Describing the Unobserved and Other Essays

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Unspeakable Sentences after *Unspeakable Sentences*

By Ann Banfield

Edited with Introduction and Notes
By Sylvie Patron

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE

An exchange overheard between two English professors in a major American university:

—That sounds like free indirect style.
—Yeah? What's that?
—I don't really know.

Such uncertainty about a literary phenomenon long the subject of linguistic research will no doubt surprise. The identification and description of the style I call, modifying Otto Jespersen (1924), "represented speech and thought," was one of the earliest discoveries in the area of the language arts to come out of the early nineteenth-century philology or comparative grammar, the first modern linguistics. The first treatments of represented speech and thought appeared between the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century in the works of such comparative linguists as Theodor Kalepky, Eugen Lerch, Gertraud Lerch, Charles Bally, student of Ferdinand de Saussure, Marguerite Lips and Jespersen.[1] Work on the style continued, especially by scholars inheriting the Germanic philological tradition, such as Leo Spitzer, Stephen Ullmann, Käte Hamburger, Roy Pascal, and Dorrit Cohn.

The notion of *linguistic argumentation* at the center of Noam Chomsky's generative program enabled the account of represented speech and thought to go beyond descriptive adequacy to offer a unified theory/explanation of the style. Crucial to this step was linguistic, specifically syntactic evidence. "Evidence" is distinguished from "data", the given. Evidence is always for something, as I argued (Banfield [1982] 2014a: 8), citing Imre Lakatos (1970: 123): "[…] the only relevant evidence is the evidence anticipated by a theory […]". I.e., evidence is not arrived at inductively, unlike data. What was revolutionary in Chomsky's notion of linguistic evidence was that it included negative evidence in

[1] See Ann Banfield (2014b), where I argue Ferdinand Brunetière's 1883 *Le Roman Naturaliste*, which predates Kalepky, Bally and Etienne Lorck, presents examples of represented speech and thought to illustrate "naturalist" or "impressionist" writing.

syntax, not just those utterances accepted as well-formed but those rejected by native speakers as ill-formed. True, they were based on speakers' intuitions, about which there was not always consensus, but in the crucial cases, there was little disagreement about them. Accompanying this notion was the requirement that hypotheses be precise and formal. This allowed them to be tested. As in the hard sciences, sometimes the identification of the crucial evidence was as much a discovery as the theory being tested.

Unfortunately, the results of the long history of the style and the considerable body of work on it have not been sufficiently grasped in literary studies, especially in the Anglophone world. The vagueness about what constitutes the style cited above is not an isolated case. Instead of building on previous work, many commentators write as if the phenomenon had yet to be descriptively characterized or theoretically analyzed. There are scant examples of it given and rarely any mention of its formal markers. Two essays on Jane Austen are symptomatic. Frances Ferguson (2000) mistakenly identifies its features. Her single purported example, not from Austen but invented, lacks the past tense of canonic represented thought: instead of Ferguson's "God is coming, and is she pissed" (*ibid*.: 167), one should have "God was (now) coming, and was she pissed". And Ferguson claims the style in French appears "in the exclusively written form of *récit*" (*ibid*.: 166; see also 176). But the aorist or *passé simple* marks a sentence as *not* representing point-of-view. I.e., the aorist is not a tense of represented thought, i.e., not a tense co-temporal with *now*. Instead, a marker of it for French readers is its peculiar use of the *imparfait*, which can co-occur with a present time deictic.[2]

[2] Ferguson would have done better to furnish as her example the sentence from *Emma* she quotes in another context and to continue the passage, making it the basis of a precise commentary. The complete passage, beginning with the sentence Ferguson cites (2000: 178), is:

> Could a linguist, could a grammarian, could even a mathematician have seen what she did, have witnessed their appearance together, and heard their history of it, without feeling that circumstances had been at work to make them peculiarly interesting to each other?—How much more must an imaginist, like herself, be on fire with speculation and foresight!—especially with such a ground-work of anticipation as her mind had already made. (Jane Austen, *Emma*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, [1816] 2003, p. 263)

The direct question in the past, interpreted as Emma's question about a present event, the exclamation attributed to Emma, the use of the reflexive pronoun

In the second essay, Casey Finch and Peter Bowen (1990) do give some examples from Austen, but without identifying any of the style's linguistic properties. Consequently, they fail to make any precise connections between the two notions that their subtitle—"Gossip and the Free Indirect Style"—promises to clarify. This is a missed opportunity. The examples given are all from the perspective of a single character/subject—i.e., grammatically singular. The principle of 1 E/1 SELF (see Banfield [1982] 2014a: 93) does not, however, exclude a plural SELF, for pronouns have plural forms. An example is the following:

> The colliery people felt as if this catastrophe had happened directly to themselves, indeed they were more shocked and frightened than if their own men had been killed. Such a tragedy in Shortlands, the high home of the district! (D. H. Lawrence, *Women in Love*, London: William Heinemann, [1920] 1971, p.182, quoted in Banfield [1982] 2014a: 17)

The reflexive *themselves* where one would otherwise expect *them* marks the plural pronouns as the SELF, a kind of class consciousness. The exclamation in the second sentence attributable to a third person, a mark of the style, is thus attributed to "the colliery people".

