

# Three linguistic theories of polyphony / dialogism: an external point of view and comparison

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## Introduction

In 2004 Henning Nølke, Kjersti Fløttum and Coco Norén wrote in their monograph *ScaPoLine. La théorie scandinave de la polyphonie linguistique*: "There are nearly as many conceptions of the notion of polyphony as there are authors using it" (2004:13). We are not far from saying: "There are nearly as many *frameworks, modelizations or theorizations* of polyphony and dialogism, as there are scholars working on those notions".

In this study I will present and discuss three of those frameworks: first, the theory of polyphony set out by Oswald Ducrot in 1984; secondly, the model elaborated by Henning Nølke, which developed into the ScaPoLine in the late 90s; and thirdly, the framework proposed by Jacques Bres for the description of what he calls (*linguistic*) *markers of dialogism*.

It is rather easy to find a presentation text for each of these co-existing frameworks of polyphony or dialogism. For Oswald Ducrot, the basic text is the famous Chapter 8 of his 1984 book *Le dire et le dit*, a chapter based on three previous articles (Ducrot 1982, 1984b and 1984c). The best overview of Jacques Bres's framework and the linguistic facts it describes can be found in Bres (1998 and 1999) and in condensed form in the dictionary of praxematics by Detrie, Siblot and Verine (2001) under the headers "*dialogique, dialogisme, marqueurs dialogiques*". For Nølke it is less easy to pick out the text that best describes his framework, because there are a whole series of introductions to it by the author, mostly in proceedings of conferences, seminars and meetings. First of all some sections of Nølke (1994) are important, but

the long article by Nølke & Olsen (2000), or the shorter and simpler version of that text in Nølke (2001b) are also useful, and of course the latest book of the linguistic sub-team of the Scandinavian Polyphonists: *ScaPoLine. La théorie scandinave de la polyphonie linguistique* (Nølke, Fløttum & Norén 2004).

What lacks to my knowledge in the literature is a comparison of the different variants of the linguistic theory of polyphony and dialogism and an independent evaluation of their respective explanatory and descriptive powers and their internal and external consistency.

It is not my ambition to present a serious evaluation of the different frameworks and their underlying principles. What I would like to do is to briefly present and compare them from an external point of view, inserting there some evaluative notes and some questions.

It is clear that the three frameworks presented here do not cover the whole field of the linguistic study of polyphony and dialogism. There are many other authors who use those two notions in their descriptions, far too many to list here. My selection is motivated by the fact that these three authors all propose a complete set of notions, terms and principles meant to describe the polyphonic or dialogical character of certain language data.

Staying on a theoretical and general level I will compare the structure and elements of the frameworks themselves. An alternative to this approach could have been to take a series of analyses of one and the same language phenomenon, e.g. the causal connector *puisque* (of which I have found more than a dozen studies) or the morpheme of the 'conditionnel' in French and to compare the different accounts given of them – polyphonic and non-polyphonic – in different frameworks.

The outline of this article is simple. In the first section I will briefly present and discuss the main elements of Ducrot's version of the theory of polyphony. In section 2, I will compare that version with the one which is directly based on it, the framework of Nølke and the ScaPoLine. In

section 3, I will compare those two versions of the theory with the framework of Bres.

## 1. "L'esquisse d'une théorie polyphonique de l'énonciation" (Ducrot 1984)

Chapter 8 of Ducrot's book *Le dire et le dit*, entitled "Esquisse d'une théorie polyphonique de l'énonciation", is more than a reflection on linguistic polyphony; it is the outline of a more general *theory of enunciation*, in which the notion of polyphony occupies an important place (40 of the 60 pages are devoted to that notion).

