Parenthetical verbs as a challenge for discourse units

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Our paper deals with some French parenthetical verbs called *incise de discours rapporté* (IDR). Our purpose is to show how two models of discourse structure, one representing discourse units in a praxeological framework involving syntax and prosody (the macro-syntactic approach of the Groupe de Fribourg 2012), the other in a modular framework which gives primacy to hierarchical organization (the modular approach of Roulet & al. 2001), can shed light on these tricking constructions, tricking because of their seemingly ambivalence between syntax and discourse. Both models highlight that the dependency the IDR maintains with the reported clause is of discursive nature, while showing different properties of these constructions: their praxeological functioning on the one hand, and their dialogical organization at the hierarchical level on the other.

**Keywords:** discourse organization, prosody, syntax, parenthetical verbs

1. **Introduction**

Parenthetical phenomena have always constituted a challenge for the syntactic analysis as well as for the analysis of discourse, probably because they are typically an in between object questioning both syntactic and discursive organizations. An emblematic kind of parenthetical element, because of its intrinsic syntactic and discursive properties, is the *incise de discours rapporté* (IDR), that, in English, corresponds to a postposed or an interposed reporting clause:

(1) *Pour toi, c’était évident que tu allais te diriger dans la musique, dit Bruno à son frère. [p, La Gruyère, 24.07.01]*

‘As for you, it was obvious that you were going to turn to music, says Bruno to his brother’

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1. The French examples are translated in a word for word translation, even when it is not correct
(2) *allons écrit-il la chasse aux responsables ne doit pas remplacer la quête des faits* [o, <Valibel]
    'come, he writes, the hunt for the people responsible must not replace the search for facts'

Such an ambivalent status still causes controversies in recent literature. For instance, an article by Danlos and al. (2010) entitled "Analyse discursive des incises de citation" reacts to the content of an article by Bonami and Godard (2008) called "Syntaxe des incises de citation". The main purpose of this article is to use tools extracted from discourse organization models to shed light on this inherent ambivalence. We will use two different models, which might prove complementary. The first one focuses on discourse units and discourse segmentation based in syntax and the other one on the hierarchical organization of discourse units.

The first model, conceived on syntactic basis, presents a praxeological conception of discourse (for a holistic presentation see Groupe de Fribourg 2012). It aims at framing an analysis of discourse organization that integrates syntactic structures. The second model proposes a representation of discourse organization based on a principle called *negotiation* introduced in Roulet and al. (1985: 14). It considers the discourse as hierarchically organized because it is seen as the emergent product of a negotiation. In a subsequent phase (cf. Roulet and al. 2001), the discourse organization is seen as the result of interaction between very different dimensions, the hierarchical one remaining central, while being considered as one of these. Even if the two models present quite different conceptions of discourse

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in English. Their references are mentioned between square brackets. Written examples come from Frantext database (marked ‘f’) or from written press (marked ‘p’ followed by the title of the newspaper and the day). Spoken examples (marked ‘o’) come either from online corpora (PFC, Durand and al. 2002; OFROM, Avanzi and Béguelin 2012; VALIBEL, Dister and al. 2009) or from a private corpus carried out at the University of Fribourg (unifr). We borrow also some examples from other researchers (Debaissieux, etc.; the borrowing is marked ‘<’).

2. This controversy would be too long to present in detail here. In a word, Bonami and Godard (2008), within a HPSC framework (*Head-driven Phrase Structure Grammar*, Pollard and Sag 1994), claim that the link between the IDR and the (direct) quotation pertains to syntax: the structure ‘quotation + IDR’ is described as a head-adjunct structure, the reported speech being the head and the IDR being the adjunct. In HPSC, adjuncts select their head, or at least select features of the head; in that case, the adjunct (IDR) selects a quotation as its head. Danlos and al. (2010), pointing out some weaknesses in Bonami and Godard’s argumentation, assume that the link between reported speech and IDR is of semantic-discursive nature and cannot be analyzed at a syntactic level. For further explanations about this controversy, and for a survey of literature on IDRs, see Gachet (2012 and forthcoming).

3. Both phases of the model are the result of a collective research involving Antoine Auchlin, Jacques Moeschler, Marianne Schelling et Christian Rubattel for the first phase published in
and follow different goals, they are both concerned by giving clues for identifying discourse units.

Our contribution aims at showing how such models, involving a discursive point of view, give accurate clues to describe the pragma-syntactic status of the so called incises de discours rapporté.

2. Presentation of two approaches to discourse units

2.1 The Grammaire de la période

The theory stated in the Grammaire de la période (GP; Groupe de Fribourg 2012) has been developed, under the direction of Alain Berrendonner, by researchers concerned with the need of a grammar describing spoken as well as written language. This theory underlines the fact that language belongs to the category of human actions. The activity of language obeys the same rules as all other kinds of actions, and therefore needs a praxeological approach. It is conceived as consisting of building and modifying a set of representations shared by a speaker and a hearer (cf. relevance theory, Sperber and Wilson 1986). This set is called discourse memory (M). The speaker works on it by executing a sequence of ostensive acts called enunciations. These enunciations give clues about what modifications the speaker wants to bring to these shared representations (i.e. to the discourse memory). Through inferential computation carried out from these clues, the hearer can get to the modifications intended by the speaker.

Thus, a discourse can be viewed as a sequence of successive states of the discourse memory as well as a sequence of enunciations modifying M from a state to the next, as shown in Figure 1 (from Groupe de Fribourg 2012,25):

![Figure 1. Representation of discourse according to GP model](image)

Degand, Simon, Tanguy and Van Damme (this volume:§2) seem to conceive their “basic discourse units” on a similar basis, since they consider them “as the

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4. The authors of the model are alluded to in recent publications by the name « Groupe de Fribourg ».
segments speakers and hearers rely on to construct and interpret the ongoing discourse, viz. segments on the basis of which inferential processes can take place.”

