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Diamesic Variation in Direct Reported Speech: Representing Orality in Fiction

Grégoire Lacaze♦

Conveying mimetic dimensions to the reader of fiction seems to be at the core of the representation of speech acts. In other words, the prominent question that is mainly at stake when trying to represent orality is: how can oral conversations be represented as accurately as possible using written modes of representation? In this perspective, representing a speaker's words or thoughts can be viewed as a challenge: the reporter has to take into account the various parameters of the speech act before creating a written description of the verbal exchanges. They have thus the choice to provide the reader with a more or less detailed rendition of the speech act, as far as fidelity and truthfulness are concerned.

This study aims to investigate how narratorial intrusion and commitment contribute to the representation of the paralinguistic features of oral conversations enacted by characters in dialogues. The representation of orality in literary discourse relies heavily on the semantics of introductory verbs, and on the presence of prepositional and adverbial phrases, which tend to minimise diamesic variation. Punctuation and capital letters also have a strong influence on readers and more specifically on their perception of reported speech acts. In this research, diamesic variation is investigated through multimodal communication in a corpus of contemporary fiction including American and British short stories and novels.

Representing speech acts

The representation of a speaker's words or thoughts is generally regarded as quintessential when it comes to the description of oral conversations. The process

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of elaborating written representations of oral parameters implies taking into account the various characteristics of speech acts, whether they be acoustic or of a nonverbal nature.

Multimodal communication and paralinguistic features of speech

As Jobert (2009: 1) puts it, "'Multimodal communication' considers both the verbal content of utterances and the other layer of meaning that accompanies speech i.e. nonverbal communication." Multimodal communication obviously lays emphasis on nonverbal communication, which includes relevant information about the way every speech act is performed.

In her analysis of spoken conversations, Brown (2013: 112) lays emphasis on these prominent features: "Paralinguistic features of speech are those which contribute to the expression of attitude by a speaker. They are phonetic features of speech which do not form an intrinsic part of the phonological contrasts which make up the verbal message […]." She maintains that the paralinguistic features of speech "relate closely to the phenomenon referred to as 'body talk' or 'body language'—which refers to gesture, posture, facial expression and so on, all of which may have an effect on the way the listener interprets what the speaker says" (Brown, 2013: 112).

This paper aims to show how these paralinguistic features of speech are transcribed in fictional dialogues and how the use of punctuation can be instrumental in adapting oral conversations to written productions.

Diamesic variation

The term *diamesic variation* was introduced by Mioni (1983) to emphasize the differences between oral and written modes of representation in contemporary Italian. As Mello (2014: 28) states: "Diamesic variation describes language variation through the medium used for communication." Studying diamesic variation obviously includes the analysis of adaptations between oral and written productions such as syllocutions, speech overlapping, and also disfluencies (pauses, hesitations, repetitions…) thanks to the choice of prepositional phrases and adverbial phrases that aim to convey acoustic features. Blasco Ferrer (1995: 80) gives a similar definition: "The so-called diamesic variation […] involves opposition between codes («written» versus «oral»), but also takes into consideration the extent of planning which the oral or written performance is subjected to […])".

The meaning of "representation"

When "representation" is alluded to, it is often confronted with "reality". This stance is supported by Webb (2009: 23): "A central issue in representation is that of substitution: it is widely understood as the process of standing in for someone or something, or acting as a substitute for the 'real thing'." The question of representation is intrinsically linked to the notion of presence:

> Christopher Prendergast suggests some definitions for the term 'representation'. The first, he writes, 'is the sense of *represent* as *re-present*, to make present again, in two interrelated ways, spatial and temporal' (Prendergast 2000: 4). It cites, or 'quotes', a presence, referring to something that is not there, but is assumed to be authentic and potentially present (the authentic voice, and so on). This is representation as *Darstellung*, the notion of making or *rendering* presence. (Webb, 2009: 8)

Moreover, Webb(2009: 9) acknowledges that the process of representation implies establishing "relationships of equivalence."

The representation of orality in literary discourse

This research aims to focus on the oral properties of written productions and on the multidimensionality of represented discourses. When it comes to representing oral conversations using direct speech in fiction, the acoustic and kinesic parameters are of paramount importance and need to be transcribed as accurately as possible in written texts. In order to fulfil this goal, authors can rely on semantics and punctuation. For instance, the semantic values associated with noun phrases, prepositional phrases, adverbial phrases and also verbs will influence the way readers have access to reported speech acts. Consequently, these semantic features will have underlying consequences on the elaboration of the ethos of reported speakers in dialogues.