Lawrence's exploitation of a plural point of view was anticipated in the Sicilian novel, as in Vitaliano Brancati's *The Lost Years* (*Gli anni perduti*), capturing not just the many individuals of a Sicilian town but the multiple categories of the populace:

> But the poets did not complain. Those windy mornings the public gardens of Natàca were one continuous, enjoyable, beflustered burst of laughter. In this cheery sound they moved like atoms on the breath in the song of a happy young girl. They made their way along the avenues grabbing here at a treetrunk, there at a marble pillar. Laughter buffeted them to right and to left, they were filled and inflated with it. Changing suddenly to a wilder note, it shoved them roughly onto a bench. But no matter—what a joke! A little hard on the backside perhaps, but still a joke. (Vitaliano Brancati, *The Lost Years*, trans. Patrick Creagh, London: HarperCollins, 1992, p. 195)

It was no doubt via the Sicilian Giovanni Verga's *I Malavoglia* that Brancati developed his mastery of this use of represented thought and particularly represented speech. Spitzer's (1956) classic study of Verga's style identifies its originality with its exploitation of a plural SELF, calling

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herself, which would appear as the non-reflexive *her* if not understood from Emma's point of view, are all syntactic marks of represented thought. Certainly the precision of a linguist or grammarian is called for here.

it "choral speech".[3] Using the term coined by Lorck (1921), Spitzer examines "examples of *erlebte Rede*", "These, too, are examples of *erlebte Rede*, with the difference that they lack a verb indicating the speech or thought of certain characters. From the beginning, Verga immerses us in the local atmosphere and creates the illusion of us being in the presence of the speech of a collective entity, a 'chorus'" (*ibid*.: 40, trans. Julia Nelsen).

Now, fifty years later, there is analytical work built on appropriate evidence arguing for something specific. Franco Moretti (2005), citing Spitzer, finds in the contrast between this choral use and one, if I read him correctly, which tends toward represented thought—as opposed to speech—and toward a singular SELF, "the fault line—which is, again, geographic and morphological at once—[which] runs between different forms of symbolic hegemony in *fin-de-siècle* Europe: in the West, the silent, interiorized *doxa* of large nation-states, arising almost impersonally from newspapers, books, and an anonymous public opinion; in the South, the noisy, *multi*-personal 'chorus' (Leo Spitzer) of the small village of *I Malavoglia* [...]" (*ibid*.: 86).

Is Highbury's point of view in Austen's *Emma* largely presented as a compilation of many similar but singular viewpoints, or is it often, as in the Sicilian example, presented as a chorus?[4] This interesting question

[3] Lawrence studied, translated "and also wrote several critical essays on Verga", Simonetta de Filippis (2016: 278) writes, adding that "what Lawrence intended to do was to create a language 'rooted in dialect as Verga's Italian was rooted in Sicilian peasant speech, but without being in any literal sense a transcript of any actual dialect" (*ibid*.: 285; the quotation is taken from Hyde 1981: 39). In other words, Lawrence intuitively grasped Verga's use of represented speech, not only its exploitation of a plural SELF, but its representing dialect without being a transcription of it. See Banfield ([1982] 2014a: 250-251).

[4] Finch and Bowen do give one example of a plural SELF in the second sentence of this passage from *Emma*:

> Miss Bates being present, it [the news of Emma and Mr Knightley's engagement] passed, of course, to Mrs Cole, Mrs Perry, and Mrs Elton, immediately afterwards. It was no more than the principals were prepared for; they had calculated from the time of its being known at Randall's, how soon it would be over Highbury; and were thinking of themselves, as the evening wonder in many a family circle, with *great* sagacity. (*Emma*, in *The Novels of Jane Austen*, vol. 4, London: Oxford University Press, [1816] 1932-1934, p. 468, quoted in Finch and Bowen 1990: 1)

Here the only explicit syntactic indicator of the style is the italicized *great* indicating contrastive stress interpretable as the third person's emphasis (see Banfield [1982] 2014a: 90), indicative that *they* can be interpreted as a SELF or

Finch and Bowen neither ask nor answer.

At the opposite end of the spectrum from the paucity of examples and detailed commentary is the promise of big data—from *horror pleni* to *horror vacui*. Julian Brooke, Adam Hammond, and Graeme Hirst (2016) claim, in their title, to read modernism with machines. Their assertion that "modernist debates about FID [free indirect discourse], which […] have been conducted in a less-than-rigorous manner, propelled by intuition and driven entirely by qualitative impressions" (*ibid*.: 1-2) is based on a bibliography lacking any of the rigorous linguistic work on the style. I first continue discussing possible developments of this work, and return later to their practice of simply ignoring it and "starting over", not only pre-theoretically, but also with no reference to the, one might suppose, "small data" that a century of work on the style has not only uncovered, but to a great extent analyzed.

Even in recent linguistic treatments of represented speech and thought, there is a restricted range of examples given and the sense that the style remains something impressionistic, without recognizable formal properties and entirely un-theorized. Yael Sharvit (2008) can still speak of the "puzzle of free indirect discourse", claiming "the problem it presents is that of finding a theory that can accommodate and account for such a hybrid" (*ibid*.: 353), meaning its seeming to share features of both direct and indirect speech, the obvious observation that begins most discussions of the style and underlies Bally's terminology, and so can conclude "that we do not know what kind of 'beast' FID is (or, more precisely, that current standard theoretical tools are not equipped to account for FID or even describe it)" (*ibid*.: 355). She mistakenly asserts that "Very little has been said about the ways in which FID is unique, and resembles neither" (*ibid*.: 392) and "there are still many issues concerning FID that are poorly understood. One of them is the behavior of the (optional) parenthetical" (*ibid*.: 393). But Banfield (1973) and Tanya Reinhart (1975) both analyze the parenthetical with formal generative treatments. Subsequently, Banfield ([1982] 2014a), the latter referred to but apparently not understood, addresses the features of the style unshared with neither direct nor indirect speech and argued for its quite distinct status.