2.1.1 Two levels of analysis
The model developed by the Groupe de Fribourg deals mainly with two levels of analysis, called micro-syntax (also morpho-syntax) and macro-syntax (also pragma-syntax). At the micro-syntactic level, constituents are linked together by rectional links. The notion of rection (government) is based in this model on this simple principle, borrowed from Hjelmslev (1963,33–41) and Bloomfield (1933,194–196): if X is present, then Y must be too. In other words, when the occurrence of a segment implies the occurrence of another one, there is a rectional relationship between them. For instance, the occurrence of an article involves the presence of a substantive with which it agrees in gender and number (une fête), and so does the occurrence of an adjective (fête foraine). The relationships between elements of nominal phrases or of verbal phrases are all of rectional nature, as well as those between a subject and a verb. Such a notion is also relevant to take into account the link between a subordinate clause and a matrix clause, like in (3):

(3) Si tu dis ça on te met en prison [o, PFC, 13brp1]
    ‘if you say so they will imprison you’

The minimal unit of this level is the morpheme; the maximal one is called the clause. As defined by the authors of the Grammaire de la période (GP), a clause does not correspond to the traditional grammatical notion of ‘clause’. In order to prevent any confusion, small caps are used in this article when referring to the specific notion used in GP. According to this model, all elements of a clause are rectionally connected, and a clause has no rectional relationship to the surrounding segments. In other words, a clause is entirely organized as a network of rectional relationships, without sharing any of such relationships with the surrounding sequences. It is thus called an “ilot de connexion rectionale” (islet of rectional connectedness). For instance, there is only one clause in (4)

(4) Quand il fait beau, je vais me promener
    ‘When the weather is nice, I go walking.’

whereas there are two in (5):

5. The notion of rection used in GP grammar is more extensive than the one used in the grammatical tradition (where it only accounts for the relation between a verb and its arguments), but is based on the same principle of implication.

6. The use of clause makes no problem in French, since this word has no other grammatical use.

7. For the sake of consistency, we use small caps also for the other unities of the GP model.
(5) *Il fait beau, je vais me promener*
‘The weather is nice, I go walking.’

Non-verbal constituents may also be clauses. For instance, examples (6) and (7) below consist of two clauses:

(6) *Cette maison, tout est à refaire.* [<Groupe de Fribourg 2012]
‘This house, everything has to be redone’

(7) *Tout ce que tu touches, tu as de la facilité.* [La Gruyère, 24.07.01]
‘Everything you do, you have facility.’

On the other hand, examples (8) and (9) are made of only one clause, because of the rectional link between the final verb and the initial nominal group:

(8) *Des faits, il y avait peu à dire.* [p]
‘About the facts, there was little to say’

(9) *Les angoisses avant l’examen, mais aussi la fatigue et le stress d’une longue préparation, tous les étudiants connaissent.* [p]
‘Anxiety before the exam, but also the tiredness and stress of a long preparation, all students know.’

2.1.2 *The macro-syntactic level*

In actual discourse, each clause materializes in an enunciation. The enunciation is the smallest unit of macro-syntax. Such a unit is not only the actualization of a clause, but is also made of prosodic, gestural and postural components. Enunciations are successively uttered and their mutual links are praxeological. For instance, an enunciation can work as a preparation, or a confirmation for another one called action. The examples below show a preparation-action routine:

(10) *Cette maison [preparation], tout est à refaire [action].*
‘This house, everything has to be redone.’

(11) *Tout ce que tu touches [preparation], tu as de la facilité [action].*
‘Everything you do, you have facility.’

The different functions of enunciations (preparation, confirmation, etc.) are often associated with prosodic features. For instance, a preparative enunciation is prosodically characterized by a continuative intonation (marked ‘*’).

The maximal unit of macro-syntax is called period. A period is a succession of enunciations, the last of them marked by a conclusive intonation (marked ‘@’). 8

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8. A conclusive intonation may correspond to different prosodic patterns (question, exclamation, affirmation, etc.).
In other words, a conclusive enunciation groups together with itself the previous continuative enunciations. The resulting period is a complete communicative program. The example (12) is made of four enunciations of a serial narrative routine, forming one period:

(12) (on allait à la messe)⁶ (on portait le pique-nique)⁶ (on mangeait sur l’herbe)⁶ (on rentrait le soir)⁶ [o <Debaiseux]
    ‘we went to mass / we carried the picnic / we ate outdoors / we came back in
    the evening’

The oral paragraph of Morel and Vladimirskaja (this volume) seems to present some similarities with the period, but it differs from it by being necessarily “a grouping of discourse constituents”, whereas a period can be constituted by a single enunciation. For instance, there are two periods in the following example. The first one consists of the first four enunciations and the second one consists of the last enunciation:

(13) (quand il fait froid)⁶ (les paquets de mer sur la gueule)⁶ (tout trempé là)⁶ (c’est pas gai)⁶ (mais y a aussi des des beaux jours)⁶ [o, unifr]
    ‘when it is cold / waves in the face / all wet / it is not funny / but there are
    good days too’

As appears from the last examples, prosodic clues are very important to describe links between enunciations. That means that primacy is given to oral discourse. This does not prevent the GP model to take into account written discourses. To analyze them, since punctuation cannot be considered as an exclusive, systematic or univocal transcription of prosodic features, there is no other choice than using it as a clue to oralize written discourses. In this respect, the discourse units of the GP model are ontologically different from the ones of Ferrari’s model (this volume), entirely conceived from clues given by written discourse, as well as from the ones of Morel and Vladimirskaja (this volume), merely based on oral discourse.