### 1.1. Definition of polyphony by Ducrot

What strikes first when reading Ducrot 1984 is that there is no clear and explicit definition of linguistic polyphony in it. At best you will find a citation like (1) that could serve as a definition:

- (1) "c'est l'objet propre d'une conception polyphonique du sens que de montrer comment l'énoncé signale, dans son énonciation, la superposition de plusieurs voix." (p.183)

["the proper object of a polyphonic conception of meaning is that it shows how an utterance signals, in its enunciation, *the superposition of several voices*"]

In (1) we see that polyphony has to do with a superposition of voices, hence with a plurality of voices. What the nature of these voices is, is not clearly indicated by the author, neither how one has to understand the term "*superposition*". Let us have a closer look at the notion of "voice/voix".

The term *voix* (*voice*) appears a dozen times in Ducrot's Chapter 8. It also appears in the French translations of Bakhtin's works. The problem is that the term *voice* is ambiguous. In Ducrot's text we can distinguish

at least two uses of it, illustrated respectively by (2) and (3). Let us first consider (2):

- (2) a. "plusieurs voix parlent simultanément" (p.171, our emphasis)

["several voices speak simultaneously"]

b. "Quant à l'énonciateur E<sub>1</sub>, celui selon qui Pierre fumait autrefois, il est assimilé à un certain ON, à une voix collective, à l'intérieur de laquelle le locuteur est lui-même rangé" (p.231, our emphasis)

["As far as utterer E<sub>1</sub> is concerned, the one according to whom Peter smoked in the past, he is identified as ON, a collective voice, within which the speaker is to be situated"]

In these two citations, the term *voix* (*voice*) seems to be used metonymically to indicate the **utterer** (it could easily be replaced by the word *person* for example). The term corresponds to what is called *enunciative source* in the ScaPoLine.

Let us now have a look at the citation in (3):

- (3) "D'où l'idée que le sens de l'énoncé, dans la représentation qu'il donne de l'énonciation, peut y faire apparaître des voix qui ne sont pas celles d'un locuteur." (p.204, our emphasis)

["Hence the idea that the meaning of an utterance, in the representation that it gives of the enunciative act, can make appear voices that are not those of the speaker"]

In this sentence, *voix/voice* rather seems to indicate a propositional content, something which is said or put forward by an utterer. In those sentences the notion would correspond to the notion "*point of view*" of the

ScaPoLine. According to Fløttum, it is in this second sense that Nølke has interpreted the term of *voice*, as you see in citation (4):

- (4) "With a polyphonic conception of meaning, the aim is to demonstrate how utterances can signal the presence of several voices, or points of view in Nølke's terminology" (Fløttum 2001a)

The polysemic character of the term "*voix/voice*" has as a consequence that there are (at least) two possible definitions of linguistic polyphony:

- (5) A. We could say that an utterance is polyphonic if there is superposition or plurality of *enunciative instances*.  
B. Or we could say that an utterance is polyphonic if there is superposition or plurality of *points of view*.

In Ducrot we do not find a clear position as to which of the two definitions is eventually preferred. Let us now consider the main elements of Ducrot's framework.

## 1.2. Main elements of the framework of Ducrot

### 1.2.1. Enunciative instances

In order to explain the phenomenon of polyphony, Ducrot introduces a distinction between three types of "*sujet parlants*" (*speaking subjects*): First type, "le locuteur", which I will translate here, following Nølke (to appear b.) as the *locutor*; secondly "l'énonciateur" (the enunciator) and thirdly "le producteur empirique" (the empirical producer of the utterance).

The **locutor** is the one who, according to the utterance, is responsible for the utterance act. It is also the one who "puts the enunciators on stage"<sup>1</sup> and it is he that is indicated in the utterance by the marks of the first person (e.g. pronouns).

<sup>1</sup> We will translate the theater metaphor *mettre en scène*, very frequent in Ducrot and the ScaPoLine, by *put on stage*.

The **enunciator** is the instance to whom are attributed the "*points de vue*" or points of view (pov's) expressed in the sentence.

The **empirical producer** is the instance who is materially responsible for the production of the utterance act, independently of who is *linguistically* marked in the utterance as being responsible for it. He is not *linguistically* important in Ducrot's perspective.