In fiction, dialogues are first and foremost the adequate structures to reproduce the words uttered by several characters. Needless to say, the author or the narrator is faced with somewhat contradictory injunctions:

- the author aims to give readers an overview of a plausible speech act involving several characters with contextual details about each turn-at-talk, on the one hand;
- but, on the other hand, a dialogue must be easily readable and fluid as it generally gives prominence to the words themselves, rather than to the way the words are uttered.

Some specificities of direct reported speech

Direct speech, one of the most common forms of reported speech, is largely used in fiction to report speech acts as it is the epitome of a syntactic form able to give direct access to the words uttered by characters and to convey orality thanks to the mimetic value of the words that are reproduced.

Huddleston & Pullum (2002: 1023) define direct reported speech as "purport[ing] to give the actual wording of the original." Biber et al. (2006: 1118) put it in a similar way: "Direct speech reporting (where the speaker gives an apparently verbatim report of what someone said) is an important and recurrent feature of conversation." This stance is also shared by Quirk et al (1985: 1021): "Direct speech purports to give the exact words that someone (who may be the reporter) utters or has uttered in speech or in writing." The mimetic dimension of the quoted sequence in direct speech is also highlighted by Coulmas (1986: 6): "[direct speech] purports to give a verbatim rendition of the words that were spoken."

When direct speech is used in fiction, the quoted words are generally introduced by a textual sequence which gathers information about the reported speaker and some optional parameters pertaining to the paralinguistic features of speech. This textual sequence is often called *reporting clause* when it contains a noun phrase and an introductory verb: "A **reporting clause** accompanies direct reports of somebody's speech or thought. It specifies the speaker/thinker, the addressee (sometimes), the type of act (*ask*, *say*, *think*, etc.), and frequently also the mode of the act (*abruptly*, *apologetically*, *bitterly*, etc.)" (Biber et al., 2006: 196, their emphasis). It has also been shown (Lacaze, 2013) that the textual sequence, whose target is to introduce quoted words, can go beyond the boundaries of a given sentence. Hence the concept of *contextualising sequence*,[1] which widens that of *reporting clause*. Indeed, the semantic value devoted to the introduction of quoted words does not necessarily coincide with the physical limits of a sentence.

As an occurrence of direct speech consists of two different sequences (the contextualising sequence, on the one hand, and the quoted words, on the other hand), it is the reporting clause, or on a larger scale, the contextualising sequence that can convey oral parameters and nonverbal communication when the reporter (whether they be the author or the narrator) decides to describe them with a view to transmit oral and kinesic features to the reader.

In this perspective, the contextualising sequence is the very textual place in which diamesic variation needs to be analysed, as its composition can be very helpful to the reader to know situational information.

1 The term was coined by Lacaze (2013): contextualising sequences are the largest extensions of textual sequences that aim to introduce utterances of direct speech. This concept is fundamentally based on the contextual environment referring to the textual fragments that are located in the immediate vicinity of an utterance of direct speech.

Representing acoustic and nonverbal properties of speech acts

As far as the scenography of a speech act is concerned, representing acoustic and paralinguistic features of speech relies on the potentialities a contextualising sequence can offer. This study especially focuses on the semantics of verbs inserted in reporting clauses to introduce direct speech and on the optional elements such as prepositional and adverbial phrases that convey detailed information about a given reported speech act.

The semantics of introductory verbs

First and foremost, the introductory verb inserted in a reporting clause can provide valuable information about the turn-at-talk that is being reported. The illocutionary force[2] conveyed by the verb can be analysed as a remarkable clue about the conditions in which the speech act is supposed to have taken place.

The sound volume of the speech act is inferrable with verbs like *cry*, *roar* and *shout*:

> It was a terrible position. He couldn't think of any way out. "You're crazy," Mr. Thompson **roared** suddenly, "you're the crazy one around here, you're crazier than he ever was! You get off this place or I'll handcuff you and turn you over to the law. You're trespassing," **shouted** Mr. Thompson. (Porter, *Noon Wine*, 1979: 255)[3]

In the excerpt, Mr. Thompson's words are reported in such a way as to enable the reader to represent Mr. Thompson's wrath mentally as he utters unpleasant words to his addressee. The use of verbs like *roar* and *shout* are evident clues that the speech act conveys anger and emphasizes the brutality of the harsh words within quotes. As something more is said than in a simple reported sequence, Hanote (2004: 541) would classify these verbs in the «*say* + QLT» class, as the speech act receives a qualitative qualification.