To sum up, if the distinction between micro- and macro-syntax seems theoretically simple (when the link between segments is rection, it is micro-syntactic, and when it is not, it is macro-syntactic), this distinction is not always easy when applied to the analysis of particular discourse items. Identifying rectional links can be difficult. Dependence may be micro- or macro-syntactic: when a segment looks dependent, it is not always clear whether it depends on another segment (which would mean that the dependence is rectional, therefore micro-syntactic), or if it depends on a state of the discourse memory (the dependence being macro-syntactic in that case).

For instance, the well-known micro or macro functioning of causal connectives — already arrived at by Rafael Lapesa (1978), and previously pointed at by
Andrés Bello at the end of the 19th century, between *causales del enunciado* and *causales de la enunciación* — can be taken into account by the model. In (14), *parce que* works at a micro-syntactic level and in (15) at a macro-syntactic one.

(14) *on n’a pas pu beaucoup assister aux conférences parce que on avait du boulot*

> [o, ofrom, unine08-jba]

‘we could not attend the lectures a lot because we had work to do’

(15) *mon père + il faisait toujours attention hein parce que moi j’avais un père qui était vraiment un père*

> [o, <Debaissieux 2002]

‘my father + he was always paying attention because I had a father who was really a father’

In the GP model, the macro-syntactic use of *parce que* in the concatenation of (*A parce que B*) is described as a connection of a discourse segment B to a previous state of the discourse memory containing the utterance of A. It does not mark a causal link directly between the contents of B and A, but between the content of B and the utterance of A: *je dis que mon père faisait toujours attention parce que j’avais un père qui était vraiment un père* (I’m saying that my father was always paying attention because I had a father who was really a father).

2.2 The modular model of discourse organization

2.2.1 General principles

To describe the discourse organization, the fundamental idea of the authors of the model presented in Roulet and al. (2001) is the independence of each level of analysis from the other ones. This is why they adopt a modular approach. The model conceives modules corresponding to basic data that can be described by elementary elements and dimensions (simple and complex). The simple dimensions are described by elements coming from the modules, and the complex ones are described by coupling elements from the different modules and from the simple dimensions. The architecture of the different modules is heterarchic, i.e. it authorizes any interrelation between the indications given by any module or dimension, which is represented in Figure 2 (<Roulet and al. 2001,51>):

There is no hierarchy and no linearity between the different modules and dimensions. The fundamental idea is that discourse organization is the result of the combination of complex organization structures. The model has to determine the rules according to which these couplings are made.

Among these different modules, the hierarchical one is conceived as central. It is considered as the result of the negotiation process underlying the production of

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9. Ferrari (this volume;§3.2.2) makes similar observations about *perché* in Italian.
any discourse. The hierarchy that is presupposed between the constituents of any discourse is due to the fact that they are viewed as materializing phases of a negotiation process. Such a process is depicted in Figure 3 (cf. Roulet and al. 2001, 57):

Figure 3 gives a representation of the idea that any speech act (questions, orders, assertions...) is viewed as a proposition (proposal), which causes a negotiation process between the protagonists. Three major phases are identified in this process: proposition, reaction and ratification. The proposition and the reaction phases can at any moment cause new negotiation processes, also combining three phases, etc. Two principles ensure the development and the end of the negotiation process: the dialogical completeness (realized by a double agreement: a reaction has to be followed by a ratification) and the monological completeness (realized when the phases proposition or reaction do not cause the starting of a new negotiation).
Since any discourse is considered as issued from a negotiation process, such a process is formally represented by its hierarchical structure. The hierarchical structure is based on the combination of three categories of discursive constituents: the discourse act which corresponds to the minimal phase of the negotiation process, the exchange which corresponds to the full negotiation process, and the move which represents any phase of the negotiation process. Formally, the discourse act consists in the minimal discourse unit, the exchange consists in a structure formed minimally by two discourse units sharing illocutionary links, and the move corresponds to a recursive constituent: any move can be composed of the three constituents of the hierarchical module (exchange, move and discourse act).

Primacy for the identification of discourse units is given to their hierarchical organization. In this respect, it differs from the Val.Es.Co’s model (this volume) which units are not identified on the basis of their hierarchical combination. It leaves room for a more complex set of units (in which we find act, subact, turn…) than in the modular approach.

2.2.2 Examples of analysis
For any discourse excerpt, the analyst has to select the relevant module and dimensions to describe its organization. For instance the topical dimension is relevant for the analysis of the following utterance:

(16) Cette maison, tout est à refaire
   'This house, everything has to be redone'

This dimension describes the organization according to which discourse objects are introduced. The constituent “la maison” would be described as the linguistic trace of a topic, which is considered as information stored in discourse memory.
The constituent “tout est à refaire” would correspond to the “propos” (comment). A relation of “aboutness” links the former to the latter.

By contrast, it is relevant to analyze the following conversational excerpt in relation to the hierarchical module and the relational dimension.

(17)  – J’aimerais vous demander quelque chose
– Oui
– Est-ce que vous connaissez ce magasin? [<Roulet and al. 2001, 171]
 ‘– I would like to ask you something
– Yes
– Do you know this shop?’

The hierarchical module allows the analyst to show that this excerpt does not correspond to a mere succession of turns. It is composed of constituents hierarchically organized. It consists in a subordinate exchange (sE) composed of M1 and M2 related to a main move (mM3): the first two constituents are used to introduce the third one.

