

Free indirect discourse, quotative readings and the Romance Imperfect

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This article addresses the role of the Imperfect in free indirect discourse (FID) and another related context, namely quotative readings. To this end, we compare the commonalities and differences between the two readings and try to determine their semantic peculiarities. A special emphasis will be laid on the semantic properties of the Imperfect, analysed in terms of ‘three ingredients’ of the tense form, which contribute to its different readings by interacting with appropriate contextual clues and settings. In particular, it will be shown that the Romance Imperfect in free indirect discourse contexts is a key element for anchoring the propositional content to two contexts, the external context (with the speaker’s *NOW* as *origo*) and the internal context (with the internal subject’s *now* as *origo*). As will be shown, this tense requirement distinguishes FID in Romance from its counterpart in Germanic languages.

KEYWORDS: free indirect discourse, quotative readings, Imperfect in Romance, tense semantics.

1. Introduction

This article addresses the use of tense in free indirect discourse (henceforth **FID**) and another related context, namely quotatives. In particular, the role of the Imperfect will be analysed with respect to these two contexts of use, which are characterized by the fact that the actual speaker is not the source of the information conveyed by the sentence but rather ‘voices’ the words of a secondary instance of enunciation present in discourse. The comparison of the two contexts of use not only casts new light on similarities and differences between the two readings under scrutiny, but, above all, allows us to highlight how the semantic properties of the Romance Imperfect interact with various linguistic clues, yielding specific readings in the corresponding contextual settings.

Given the concern of this article with the semantic contribution of the Imperfect in specific contexts, and especially in FID, only ‘prototypical’ instances thereof will be taken into account. We will therefore restrict this study to the characteristic occurrences of FID in 19th and 20th century literary prose. We are, however, well aware of the fact that FID is a more complex phenomenon that also plays an important role

in non-literary written genres (e.g. in journalistic prose; see Loporcaro 2005: 106-113), as well as in natural spoken dialogue. We refer the reader to recent studies which offer a more comprehensive view of the different types of FID, see especially Mortara Garavelli (1995: 446-469; 2009: 87-126), Reyes (1984: 230-279; 1996: 20-24; 2002: 46-49), Fludernik (1993; 1995), Calaresu (2004: 28f), Katelhoen (2005: 66-68) and Loporcaro (2005: 106-113).

The article is structured as follows: section 2 introduces into the characteristics of free indirect discourse, highlighting in section 2.1 the standard analysis for Germanic languages and its limitations with respect to Romance. In section 2.2, Giorgi's prominent analysis for Italian (and Romance in general) is discussed. Section 3 explores the relationship between FID and the available quotative readings in Spanish and Italian, especially in order to grasp the similarities underlying the occurrence of the Imperfect in both of these contexts. Section 4 aims to account for the special role of the Romance Imperfect in FID and quotative contexts by drawing on its general semantic properties (or 'ingredients') (section 4.1) and by spelling out formally its specific semantics in FID (section 4.2) and quotative readings (section 4.3). Section 5 summarizes the results and situates both readings under scrutiny on the continuum which unfolds between the temporal and the modal pole of the Romance Imperfect.

2. On the characteristics of FID

2.1. The peculiarities of FID in Germanic languages and Romance

FID has been very much in vogue in recent linguistic research, especially for Germanic languages such as English and German. This is evident in the bulk of important studies published on the subject, such as the works of Banfield (1982), Doron (1991), Schlenker (2004), Eckardt (2014) and Hinterwimmer (2017), to name but a few contributions. There has also been some criticism with respect to this line of research, which was inspired by Banfield's pioneering study (see especially Fludernik 1993 and 1995).

The following examples (1) and (2) illustrate the FID phenomenon in English and German:

- (1) *Tomorrow was Monday, Monday, the beginning of another week.* (Lawrence, *Women in Love*, quoted from Schlenker 2004: 2)
- (2) *Er musste sich zusammennehmen, um nicht feuchte Augen zu bekommen. Wie wohlwollend die*

Verwandten ihm zulächelten! Der Schwager stieß mit ihm an. Was für gute Menschen! Und Agnes, die süße Agnes, liebte ihn! Er verdiente so viel nicht! (Mann 1918: 83)

'He had to pull it together so he wouldn't start crying. How benevolently the relatives smiled at him! His brother-in-law toasted with him. What good people! And Agnes, the sweet Agnes, loved him! He did not deserve so much!' (Mann 1921: 83)

These studies on FID in Germanic languages have, however, been complemented by numerous important publications that highlight the peculiarities in Romance. Here, much more importance is attributed to the specific constellation of enunciation underlying instances of FID. In these contexts, the narrator 'lends his voice' to a second instance whose contents of consciousness are reflected, among other means, by virtue of deictic expressions as well as specific tense forms (see e.g. Reyes 1984: 242-246; 1996: 20-24 and Mortara Garavelli 2009: 96-99). This is what produces the impression of an overlapping of two enunciative situations, that of the narrator and of a second instance (the character or protagonist). In this vein, Reyes (1984: 242) provides the following comprehensive definition of the phenomenon under scrutiny:

Llamaremos EIL [= Estilo Indirecto Libre] a la técnica narrativa que consiste en transcribir los contenidos de una conciencia (pensamientos, percepciones, palabras pensadas o dichas) de tal modo que se produzca una confluencia entre el punto de vista del narrador y el del personaje, y que esa confluencia se manifieste, en la superficie del texto, en la superposición de dos situaciones de enunciación, la del narrador y la del personaje: superposición de las referencias deícticas del narrador (tiempo pasado, tercera persona) y las del personaje (imperfecto o condicional, adverbios de lugar y de tiempo coexistentes con el 'presente' de su conciencia). Se trata, pues, de la reproducción del discurso imaginario de una conciencia en su propio tiempo y espacio;

('We will define FID as the narrative technique that consists of transcribing the contents of a consciousness (thoughts, perceptions, words thought or said) in such a way that a confluence is produced between the point of view of the narrator and that of the character, and that this confluence manifests itself, on the surface of the text, in the overlapping of two situations of enunciation, that of the narrator and that of the character: the overlapping of the deictic references of the narrator (past time, third person) and those of the character (imperfect or conditional, adverbs of place and time coexisting with the 'present' of his consciousness). We are dealing, therefore, with the reproduction of the fictitious discourse of a consciousness in its own time and space')

Summarizing the typical characteristics highlighted by the above-mentioned literature on FID in Germanic and Romance languages, we can provide the following list of linguistic features:

- The use of temporal indexicals such as 'tomorrow' (e.g. in our example (1) *Tomorrow was Monday*), 'now', 'then', 'next week' and the like;
- The use of spatial indexicals and – linked to them – of demonstratives: *Rifletteva: non era questa la fine che aveva desiderato; non qui, almeno* (Mortara Garavelli 1995: 465 – 'He pondered: this was not the end he

- had desired; not here, at least.’);
- The systematic use of the Past Tense in combination with the temporal indexicals listed (the imperfective tense in Romance and ‘episches Präteritum’ in German; see Martínez & Scheffel ¹⁰2016: 62);
- Generally, the occurrence of third person pronouns, as example (2) illustrates;
- The important role of lexical items and syntactic constructions reflecting the train of thought of a protagonist and designed to mark the subjective status of the propositional content.

In particular, the feature of ‘subjectivity’ (see especially Guéron 2015: 256ff) is conveyed by the following devices:

- The author/speaker falls back on evaluative nouns (*the bastard, the son of a bitch*);
- Evaluative adjectives (*die süße Agnes*, ‘sweet Agnes’; see example (2));
- Expressive adjectives (*damn dog*);
- Expressive intensifiers (*ein sau/mords/krass/voll/total schnelles Auto*; see Gutzmann 2018: 27).
- The author/narrator may also resort to interjections (*damn!*) and exclamative constructions of different kinds (*What good people! / Was für gute Menschen!*, see example (2), *Aria! Aria! Un po’ d’aria attorno al letto!* (‘Fresh air! Fresh air! A little bit of fresh air around the bed!’), Pirandello, ‘Superior stabat lupus’, NA, I, p. 1318, quoted in Mortara Garavelli 2009: 97) but also to contrastive and emphatic stress (*To complete every other recommendation, he had almost told her that he loved her*; see example in Eckardt 2014: 10);
- Generally, syntactic constructions display properties inherent in oral registers (or ‘orality’ in general) such as repetitions and hesitations (*But, but – he was almost the unnecessary party in the affair*, Banfield 1982: 74), specific inversions and dislocations (*absurd she was – very absurd*, Banfield 1982: 72f), incomplete sentences and anacoluthons (*Who could? Kissing Sally in the smoking room!*, Banfield 1982: 75; all examples quoted in Eckardt 2014: 10);
- Interrogative structures (or ‘interior’ questions) are another element signalling a character’s stream of consciousness (*Mañana era Navidad. ¿Vendría papa a traerle regalos?*, ‘Tomorrow was Christmas. Would daddy come and bring him presents?’ – Reyes 2002: 46);
- A particular feature of FID in German is particles such as *ja, wohl, doch, eben, also*, which convey information about the speaker’s attitudes and beliefs, but also about his relationship to the addressee.