Going beyond the acoustic parameters, some paralinguistic features pertaining to gesture, posture or kinesics (bodily activity and motion) accompany what a reported speaker has said:

> Carl strode into the kitchen then, and Jody's mother asked, "Who's the letter from, Carl?"
> He **frowned** quickly. "How did you know there was a letter?"

2 See Austin (1962).
3 Our emphasis in the utterances of the corpus, unless otherwise stated.

> She **nodded** her head in the boy's direction. "Big-Britches Jody told me." (Steinbeck, *The Red Pony*, 1992: 83)

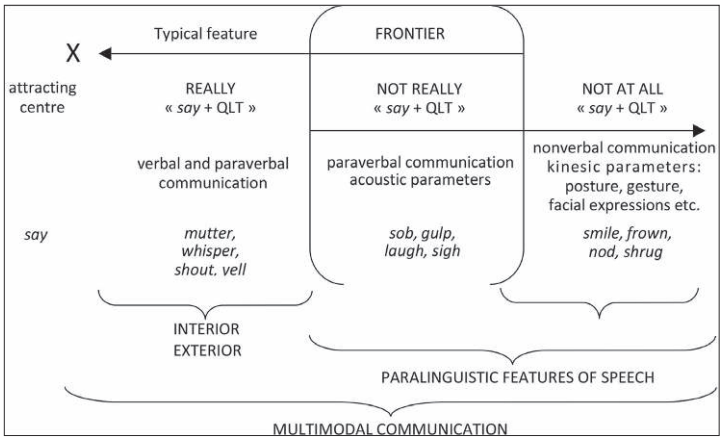
Verbs like *frown* and *nod* do not imply oral communication *per se*. It is the presence of these verbs in the immediate vicinity of quoted fragments that shows these clauses can be analysed as contextualising sequences, helping to identify the speaker in each turn-at-talk of the dialogue. According to Hanote (2004: 543), semantically speaking, there is no notion of introducing direct speech in these fronted clauses including kinesic verbs. She maintains (2004: 544) that verbs like *laugh*, *explode*, *dazzle* cannot be considered as introductory verbs as they do not imply oral conversations but simply human actions:

> 'Look at their figures!' **laughed** Miss Lavish. 'They walk through my Italy like a pair of cows. […]' (Forster, *A Room with a View*, 1961: 39)

Even though the verb *laugh* does not imply an oral production of words by the utterer, it can logically be interpreted as a substitute for the verb *say* to which bodily facial expression would be added as supplementary information. Similarly, Gournay (2015) surmises that verbs like *frown*, *groan*, *nod*, *pause*, *shrug*, *smile*, *smirk*, *sigh*, *swallow* refer to physical actions but also have a communicative value, which means that it is understandable that such verbs should contribute to introduce a speaker's words in a dialogue.

The notional domain of introductory verbs

Thanks to the research on the concept of notional domain popularized by Culioli (1999), it seems legitimate to consider that introductory verbs can be classified and represented inside a notional domain whose "attractor" (also called "attracting centre") would be occupied by the most commonly used verb of



saying, the verb *say*. This notional domain is divided into several zones according to a "gradient" (Culioli, 1999: 86).

The analysis of the literary corpus has led to the following diagram that represents the notional domain of introductory verbs:
This diagram has been adapted from Bouscaren and Chuquet's study (1987:146) to the specific class of introductory verbs that are used in contextualising sequences. Verbs are classified here according to the semantic properties they convey about speech acts.

Verbs expressing verbal and paraverbal communication

In this category, reporting verbs intrinsically contain two dimensions: verbal features and paraverbal parameters. Obviously, these verbs are supposed to introduce utterances of direct speech but they also provide acoustic information, which minimises diamesic variation. The features of oral conversations are kept and included in the semantic value of verbs:

> "You're not to worry about me, Christopher," she **whispered** from the door. "I'm perfectly all right." (Ishiguro, *When We Were Orphans*, 2009, Web)

Not only does the occurrence of direct speech reproduce the female character's words but paraverbal information is also given to the reader about the acoustic volume of her turn-at-talk. When words are uttered loudly, the author can resort to some expressive verbs conveying the semantic notion of a loud volume (*cry*, *shout*, *yell*):