The relational dimension specifies the relevant link between the subordinate exchange and the main move. The exchange is used as a preparatory phase of the question expressed in the main move. Such a link is defined as “préalable”.

This organization is represented in Figure 4:

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M[M1 M2]  sE (préalable) [M1 M2]
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Figure 4. Representation of the hierarchical organization of example 17

To sum up, each module or dimension sheds light on different organization forms that are involved in the interpretation process. The purpose of the approach is not to apprehend all of them, but to select the ones that are relevant to understand a particular link (for instance the link between the first two moves and the third one in the latter example), or to describe a particular structure (for instance the left dislocation in the former example).

2.2.3 The discourse act

To conceive the theoretical basis of the minimal discourse unit, Roulet and al. (2001,59 sq.) first addresses the relevance of establishing a correspondence between the maximal syntactic unit and the minimal discursive one. According to the authors, in order to define the minimal discourse unit, it is not relevant to make such a correspondence. One of the reasons they put forward is the lack of criteria defining a maximal syntactic unit. Neither the notion of “sentence” nor the
one of “utterance” is satisfactory enough to be used as basic unit. The other main reason that makes the authors refuse a possible correspondence between both units is the independence of the communicative level from the syntactic one. No clue shows that a communicative act should consist in a complete syntactic form. Therefore the authors consider that such a unit has to be defined only in relation to the textual module — the hierarchical one — and not in relation to the linguistic module — the syntactic one —, cf. Figure 2.

The minimal discourse unit is thus considered as a part of the negotiation principle that is at the basis of the hierarchical structure. In such a conception, it has to be a “cognitive” constituent and not a linguistic one. Therefore Roulet and al. (2001) uses the definition of enunciation given by Berendonner to identify the discourse act. As shown in the former section, the enunciations give clues about what modifications the speaker wants to bring to shared representations (i.e. to the discourse memory). The authors of Roulet and al. 2001 thus propose to define the discourse act as the minimal constituent that is likely to introduce a modification in the discourse memory. To identify clues of the registration process in discourse memory, the authors use an observation made in Berendonner (1990). In this article, the use of linked pronouns is considered as a clue of rectional link when the nominal phrase and the pronominal one point to the same referent.

(18)  *Mon voisin pense qu’il est malade
     ‘My neighbor thinks that he is ill’

In such an utterance the pronoun il could not be substituted with a nominal phrase:

(19)  *Mon voisin pense que le malheureux est malade
     ‘My neighbor thinks that the poor man is ill’

On the other hand, when a nominal phrase can be reintroduced in the discourse flow by another co-referring nominal phrase, the two constituents where they occur are two different discourse acts.

(20)  j’ai écrit à Jeanne pour qu’elle me donne de ses nouvelles. [<Roulet and al. 2001,68]
     ‘I wrote to Jeanne in order to have some news of her’

(21)  j’ai écrit à Jeanne pour que cette vieille amie me donne de ses nouvelles.  
     [<Roulet and al. 2001,68]
     ‘I wrote to Jeanne in order to have some news of this old friend’

In such a syntactic pattern, the possibility of using a nominal expression instead of the anaphoric pronoun elle is viewed in Berendonner (1990) as a clue of the storage of the referent in discourse memory. Thus the authors of Roulet and al. would
consider the occurrence of "cette vieille amie" in (21) as well as the one of elle in (20) as establishing a cognitive link with "Jeanne" and not a syntactic one.

Even if this definition of discourse act approximately corresponds to the definition of Berrendonner's enunciation, there is a substantial difference between them. The modular model used by Roulet allows him to admit that there is no link between the syntactic level and the textual one: instead of considering enunciation as a possible materialization of a clause, he fully emancipates the notion of clause from the one of discourse act. Three possibilities of combining clauses and discourse acts are taken into account:

a. Two discourse acts correspond to two clauses

(22) Luc est arrivé en retard à la réunion, il (le malheureux) a manqué son train
    'Luc arrived late to the meeting, he (the poor man) missed the train'

(23) Luc est arrivé en retard à la réunion, en effet, il (le malheureux) a manqué son train
    'Luc arrived late to the meeting, indeed, he (the poor man) missed the train'

b. One discourse act corresponds to one clause

(24) Mon voisin pense qu'il (que 'le malheureux') est malade
    'My neighbor thinks that he (the poor man) is ill'

(25) De ce livre, j'ai souvent entendu parler ('de cette publication)
    'About this book, I often heard (of this publication)'

c. Two discourse acts correspond to one clause.

(26) Luc est arrivé en retard à la réunion, parce qu'il (le malheureux) a manqué son train
    'Luc arrived late to the meeting, because he (the poor man) missed the train'

(27) j'ai écrit à Jeanne pour qu'elle (pour que cette vieille amie) me donne de ses nouvelles [Roulet and al. 2001, 68]
    'I wrote to Jeanne in order to have some news of her (this old friend)'.

The possibility c would not be conceivable according to Berrendonner (1990). As mentioned above, an enunciation has a clause structure. If there are two enunciations there necessarily are two clauses.

The modular approach also implies a separation between the constituent "discourse act" and the prosodic clues. This is another major difference with Berrendonner's model. We have seen that, in the GP model, the enunciation is also made of prosodic, gestural and postural components. All these components are part of different dimensions in Roulet's model. They are not involved in the
identification of the discourse act. The result is that discursive constituents are conceived as abstract entities relevant only in relation to the construction of the hierarchical structure.

3. The IDR seen by both models

3.1 The analysis of IDR according to the GP Model

3.1.1 Previous analyses
As announced above, this section aims at attempting a syntactic description of the interposed or postposed reporting clauses called “incises de discours rapporté” (IDR) in French.