As already indicated, one of the most conspicuous characteristics of FID is the specific interpretation of utterances with respect to the relevant contextual variables. As we know, ordinary sentences are

interpreted relative to an utterance context, represented by C, which is determined by the instantiation of the speaker and addressee variable as well as by a temporal and local variable (the so-called *hic et nunc*) of the utterance. However, sentences in FID are distinguished by their hybrid character ('the overlapping') given that some discourse elements are expressed from the speaker's perspective whereas other elements are attached to a protagonist's (inner) perspective. Therefore, standard FID approaches (for instance, the analyses suggested by Banfield, Doron, Schlenker, and Eckardt) assume that sentences in FID mode are interpreted with respect to two contexts of utterance, the pair of contexts C, c (uppercase C and lowercase c). More specifically, some of the relevant discourse categories are interpreted relative to the external context C, the context of the speaker/narrator in his interaction with the addressee/reader and some are interpreted with respect to the internal or 'fictional' context c, which evokes the utterance situation of the protagonist. Let us consider the most relevant discourse entities in a more careful way:

First, the pronouns: in FID contexts, the personal pronouns are interpreted in line with the speaker's or narrator's context of utterance (the external context). Deictic pronouns of the first and second person are very rare in FID, but they are possible and accordingly refer to the speaker/addressee himself as in the following example that reflects Lotte's own conclusions about the health state of the current interlocutor:

- (3) *I told Lotte about your good health. She smiled. You had obviously finally stopped smoking!*
(Eckardt 2014: 234)

It is only in direct speech passages that the choice of personal pronouns coheres with the 'protagonist as a speaker'. We mention in passing that exclamatives (*damn!*), evaluative adjectives (*her dull husband*) and qualitative nouns (*bastard*) are of course associated with the protagonist.

Secondly, temporal adverbs and tense behave in a particular way. As pointed out by Eckardt 2014: 20, "[t]ense in [FID] follows the perspective of the narrator, whereas temporal adverbs are used with respect to the protagonist's context."

This aspect is illustrated by example (4):

- (4) *Tom sighed. Tomorrow was Christmas.* (Eckardt 2014: 88)

The Preterite form *sighed* is related to the external context of the narrator, whereas *tomorrow* mirrors the perspective of the protagonist.

Drawing on the two-fold anchoring of temporal information, it can be claimed in the vein of Doron that temporal reference is established “relative to the ‘protagonist’s *now*’ as conveyed by the narrator” (see Doron 1991: 60). The generalization on tense in the literature on FID in German and English, as summed up, for instance, by Eckardt in the formula “tense in [FID] follows the perspective of the narrator” (Eckardt 2014: 20) is valid for these languages, but turns out to be too strong when it comes to analysing the use of tense in FID contexts in Romance. Alessandra Giorgi (2015) makes it clear that this generalization “is not tenable for languages with a temporal system richer than English” (Giorgi 2015: 238). So the question arises: What are the typical FID tenses in Romance languages and how can we account for the patterns of specialization typical of FID contexts?

First of all, it is particularly striking that FID never shows up with perfective morphology, i.e. Simple Past. The standard tense in Romance FID is the Imperfect (or an imperfective tense). This can be seen from the following Italian and French examples:

- (5) *Ah, Ecco perchè era così, oggi. Piangeva* (IMPF) (**pianse*, PERF)
(Deledda, *Le colpe altrui*, p. 76, quoted in Giorgi 2010: 185)
‘Ah, this was why she was like that, today. She was crying’
- (6) *Elle le regardait* (IMPF) *de ses grands yeux fixes: pourquoi donc ne mourait-il* (IMPF) (**mourut-il*, PERF) *pas, puis qu’elle [sic puisque] ne l’aimait* (IMPF) (**aima*, PERF) *plus, et qu’il gênait* (IMPF) (**gêna*, PERF) *tout le monde, maintenant ?* (Zola, *La bête humaine*: 302, quoted in Landeweerd & Vet 1996: 159)
‘She gazed at him with an unblinking stare. Why didn’t he die, then, for she didn’t love him anymore and he was in everybody’s way.’ (Example and translation taken from Landeweerd & Vet 1996: 159)

As the examples illustrate, the FID has to be obligatorily marked by the Imperfect while the perfective past (the Italian Passato Remoto and the French Passé Simple) is ungrammatical with this discourse mode (i.e. **pianse*, **mourut* and **aima*).¹

These specific tense restrictions on FID reflect the more complex tense system of Romance with its aspectual distinctions (imperfective vs perfective past tenses) and the relevance of these distinctions for marking the presence of a second enunciative instance. The specific tense constraints in Romance FID therefore cast doubt on the hypothesis that tense in this specific context is interpreted with respect to the speaker’s *NOW* as claimed in the literature on Germanic languages (see Schlenker 2004: 2; Eckardt 2014: 20). Generally speaking, the studies on FID in Romance relate the use of the Imperfect to the co-presence of some internal subject (see below). Landeweerd & Vet (1996: 159),

for instance, stress that “tense usage confirms [...] that the pivot-role is assigned to some internal subject” (Landeweerd & Vet 1996: 159, see also e.g. Giorgi 2015: 247).

This intuition is echoed by Vandelanotte’s analysis of the functions of the French *Imparfait* in free indirect speech or thought. He insists that in these contexts the Imperfect points to a ‘secondary deictic center’, the protagonist’s *now* (cf. Vandelanotte 2005: 74). We will spell out these intuitions and observations concerning tense in FID more precisely in this article. For the time being, we highlight the fact that the specific use of the Imperfect is a crucial built-in ingredient of the FID discourse mode and has therefore to be accounted for properly. In particular, it must be taken into account that the Imperfect seems to be strongly associated with the evoking of some internal subject or a second instance of enunciation. So the questions arising from these general observations on tense in FID are the following:

- How can we account for the intrinsic link between the Imperfect and the set-up of a secondary deictic center or some internal subject of discourse?
- How can we describe the semantics of past sentences with FID reading in an appropriate way?
- And finally, why does the Imperfect qualify particularly for these kinds of readings given its basic semantic ingredients?

Before we answer these key questions, a short side glance at Giorgi’s account on the Imperfect in Italian FID contexts is warranted.

2.2. Giorgi’s approach to the use of the Imperfect in Italian FID

In her seminal 2010 study *About the speaker*, Giorgi has tried to construe the reference to a secondary source or an internal subject as a primary and, therefore, essential and defining feature of the Imperfect. In her quite vigorous stance on the true nature of the Imperfect, she defines this verbal category as ‘an anti-speaker tense’ (see e.g. Giorgi 2010: 106, 153 and 214). Correspondingly, Giorgi contends that the Italian Imperfect morpheme *-va-* (as, for instance, in *piangeva* ‘(s)he cried’) is “the lexicalization of the feature [–speaker]” (Giorgi 2010: 104). She models her analysis within a generative framework and conceives the role of the Imperfect morpheme *-va-* in terms of a resetting of the enunciative coordinates represented in C. In standard declarative sentences, the coordinates represented in C are the speaker’s. Conversely, in FID clauses these coordinates are reset from those of the speaker to those of the subject or internal source (see Giorgi 2010: 201).

Giorgi advances several arguments to substantiate her claim that the Imperfect is a [-speaker]/anti-speaker tense.

The first argument capitalizes on restrictions concerning the occurrence of the Imperfect in main clauses. As Giorgi points out, the Imperfect always requires a temporal topic, otherwise the sentence turns out to be unacceptable.

- (7) a. # *Gianni mangiava un panino.*
b. *Ieri alle tre Gianni mangiava un panino.*
'Yesterday at three o'clock Gianna was eating a sandwich.' (Giorgi 2010: 106)

According to Giorgi, the temporal topic *ieri alle tre* ('yesterday at three o'clock') provides the interpretable feature [-speaker] and locates the event "somewhere else – (...) – with respect to the speaker's temporal location" (Giorgi 2010: 106).

However, it is problematic to analyse a temporal topic located in the past as [-speaker] only because it is distant from the utterance time of the speaker. Following this analysis, all past tenses would be endowed with this particular feature as they locate events remote from the utterance time of the speaker. Even more prominently, a sentence with a perfective tense like in (8) – again presenting a temporal topic – is judged by native speakers as self-contained (at least in French), in contrast to the same sentence marked by the Imperfect. As Kleiber (2003: 14) points out, the sentence

- (8) *Hier, à midi, il a plu* (PERF).
'Yesterday, at noon, it rained.'

with perfective tense and without any contextual amendments is totally fine whereas its Imperfect counterpart needs some further (linguistic or encyclopaedic) context in order to be fully acceptable. Therefore, in an Imperfect context as in (9), some continuation like, for instance, a subordinate temporal clause is expected:

- (9) *Hier, à midi, il pleuvait* (IMPF) *lorsque Paul est allé faire son footing.* (cf. Kleiber 2003: 15)
'Yesterday, at noon, it rained, when Paul went jogging.'