> Slim jumped up. 'The dirty little rat,' he **cried**, 'I'll get 'um myself.' George put out his hand and grabbed Slim. 'Wait a minute,' he **shouted**. He cupped his hands around his mouth and **yelled**: 'Get 'im, Lennie!' (Steinbeck, *Of Mice and Men*, 1963: 55)

Verbs describing the acoustic parameters of speech

These verbs focus on acoustic parameters but their semantic value does not necessarily imply that words are overtly spoken:

> "I do too," Barbie **gulped**. (Lurie, *The Last Resort*, 1999: 147)

The verb *gulp* is not necessarily linked to the representation of direct speech, as is illustrated by the *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*) definition:

> To gasp or choke when or as when drinking large draughts of liquid (*OED*, Web)

A similar effect emerges with a verb like *laugh*:

> "A cat?" the maid **laughed**. "A cat in the rain?" (Hemingway, "Cat in the Rain", 2003: 130)

The verb *laugh* is directly linked to bursts of laughter, which implies an acoustic event. Thanks to the location of the reporting clause in medial position between two fragments of direct speech, the acoustic activity is expected to accompany the production of words.

Diamesic variation is first and foremost taken into account with this semantic class of verbs. The use of such illocutionary verbs contributes to a careful description of the settings of the speech act, giving prominence to paraverbal communication.

Verbs describing nonverbal communication

Nonverbal communication is essential in ensuring the success of oral conversations. The phatic function identified by Jakobson (1960) shows the importance of kinesic interaction between two speakers to guarantee an ongoing and successful conversation.

However, the basic semantic values of these verbs are only focused on kinesic parameters; they do not imply reported speech. Nonetheless, the presence of such a verb inside a contextualising sequence is likely to be interpreted as a potential introductory verb of direct speech:

> "There's that wise comrade," Al **nodded** across at another table. (Hemingway, "Night Before Battle", 2003: 450)

> "I could do nothing, of course," he **smiled**. "But I know you wouldn't do such a thing, Captain." (Hemingway, "One Trip Across", 2003: 396)

The verbs *nod* and *smile* describe physical gestures: they provide the reader with contextual information, thus reducing diamesic variation. Some information about the speech act is transcribed, thus reducing the gap between what happens in an oral conversation and what can be inferred from the reading of literary discourse in fiction.

Prepositional phrases

A prepositional phrase is an optional element within a contextualising sequence. It conveys information that can be regarded as far more important than the verb *say*, which is generally hailed as the epitome of the introductory verbs for direct speech:

> 'It's just as well one of us is sensible about these things,' she said **with a smile**. (Ishiguro, *The Remains of the Day*, 1996: 233)

The prepositional phrase *with a smile* enriches the report of what the female character has said; the reader has thus direct access to the woman's facial expression when she utters her words. Multimodal communication is illustrated in this excerpt as the actual words are not only uttered but some information identified as nonverbal communication (Mrs Benn's smile) is conveyed to the readers.

Adding a prepositional phrase allows the reporter to unveil the sound volume of the speech act (here, a whisper) and also enables them to express emotions that can be perceived through the tone of voice:

> 'Now look here…' I put my face right up to his ear and spoke **in an angry whisper**. 'Look here, can't you understand…' (Ishiguro, *The Unconsoled*, 1995: 50)

A prepositional phrase can also provide information about the accent of the reported speaker:

> 'You have what, Comrade?' he asked Gomez, speaking Spanish **with a strong Catalan accent**. (Hemingway, *For Whom The Bell Tolls*, 1952: 390)

The mimetic function of direct speech is once again underlined with the mention of a particular accent, which characterizes one speaker and is part and parcel of the character's ethos.

Adverbial phrases

In adverbial phrases within contextualising sequences, reporters can select adverbs to convey oral and acoustic features to reported speech acts:

> 'Leave it alone,' he said **coldly**.
> 'Nay,' she said **harshly** and **lovingly**. 'It is just a lying nonsense

> that I make. I would not have thee worry in the day of battle.' (Hemingway, *For Whom The Bell Tolls*, 1952: 364)

The adverbs *coldly*, *harshly* and *lovingly* give information on the way the turns-at-talk are performed (tone of voice, pitch, feelings and emotions…).

The large diversity of adverbs used in reporting clauses or, more largely, in contextualising sequences enriches the reports of oral conversations with accurate descriptions of phonological features:

> 'A brown and white one,' Lennie cried **excitedly**.
> […]
> 'You seen a girl around here?' he demanded **angrily**. (Steinbeck, *Of Mice and Men*, 1963: 34)

The adverbs *excitedly* and *angrily* give access to Lennie's and Curley's moods.