Nowhere is the paucity of evidence and argumentation more apparent than when it comes to deciding the question of whether represented speech and thought is accurately analyzed as a combination of a narrator's and a subject/character's voice, Roy Pascal's "dual voice" position. The restriction of the theoretical construct "narrator" to a grammatically

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single, but not singular, point of view. (The reflexive *themselves* is here an anaphor with an antecedent, so not peculiar to represented speech and thought.)

explicit first person, one not addressing a second person, as in communication, and the possibility that a text may lack a narrator are among the more controversial claims of Banfield (1973 and [1982] 2014a), developing the positions of Émile Benveniste ([1959] 1966, 1990), Hamburger ([1957, 1968] 1973, 1993) and S.-Y. Kuroda ([1973] 2014). The narrator remains an unquestioned assumption of so many of these commentators. By now, the burden of proof should be on those who hold that every text has a narrator. Yet rarely are any counter-arguments given, supported by evidence, against the absence of a narrator.[5]

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[5] Philippe Schlenker (2004) writes that in represented thought "another person's thoughts are articulated through the speaker's mouth" (*ibid*.: 280) and that this "initial observation that 'someone appears to be speaking through the narrator's mouth' is more than a mere metaphor" (*ibid*.: 285). His justification is a distinction between "the Context of Utterance" and "the Context of Thought"—"close to the spirit of Banfield (1982)" (*ibid*.: 285). But that work explicitly distinguishes the notion of TEXT from utterance or communication. The notions of "narrator" and "narrator's mouth" are rather simply absent from represented thought—there is not empirical evidence of them in a TEXT of represented thought. Nor is the SELF empirically equivalent to the "Context of Thought". And Schlenker's claim that he departs from that "spirit" in holding that "tenses and pronouns should behave differently from other indexicals" (*ibid*.: 285-286) takes no account of the distinction between "E-level" vs. "TEXT-level" shifters in Banfield (1998), nonetheless cited in his bibliography.

Edit Doron (1991) is rare in proposing purported evidence for the dual voice, maintaining that (a) below does not contain the information that the referent of Robin, a gender-neutral name, is female, since "the first person is not marked for gender". By contrast, a third-person pronoun is, so (b) "is more informative" (*ibid*.: 59).

(a) Robin thought: "I am tired".

(b) She was tired, thought Robin.

But (b) has a reading in which "she" and "Robin" have disjoint reference, so (b) is no more informative than (a). In Doron's argument, the gender information "clearly emanates from […] the narrator" (*ibid*.: 59-60). But doesn't the author provide this information?

Via a set of logical leaps, Doron concludes this "settles a debate in the poetics literature about whether in FID, consciousness is represented unmediated by the narrator (as Banfield for example believes), or whether the voice of the narrator blends in with that of the subject of consciousness" (*ibid*.: 60). But Doron's conclusion—that the narrator's voice emanates from the "discourse situation"—only states the dual voice position, but does nothing to confirm it.

In fact, a single example seldom "settles" a debate. It might present one piece

Instead of drawing new insights from what has thus far been discovered about represented speech and thought, accounts such as these begin all over again, in ignorance of what has gone before, or fixate on only a few of the many interrelated positions presented in Banfield ([1982] 2014a). But the theory of unspeakable sentences is not restricted to the possible absence of a narrator or even to a theory of represented speech and thought. It is an account of narrative style and, in particular, of the co-existence of sentences representing consciousness and sentences of pure narration in what I call "narrative fiction" with many possible ramifications. By contrast, where these ramifications are taken seriously, as in the case of Moretti's reflections on the use of a plural Self, interesting hypotheses emerge.

One case where both types of unspeakable sentences are taken into account leads to an original reading of Jane Austen. Entertaining the absence of a narrator, Miller (2003) uncovers the "secret" of Austen's manipulation of the registers of narrative style and, in particular, the subtle but distinct difference between the sentence of represented thought and the sentence of narration, the latter sentence without a narrator (except in "first person narration"). It is the sentence of narration which creates the "facts" of the fiction (see Banfield [1982] 2014a: 216ff.). The syntactic difference between narration and the representation of (third-person) subjectivity may be very marked and unambiguous, or there may be superficial similarity between the two types of sentence and so ambiguity. But how a reader interprets a sentence ambiguous between the two readings can have different empirical consequences for an understanding of the text. Since only the sentences of narration invariably create the fictional facts, a sentence interpretable as a representation of a character's point of view can misrepresent the fictional facts. As an illustration, I provide the following passage from Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*:

> It was at that moment (Rezia had gone shopping) that the great revelation took place. A voice spoke from behind the screen. Evans was speaking. The dead were with him.
>
> "Evans, Evans!" he cried.
>
> Mr Smith was talking aloud to himself, Agnes the servant girl cried to Mrs Filmer in the kitchen. (*Mrs Dalloway*, London: Penguin Books, "Penguin Popular Classics", [1925] 1996, p. 103)

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of evidence for one side. Here that "evidence" depends on the claim the first person provides no information as to its gender. There are, however, languages in which a first person agrees in gender with adjectives modifying it: in French, *je suis fatigué[e]* are both possible.

The first sentence, with its deictic time adverbial "that moment", represents the consciousness of the shell-shocked war veteran Septimus Warren Smith. Out of context, the second sentence is ambiguous between represented thought or pure narration. But the following sentence, with its antecedentless past progressive, indicates it continues in Septimus' point of view. Without the syntactic and semantic clues (the latter provided in the last sentence), a reader might mistakenly conclude that the voice of Septimus' dead fellow soldier Evans did speak and that *Mrs Dalloway* was a ghost story.

Returning to Miller, his detective work finds, instead of the person of a narrator or the presence of the author, the traces in the novels of what he calls "Austen Style": "The significance of free indirect style for Austen Style is not that it attenuates the stark opposition between character and narration, much less abandons it, but that it performs this opposition *at ostentatiously close quarters*" (Miller 2003: 59). Miller locates this opposition in the invisible but real difference between two seemingly identical sentences, one that ends book II, chapter 2 and the other that begins book II, chapter 3 (see *ibid*.: 61-63). The sentence is "Emma could not forgive her". In its first appearance, it is a sentence of Emma's represented thought; in the second, it is narration. As Miller puts it,

> During the chapter break, what has been the indirect and impersonal *performance* of Emma's consciousness has become the mere matter-of-fact *notation* of that thought. On its first occurrence, "Emma could not forgive her" mimics Emma's conscious if unreflective mood. By the time of the second, without a word being altered, the sentence has been distilled into what Ann Banfield calls a "fact of the fiction". (*Ibid*.: 64-65).