This boils down to the fact that the temporal topic alone might not be sufficient to license the Imperfect given that its occurrence requires some additional contextual anchoring (see Kleiber 2003: 13-16).

Further arguments for the [-speaker]-status of the Imperfect put forward by Giorgi rest on its crucial role in embedded clauses. So the

Imperfect typically occurs in subordinated clauses selected by verbs of ‘saying’. A case in point is (10):

- (10) *Gianni ha detto che Maria mangiava (IMPF) un panino.* (Giorgi 2010: 110)
‘Gianni said that Maria ate/was eating a sandwich.’

As Giorgi highlights, the embedded verbal forms are interpreted as simultaneous with the main predicate. She maintains that both the [–speaker]-constraint of the Imperfect and the anchoring requirement are met, since “the uninterpretable feature of the Imperfect is valued by the main past verbal form, which also anchors it”. (Giorgi 2010: 110)²

Giorgi does not explain why the [–speaker] constraint is necessarily met in these *verba dicendi* contexts. If the Imperfect signalled a divergence between the speaker and the subject of the subordinate clause, as is frequent in *verba dicendi* contexts as in (10), we would expect a non-imperfective form in those contexts in which the speaker and the internal source are one and the same. However, even in these cases the subordinate verb is consistently marked by the Imperfetto. What is more, the Imperfect is selected irrespective of whether a Passato Composto or a Passato Semplice form occurs. This fact is confirmed by the corpus examples (11) and (12), which reproduce utterances of the speaker:

- (11) *Io gli ho detto (Passato Composto) che andavo a Poggibonsi, dove ho un amico.* (Tozzi, *Con gli occhi chiusi*: 61)
‘I told I him I was going to Poggibonsi, where I have a friend.’
- (12) *Al primo show della Lega per la nascita della Padania – ricorda Prodi – io dissi (Passato Semplice) che mi sentivo più padano di Bossi* (*Corriere della Sera* 16.02.1997: 5)
‘At the first show of the League for the birth of Padania – remembers Prodi – I said that I felt more Padano than Bossi.’

Another argument put forward by Giorgi is the prominent role of the Imperfect in dreams. She claims that in these contexts the Imperfect is totally atemporal, or – as she puts it – the Imperfect is not a past, but “simply contributes to expressing the content of the dream.” (Giorgi 2010: 104). A case in point is example (13):

- (13) *Gianni ha sognato che Maria partiva.*
‘Gianni dreamed that Maria left.’

The status of dreams in language is an intriguing question which borders on philosophical and psychological considerations. Without going into detail, we can state that dreams are generally coded as extensions of the real world given the systematic and exclusive use of indicative morphology. The claim that the occurrence of the Imperfect in

dream contexts betrays its atemporal character is an ad-hoc assumption. Rather, we see that its use in these specific contexts is not different from its deployment in any other embedded utterance or context of perception. An analysis of the Imperfect should capture the commonalities (and differences, if they exist) between these different, ‘reported’ and ‘psychological’, readings (see also Reyes 1990: 64, who stresses the “ontological status of dreams” between “real experiences” and “unreal experiences that fade away at dawn”).

Most importantly, Giorgi’s main argument for the [–speaker] feature of the Imperfect dwells on the existence of a specific future-oriented ‘modal’ reading of the Imperfect in Italian (see Giorgi 2010: 107). Take the following short dialogue:

- (14) *Verrà anche Gianni alla festa di domani?*
‘Will Gianni come as well to tomorrow’s party?’

Non so. Domani uscirà (IMPF) con Maria.
‘I do not know. Tomorrow he was going out (IMPF ≈ is supposed to go out) with Maria.’
(Giorgi 2010: 101)

As can be seen from the context, the reader does not want to guarantee the truth, that is to say, the coming-into-existence of the expected future event. Giorgi takes this use as a crucial piece of evidence for her basic assumption that the Imperfect is not anchored to the speaker. According to her interpretation, the proposition in question is not linked to the speaker’s *NOW* (his utterance time) and the “present-time expectation of an event projected in the future” (as she asserts; see Giorgi 2010: 107) only comes with the specification contributed by the adverb *domani* (‘tomorrow’). However, this argument requires some caveats:

- First of all, the quotative reading is not a basic reading of the Imperfect. On the contrary, it is quite a rare and rather recent extension of the Italian Imperfetto.
 - Apart from that, this reading is much more entrenched in Spanish than in Italian, but, as Leonetti and Escandell-Vidal conclusively argue, even in Spanish the quotative reading is a derived one and may be accounted for by the mechanism of coercion (see Leonetti & Escandell-Vidal 2003: 138);
 - Finally, most Romance languages like Portuguese, Romanian and Catalan, and especially French, which display an extensive array of different Imperfect readings, do not allow for a quotative reading at all. For instance, the French example (15) is totally ungrammatical:
- (15) *Georges viendra à la boom de Marie?*
*Je ne le sais pas. *Il sortait (IMPF) demain avec Pierre.*

'Will George come to Mary's party? I do not know. *He is supposed to hang out with Peter tomorrow.'

To conclude, the quotative reading of the Imperfect is a very specialized reading in Italian and Spanish that, in addition, is not available in other Romance languages. Therefore, it neither qualifies as a key argument for an alleged [-speaker] feature of the Imperfect in Romance, in general, nor in Italian (or Spanish), in particular. In the latter case, the [-speaker] feature can be inferred from the context but it is not an autonomous semantic property of the Imperfect that pervades and characterizes the other readings (particularly the core readings) of the Italian or Spanish Imperfect.³ In contrast to Giorgi's [-speaker] hypothesis, we make the case for an account based on three essential semantic ingredients of the Imperfect, which is comprehensive enough to account for all Imperfect readings in Romance. This approach is, therefore, intended to cover, apart from the standard readings, the uses of the Imperfect in FID contexts as well as the quotative readings in Spanish and Italian. But before we dwell on the three ingredients of the Imperfect, we are going to explore the relationship between the quotative readings and FID in a more precise way in the next section.

3. On quotative readings and their relationship to FID

An excellent starting point for determining the relationship between FID and quotative readings is the in-depth analysis of quotatives provided by Leonetti and Escandell-Vidal. As we will see, the comparison of FID and quotative readings not only highlights the semantics of the two specific extensions of the Romance Imperfect but it also allows us to identify essential semantic ingredients of the Imperfect in its interaction with relevant contextual factors. Quotative readings may be found in present, past and future contexts. We have already quoted an example of a prospective reading. Past quotative readings are also available in Spanish and Italian, as the following examples attest:

(16) a. *¿Qué sabes de Juan?*

'What do you know about John?'

b. *Llegaba el martes.*

'He is supposed to come on Tuesday.'

(17) *La rivelazione di una fonte autorevole dei servizi di sicurezza. Il Cavaliere temeva di essere considerato troppo filo rais. (ilfattoquotidiano.it, 13/06/2013, quoted in Verdiani 2014: 129)*

‘The leakage of an influential source of the national intelligence services. Il Cavaliere [Berlusconi] was afraid of being considered too Rais-friendly.’

Please note that in Italian the past quotative reading is only triggered by an explicit reference to a source different from the speaker. In (17) the source is referred to with the phrase *di una fonte autorevole* (‘by an influential source’). This requirement for source specification indicates the less conventionalized character of quotative readings in Italian. Apart from that, it also has to be stressed that, at least in Italian, quotative readings are strongly confined to oral registers or text genres closely related to orality such as police records that reproduce testimonies of witnesses (see Calaresu 2004: 197).

In prospective quotative readings, the event is located in the future relative to a past reference time, for instance:

(18) *Esta noche la daban de alta.*
‘She was going to (\approx is supposed to) be discharged from hospital tonight.’

(19) *El partido empezaba a las 8:45 h.*
‘The match was starting (\approx is supposed to start) at 8:45.’

The same holds for Italian. I repeat example (14) as (20) for convenience:

(20) *Verrà anche Gianni alla festa di domani?*
‘Will Gianni also come to tomorrow’s party?’

Non so. Domani usciva con Maria.
‘I do not know. Tomorrow he was going out (\approx is supposed to go out) with Maria.’
(Giorgi 2010: 101)

As Leonetti and Escandell-Vidal point out in their analysis, quotative readings have to comply with a series of particular requirements.