An adverb can also describe the illocutionary force of the speech act:

> Curley looked **threateningly** about the room. 'Where's the hell's Slim?' (Steinbeck, *Of Mice and Men*, 1963: 47)

The contextualising sequence in initial position helps introduce the words that are then reproduced. Curley's look is interpreted by the reporter and his anger is then transcribed in his own words in the quoted sequence. Thus the initial contextualising sequence ensures a semantic subordination to the quoted words, despite its syntactic independence. That is why the meaning of the adverb is subtly shifted to the right to reinforce the uttered words.

The large semantic spectrum of adverbs in collocation with introductory verbs provides reporters with very efficient ways to give detailed renditions of speech acts.

Enriched contextualising sequences with adverbial, prepositional phrases and verb phrases

An author's style is largely influenced by the richness or paucity of contextual information communicated when it comes to reporting speech acts.

A profusion of contextual details about one turn-at-talk in a dialogue can be reported:

> She **now** said **very softly, in a trembling voice**:
> "Mama, I hope you have finished?" (Dickens, *David Copperfield*, vol. 2, 1863: 44)

The two adverbial phrases *now* and *very softly* give information about deixis (temporal localisation) and about the tone of voice, whereas the prepositional phrase *in a trembling voice* restores the acoustic dimension of the vocal production.

Trying to minimise diamesic variation can lead to the adding of a poetic touch to a speech report. This can be illustrated by an excerpt from Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*:

> "There it is," said Rezia, twirling Mrs. Peters' hat on the tips of her fingers.
> "That'll do for the moment. Later …" **her sentence bubbled away drip, drip, drip, like a contented tap left running**. (Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway*, 2000: 122)

The closing contextualising sequence focuses on the acoustic and mimetic properties of the words uttered by the female character. The extinction of the acoustic phenomenon seems rather gradual thanks to the final contextualising sequence and the epizeuxis effect (the repetition of *drip*) that conveys a sense of incantation and a feeling of regularity to the quoted sequence, the acoustic noise happening periodically following a repetitive pattern.

The extension of a contextualising sequence is very variable: from a canonical reporting clause simply containing the utterer and a verb of saying to a long textual extension giving as many details as possible. In this latter perspective, the focus shifts slightly from the uttered words to the way they are pronounced:

> "Ready," he said in that low, hoarse voice that did not belong to a small boy.
> "Ready," answered the trapper.
> "Pull," **said the hoarse voice and from whichever of the five traps the grey racing pigeon came out, and at whatever angle his wings drove him in full, low flight above the green grass toward the white, low fence, the load of the first barrel swung into him and the load from the second barrel drove through the first**. (Hemingway, "I Guess Everything Reminds You of Something", 2003: 598-599)

The very long contextualising sequence in final position of the last turn-at-talk aims to describe very accurately the surrounding environment, as a snapshot would do.

How punctuation and capital letters influence the perception of reported speech acts

This paper aims to highlight how important punctuation is in dialogues and its subsequent effects in the elaboration of reported speech acts, as well as the use of uppercase letters, when it comes to representing orality in fiction.

Dashes and ellipsis, when they are interspersed within dialogues, undeniably have a very definite purpose. They can stand for "aposiopesis[4]" representing pauses, hesitations or even speech overlappings of concomitant turns-at-talk. Whatever their underlying subsequent interpretation(s), they can be regarded as abrupt interruptions.

The use of dashes

The use of dashes produces some stylistic effect, as it is illustrated in the following example:

> "You're the woman I've looked for all my life," he said.
> "You know that?"
> "No, I'm not—" **Jenny began, but the rest of the sentence was smothered in an enthusiastic embrace**. (Lurie, *The Last Resort*, 1999: 181)

In this dialogue involving Gerry Gras and Jenny Walker, Jenny's turn-at-talk is suddenly interrupted, the dash meaning that Jenny is unable to finish her sentence. The postposed contextualising sequence gives the reason for this abrupt interruption (here, the embrace). While the dash signals an impromptu interruption, the contextualising sequence in final position conveys nonverbal communication, minimising diamesic variation.