For a representation of subjectivity, unlike in the case of Septimus Warren Smith's hallucination, can turn out to be in conformity with a fact of the fiction.

Along the lines of analyses like Moretti's and Miller's, the essays gathered in this volume attempt to follow certain of the ramifications of *Unspeakable Sentences* in new directions. "Linguistic Competence and Literary Theory" (1983) and "L'Écriture et le Non-Dit" (1991) address some alternative accounts of point of view and demonstrate the role of syntactic vs., for instance, vaguer pragmatic evidence in isolating an empirical testable notion of linguistic subjectivity, the first by examining in detail the claim of Susumu Kuno and Etsuko Kaburaki (1977) that there exists a syntactically isolatable category of "empathy". The second addresses Oswald Ducrot's bakhtinian account of point of view. "*Écriture*, Narration and the Grammar of the French" (1985) gives a grammatical

content to the French word in the title, which had become a term of Anglo-American literary criticism whose exact sense remained unclear. In other of the essays, I have also tried to follow up on ideas in *Unspeakable Sentences.* In "Grammar and Memory" (1985), I place the habitual aspect of the past within the theory of tenses presented in *Unspeakable Sentences*.[6] While the French *passé simple* "counts" past events as discrete units and the *imparfait* of free indirect style, co-temporal with *now*, represents a "now-in-the-past", a verb in the habitual past—one aspect of the French *imparfait*—is "countable", because it refers to a quantifiable plurality of past events, but, unlike the *passé simple*, it does not count this plurality. The distinction allows the habitual past to be connected to Marcel Proust's voluntary memory or to the *"habitude éclairée par la mémoire"* of Henri Bergson, and the *imparfait* of represented speech and thought, about which Proust wrote, to proustian involuntary memory.

Finally, "Describing the Unobserved: Events Grouped Around an Empty Center" (1987) and "The Name of the Subject: the 'Il'" (1998) treat some philosophical implications of the linguistic representation of subjectivity—in particular the relation between the third person pronoun of represented speech and thought, which is not an anaphor, and the notion of the philosophical subject.

I hope these essays will provide the basis for further analyses and insights into narrative style. The initial steps along such paths seem to me to have been taken, and further research can build on, or present alternatives to, this initial theory.

For a perhaps unorthodox conclusion, I feel it necessary to criticize at

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[6] In this theory, the historical present is treated, like the *passé simple*, as a non-deictic narrative tense (see Banfield [1982] 2014a: 165). By contrast, Schlenker analyses it as deictic, giving as an example, "Fifty-eight years ago to this day, on January 22nd, 1944, just as the Americans *are* about to invade Europe, the Germans *attack* Vercors" (2004: 298). My judgment is that this sentence is questionable at best. But here is a case where more than one example is called for. The examples below strike me as less acceptable:

?Fifty-eight years ago, just as the Americans are about to invade Europe, the Germans attack Vercors.

*Yesterday, just as the president is about to propose a Muslim ban, the State Supreme court issues an injunction.

*Long/years ago, Germany attacks France.

*The day before yesterday, Germany attacks France.

greater length an alternative research direction mentioned earlier, which is to simply ignore the theoretical work and empirical evidence which has been completed up to this time, and "start over" in purely empiricist (not empirical) fashion, hoping that somehow out of a mass of newly constructed and gathered data, a better theory will somehow "shape itself", like the smoke from Aladdin's lamp, into an analysis that surpasses the conscious efforts of scholars. This direction goes under the rubric of "big data".

"Rather than beginning from anecdotal or a priori definitions of the device", Brooke, Hammond, and Hirst's "approach works inductively" to develop "a model of lexical stylistic variation derived by applying state-of-the-art computational techniques in a corpus of Project Gutenberg texts" (2016: 1-2). But their initial questions—"Is FID stylistically distinguishable from direct discourse and narration? If so, does it occupy a middle position between the two, between the stylistic extremes of the narrator's language and that of individual characters?" (*ibid*.: 2)—start with often observationally inadequate assumptions that form so many pre-theoretical conceptions of the style and ignore those that offer answers. And they conclude, in a circular fashion, with the same assumptions, no more rigorously stated: "[…] we confirm that free indirect discourse does, at a stylistic level, reflect a mixture of narration and direct speech" (*ibid*.: 1). They never refer to the exact nature of this mixture set out and defended in Banfield ([1982] 2014a).

The goal of "quantitative insight" (Brooke, Hammond, and Hirst 2016: 2) rather than "qualitative impressions" (or should it rather be "quantitative impressions" and "qualitative insight"?), Brooke, Hammond, and Hirst acknowledge, meets "the nature of free indirect discourse" (*ibid*.: 1), i.e., its resistance to the isolation of recognizably quantifiable units. Hence, they resort to an "annotation methodology for tagging types of discourse" that "falls somewhere between traditional annotation strategies involving a small number of expert annotators and modern crowdsourcing techniques", i.e., "three cohorts of roughly 160 students each" (*ibid*.: 4-5). Every one of these ingredients involves linguistically uninformed and arbitrary intuitions about language structure. The momentary judgments of these students provide the quantifiable units: "if a majority of annotators tagged" an excerpt as represented speech and thought, this "standard approach", Brooke, Hammond and Hirst write, "can result in highly reliable gold standards even when the quality of annotators or the difficultly of task (as in our case) results in only moderate annotator agreement" (*ibid*.: 5). They do not further explicate the nature of this alchemy, transforming dross into gold.