(i) First of all, there are actionality requirements: the predicates which allow for a quotative reading have to be telic. Leonetti and Escandell-Vidal interpret this interplay of telic predicates with the Imperfect as an instance of coercion. According to the authors, the Imperfect generally selects atelic predicates. If, however, the Imperfect interacts with a telic predicate, a process of reinterpretation due to conflicting selectional features is triggered, in which the Imperfect coerces the telic predicate into an atelic one. Depending on particular contextual items coming into play (such as an indexical like ‘tomorrow’), this interactive process may result in a quotative reading. (Leonetti & Escandell-Vidal 2003: 140f; cf. also de Swart 1998; for Italian, see Calaresu 2004:

200). Compare the following examples (taken from Leonetti & Escandell-Vidal 2003: 138):

- (21) *Esta noche terminaba su trabajo.*
'That night he was going (\approx is supposed) to finish his work.'
- (22) *Era una persona muy tímida.*
'She was a very shy person.'
- (23) *Salía con un chico italiano de la facultad.*
'She was hanging out with an Italian boy from college.'

As the last two examples illustrate, atelic verbs such as *ser* ('to be') and *salir* ('to hang out with') are only compatible with a characterizing and/or habitual reading.

(ii) Secondly, quotative readings arise from the combination of the Imperfect with specific temporal adjuncts, or with deictic temporal expressions. Both the prospective and past quotatives depend on the semantics of the deictic expressions, as the following examples show:

- Prospective readings with future-oriented deictic expressions:

- (24) *Juan volvía la semana próxima.*
'John was going (\approx is supposed) to return next week.'

- Past readings with past-oriented deictic expressions:

- (25) *La daban de alta hace dos días.*
'He is reported to have been discharged from hospital two days ago.'

- Anaphoric expressions such as *al día siguiente* do not trigger quotative-evidential readings:

- (26) *La daban de alta al día siguiente.* (past reading, non-quotative)
'They discharged her from hospital the following day.'

(iii) Thirdly, the informational status of the adjunct can be of paramount importance:

- Topic adjuncts, which are always placed at the beginning of the sentence, never allow for a quotative reading. This peculiarity is illustrated by example (27):

- (27) *A las ocho en punto, el tren salía.* (see Leonetti & Escandell-Vidal 2003: 345)
'At 8 o'clock, the train was leaving/was about to leave', but *'was supposed to leave.'

- If the adjunct constitutes or is part of the sentence focus, the sentence can (but does not have to) receive a quotative interpretation:

- (28) *El tren salía* A LAS OCHO EN PUNTO. (Answer to the question: When did the train leave?)
a. *El tren SALÍA* A LAS OCHO EN PUNTO. (Answer to the question: What about the train?)
'The train was supposed/reported to leave at 8 o'clock / the train was leaving at 8 o'clock.'

(iv) Fourth, pragmatic considerations also play a role in triggering the quotative reading. Events giving rise to quotative readings are typically events which have to be scheduled in advance. These events often pertain to frames related to everyday experience. Typically, quotative readings emerge when plans are brought up, timetables discussed and fixed routines or institutional procedures evoked. With these peculiarities in mind, we can now briefly compare the characteristics of the FID and quotative readings.

A shared feature of FID and quotatives is the paramount role of deictical temporal adverbs (such as 'tomorrow', 'next week' etc.). They act as a key contextual ingredient helping to trigger the relevant readings. In FID the temporal adverbs are linked to the internal subject/protagonist whereas in quotative readings they refer to the speaker and his utterance time. As for the propositional content, it is anchored to the internal subject in FID contexts. In quotative contexts, on the other hand, the propositional content is reported by the speaker as linked to an internal subject. A further essential property that FID and quotatives have in common is the fact that the Imperfect stands out as marker of the presence of an internal subject featuring as secondary source or origo of the proposition (or, more generally, the information) under consideration. A particularly striking characteristic of both readings is the fact that they are dependent on the specific interaction between apparently conflicting linguistic elements, namely the co-occurring imperfective past and the deictic (i.e. utterance-time oriented) expressions. Actionality restrictions, however, are only relevant for triggering quotative readings and combine as a crucial contextual factor.

Finally, both readings are associated with further conceptual information (e.g. frames, encyclopaedic knowledge about procedures and the like), which is relevant for the adequate interpretation of the Imperfect in its contexts. Quotative readings rely on scripts that include scheduled events, routines and institutional conventions. As regards FID, these elements typically involve linguistic expressions signalling subjectivity such as exclamations, evaluative predicates and elements of oral discourse. These markers of subjectivity are intended

to ‘voice’ the consciousness of a co-present instance, i.e. a character alongside the narrator. The exclusive hallmark of FID is, therefore, the anchoring of the propositional content with respect to two contexts, the context of the speaker C and the context of the internal subject c. The following table summarizes similarities and differences between FID and quotative readings:

	FID	QUOTATIVES
ANCHORING OF PRONOUNS	to speaker/narrator	to speaker/narrator
TEMPORAL ADVERBS	indexical: anchored to the internal subject/protagonist	indexical: linked to the speaker and his utterance time
PROPOSITIONAL CONTENT	linked to the internal subject	reported by the speaker as linked to an internal subject
TOPIC ADJUNCTS	possible	not allowed, only focal
ACTIONALITY	no restrictions	telic predicates
PRAGMATICS/ CONTEXTUAL CLUES	thought content: evaluative and emotive expressions, exclamatives, items signalling orality	utterance content: planned/scheduled events, frames
TENSE/ASPECT	Imperfect	Imperfect

Table 1. Similarities and differences between FID and quotative readings.

As the table nicely illustrates, the Imperfect brings its semantic potential to both readings but the relevant meaning is instantiated in accordance with specific and well identifiable contextual clues. As it turns out, the semantic properties of the Imperfect allow for readings which, in an appropriate contextual setting, imply the presence of a secondary source. Therefore, the question arises: what is it that makes the Imperfect amenable to the two specialized readings under scrutiny and, above all, why is there this particular link to a secondary source? We try to explore these questions in the following section by getting down to the specific semantic properties, the ‘ingredients’, of the Romance Imperfect.

4. The semantic properties of the Imperfect and its specific role in FID and quotative readings

4.1. The semantic properties ('ingredients') of the Romance Imperfect

In a contribution published in 2011 ('Die Ingredienzen des romanischen Imperfekts'), I attempted to identify and argue for the key role of three basic 'ingredients' of the Imperfect in order to account for its various readings in interaction with different contexts (Becker 2011: 79ff). These 'ingredients' should be understood as properties of the Imperfect deriving from its aspectual nature (imperfective). The different readings of the Imperfect can be deduced from the interplay of the 'ingredients' with particular contextual clues that trigger a systematic interpretation.

As we will see throughout the second part of this article, a slight rephrasing of the third ingredient turns out to be appropriate in order to account for the quotative and FID readings. The three 'ingredients' to be highlighted boil down to the following:

- 1) First, the indexical indeterminacy associated with the Imperfect;
- 2) Second, its anaphorical character and, more comprehensively, its context dependency;
- 3) The third ingredient, which was originally included as 'principle of typicality' and was intended to account for the modal flavour of the Imperfect, should be rephrased in order to cover both its FID and quotative uses.

As we will see in the following sections, the Imperfect comes with a potential of widening the domain of evaluation of a proposition to worlds different from the actual world w_0 according to the speaker. This third modal ingredient could, therefore, be rephrased as the potential of accessing worlds beyond the actual world according to the speaker. For the sake of space, only the most relevant aspects of the analysis of the Imperfect will be summarized in view of motivating its semantic role in FID and quotative contexts. First of all, the three 'ingredients' or essential properties will be outlined:

- 1) The starting point of the analysis of the Imperfect is its INDEXICAL INDETERMINACY. There is a large consensus in the tense literature that an event description in the scope of the imperfective operator presents or 'views' an event without its delimiting boundaries, i.e. the initial and the final points of the event under consideration (see e.g.

Bertinetto 1986, Bonomi & Zucchi 2001 for the Italian Imperfect; Bres 2005: 5f, Barceló & Bres 2006, Bres 2018, Smith ²1997, 2012: 2588f for French; and Leonetti 2004 for Spanish, among others). Contrary to the imperfective operator, the perfective operator presents an event as a whole with its edge boundaries (i.e. as a ‘bounded event’). Whilst the interval of an event referred to by a perfective tense form (e.g. Indefinido, Passato Remoto, Passé Simple) is profiled as a delimited set of successive temporal indexes on the time axis, ranging from the initial to the final point, the interval of an Imperfect lacks this delimitation. In other words, given its unboundedness, the imperfective event interval remains indexically unspecified (or undetermined). The ‘openness’ of the interval in focus may even allow for the possibility of evoking alternative worlds (e.g. inertia worlds, see below), widening, in this case, the domain of evaluation from purely temporal to modal world-time indexes (representing possible worlds).

Let us take a typical contrastive example for the sake of illustration:

- (29) a. *Alle 5, Gianni fumò.*
b. *Alle 5, Gianni fumava.*

If, in (29a), the whole event of smoking starts and ends at 5 o’clock (and the readers may accommodate the short duration of the event pragmatically), (29b) tells nothing about the beginning and the end of the event. The sentence only asserts that the event of smoking is in progress at 5 o’clock. The event interval remains undetermined as to its initial and final time index.