An important feature of the IDR is the possible inversion of the subject — as in examples (1) and (2) — which is particularly frequent in written and formal spoken language (e.g. radio). However, IDR can also follow the normal order:

(28) *neuf kilos elle a dit pas plus* [o, PFC, 91aal1gg]
    ‘nine kilos she said no more’

In this case, they can sometimes be preceded by *que.*

(29) *il m'a même demandé qu'elle dit si j'étais vierge* [o, PFC, bgadb1lg]
    ‘he even asked me she said if I was a virgin’

The syntactic status of IDR is quite puzzling, probably because an IDR, superficially considered, looks both syntactically like a main verb governing the reported speech and enunciatively like a subsidiary parenthetical element (see Le Goffic 1993, 496–497). The result is a great number of various descriptions. For some linguists, an IDR can be analyzed as a main verb governing the segment of reported speech (Salvan 2005, de Cornulier 1978, *inter alios*), as in the following example:

(30) *je t'attraperai bien, dit-il.* [f, La Fontaine]
    ‘I’ll catch you sometime, he said’

For other authors, the same IDR is considered as governed by — or at least syntactically dependent on — the reported speech (Wilmet 2003, Van Raemdonck 2002). Both analyses are making the IDR a micro-syntactic constituent. In other analyses, IDR pertain to discourse, not to syntax (Danlos *et al.* 2010, Blanche-Benveniste 1989). Choosing one of them is not an easy task.

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10. The formal differences between IDR (*dit-il* / *il dit* / *qu’il dit*) have not been reflected in the English translation, in order to prevent them from being semantically interpreted.
3.1.2 *An analysis according to the GP model*

IDRs seem to imply the presence of a segment of reported speech. This lack of autonomy is emphasized by the (very frequent) inversion. As one may remember, the implication of a segmental occurrence is precisely the criterion defining the rection, in the sense of GP. Therefore, the dependence indicated by inversion is an important clue in favor of a micro-syntactic status.

However, there is some evidence against the micro-syntactic status of IDRs. If the reported speech and the IDR would together form a clause, this clause should be embeddable as a part of a greater clause. Yet it does not seem to be possible. As Bonami and Godard (2008) already noticed, the embedding of the structure ‘reported speech + IDR’ is not possible, whereas it is quite normal with the structure ‘anteposed reporting clause + reported speech’:

(31) *Je crois que “donne-moi la main” a lancé Paul à Marie* [<Bonami and Godard 2008]

‘I believe that “give me your hand” Paul exclaimed to Mary’

(32) *Je crois que Paul a lancé à Marie: “donne-moi la main”* [<Bonami and Godard 2008]

‘I believe that Paul exclaimed to Mary: “give me your hand”’

In addition, if IDRs were governed by reported speech, their governor would be of a very peculiar kind, since it can be any vocal manifestation:

(33) *Arrgh!* a fait Paul

‘Ouch!’ said Paul

Like all structures involving constituents as peculiar and heterogeneous as is reported speech (especially direct speech), the structure ‘reported speech + IDR’ is particularly tricky.

(34) Moi je fais pas de politiqué je lui ai dit. [o, PFC, swanplug]

‘I don’t do politics I told him’

Comparing it with a similar structure not involving reported speech might help to understand its functioning.

(35) *Toutes les peines du monde j’éprouvais.* [f, Céline]

‘All sorrows in the world I was suffering’

(36) *Au bord des larmes elle est* [o <Sabio 1992]

‘about to cry she is’

(37) *Mille fois raison tu as.* [p, Marianne, 16–22.09.2006]

‘Totally right you are’
(38) *Bouche bée, ça me laisse. [p, La Liberté, 05.08.2006]*
My jaw drop it makes me

(39) *Une bêtise, il a fait.*
A stupid thing he did

In the structure illustrated in the examples (35) to (39) as well as in (34), the initial sequence is marked by a conclusive intonation; it is followed by a verbal phrase marked by the typical intonation of postfocal segments (Mertens 1987). This verbal phrase is an appendix, according to Cresti’s terminology, used in this volume by Lombardi Vallauri. In addition, the initial sequence is in both cases semantically a potential argument for the final verb. Furthermore, (35) to (39) are not embeddable, just as the structure involving IDR isn’t.

(40) *J’étais tellement déprimé que toutes les peines du monde j’éprouvais*
I felt so depressed that all sorrows in the world I was suffering

These similarities show that the analysis of (35) to (39) will be relevant to shed some light on the IDR structure.

First, we can notice that the verb of (35) to (39) is not questionable, unlike a main verb governing a nominal phrase. From an utterance such as *Il a fait une bêtise*, there is no problem expressing a question like *A-t-il fait une bêtise?* or *Est-ce qu’il a fait une bêtise?* However, this is quite impossible with the example (39), for instance:

(41) *Une bêtise, a-t-il fait?*
A stupid thing, did he do?

(42) *Une bêtise, est-ce qu’il a fait?*
A stupid thing, did he do?

The only way to question such an utterance is to put an interrogative intonation (marked "Q") on the nominal phrase and a reduced copy of interrogative intonation (marked "Q") on the verbal phrase:

(43) *(une bêtise)Q (il a fait)Q*

Similarly, it does not seem possible to negate the verb; the utterance (44) seems quite unlikely:

(44) *Une bêtise, il n’a pas fait*
A stupid thing, he did not do

11. Flat or reduced contour underlining the lack of autonomy of the parenthetical (see Gachet and Avanzi 2011).
The only possibility of negating example (39) would be by putting a negation on the nominal phrase (for instance: aucune bêtise, il a fait [no stupidity, he did]).