Aiming for "the creation of high-coverage stylistic lexicons", the judgments identify "six stylistic aspects" of represented speech and thought, Objective, Abstract, Literary, Colloquial, Concrete and Subjective (*ibid*.: 6). A glance suffices to see how "less-than-rigorous" (*ibid*.: 1) these categories are, each moreover with only three examples provided. By contrast, linguistic accounts of represented speech and thought missing from the bibliography do provide precise markers of the style. Compare Brooke, Hammond, and Hirst's notion of "personalized aspects of a character's subjective expression", "the breathless, uncapitalized transition between clauses" or even "the exclamation points" (*ibid*.: 2) with the empirically-testable linguistic categories provided in Banfield ([1982] 2014a) such as exclamations or Jean-Claude Milner's (1978a) "qualitative" nouns and adjectives.

Generative grammar's notion of syntactic evidence based on native speaker judgments of acceptability is in marked contrast with Brooke, Hammond, and Hirst's cohorts' judgments about their six "stylistic aspects". For instance, a test for an "*adjectif de qualité*", a candidate for a syntactically subjective term, is that it can occur alone or with a noun in a well-formed non-sentential exclamatory construction. *Damn Yankees!* is well-formed but **worthy Yankees!*, alone as an exclamation, is not. Likewise, the construction "X of N" permits *noms de qualité* in the position of X but not non-qualitative nouns: "That bastard of a teacher!" is a well-formed exclamation, but **That teacher of a son!* is not. Such crucial tests are lacking for the six stylistic categories above. None of the sets of three examples for each of the six form a natural class, in any testable sense. *Worthy* is classed by Brooke, Hammond, and Hirst as "subjective", along with *bastard*, which is a *nom de qualité*, while *damn* is labeled "colloquial". (In Milner, the latter two pattern together, the first a *nom de qualité* and the second an *adjectif de qualité*.) Their labels are their own impressionistic and otherwise unargued for choices; they render their counting of them no more reliable than counting the words with one vs. two syllables.

In linguistic argumentation, the force of the argument depends not on a statistical percentage of judgments. It is the judgments themselves that constitute the evidence. Of course, there are cases of differences of judgments. But linguistic argumentation looks first for examples where there is the greatest agreement, and "lets the theory decide" where there are differences. Brooke, Hammond, and Hirst would have done well to follow the advice of Eric Rundquist's entry on their bibliography: he argues "that essential linguistic constructs employed in consciousness presentation [i.e., represented speech and thought] must remain relevant

for analysis" (2014: 161). Big data here never reaches the level of evidence, in fact, shrinks to something less than big.

The identification of examples is a beginning, but only a beginning. "Any collection of data is a theory in the weak sense", I recall Chomsky having said long ago. Then, in my anti-taxonomic fervor, I heard the stress on *weak*; now I recognize that to identify examples with syntactic properties, especially crucial examples, is necessary, although not sufficient. In Brooke, Hammond, and Hirst's case, the emphasis on *weak* is appropriate, since the data is not clearly identified nor described in even rudimentary grammatical terms.

Ann Banfield

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Sylvie Patron

INTRODUCTION

The seven essays gathered in this volume are all concerned, more or less directly, with what Ann Banfield calls the "unspeakable sentences" of fictional narrative. We must not mistake the meaning of this expression, however, which designates neither inexpressible sentences, those that one could not or should not speak, nor sentences that are unpronounceable, for whatever reason, but in a sense much more specific to Banfield's theory, sentences that do not bear any explicit marker nor any implicit indication of a first person, and which are not interpretable as the expression of a speaker's subjectivity.[1] Chief among them are the sentences of free indirect style (free indirect speech, free indirect discourse), which Banfield prefers to call sentences of "represented speech and thought".[2] All of these essays were written and/or published after the publication of *Unspeakable Sentences: Narration and Representation in the Language of Fiction* (1982). They take up its theoretical frameworks and extend its analyses into other contexts, where they acquire other uses, other functions, and other values. I will begin, therefore, with a presentation of the theory of unspeakable sentences as it appears in *Unspeakable Sentences*.[3]

1. Direct Speech, Indirect Speech, Represented Speech and Thought

Banfield's point of departure, historically[4] and methodologically, is the examination of similarities and differences between the forms of direct speech and indirect speech, and the observation that it is impossible to derive one from the other through a plausible grammatical transformation.

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[1] "Unspeakable sentences" can be replaced with "speakerless sentences": see Banfield ([1982] 2014a: 70 and 189) and right here Ch. 4, p. 120, and Ch. 5, pp. 131 and 135.

[2] For the expression of this preference and an early indication of the reasoning behind it, see Banfield ([1982] 2014a: 12 and 277-278, n. 14). See also Ch. 1, p. 39, 45, Ch. 2, p. 69, Ch. 3, p. 86, Ch. 5, p. 135, and Ch. 7, p. 183.

[3] Here, I am taking up a part of the chapter devoted to Banfield's theory in Patron ([2009] 2016: Ch. 9).

[4] See Banfield (1973) and Ch. 6, pp. 143 and 147-148.

1.1. The Transformational Hypothesis

Traditional grammar notes the following differences between direct speech and indirect speech: indirect speech is introduced by a conjunction of subordination (*that* and *whether* or *if* in English, *que* and *si* in French); the verbs of indirect speech are subject to the rules of concordance of tense; indirect speech is subject to the same type of rules concerning grammatical person; certain adverbs and adverbial phrases of time and place are different in direct speech and in indirect speech. Example (1), taken from Banfield, illustrates the similarities and differences between direct speech and indirect speech having a paraphrase relation:

(1) (a) Mary told me yesterday at the station, "I will meet you here tomorrow".

(b) Mary told me yesterday at the station that she would meet me there today.

The most obvious hypothesis suggested by generative grammar consists in positing a transformational relation between direct speech and indirect speech. According to this hypothesis, the two forms of reported speech would have the same deep structure and possibly one of them (direct speech, in all likelihood) would represent the deep structure implicit in the other. Even so, the difficulty of producing a suitable representation in deep structure for certain personal pronouns, possessive determiners, and adverbs—combined with the fact that certain ambiguities of interpretation exist only in indirect speech—, constitute the major arguments against this solution. First argument: take sentences (2a) and (3a), the first being an example crafted by Banfield, the second borrowed from *Les Voyageurs de l'impériale* by Louis Aragon:

(2) (a) Smith remarked that I was a writer of your caliber.