This typical property of indeterminacy is also reflected in the habitual reading of the Imperfect. As Lenci & Bertinetto (2000: 273) point out, in a sentence like

- (30) *Nel 1998, Gianni andava al cinema con Maria* (Lenci & Bertinetto 2000: 272)

the temporal adverb *nel 1998* sets a frame for which the habit of Gianni’s going to the cinema with Mary is asserted but nothing is said about the temporal extension of the habit beyond this frame (the habit may have reigned before or even after 1998). In other words, the run-time of the habit with its initial and final temporal indexes remains undetermined. It would, therefore, be impossible to specify any definite set of successive temporal indexes, ranging from an initial to a final time point/index.

2) The second basic property of the Imperfect, which ensues from its aspect-based indexical indeterminacy, is its ANAPHORICAL NATURE.

The notion of anaphoricity can be understood as reference to an element, which, already introduced into or present in the discourse, is a necessary requirement for the anchoring and interpretation, i.e. the discourse-semantic ‘saturation’, of another element, in this case, an instance of the Imperfect.

In view of the relevance of this characteristic for the interpretation of the Imperfect in discourse, the Discourse Representation Theory (DRT) has particularly dwelt on its anaphoric character. A standard DRT assumption is that the Imperfect – in contrast with perfective past forms – cannot introduce reference points and is therefore not capable of updating the discourse. Given its indexical indeterminacy, the Imperfect is thus dependent on a reference point already introduced either by a perfective tense form or by an adverbial expression, which sets a reference point such as ‘at 5 o’clock’ or ‘5 minutes later’ and the like. Figuratively speaking, the Imperfect ‘looks for’ an antecedent in order to be anchored temporally and interpreted in an appropriate way. The following typical DRT representation (taken from Kamp & Rohrer 1983: 254) captures this insight:

(31) *Pierre entra* (PERF). *Marie téléphonait* (IMPF).

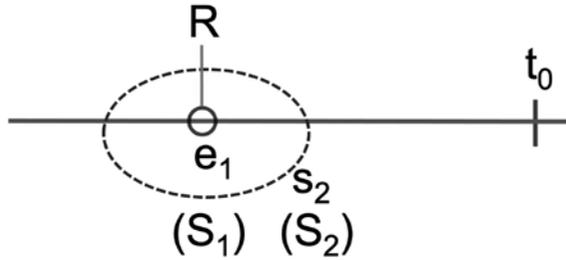


Figure 1. The anaphoric character of the Imperfect in discourse (Kamp & Rohrer 1983: 254).

The perfective French *Passé Simple* (sentence S_1) introduces a reference point (R). The eventuality-in-progress marked by the Imperfect (sentence S_2) is anchored to R and interpreted as unfolding around the reference point on the temporal axis.

So in TEMPORAL terms, the anaphoric character of the Imperfect boils down to the anchoring of an event description marked by the Imperfect to a prominent time point, i.e. a reference time in discourse.

In HABITUAL or even CONDITIONAL contexts, the anaphoric character of the Imperfect manifests itself in a different way. Take the following example:

(32) *Era il periodo delle piogge, ogni domenica pioveva* (IMPF).

The habitual reading is only triggered due to the frame-setting expression *il periodo delle piogge* ('the rainy period'), combined with the quantifier *ogni domenica* ('every Sunday'). The interplay of the Imperfect with these two contextual clues is the crucial requirement for us to be able to disentangle the correct reading: the temporal indication *il periodo delle piogge* marks the reference interval in which the rule-like regularity holds whereas *ogni domenica* (not to be read as an all-quantification but a quantification over typical instances of *domenica*) functions as a 'partition measure' of the relevant sub-intervals to be taken into consideration (see Deo 2009: 478f).

Now, the same requirement holds for the conditional reading available in non-standard varieties of Italian such as in example (33):

(33) *Se lo sapevo* (IMPF) *te lo dicevo*.

'If I had known, I would have told you.' (Dessi Schmid 2010: 49)⁴

This reading is again dependent on an element already present in the context. In conditional contexts, the relevant element is the domain-restricting operator IF, which introduces sets of possible worlds relevant for the evaluation of the main clause (apodosis).

Note that even Standard Italian does not exclude the Imperfect in counterfactual contexts, as a quote from the novel *I promessi sposi* written by the famous 19th century prose writer Manzoni, demonstrates:

(34) *Se Lucia non faceva* (IMPF) *quel segno, la risposta sarebbe probabilmente stata diversa*. (*I promessi sposi*, chapter 3, quoted in Dessì Schmid 2010: 47)

'If Lucia had not made this sign, the answer would probably have been different.'

3) The modal ingredient of the Imperfect was first discussed in great detail by Lenci & Bertinetto (2000). Although the authors focus on the modal character of the habitual reading, they suggest that "imperfectivity might be analysed as an intrinsically intensional phenomenon." (Lenci & Bertinetto 2000: 257, see also Bertinetto 1997: 97f, Bonomi & Zucchi 2001: 109-111). Deo (2009) tries to develop a coherent unifying account of the imperfective aspect from a 'universalist' formal semantic perspective, which subsumes the progressive and the habitual (or more generally, 'characterizing') readings. Her account spells out the intensional (i.e. 'modal') component of imperfectivity by dwelling on the model of branching futures that may develop as possible or expected continuations of the relevant reference interval in question. Given that a precise formal account of the semantics of the Imperfect is beyond the

scope of this paper, we refer to the very detailed analysis provided by Deo (2009).⁵

However, we would like to stress the relevance of the three highlighted properties of the Imperfect, and especially the last, the modal one, against the backdrop of its two central readings, the PROGRESSIVE and the HABITUAL.

The PROGRESSIVE READING focuses on a single time point of an ongoing event (characterized by Bertinetto as ‘monofocalizing’ perspective; see Bertinetto 1986: 164) and implies the existence of preceding instances of the event, as well as a continuation of the event dynamics to its natural end, i.e. the ‘culmination point’, provided that no unexpected or extraordinary cancelling event intervenes. In sum, the extension of the time interval with its temporal indexes is undetermined (property of indexical indeterminacy), the progressive reading is instantiated by the indication of an explicit time point from which the ‘monofocalizing’ perspective unfolds (property of anaphoricity) and finally, this constellation is imbued with a modal flavour: future worlds that continue a state of affairs as it stands at the ‘monofocalizing’ perspective time point are conceived of as ‘inertia worlds’. They are – so to speak – continuations of the real world w_0 *ceteris paribus*. A case in point is (35):

- (35) *Alle 5 Enrico attraversava (IMPF) la strada. / À 5 heures Henri traversait (IMPF) la rue.*
‘At 5 o’clock Henri was crossing the street.’

If it happened that a car hit Enrico and the event could not reach its culmination point, the crossing-event would pass to the ‘reign’ of counterfactuality and non-*p* would hold in the base world w_0 . In other words: *p* and non-*p* are possible future outcomes of the event dynamics at the ‘monofocalizing’ perspective time point that is located before the speaker’s utterance time.

The HABITUAL READING, on the other hand, does not focus on a single event, but rather refers to an undetermined set of instantiations of an event type (indexical indeterminacy), whereby all instantiations classify as members of this set given their particular status: they represent manifestations of a rule-like pattern or, to put it slightly differently, they ‘exemplify’ it. The notion of habituality abstracts a general rule out of a bundle of instances without specifying the number of occurrences to be taken into consideration. Here again, modality comes into play: the instances to be taken into account not only constitute real past time instances, but they are, at the same time, typical or ideal instances of an event type as they exemplify an underlying rule-like pattern. In other words, the domain of worlds taken into consideration for the verification

of the proposition is extended from the base world w_0 to possible worlds that come closest to the rule-like pattern determined by the principle of normalcy. The principle of normalcy corresponds to the normal course of events according to our expectations, and acts, in modal terms, as the ordering source (see Kratzer 1991: 644, Krifka *et al.* 1995: 52 and Portner 2009: 99-101, see also Bertinetto & Lenci 2012 for the analysis of habituality as a subtype of gnomic imperfectivity). To illustrate this idea, we pick up example (32), now quoted as (36):

- (36) *Era il periodo delle piogge, ogni domenica pioveva* (IMPF).
'It was the rainy season, every Sunday it rained.'

In this example, the set of instances of rain-events remains unspecified. The truth conditions of the sentence (and of its underlying propositional content) hold if rain fell on typical Sundays during the rainy season, not necessarily on all Sundays – this latter case would be tantamount to an all-quantification. A typical Sunday reuniting all the properties in accordance with the principle of normalcy (or 'expectedness') suffices to exemplify the rule-like pattern and qualifies, therefore, as a relevant instance to be taken into account for the evaluation of the propositional content in truth-conditional terms.