These clues tend to show that in this structure, the final verbal phrase is not a main verb governing the initial nominal phrase. The syntactic features observed are more coherent with a macro-syntactic analysis: it is very likely that the two phrases do not belong to the same clause, but form two enunciations. Similarly, in a structure ‘reported speech + IDR’ like (34), reported speech and IDR are two enunciations as well.

In both structures, the postfocal verbal phrase is an enunciation labeled “confirmation”, according to the GP model. This label is used to emphasize the capacity of postfocal enunciations to increase the amount of confidence in information already available through inference. Here is an example of another kind of “confirmative enunciation”:

(45)  S1 – à côté de ça on a effectivement le phoque Netzvik vous voyez  
     S2 – ça c’est une image familière hein qu’on a le phoque [o, radio, unifr]  
     ‘S1 – besides, there is indeed the seal Netzvik you see  
     S2 – that is a familiar picture one has, the seal’

In this example, the boldfaced postfocal enunciation (le phoque) confirms that the previous utterance (ça c’est une image familière qu’on a) is referring to the seal (le phoque). This information could be inferred — but with less confidence — from the utterance of S1.

In the structures illustrated from (35) to (39), the verbal phrase endorses this confirmative function. And so does the IDR. The confirmative function is highly suitable to characterize IDRs. Like the enunciation “le phoque” in (45), the IDRs generally confirm information available through inference. IDRs confirm in particular the fact that the previous enunciation is reported speech, and in some cases the identity of its original speaker.12

Thus, if the inversion of the clitic subject gives a clue as to the dependency of IDRs to reported speech, this dependency seems to be better taken into account in a macro-syntactic conception than in a micro-syntactic one.

3.1.3 Examples attesting the macro-syntactic status of IDRs
Since, according to our hypothesis, the IDR is not governed (i.e. its dependence is not micro- but macro-syntactic), it must be shown that the occurrence of an IDR

12. It must be pointed out that the IDR may also bring new information, for instance by revealing who is actually the original speaker of the reported sequence. But even then, being given through an IDR (instead of a preposed reporting clause, for instance), this information is given as a confirmation. This confirmative function of IDRs accounts for the uselessness they have so often been accused of.
does not imply the presence of a governing segment, but merely an appropriate
state of the discourse memory. The next examples might attest to such a function-
ing. The first one exhibits what could be called a “delayed” IDR:

(46) Directeur de cabinet à Vichy, héro à Londres, il sortit de la guerre en ayant
réussi l’impossible: maintenir les institutions de la République sans faillir à
l’honneur de la France. La quadrature d’un cercle où s’étaient noyés la plupart
de ses détracteurs. Dès quarante-cinq, Chabotte fut de tous les gouvernements.
La politique, pourtant, n’était pas sa vocation. Disait-il. [F. Pennac, 1989]
‘Cabinet minister in Vichy, hero in London, he finished the war having
managed the impossible: maintaining the institutions of the Republic
without failing to keep the honor of France. That was squaring a circle where
most of his detractors had drowned. From 1945, Chabotte was a member of
all governments. Politics, however, was not Chabotte’s vocation. He said.’

In this example, the IDR is preceded by a strong punctuation mark, producing
a very particular effect. Until he/she reads the IDR, the reader understands that
the narrator, after praising Chabotte’s political achievements, considers eventual-
ly, and quite surprisingly, that politics is not his vocation. Then, after reading the
IDR, she/he reconsiders her/his interpretation, and attributes to Chabotte himself
the opinion uttered just before the IDR: Politics was not Chabotte’s vocation. At
least that is what he thought himself.

What does this example tell us about the syntax of IDRs? If the IDR were
a micro-syntactic constituent, it would be per definitionem located in the same
clause (hence would be part of the same enunciation) as the segment of re-
ported speech. So the sequence ‘direct speech + IDR’ would modify the discourse
memory at one stroke. That means that in our example, the utterance preceding the
IDR should be immediately interpreted as a quotation. Thus, the reinterpretation
effect would not occur. By contrast, the latter effect can be accurately described if
the IDR is analyzed as a macro-syntactic phenomenon. After the utterance of La
politique, pourtant, n’était pas sa vocation, the discourse memory contains (i) the
semantic content C (Chabotte’s vocation is not politics), (ii) the fact that the narrator
agrees with C, and (iii) the fact that C seems paradoxical in view of the prece-
ding states of M, recently updated with the political achievements of Chabotte. In
these conditions, the following IDR gives rise to various abductive inferences, one
of them being the re-interpretation of the utterance La politique, pourtant, n’était
pas sa vocation as Chabotte’s own words, reported in free indirect speech. The IDR
gives rise to a new state of M compatible with the idea that it is Chabotte himself,
and not the narrator, who agrees with C.

Such an analysis allows us to treat IDRs used in a “dialogical” structure in a
homogenous way. The IDR used in the following example, in spite of the dialogical
structure, gives rise to the same abductive inferences. In this dialog, two women are chatting about their husbands. One of them (S1) produces the IDR *qu’il dit* as an answer to a question by her friend (S2).

(47)  
S1 – Est-ce que ton mari a du diabète?  
S2 – Du diabète??... Non, je ne crois pas.  
S1 – Le mien, si. Il prétend que cela l’empêche de baiser. Voilà deux mois que… ceinture!  
S2 – Ah merde! Il a été voir un médecin?  
S1 – Qu’il dit. Mais c’est un copain. [f, de Buron, 1998; S1 and S2 added]  
‘S1 – Does your husband have diabetes?  
S2 – Diabetes??… No, I don’t think so.  
S1 – Mine does. He claims that it stops him from fucking. He hasn’t done it for two months!  
S2 – Ah shit! Did he see a doctor?  
S1 – So he says. But he’s a friend of his’

This IDR does not apply directly to the question asked by S2. To understand the functioning of the IDR, one has to consider that the question asked by S2 inserts the semantic content C (S1’s husband: “went to see a doctor”) into M. S2 asks S1 about the truth of C. From this question, the IDR leads to infer an assertion of C made by S1’s husband himself. The IDR makes one interpret this assertion as if it were quoted, *i.e.* reported by S1 (« *J’ai été voir un médecin*, qu’il dit). Once again, the IDR does not imply the presence of a quoted segment, but the presence in M of a quotable semantic content.