(3) (a) *Jeannot, paraît-il, a dit à Sophie que c'était votre amoureux...*
(Aragon, *Les Voyageurs de l'impériale*, in *Œuvres romanesques complètes*, vol. II, Paris: Gallimard, "Bibliothèque de la Pléiade", [1942] 2000, p. 1050 [the speaker is Paulette Mercadier, Jeannot's grandmother; she is speaking to Maria, the nanny])
[Jeannot, it seems, told Sophie that he was your lover…]

How can one specify the source, in direct speech, of the personal pronoun *I* and of the possessive *your* of (2a), as well as of the possessive *votre* of (3a)? The possible representations of what could be their source in deep

structure (examples of which we can see in 2b and 3b) are not finite in number:

(2) (b) Smith remarked, "You/Dorothy/the author of ... are/is a writer of his caliber/Sam's caliber/that idiot's caliber".

(3) (b) *Jeannot, paraît-il, a dit à Sophie : "C'est son amoureux/C'est l'amoureux de Maria/C'est l'amoureux de ma bonne/C'est l'amoureux de cette gourde".*
[Jeannot, it seems, told Sophie: "He is your lover/He is Maria's lover/He is my nanny's lover/He is the lover of this klutz.]

One can use the same argument with respect to deictic adverbs of time and place of indirect speech. It is as difficult to assign a source to *the day before yesterday* as to *you* in sentence (4a):

(4) (a) Jeannot told Sophie that you saw him the day before yesterday.

(b) Jeannot told Sophie: "She/Maria/my nanny/this klutz saw him the day before yesterday/yesterday/today/on Sunday".

Second argument: let us examine sentences (5a-d):

(5) (a) *Pascal disait qu'il avait interrogé la bonne, Maria […].* (*Les Voyageurs de l'impériale*, *op. cit.*, p. 1053)
[Pascal was saying that he had asked the nanny, Maria […].]

(b) *Pascal disait : "J'ai interrogé la bonne, Maria".*
[Pascal was saying: "I asked the nanny, Maria".]

(c) *Pascal disait : "J'ai interrogé la bonne".*
[Pascal was saying: "I asked the nanny".]

(d) *Pascal disait : "J'ai interrogé Maria".*
[Pascal was saying: "I asked Maria".]

Sentence (5a) is ambiguous. In the *de re* interpretation, it can be paraphrased as: "Pascal was saying that he had asked someone that the speaker who reports his speech refers to as 'the nanny, Maria'"; in the *de dicto* interpretation, it is more concerned with the terms employed by Pascal and the paraphrase is (5b). If indirect speech were derived transformationally from direct speech, the required transformation would only account for the *de dicto* interpretation. The *de re* interpretation would

have to be related to a different deep structure and thus to a different derivation.

Banfield then shows the impossibility of positing indirect speech as primary and of deriving direct speech from it by transformation. This time, she draws on the existence in direct speech of transformations and of elements and constructions that are unacceptable in indirect speech: the inversion of the subject in questions, topicalization (emphasis through anteposition), right dislocation, the anteposition of adverbs of movement like *away*; interjections, exclamatory sentences, verbless exclamatory constructions; "incomplete" sentences (which cannot all be considered as ellipses or as phenomena of performance); imperatives, apostrophes; sayings in different languages or dialects than those of the introductory clause; addressee-oriented adverbials, like *frankly*. Let us consider, for example, the sentence pairs in (6) and (7), the first being an example devised by Banfield using a sentence from *Mrs Dalloway*, the first sentence of the second being directly borrowed from Virginia Woolf's novel:

(6) (a) Clarissa exclaimed, "What a lark!".

(b)*Clarissa exclaimed that what a lark.

(7) (a) "Oh this horror! she said to herself […]." (Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway*, London: Penguin Books, "Penguin Popular Classics", [1925] 1996, p. 41)

(b) *She said to herself that oh this horror[5].

Finally, Banfield observes that certain verbs introducing direct speech cannot take indirect speech (*to query*, *to intone*, etc.) and, conversely, that verbs like *to learn* or *to mention* do not allow any other complement than the proposition of indirect speech. Only so-called communication verbs—*to say*, *to ask*, *to command*, etc., to which we might add the verb *to think*—can introduce both forms of reported speech.

[5] Banfield's critics have not failed to produce examples of "indirect speech" of this type, extracted from literary texts (see for example Chatman 1978: 200, McHale 1978: 254-255, Fludernik [1993] 2014: 227-259, 380). Nevertheless, these authors seem to confuse the notion of grammaticality with that of attested occurrences in a given text or collection of texts. (The fact that the notion of grammaticality could appear as an *ad hoc* notion, constructed by the linguist and separated from the question of attestations, is a fundamental epistemological problem, but one cannot say that this problem is posed in a real way by the authors in question.)

There are, therefore, at least four arguments against the hypothesis of a transformation between direct speech and indirect speech. The alternative hypothesis consists of treating direct speech and indirect speech as each generated independently in the base (that is, in deep structure).[6]

1.2 The Syntagmatic Hypothesis and the Introduction of the E Node in the Base

This part of Banfield's work, very technical and accessible only with difficulty to non-specialists, is nevertheless fundamental. In the preface to the French translation of her book, Banfield writes:

> Instead of using as the initial symbol of the base rules the S node (S symbolizing the classic notion of "sentence"), I proposed, in effect, in 1973 a new entity as initial symbol: the node E. Thus, a syntactic definition of subjectivity in language becomes possible. E is designed to function as the reference point for the subjective system: deictics, personal pronouns, certain verb tenses, certain words and expressions. In truth, the consequences of the introduction of the E node constitute the principal subject matter of *Unspeakable Sentences.* ([1995] 2008: 467)[7]

The first part of the analysis showed that within direct speech there exist a vast array of elements and constructions that became unacceptable in indirect speech. For example:

(7) (a) "Oh this horror! she said to herself […]". (*Mrs Dalloway*, *op. cit*., p. 41)
(b) *She said to herself that oh this horror.