Alison's Lurie novel, *The Last Resort*, has an exceptionally frequent use of dashes:

> "Yes, well, excuse me," Wilkie said, detaching himself finally, rather roughly. "I need to—"
> "Oh, gee, of course, I'm sorry—" Finally she got the hell out of the way. "I didn't realize. I was just thinking—" **But the rest of her gush of words was lost, amputated by the slam of the front door**. (Lurie, *The Last Resort*, 1999: 168169)

4 According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, an aposiopesis is "a rhetorical artifice, in which the speaker comes to a sudden halt, as if unable or unwilling to proceed" (*OED*, Web).

This dialogue between Barbie Mumpson and Wilkie Walker contains several dashes that can be subject to different interpretations. In the second turn-at-talk, the dash can be interpreted as an overlapping of words: while Wilkie is still speaking, Barbie starts speaking, her words being then reported and covering Wilkie's words. Even Barbie's verbal production is suddenly stopped due to an external cause: the slamming of the front door. The narrator acting here as a reporter definitely wants to provide readers with the sound parameters of the dialogue involving these two characters.

The use of ellipsis

Whenever ellipsis occurs at the end of a quoted sequence, this implies a stylistic effect the reader has to decipher. Ellipsis can obviously materialise the extinction of the verbal production:

> "Didn't you ever read that disgusting book of his, *The Natural Animal*?"
> "I don't really remember it…" **Molly's voice trailed off**. (Lurie, *The Last Resort*, 1999: 168169)

As Lee Weiss asks Molly Hopkins whether she has read a book, Molly replies she has not. Ellipsis in association with the final contextualising sequence *Molly's voice trailed off* help the reader understand that in her reply, the acoustic volume of Molly's voice gradually decreases until extinction.

Ellipsis is particularly relevant to express pauses or silence in a speaker's turn-at-talk:

> 'If you find time to sit down at the Hungarian Café in the Old Square, I feel certain you wouldn't regret it. I would suggest you order a pot of coffee and a piece of the apple strudel. Incidentally, sir, I did just wonder…' **The porter paused a moment. Then he went on**: 'I did wonder if I might ask a small favour of you. I wouldn't normally ask favours of guests, but in your case, I feel we've got to know one another pretty well.' (Ishiguro, *The Unconsoled*, 1995: 27)

Punctuation here is truly meaningful: not only does it stand for a moment of silence, but it also conveys the porter's feeling of uneasiness, which the contextualising sequence in medial position confirms.

Ellipsis is very often linked to the interruption of a sequence of words:

> 'I'm sorry,' Sophie said. 'He's been rather moody today.'
> 'As a matter of fact,' I said to her quietly, 'there was something I

> wished to talk to you about. But, er…' **I signalled with my eyes towards Boris**. (Ishiguro, *The Unconsoled*, 1995: 33)

The interjection *er* followed by ellipsis signals that the homodiegetic narrator feels embarrassed and cannot express himself freely because of the presence of little Boris, Sophie's son. He is thus obliged to stop talking.

The use of capital letters

Whenever capital letters are used in a quoted sequence for a group of words, it shows a deliberate desire of the author/narrator to use a mimetic effect, according to which capitalized words are supposed to have been uttered very loudly, crying or shouting.

This typical use of capital letters is called *vociferation* by Rosier (1999: 216) and is illustrated below:

> A sound explodes from me.
> "**NNNOOO**!!!" (Anderson, *Speak*, 2006: 194)

Melinda, a young American teenager, meets Andy, an elder student, who has already raped her and now tries to assault her once again. The combined use of capital letters, as well as the reduplication of letters *n* and *o* in association with the repetition of exclamation marks, show Melinda's strong response to her aggressor when she shouts *no*.

The different "techniques" mentioned here show how paralinguistic features of speech can be adapted from oral conversations to written textual productions in fiction.

Conclusion

This study has aimed to reveal the importance of diamesic variation for authors and the subsequent linguistic strategies they implement in order to reduce it. As the representation of oral conversations is central in literary fiction, dialogues require narratorial investment to convey oral features to readers. It has been argued that the mention of paralinguistic features of speech largely contributes to reduce the loss of contextual information as far as a speech act is concerned.

We have also shown that the representation of acoustic and nonverbal properties of speech acts relies on the selection of introductory verbs expressing verbal, paraverbal or acoustic features. The use of prepositional and adverbial phrases also enables the reporter to provide readers with acoustic and kinesic parameters, which plays an active role in minimising diamesic variation.

Finally, not only do the semantic values associated with words convey valuable information about oral conversations, but punctuation and the use of uppercase letters are also instrumental in representing oral conversations with their inevitable imperfections such as disfluencies or speech overlappings.

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