These examples concur to confirm that in spite of their lack of autonomy, IDRs point to states of M and thus, in GP model, they pertain to the macro-syntactic level of discourse organization.

3.2 The analysis of IDRs according to the Modular Approach

We have seen above how different ways of indicating a reported speech can be represented as involving constituents of micro- or macro-syntax. They are illustrated by the following constructions:

(48)  
*Il dit qu’il a été voir un médecin.*  
‘He says that he went to see a doctor’

(49)  
*Il a été voir un médecin, dit-il*  
‘He went to see a doctor, he said’

(50)  
*Il a été voir un médecin, il dit*  
‘He went to see a doctor, he said’
Among these constructions, only the first one is a micro-syntactic realization. As previously shown, all the others involve two clauses: the IDR (dit-il, il dit, qu’il dit) is dependent but at a praxeological level to the reported clause (RC) “Il a été voir un médecin”. In the GP model, the utterance of the IDR corresponds to a prosodic pattern of dependency labeled “confirmation”. The analysis we can make using the tools of the modular approach will allow us to take the notion of confirmation further. Instead of seeing it just as a way to confirm the referent of the speaker of an enunciation that could be inferred by contextual clues, we will see that IDR also has the capacity, in some cases, to confirm the state of affairs (SoA) in itself. Our analysis will show that such a notion of confirmation is conceivable in relation to one particular discursive routine, which can be identified by means of the hierarchical dimension, as a projection of a dialogical structure into a monological one.

3.2.1 The notion of confirmation conveyed by the IDRs
There is a paradigm of parenthetical constituents conveying evidential meaning that allow the speaker to confirm a state of affairs that she/he has just previously uttered.

(53) À dire du mal ainsi, médire, mépriser, menacer, ça leur faisait du bien, faut croire. [f, Céline <Rossari 2012].
“To criticize like that, to despise, to threaten, it made them feel good, one would believe”

Without faut croire, the state of affairs [criticizing was beneficial to them] is introduced as a fact. With the parenthetical evidential, it is reinterpreted as an assumption by the speaker. By confirming it, the parenthetical expression gives ipso facto the SoA a conjectural interpretation. In such a position other evidential expressions can occur, such as (il) parait, on dirait, which all share this confirmative value, by means of different evidential meanings, as shown in Rossari (2012): faut croire signals that confirmation is due to an inference, on dirait to a vague perception and parait to a weak hearsay:

(54) À dire du mal ainsi, médire, mépriser, menacer, ça leur faisait du bien, on dirait/parait.
“To criticize like that, to despise, to threaten, it made them feel good, one would believe, one would say”
One can notice that some IDR can produce similar effects:

(55) À dire du mal ainsi, médire, mépriser, menacer, ça leur faisait du bien, il dit/qu’il dit/c’est ce qu’il dit.
    ‘To criticize like that, to despise, to threaten, it made them feel good, he /he says/that he says/it’s what he says’

The more the IDR is emphasized, the more the SoA is interpreted as dubious. But, instead of making one interpret the SoA as an assumption potentially endorsed by the speaker, as the evidential parenthetical does, the IDR makes one interpret it as a pure speculation that the speaker could be tempted not to endorse. The speaker can deny it in his/her subsequent discourse. With the evidential parenthetical, it is not possible for her/him to deny it.

(56) À dire du mal ainsi, médire, mépriser, menacer, ça leur faisait du bien, faut croire/on dirait/paraît, ??mais c’est faux, ça ne leur faisait pas de bien.
    ‘To criticize like that, to despise, to threaten, it made them feel good, one would believe, one would say, but it is wrong, it did not make them feel good’

(57) À dire du mal ainsi, médire, mépriser, menacer, ça leur faisait du bien, il dit/qu’il dit/c’est ce qu’il dit, mais c’est faux, ça ne leur faisait pas de bien.
    ‘To criticize like that, to despise, to threaten, it made them feel good, he /he says/that he says/it’s what he says but it is wrong, it did not make them feel good’

So, both IDRs and evidential parentheticals in this context jeopardize the truth-value of the state of affairs. But they give rise to this effect differently: the IDR implies a disjunction between the speaker of the RC and the one of the IDR. It leads to an interpretation by default according to which the speaker of the IDR would not endorse the RC. Such an interpretation can even cast doubt about the truth-value of the SoA. Since this source is not the speaker himself/herself, if she/he insists on this difference by the way he/she utters the IDR, it conveys an effect of doubt on the SoA. For instance, when qu’il dit or à ce qu’il dit are uttered with one particular prosody they can convey the idea that the speaker is reluctant to give a truth-value to the SoA.

3.2.2 Discourse structure of the construction [RC, IDR]
The effects that have been highlighted above can be precisely represented with the tools of the MA. They are due to the link that characterizes the relationship between IDR and RC. According to the hierarchical module, there are two types of discursive structures: the dialogical ones — the constituents forming an exchange — and the monological ones — the constituents forming a move. The links
between the constituents are different in an exchange and in a move. In the latter case, some constituents are subordinated to others. The subordinate constituents can be suppressed without having an impact on the coherence of the discourse. In the former case, the constituents are interdependent. That means that their interpretation has no sense if they are not put in relation to each other. For instance, an answer is structurally linked to the question it reacts to and vice versa. In the case of our IDR, we would like to show that the effect they can have on the RC in monological structures results from the fact that they establish an interdependent relationship with the RC, as the one involved between two constituents of an exchange.