We can compare the first clause of (7a) with sentence (8a), which is constructed on the classical model of the sentence (S → NP + VP[8]).

(8) (a) This is a horror.
(b) She said to herself that this was a horror.

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[6] This part of Banfield's work is met with wide consensus today. See Charaudeau and Maingueneau (2002: 192), on direct speech, indirect speech and what they call "free indirect speech": "It is now established that they are three forms *independent of one another*, i.e. we cannot switch from one to the other by mechanical operations (Banfield 1973)" (my translation, S. P.).
[7] See also Ch. 6, pp. 147-148.
[8] Abbreviation for "noun phrase" and "verbal phrase".

Among the properties common to sentences like the first clause of (7a), we can note:

—the fact that they cannot be embedded within other sentences;
—the fact that they do not seem to be transformationally derivable from "normal" sentences;
—the fact that they do not have truth value;
—the fact that they express the speaker's subjective point of view.

To account for these sentences and their properties, Banfield postulates an E node (for "Expression", in the restricted sense of "the expression of subjectivity"). This node replaces S as the initial symbol of the base rules, but differs from it in the fact that it is not recursive (except by coordination).[9] E is only optionally developed as S. This is how the elements and constructions in italics in (9) are considered to be generated under E, but outside of any S:

(9) "*Heavens*, the front-door bell!" exclaimed Clarissa. (*Mrs Dalloway*, *op. cit.*, p. 45)
"*Oh yes*, she will see me", he repeated. (*Ibid.*)
"This is what I have made of it! This!" (*Ibid*., p. 48)
"*Yes"*, said Peter. *"Yes, yes, yes"*, he said […]. (*Ibid.*)
"*Stop! Stop!"* he wanted to cry. (*Ibid*.)
And this has been going on all the time! he thought. (*Ibid*., p. 49)
"In love", she said. (*Ibid*., p. 50)
All the same, he is in love, thought Clarissa. (*Ibid*., p. 51)

The E node has been revisited by Judith and Jean-Claude Milner in their analysis of *questions de reprise* (see Milner and Milner 1975: 140-141) and by Jean-Claude Milner in his analysis of *noms de qualité* in French (see Milner 1978a: 227-232 and *passim*), which can be considered as an independent justification for this symbol.

The introduction of the E node into the grammar allows Banfield to explain the syntactic differences between the two forms of reported speech. Direct speech consists of two syntactically independent expressions (E). Indirect speech, on the other hand, is made up of only one expression. The second clause of a sentence of indirect speech is an embedded sentence (S), and not an expression. Banfield then formulates two principles that allow her to clarify the similarities and differences between direct speech and indirect speech. The first is called the "Anaphoric E

[9] The property of recursivity associated with the symbol S is indicated by the notation S: see Ch. 1. It is replaced by the prime notation in Ch. 5: see pp. 131-132, n. 6.

principle":

> Certain proform complements of communication or consciousness verbs (such as *this*, *that*, *so*, *thus*) may be coreferential with a following or preceding E or sequence of Es. (Banfield [1982] 2014a: 52)

This principle explains why the second clause (the quoted clause) of direct speech, despite having the form and syntactic behavior of an independent clause, is not semantically independent of the first. The second principle is called "one expression/one speaker" (notated 1 E/1 I):

> For every expression (E), there is a unique referent of *I* (the SPEAKER), to whom all expressive elements are attributed, and a unique referent of *you* (the ADDRESSEE/HEARER). (*Ibid*.: 57)

This principle explains why the referents of the pronouns *I* and *you* in English, *je* and *tu* or *vous* in French, can be different in the two clauses of a sentence of direct speech, but must be the same in the two clauses of a sentence of indirect speech:

> (10) (a) *"[...] — Mais oui, je$_i$ me$_i$ rappelle très bien vous avoir vu ce jour-là", me$_j$ dit d'un ton marqué Mme de Guermantes, comme si de sa part ce souvenir avait quelque chose qui dût beaucoup me$_j$ flatter.* (Marcel Proust, *Le Côté de Guermantes,* in *À la recherche du temps perdu*, vol. II, Paris: Gallimard, "Bibliothèque de la Pléiade", [1920-1921] 1988, p. 795).
> "Yes, I$_i$ remember quite well seeing you there that evening", said Mme de Guermantes with emphasis as though, coming from her, there must be something in this reminiscence highly flattering to myself$_j$. (*The Guermantes Way*, in *The Remembrance of Things Past*, vol. II, trans. Charles Kenneth Scott Montcrieff, quoted according to the web edition published by eBooks@Adelaide, https://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/p/proust/marcel/p96g/index.html).
>
> (b) *Elle me$_i$ dit qu'elle se rappelait très bien m$_i$'avoir vu ce jour-là.*
> She said to me$_i$ that she remembered quite well seeing me$_i$ there that evening.

This principle also explains why the "style"—that is, all of the expressive elements and constructions, but also the language or dialect—can be different in the two clauses of a sentence of direct speech, but must be homogeneous in the two clauses of a sentence of indirect speech.[10] The

[10] One can obviously find examples of indirect speech with quotation marks, but that is another matter (see Banfield [1982] 2014a: 115 and 281, n. 9, for the

expressive elements and constructions are strictly defined, on an exclusively syntactic basis; we find:

1) non-embeddable elements and constructions that can appear in the second clause of direct speech, but not in that of indirect speech (interjections, exclamatory sentences and verbless exclamatory constructions, incomplete sentences, imperatives, apostrophes);

2) embeddable elements that, when they appear in the second clause of indirect speech, are always attributed to the speaker of the whole, to the person who cites and not to the person who is cited (nouns of quality like *idiot*, evaluative adjectives like *poor*, kinship nouns like *Mummy*, first- and second-person pronouns, deictic adverbs of time and place).

