# Fictive indirect speech as scalar demonstration:
# Rethinking the direct vs. direct speech dichotomy

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The traditional opposition between direct (1) and indirect speech (2) is central to descriptions of deixis and viewpoint.

(1) John said: ''Huh? Vegan?!''
(2) John said that he couldn't believe it was vegan.

According to the influential proposal by Clark & Gerrig (1990), the unit between quotation marks in (1) 'demonstrates' an utterance, whereas the embedded clause in (2) *describes* one. But description and demonstration (or 'depiction', Clark 2016) can appear mixed, as in (3), where the interjection 'huh' is a depictive element in an otherwise descriptive indirect speech construction (cf. Fludernik 1993).

(3) John said that he –huh!– couldn't believe it was vegan.

Even the earliest descriptions of direct and indirect speech acknowledge that presenting the difference as a binary opposition is a simplification (see Coulmas 1986 for an overview). Yet, abandoning the opposition seems to come with a great cost: if we acknowledge that descriptive sentence types can include depictive elements, the traditionally assumed contrast between direct ('demonstrated') and indirect ('described') speech no longer correlates with a clearly identifiable structure. Authors who have dealt with this theoretical problem have suggested that the depictive elements in descriptive sentences are extra-syntactic intrusions (Kaltenböck, Heine & Kuteva 2011), pragmatically added units (Maier 2007), or that such sentences constitute a prototypical third type of reported speech (Evans 2013).

But a more radical interpretation is simply that a stable structural basis of direct and indirect speech *never existed* and that depiction and description are modes of communication that only loosely correspond to specific structures (Clark 2016; D'Arcy 2015). In this paper we explore this possibility by analyzing a phenomenon that provides a unique insight into these categories: sentential fictive interaction. Fictive interaction is the adoption of the frame of conversation for a variety of functions that do not imply an actual or fictional communicative exchange (Pascual 2006, 2014). It is primarily a conceptual phenomenon apparent at various levels of grammar (e.g. "the '*why me?' attitude*") and also in semantics ("This painting speaks to me", cf. Sullivan 2016). Yet, given that direct speech is the most explicit strategy for demonstrating communication, it is the most likely candidate for expressing fictive interaction where the current enunciator presents a clausal unit *as if* it were an actual and genuine report of previously produced discourse, as in (4). This leads to the question, why does fictive indirect speech, as in (5), occur at all?

(4) Her eyes said: "*Leave!*"
(5) Her eyes told me to leave.

Based on corpus examples primarily from English (BNC), Dutch (Corpus of Spoken Dutch) and Russian (Russian National Corpus) this represents the first in-depth study of fictive indirect speech. By classifying types of fictive indirect speech we present a new account of the direct-indirect speech distinction and its relation to 'demonstration'/'depiction'. We show how the former distinction may to some extent be made structurally, but only with reference to specific languages, while it is still based on the latter, universal distinction.

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