In Rossari (2012) we have shown that the link between evidential parenthetical and the main clause is not derived from the erosion of a syntactic link, but from a projection of their dialogical use. Thus, in a construction such as (53), *faut croire* has the same function as in the following dialogical construction:

\[(58) \quad M1 \rightarrow \text{À dire du mal ainsi, médire, mépriser, menacer, ça leur faisait du bien?} \]\n\[M2 \rightarrow \text{Faut croire.} \]

‘M1 – To criticize like that, to despise, to threaten, did it make them feel good?\]
\[M2 – One would believe’\]

In this structure, *faut croire* is used to answer a confirmation request. The dialogical link consists in confirmation request — answer. *Faut croire* could not be used to answer a simple yes/no question. For instance, if one speaker is in Paris (S1) and the other in Sydney (S2), it would not be natural for S2 to use *faut croire* to answer a question about the weather in Sydney:

\[(59) \quad S1 \rightarrow \text{Est-ce qu’il fait beau à Sidney?} \]
\[S2 \rightarrow \text{Faut croire} \]

In such a construction, the confirmation request casts doubt on the SoA expressed in move1, namely “it made them feel good to speak ill…” This confirmative relationship is also involved in the monological structure (53). The evidential parenthetical is linked to the host clause by means of a dialogical relation, but since there is only one speaker who endorses both utterances, the dialogical link seems to be cancelled. By conveying such a confirmative relationship, the evidential parenthetical casts doubt on the SoA expressed in the previous utterance, which is retrospectively interpreted as a SoA that has to be confirmed. Therefore it is no more interpreted as a fact but as a conjecture.

Our hypothesis is that IDR can endorse the same function. As the evidential parenthetical, they can be used in a dialogical structure to answer a confirmation request:
(60)  M1 – À dire du mal ainsi, médire, mépriser, menacer, ça leur faisait du bien?
M2 – Qu’il dit.
‘M1 – To criticize like that, to despise, to threaten, does it made them feel
good?
M2 – He says’

And, as we have seen above, they can be used in a monological structure to cast
doubt on the SoA expressed in the previous utterance, cf. (57). But the production
of such an effect is not systematic, as in the case of evidential parentheticals. The
contribution of the IDR can be restricted to an indication of source. Two poles can
be parted:

Left pole: The contribution of IDR is limited to specifying the source of the RC.
Right pole: The contribution of IDR casts doubt on the SoA expressed in the RC.

Such a contribution takes place when the IDR can be interpreted as conveying
a dialogical confirmation.

The more the dialogical functioning is emphasized, the more the IDR allows
the speaker to question the truth-value of the RC. The following configurations
represent the different scales of this crescendo going from the left to right pole:

(61)  Il est, dit-il, désolé. [uttered with a neutral prosody]
‘He is, he says, sorry.’

(62)  Il est désolé, dit-il.
‘He is sorry, he says.’

(63)  Il est désolé, il dit/qu’il dit.
‘He is sorry, he says.’

(64)  Il est désolé, c’est ce qu’il dit.
‘He is sorry, that’s what he says.’

(65)  M1 – Il est désolé.
M2 – Dit-il/Il dit/Qu’il dit/C’est ce qu’il dit.
‘M1 – He is sorry.
M2 – He says /that’s what he says.’

Between (61) and (64), according to the IDR selected and its prosody, the dialogi-
cal functioning is made more or less visible.

The scale between these two poles allows one to take into account that IDR can
be used where there is no doubt about the source of the RC, as in the following
discourse excerpt:
(66) Cécile eut un soupir, et elle dit à Christophe:
   – Oui… c’est mon frère.
Christophe comprit:
   – Ah ! Dit-il… je sais… moi aussi, j’en ai un…
Cécile lui prit la main, avec une commiseration affectueuse:
   – Vous aussi?
   – Oui, fit-il… [f, Rolland]
‘Cecile sighed, and she said to Christophe
   – Yes, he is my brother
Christophe understood:
   – Ah, he said, I know… me too, I have one…
Cecile took his hand with affectionate commiseration :
   – You too?
   – Yes, he said.’

The source of “ah” and “oui” is clearly indicated by the typography: the use of the
dash cancels any ambiguity about it. Thus, if the contribution of the IDR is
restricted to specifying the source, it results in being over-informative. In the previ-
ous example, dit-il and fit-il occur in a context where the protagonist Cecile does
not know how the protagonist Christophe will react to the news “C’est mon frère”.
The use of the IDR allows the speaker (the narrator) to emphasize that Christophe
said “ah” and “oui”. They confirm the fact that those words have really been uttered.
The confirmative link they can convey allows us to characterize their contribution
in such contexts where the evidential function of the IDR is less relevant.

Such a way of seeing the contribution of the IDR also makes appear their macro-
syntactic status: by characterizing them as the result of dialogical routine, they
pertain to an exchange structure whose links between constituents can only be
relevant at a cognitive level.

4. Synthesis

Both approaches make the macro-syntactic status of IDR s clear. Both show that
even if they consist of enunciations, they maintain a link of dependency with
the RC, labeled “confirmation”. They differ in relation to the way they can repres-
ent this discursive dependency. This dependency is conceived as a projection of a
praxeological structure in GP model, whereas, in MA model, it is the result of the
projection of an exchange structure into a move structure.
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