A principle parallel to the 1 E/1 I principle, called "one expression/one present" (notated 1 E/1 PRESENT), applies to occurrences of the present tense:

> For every expression (E), there is a unique referent of the present tense, which is cotemporal with NOW. (Banfield [1982] 2014a: 58) [11]

One last set of principles defines a unit larger than the expression, which Banfield calls a "text". Following the principle "one text/one speaker and present" (notated 1 TEXT/1 SPEAKER & PRESENT), all the first-person pronouns and all the occurrences of the present tense are coreferential from E to E. Following the principle "Shift to a new TEXT", the first-person pronouns and the occurrences of the present tense can change referents in a sequence of two Es in deep structure, given certain conditions.[12]

1.3. A Grammatical Definition of Represented Speech and Thought

Represented speech and thought, which Banfield considers restricted to the written language[13], is distinct from the forms of direct speech and indirect

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recognition of the existence of "mixed forms" in performance, and Rosier 1999: 201-244, for a purportedly exhaustive inventory of these forms).

[11] The notation NOW applies to all deictic adverbs of present.

[12] For more on the notion of TEXT and on the distinction between the level of the TEXT and the level of the E, see Ch. 5, p. 133, and especially Ch. 7, pp. 181-182 and 187-194.

[13] According to Rosier (1999: 272, n. 29), "[…] she is not mistaken, if we accept the fact that free indirect speech has been theorized as such, due to its particular exploitation of the imperfect tense. In spoken language, as we have noted before, it

speech and cannot be derived from the underlying structures of these two forms of reported speech. Like sentences of direct speech, sentences of represented speech and thought are Expressions: they share all their syntactic properties, particularly the fact that they cannot be embedded in other sentences. They can contain interjections, exclamatory sentences, verbless exclamatory constructions, incomplete sentences, or products of "root" transformations, like inverted questions:

> (11) He was in love! Not with her. With some younger woman, of course. (*Mrs Dalloway*, *op. cit*., p. 51)
>
> (12) She flattered him; she fooled him, thought Clarissa […]. What a waste! What a folly! All his life long Peter had been fooled like that; first getting sent down from Oxford; next marrying a girl on the boat going to India; now the wife of a Major—thank Heaven she had refused to marry him! Still, he was in love; her old friend, her dear Peter, he was in love. (*Ibid*., pp. 51-52)
>
> (13) No, no, no! He was not in love with her any more! (*Ibid*., p. 85)
>
> (14) Could it be that he was in love with her, then, remembering the misery, the torture, the extraordinary passion of those days? (*Ibid*., p. 88-89)

What is more, when these sentences are interrupted or followed by a parenthetical, it is with a much wider variety of verbs than in direct speech. Indeed, in addition to communication verbs, represented speech and thought accepts all consciousness verbs that can have a subordinate clause comparable to that of indirect speech (*believe, feel, know, suppose*, etc.). It is the choice of verb which indicates whether the sentence of represented speech and thought is to be interpreted as the representation of words or of thoughts.

In sentences of represented speech and thought, the semantic relation previously established between the first person and the expression of

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is the present tense that appears and we prefer to speak of free direct speech in such cases, because of the present tense form" (our translation, V. B. and J. N.). For a different point of view, see for instance Authier (1978: 83-84) and Fludernik ([1993] 2014: 73-74 and *passim*). Three things seem clear to me: first, that there are forms of free indirect speech that exist in spoken language (most often in the present, but also possibly in the imperfect); second, that spoken free indirect speech is not very developed and rarely extends beyond the dimension of the sentence (for reasons linked to reference management during both discourse production and comprehension); and third, that spoken free indirect speech is used only to represent speech and not thoughts.

subjectivity no longer holds. It is therefore necessary to reformulate the principle 1 E/1 I by breaking it down into two principles, of which only one places the first person and the expression of subjectivity into relation:

> 1 E/1 SELF. For every node E, there is at most one referent, called the "subject of consciousness" or SELF, to whom all expressive elements are attributed. That is, all realizations of SELF in an E are coreferential.[14]
>
> Priority of SPEAKER. If there is an *I*, *I* is coreferential with the SELF. In the absence of an *I*, a third-person pronoun may be interpreted as SELF. (Banfield [1982] 2014a: 93)

According to the first principle, the personal pronouns *he* and *she* can assume the role that ordinary speech normally reserves for the pronoun *I*, namely the role of source or of center of subjectivity. This is the case, for instance, in sentences (11)-(14). According to the second principle, the presence of a speaker who calls her- or himself *I* necessarily implies that of a subject of consciousness coreferential with *I*. We can confirm this by way of a simple test: if we add an *I* to sentences (11)-(14), we can see that it is no longer possible to attribute the expressive elements and constructions to any subject other than the referent of *I*:

> (15) He was in love! Not with her. With some younger woman, in my view!
>
> (16) In front of me, she thanked Heaven she had refused to marry him!
>
> (17) No, no, no! He was not in love with her any more, nor with me!
>
> (18) I was wondering if he was in love with her, then, remembering the misery, the torture, the extraordinary passion of those days.[15]

It is also necessary to reformulate the principle 1 E/1 PRESENT by breaking it down into two principles, of which only one places the

[14] The term "subject of consciousness" is taken from Kuroda (see [1973] 2014: 45, 46, 54, 55; [1975] 2014: 75, 77, 85; [1987] 2014: 143, 144; and Banfield 1973: 30, n. 22, where Banfield suggests that it could be replaced by Henry James's "point of view" or "center of consciousness"). It is not the term itself that matters; rather, it is the idea of a new notion, distinct from the notion of speaker, and whose justification rests on linguistic features proper to the fictional narrative.

[15] In this sentence, the expressive element, according to Banfield's definition, is the adjective "extraordinary". See Ch. 1, pp. 58-63, on evaluative adjectives.