As we see, both central readings are associated with the three ingredients of the Imperfect, namely: indexical indeterminacy, its anaphoric character (in the case of the habitual reading with the cyclical, 'partition-measuring' adverbial expression *ogni domenica*), and its modality, i.e. the access to worlds beyond the actual world w_0 according to the speaker.

Yet, the Imperfect can also point to a secondary origo or internal subject. As sections 2 and 3 illustrated in detail, this characteristic is at the heart of the FID and the quotative readings.

Bres (2018) relates both the third modal ingredient, and the FID uses, to the aspectual nature of the Imperfect. More specifically, given that the Imperfect leaves the event interval unbounded, it gives rise to modal and FID interpretations. Bres characterizes this constellation quite metaphorically as "l'imparfait laisse la porte ouverte" ('the imperfect keeps the door open'). This characterization ties in with the notion of indexical indeterminacy, implying that the relevant indexes of evaluation in appropriate contexts include world indexes beyond the real world w_0 .

In the next section, we focus on the two specific Imperfect readings under scrutiny and endeavor to answer the key question of this article: how can we analyse the function of the Imperfect in FID and in quotative readings, taking into account the semantic ingredients of the Imperfect?

4.2. The semantics of the FID reading

As we highlighted in section 2.1, the linguistic literature on FID makes the claim that FID involves a specific constellation, with two contexts of evaluation: the external and the internal contexts, which overlap and conflate. The central question now is: why is the Imperfect the ideal tense, the category par excellence, to mark this double-index constellation at the heart of FID contexts?

To start with, let us take a conspicuous example from Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* that illustrates the interplay and overlap of the two contexts, coded by the Imperfect:

- (37) *La journée fut longue, le lendemain. Elle se promena dans son jardinet, (...). Comme le bal déjà lui semblait loin ! Qui donc écartait, à tant de distance, le matin d'avant-hier et le soir d'aujourd'hui ? Son voyage à Vaubyessard avait fait un trou dans sa vie, (...).* (Flaubert, *Madame Bovary*, part 1, chapter 8)
'It was a long day, the next day. She went for a walk in her garden, (...). How far away the ball already seemed to her! Who, then, separated, with such a distance, the morning before yesterday and the evening of today ? Her trip to Vaubyessard had made a hole in her life, [...].'

The example revolves around Emma Bovary's excitement for the evening ball at Château Vaubyessard she was a guest at. The first two sentences represent the viewpoint of the narrator. He introduces the scene by resorting to the perfective past tense, the French *Passé Simple*. The following passage contains important contextual clues which point to FID and provide an insight into the psychology and consciousness of the prominent protagonist. The sequence of sentences reflecting Emma Bovary's thoughts are characterized by the following elements of subjectivity:

- An exclamative clause mirroring her feelings (*Comme le bal lui semblait loin !*);
- An interrogative clause that borders on a rhetorical question (*Qui donc écartait ... ?*) – the person in question is Emma's dull husband Charles;
- The last sentence includes a personal assessment of the consequences of a deeply felt experience.

These different aspects combine perfectly with the use of the Imperfect in the interrogative sentence (*Qui donc écartait à tant de distance, le matin d'avant-hier et le soir d'aujourd'hui?*). Furthermore, the Imperfect co-occurs with the deictic adverbial expressions, *le matin d'avant-hier* and *le soir d'aujourd'hui*. These adverbs refer explicitly to the secondary origo ('the now') of the internal context. The specific role of the Imperfect in FID contexts comes to the fore in this example. The Imperfect marks that the thought content is attached to the secondary source, i.e.

the protagonist or inner subject. This aspect becomes all the more evident if we take into account that the verb *écarter* is telic and, therefore, strongly correlates with a perfective tense. However, a question marked by the *Passé Simple* (*Qui donc écarta ...*) would not only ask for the agent of a completed past event but would take an external perspective, as is characteristic of a heterodiegetic narrator. The Imperfect, on the other hand, reflects an internal perspective, in this case, the emotions and thoughts of the protagonist Emma Bovary. As this example shows, the FID reading is triggered by contextual clues – the temporal indexical adverbials *le matin d'avant-hier* and *le soir d'aujourd'hui*, and markers of subjectivity (an exclamative construction, a (rhetorical) question, the occurrence of evaluative expressions), which reflect the consciousness of the protagonist ('a second voice'). These contextual clues interact with the semantic potential of the Imperfect which occurs in conjunction with a telic verb (*écarter*).

The Imperfect interacts perfectly with these contextual elements and in turn contributes to the creation of the FID reading with the following characteristics:

- a) The Imperfect, in its function as a past tense, marks the thought content of the protagonist as conveyed by the narrator as being located before the utterance time, i.e. the speaker's *NOW*;
- b) The Imperfect, with its modo-aspectual peculiarities, also indicates that the thought content depends on and is anchored to a secondary source and its origo, i.e. to the protagonist's *now*; this anchoring may be made explicit by the French temporal adverb *maintenant* or by other deictic expressions (e.g. *hier*, *aujourd'hui* etc.).

A formalization of the specific FID constellation with the Imperfect has to take into consideration several aspects:

- FID implies a thought (or cognitive) event *e* of the protagonist that is conveyed by the narrator and located before the utterance time, i.e. the speaker's *NOW*;
- FID contains a thought (cognitive) content which is anchored to the protagonist and his/her origo *now*;
- Since the thought content depends on the beliefs (or 'epistemic state') of the protagonist, the propositional content has to be couched in intensional terms. To put it another way, the propositional content is evaluated with respect to those worlds, which are accessible to the protagonist and compatible with what the protagonist believes at the moment of the thought event. These worlds constitute the doxastic modal base (or epistemic modal base if we understand the latter term in a broad sense; see section 4.3 below).

The semantics of the Imperfect in FID contexts can be grasped by drawing on the essential insight of Eckardt into the presence of two contexts (see e.g. Eckardt 2014: 107, 260f), i.e. the external context of the narrator (*NOW*) and the internal context of the protagonist (*now*), and by taking into account the intensional character of the thought content ascribed to the protagonist:

$$\exists e (R \subset \tau(e) \wedge, R < NOW \wedge (\text{THINK}(\text{EMMA}, e) \wedge \text{CONTENT } e = \{w: \exists e' \text{ TRIUMPH}(\text{EMMA}, e', w)\} \wedge \tau(e') \text{ o } now))$$

THOUGHT EVENT

located in the past of the narrator's *NOW*.

THOUGHT CONTENT

anchored to the protagonist's *now*

Please note that the implied thought event is an ingredient of the FID – as is the thought content – and that the Imperfect combines both (a) the pastness of the thought event as conveyed by the narrator, i.e. with respect to his *NOW*, and (b) the anchoring of the thought content to the protagonist's *now*.

The Imperfect also reunites in this specific FID reading the three ingredients we described in section 4.1:

- The FID interpretation requires several contextual clues such as contexts bridging between the external narrative context (with temporal update) and the focusing of internal cognitive (mental and emotional) states of the protagonist(s).
- The FID also builds on conflicting temporal indications, such as deictic temporal expressions (*maintenant*) but also conflicting temporal indications, i.e. tense and temporal expressions.
- The FID refers to worlds accessible to the internal protagonist (doxastic modal base). This peculiarity coherently mirrors the third ingredient of the Imperfect, namely the extension of the domain of evaluation to worlds different from the actual world w_0 according to the speaker. By evoking the belief worlds (or a peculiar epistemic state) of the protagonist, the modal component of the Imperfect comes to the fore.
- Finally, the FID complex (containing the thought event and the thought content) remains un(der)specified as to its temporal extension (when did the internal state of the character start and when did it end?) and its relationship to the actual world w_0 of the speaker (are the doxastic worlds of the character compatible with the actual world w_0 according to the narrator?); this peculiarity points to the ingredient of indexical indeterminacy.

Apart from the *Imparfait*, we find two other tense forms in FID, the *Pluperfect* and the *Futur du Passé* (the *Conditional*) as the following illustrates:

- (38) *Chez elle, il s'assit, alluma une autre cigarette, [...] puis se rappela. Le plus terrible, c'était qu'avec lui elle avait connu et connaîtrait des heures ternes, pas adultères du tout.* (Cohen 1968: 1081, example taken from Kronning 2011: 281)
'At her house, he sat down, lit another cigarette, [...] then he remembered. The most terrible thing was that with him she had experienced and would experience dull, not adulterous hours at all.'

The *Pluperfect*, featured by the form *avait connu*, expresses anteriority whereas the *Conditional* form *connaîtrait* has a prospective orientation.

Standard grammars such as the *Grammaire Méthodique du Français*, composed by Martin Riegel, Jean-Christophe Pellat and René Rioul, emphasize the morphological relationship between the (French) *Imperfect* and the *Conditional*, as well as the *Pluperfect*, respectively.

Introducing the *Pluperfect* in chapter X. 2. 1.5, Riegel *et al.* explain that

C'est la forme composée correspondant à l'imparfait. Il situe le procès par rapport à un repère temporel passé. (Riegel *et al.* 2009: 547)

'It is the compound form corresponding to the imperfect. It situates the process in relation to a past temporal marker.'

And explaining the formation of the *Conditional* tense form, the authors highlight that

Le conditionnel présent est formé par l'adjonction de la désinence de l'imparfait (-ais, -ait, -ions, ...) à la désinence spécifique du futur (-r-): il chanterait. (Riegel *et al.* 2009: 554f)

'The present conditional is formed by adding the inflection of the imperfect (-ais, -ait, -ions, ...) to the specific inflection of the future (-r-): it would sing.'

Interestingly, the *Conditional* form may be replaced by the verbal periphrasis *aller* + *Infinitive*, which occurs exclusively in the *Imperfect* (see Riegel *et al.* 2009: 556f). This is illustrated by the following FID example, which is once again taken from *Madame Bovary*:

- (39) *Elle se répétait: "J'ai un amant ! un amant !" se délectant à cette idée ... Elle allait donc posséder enfin ces joies de l'amour, cette fièvre de bonheur dont elle avait désespéré.* (*Madame Bovary*, part II, cap. 9)
'She repeated to herself: "I have a lover! a lover!", revelling in this idea ... She was going to possess at last the joys of love, the fever of happiness she had despaired of.'

In this article, we will not be able to address the semantic peculiarities of the forms in question and determine their relationship to the properties of the Imperfect. Suffice is to say here that both forms share key contexts of occurrence with the Imperfect, especially reported speech and FID. In these contexts, they indicate anteriority or posteriority, respectively, with respect to a speech or thought event. In the same way as is the case with the Imperfect, the thought content reported by a sentence in Pluperfect or Conditional tense is attached to and anchored in a secondary origo, the internal subject's *now*.

The semantics of the Pluperfect in FID contexts can be captured by the following formalization, which accounts for the conditional sentence (*elle connaîtrait des heures ternes*) as part of example (38).

$\exists e (R < \tau(e) \wedge , R < NOW \wedge (\text{THINK}(\text{EMMA}, e) \wedge$	$\text{CONTENT } e = \{w: \exists e' \exists s (\text{post-state}(e') = s$
	$\text{EXPERIENCE}(\text{EMMA}, \text{SWEET_HOURS}, e', w) \} \wedge$
	$s(=\text{post-state}(e') \text{ o } \text{now})$
<p>THOUGHT EVENT located in the past of the narrator's <i>NOW</i>.</p>	<p>THOUGHT CONTENT anchored to the protagonist's <i>now</i></p>

To sum up, the semantic potential of the Imperfect with its three ingredients combines with the specific contextual clues of FID in order to yield the typical double-index constellation, with two contexts of evaluation: the external and the internal context, which overlap and conflate.

4.3. The semantics of quotative readings

We can now turn to the semantics of the quotative reading and highlight the similarities and differences relative to the FID reading. This is the moment to readdress our introductory example:

- (39) *Verrà anche Gianni alla festa di domani?*
'Will Gianni come as well to tomorrow's party?'

Non so. Domani usciva con Maria.
'I do not know. Tomorrow he went out (IMPF ≈ is supposed to go out) with Maria.'
(Giorgi 2010: 101)

As regards the quotative reading, we can assume that an underlying speech event of the secondary source takes place, which is rendered ('quoted') by the speaker. The underlying speech event of the secondary source is located at a reference time prior to the utterance time of the

speaker. This anteriority relation between the reference time and the utterance time corresponds to the past tense character of the Imperfect. At the same time, the propositional content of the quotative points to the secondary, i.e. the original source, i.e. to Gianni. This reference to a secondary or internal source is coherently signalled by the imperfective aspectual morphology. It should be stressed that it is the speaker who quotes the propositional content of the secondary source. For this reason, the relevant context of interpretation is always confined to the speaker's *NOW*. This fact can particularly be seen from the use of the temporal adverb *domani* ('tomorrow'). In contrast to the FID readings, the temporal information is anchored to the speaker's, i.e. the external, context: the going out event is presented as the speaker's quote of a piece of information provided by a secondary source. This going out event is said to hold on the day following the day of the speech act and its utterance time.

How can we characterize this constellation – the piece of information provided by a secondary source – in modal terms?

Conte (1998: 71) and Bazzanella (1994: 101-102, 104-105) classify the semantics of the quotative reading as “epistemico-doxastico”, while Calaresu (2004: 198) speaks of “l'uso evidenziale citativo”, thereby introducing the additional dimension of evidentiality. In her analysis, Reyes (1990: 68) juxtaposes “modalidad epistémica” and “evidencialidad”, conflating the two notions:

El imperfecto expresa aquí [...] modalidad, epistémica, y precisamente, evidencialidad (Reyes 1990: 50)
(‘The imperfect expresses here epistemic modality, and to be more precise, evidentiality’.)

This quote brings up the question of how to construe the relationship between epistemic modality and evidentiality. We cannot delve into the intricacies of this question due to lack of space. However, it is plausible to assume that the dimension of evidentiality comes into play when the focus lies on the source, i.e. the type of evidence, provided for a certain piece of information. In contrast, the notion of epistemic-doxastic modality is at stake if the accessibility of a state of affairs to an individual anchor (or subject) and – related to this – the degree to which (s)he commits himself/herself to the truth of this state of affairs is under discussion (see also Squartini 2015: 117f).

Reyes' analysis of the quotative reading points to how we can capture the presence of a secondary source in modal terms. Providing the following example:

- (40) *No sé si los voy a ver ... Hoy ...? Mañana es martes?*
'I don't know if I will see them ... Today ...? Tomorrow is Tuesday?'

Porque salían de viaje mañana. [...] Eso dijo ... me dijo ella.
'Because they are supposed to be on a trip tomorrow. [...] That's what she told... she told me.' (Reyes 1990: 50)

she paraphrases the discourse semantics of the Imperfect by highlighting that

la hablante [...] no afirma completamente que la salida será mañana, sino que remite a una fuente (que menciona más adelante: *Eso dijo ... me dijo ella*), es decir, señala, por medio del imperfecto, otro discurso, desligándose así del compromiso de afirmar plenamente. (Reyes 1990: 50)
(‘The speaker [...] does not completely affirm that they will leave tomorrow, but refers to a source (which she mentions later on: *That's what she told ... she told me*), that is, she points, by means of the imperfect, to another discourse, thus distancing/disengaging herself from the commitment of fully affirming the content.’)

The quotative reading thus emerges from the interplay of the Imperfect in combination with the explicit indication of a secondary source. The explicit contextual clue (which is the anaphoric element satisfying the interpretation of the Imperfect) constitutes the evidential component of the quotative reading. The Imperfect, on the other hand, contributes its modal potential: the tense form points to possible worlds accessible to the secondary source but not necessarily to the speaker. The speaker is therefore not able to fully commit himself/herself to the truth of the state of affairs described by the sentence. (S)he does not know whether the proposition in question (p : *porque salían mañana*) is true (in the real world w_0). This (partial) ignorance about what really is the case in w_0 mirrors the feature of indexical indeterminacy.

To sum up, although the speaker lends his voice, an additional voice – the source of information – is present. The Imperfect in interaction with contextual clues (the explicit indication of the source, the deictic temporal indication) is able to express this constellation due to its inherent semantics. We can state that also in the case of the quotative reading, the three ingredients of the Imperfect concur to yield the reading in question:

- the existence of a secondary source is explicitly marked in the discourse (anaphoric character / context-dependency);
- the proposition marked by the Imperfect signals that the propositional content corresponds to the belief state of the secondary source

- (doxastic(-epistemic) modal base) and is, therefore, only partially compatible with what the speaker takes as real world w_0 (modal feature);
- the lack of full commitment on the part of the speaker can be interpreted as the result of his/her (partial) ignorance about the truth of state of affairs under discussion, or in other worlds: about the worlds in which the propositional content of p holds (the feature of indexical indeterminacy).

A simplified formalization aims to capture the aspects we have developed in view of the representation of quotative readings.

(41) Domani usciva con Maria.

$$\exists e(\tau(e) \subset R, R < NOW \wedge (\text{SAY/BELIEVE}(\text{SECOND_SOURCE}, e)) \wedge \text{CONTENT } e = \{w: \exists e' \text{ LEAVE}(\text{MARIA}, e', w)\} \wedge \tau(e) \subset R (= \text{DOMANI}) > NOW)$$

This formalization captures the insight that the presupposed utterance event of the secondary source is a bounded event prior to the speaker's *NOW* ($\tau(e) \subset R, R < NOW$). The content of the utterance event corresponds to what the secondary source believes to be the case. So the sentence is true if in all worlds accessible to the secondary source (in all his belief worlds), there is a going out event of Maria, taking place the day after the speaker's *NOW*. This again, activates the modal ingredient of the Imperfect and explains its occurrence in quotative contexts. A more sophisticated formalization could specify as an additional truth condition that the worlds in which the proposition holds are elements of the doxastic modal base linked to the secondary source x (for all $w \in \text{MB}_{\text{dox}(x)}$).

Finally, we draw attention to the fact that the Conditional form also yields an evidential reading in a convenient context, i.e. when a source of information is specified in the discourse context. A case in point is the following example taken from Reyes (1996: 33):

(42) [*Hablé por teléfono esta mañana con el vicepresidente y con el ministro de Interior*]. Puedo asegurar [...] que no hay motivos para inquietarse. Habría, en efecto, cierto malestar en algunos generales ...

'I spoke on the phone this morning with the Vice-President and with the Minister of the Interior this morning. I can assure you that there is no reason to worry. A certain uneasiness among the generals is said to exist ...'

Neither Reyes (for Spanish) nor Calaresu (2004: 193-202) (for Italian) clearly differentiates semantically between the evidential use of the Conditional and that of the Imperfect. Calaresu, however, makes the fairly general observation that:

il verbo all'Imperfetto con valore citativo può essere sostituito con il verbo al condizionale, da solo o con il modale *dovere* – anche se nel passaggio dall'Imperfetto al Condizionale sembra smorzarsi notevolmente il valore citativo vero e proprio (Calaresu 2004: 198)

(‘the verb in the Imperfect with quotative value can be replaced by the verb in the conditional, either alone or with the modal *dovere* – even if in the shift from the Imperfect to the Conditional, the actual quotative value seems to fade considerably’).

What can be clearly asserted, however, is the fact that the evidential use of the Conditional is more conventionalized and strongly entrenched in the linguistic norm (“relativamente codificato e normativizzato”, Calaresu 2004: 199) whereas the Imperfect – as already highlighted in section 3 – is restricted to certain registers and genres, and most importantly, dependent on different contextual clues (actionality requirements, deictic temporal adverbs, typical frames evoked by lexical material). Though further research is required to disentangle the subtle semantic differences between the evidential uses of the Imperfect and the Conditional, it is safe to say that, once again, the more abstract character and – linked to that – the characteristic context-dependency of the Imperfect stand out in a conspicuous way.

5. Summary and conclusions for the analysis of the Imperfect

In this article, we argued that tense in Romance FID is not simply anchored to the external context, in contrast to what is claimed in the literature to be the case for German and English. As has been shown throughout this article, tense is linked by means of the Imperfect to the external (the speaker’s *NOW*) as well as to the internal context (the internal subject’s *now*). Due to its inherent temporal and modo-aspectual properties, the Imperfect has the capacity to realize this double-anchoring in FID contexts:

- temporally, given its nature as a past tense, the Imperfect signals that the thought content of the protagonist as conveyed by the narrator is located before the utterance time, the speaker’s *NOW*;
- based on its modo-aspectual properties, the Imperfect signals that the thought-content (i.e. the underlying proposition of the FID context) is attached to a secondary source/origo, that is to say, to the internal context of the protagonist, i.e. the protagonist’s *now*.

In quotative readings, the propositional context is exclusively anchored to the external context. However, in the case of quotative readings, the Imperfect is also compatible with the introduction of a second-

ary source, whose utterance is quoted by the speaker. In both readings, the Imperfect in interaction with appropriate contextual clues echoes a secondary source. In view of the underlying proposition of the sentence, this means that the propositional content is not instantiated relative to the actual world w_0 according to the speaker, but is evaluated with respect to worlds accessible to the secondary source, i.e. its belief worlds or epistemic state (corresponding, in modal terms, to a doxastic/epistemic modal base).

Now, how can we accommodate FID and quotative uses of the Imperfect to the overall picture and explain them based on the three 'ingredients' we identified for the Romance Imperfect?

It was argued that the properties of the Imperfect (its three 'ingredients') spring from its aspectual, i.e. its unbounded nature. This inherent unboundedness especially explains the indexical indeterminacy of the form and its anaphoric character, rendering its interpretation highly context-dependent. The indexical indeterminacy also renders the form amenable to modal readings.

We emphasized that all readings can be derived from the three ingredients of the Imperfect; however, this takes place in combination with specific and systematic contextual clues which trigger the appropriate interpretation. In other words, the underspecified semantic potential of the Imperfect (based on the relevant three ingredients) is 'saturated' by contextual information, which instantiates the relevant reading of the form. All Imperfect readings contain the three ingredients but the interplay with the context leads to the range of different readings from which some tend more towards the temporal, others more towards the modal pole in accordance with specific contextual clues.

In the progressive reading, the temporal dimension is prominent, although the modal dimension is not totally eclipsed given that neither the time interval nor the relevant worlds are specified: the relevant worlds may be the actual world or very close inertia worlds where the event under consideration reaches its culmination point or, alternatively, counterfactual worlds, in which the event is aborted and non-p holds (the Peter-was-crossing-the-street-when-a-car-hit-him case).

In non-temporal readings, the modal dimension is clearly prominent, although the temporal dimension is not completely cancelled:

In the case of the habitual reading, neither the set of the instances of the event under consideration (external quantification) is determined nor is the world variable: this is due to the fact that habituality not only refers to the actual world w_0 but also evokes possible worlds in accordance with an underlying rule-like pattern, which characterizes the typical course of events. This rule-like pattern is subject to the normalcy condition, whereby the latter acts as an ordering source.

The hypothetical readings of the Imperfect are only available in some of the Romance languages, for instance, in French, Italian, Romanian, Catalan (and marginally also in the Spanish substandard), where the IF-operator can combine with the Imperfect. In these contexts, the speaker primarily focuses on worlds different from the actual world and, as a borderline case, even on counterfactual worlds (see e.g. *If he had wings, he would fly to the moon*).

Finally, we are able to determine the place of FID and quotative readings on the continuum between temporal and modal of the scale associated with the Imperfect. In both readings, the world variable is set to worlds (only) accessible to the secondary source concerned. The propositional content of the secondary source's belief worlds is either quoted by the speaker – in the case of quotative readings – or directly accessed via the special device of FID. The FID and quotative readings are less close to the modal pole than the hypothetical readings given that the temporal dimension has its due share: both readings are characterized by the fact that the utterance event of the secondary source lies in the past of the speaker's *NOW*. As we have seen, the quotative and FID-readings show from quite a different angle how the three ingredients of the Romance Imperfect – indexical indeterminacy, anaphoric character/context-dependency and compatibility with possible worlds different from the base world w_0 – interact. These allow us to identify another area of the Imperfect, situated along the continuum between the temporal and the modal poles.

Abbreviations

C = external or utterance context; c = internal context; DRT = Discourse Representation Theory, e = event; FID = free indirect discourse; IMP = imperfective (past); *NOW* = external context of the narrator; *now* = internal context of the protagonist; p = proposition; PER = perfective (past); R = Reference point, S = sentence, w_0 = real/actual world;

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Notes

¹ See, however, Bertinetto (2003: 115f). The examples cited for FID in Italian prose of the 19th and 20th centuries include perfective past forms and would require an in-depth discussion that cannot be provided in this article. Here, my intuition is that the ('external') voice of the narrator is involved and not that of the protagonist.

² An anonymous reviewer, who identifies herself as a native speaker of Italian, points out that, without any specific contextual clues, the most spontaneous reading of (10) would be – in line with the Italian neo-standard – a 'future-in-the-past' and not a simultaneous reading (i.e. *mangiava* = *avrebbe mangiato*: 'would eat'). Though this observation does neither confirm nor disconfirm the [-speaker]-hypothesis, it makes clear that the Imperfect is not just a temporal variable that is instantiated by the tense of the main predicate but comes with its own proper semantics (this is all the more relevant here as the example lacks a temporal adjunct!).

³ As a reviewer points out, the quotative reading may even appear with the first person singular and refer to the speaker himself accordingly. An instance would be: S₁: *Domani vieni anche tu con noi al concerto?* – S₂ *Veramente domani andavo al museo con Gianni*. Here the speaker quotes himself capitalizing on a previous self-commitment as part of a politeness strategy.

⁴ A reviewer correctly points out that even more contextual material is needed to exclude a habitual reading. An introductory sentence such as *in quel momento non sapevo ancora nulla dell'incidente* ('At that moment I didn't yet know anything about the incident') would clarify the appropriate interpretation.

⁵ In her analysis, Deo (2009) identifies three ingredients of the imperfective operator (= IMPF): (i) A modal or intensional component arising from different possible/expected continuations of the relevant reference interval; (ii) The universal quantificational force associated with IMPF; and (iii) a quantificational domain acting as restriction of the universal quantifier. This domain is conceived of as a regular partition with a contextually determined partition measure. The variability of the partition-measure accounts for the range of readings realized by IMPF, with an infinitesimally small length of the measure for the progressive reading and much larger measures for habitual readings.

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