Within the locutor Ducrot distinguishes further between two sub-types (Nølke and the ScaPoLine will do the same, and call them "images" of the speaker):

- Le "**locuteur-en-tant-que-tel**" (the locutor as such). He is taken in his sole activity of being responsible for the utterance act
- Le **locuteur-en-tant-qu'être-du-monde** (the locutor-as-an-entity-of-the-world). He is the locutor taken as a "complete person, with all his characteristics, including the one of responsibility for the utterance act" (1984:99).

The enunciator and both instances of the locutor are what Ducrot calls *êtres de discours* (*discursive entities*, to use the translation proposed by Nølke, to appear b.). The empirical producer is not a discursive entity.

If we analyze the examples of polyphony given by Ducrot 1984, we can distinguish three or four *types of polyphony* within his theory, depending on the kinds of instances that are mobilized:

1. **Polyphony with two enunciators.** That is the case with polemic negation (*The wall is not white*): according to Ducrot 1984, the locutor puts on stage two enunciators defending contrary points of view. One of the two is assimilated with the locutor.
2. **Polyphony with two locutors.** This is the case with direct reported speech. In DRS there are two locutors: the primary locutor ('locuteur premier') and the secondary locutor ('locuteur second') (1984:196).

3. **Polyphony with only one enunciator shown to refer to a different person than the locutor.** This is the case with irony, according to Ducrot. It distinguishes irony from polemic negation, which is of type 1.

4. **Polyphony of the locutor-as-an-entity-of-the-world shown to be dissimilar from the locutor-as-such:** that is the case of autoirony.

The question is whether in Ducrot's view this last case is a type apart or a subtype of the third one. What Ducrot has called the locutor-as-an-entity-of-the-world is in fact an entity whose main characteristic is to present a point of view. In that sense he is nothing else than an enunciator.

The ScaPoLine would distinguish types 3 and 4 because type 4 is a case of internal polyphony, type 3 a case of external polyphony.

This small classification shows that polyphony can be looked upon as the co-presence of at least *two discursive entities*, two entities that do not share the same point of view and/or that do not represent the same person.

#### 1.2.2. Points of view

The notion of **point of view (pov)** is another important theoretical element in Ducrot's system. Pov's for Ducrot are semantic units *not bound to a specific form*. With this characterization of pov's Ducrot tackled the problem of sentences containing a negative polarity item, like *grand-chose* or *foggiest* in English. For a sentence like (6):

(6) Il n'a pas fait grand-chose.

[Cf. English: He doesn't have the foggiest idea]

The underlying (affirmative) pov of those negative utterances can not have the form "*Il a fait grand chose*" or "*He has the foggiest idea*", because those forms do not exist as such. But since pov's are not bound to

a specific form, the linguist can pose, as underlying pov for (6) something like "*Il a fait plein de choses*" or "*He has some idea*".

If we try to define polyphony not in terms of the plurality of *enunciative instances* as we did above, but in terms of plurality of *pov's*, we obtain the following three or four cases (it is our classification and not Ducrot's):

1. Polyphony of two *contrasting or conflicting pov's* (e.g. polemic negation)
2. Polyphony of two *semantically and syntactically juxtaposed pov's* (1984:172) (e.g. direct reported speech)
3. Polyphony of two *semantically juxtaposed or superposed pov's* (e.g. presupposition)

Without explicitly theorizing the relations between different points of view, Ducrot at least names some relations between them: juxtaposition, superposition and reaction to:

- (7) Il y a polyphonie quand dans un énoncé il y a multiplicité de pdv qui "**se juxtaposent, se superposent ou se répondent**" (Ducrot 1986:26, our emphasis)

[We have polyphony in an utterance if there is a multiplicity of points of view that *juxtapose, superpose or react to each other*]

An important question, a question that, as far as I know, has not received a clear answer yet, is whether the presence in one and the same utterance of two or more points of view combined with one of these three relations between the pov's is sufficient to create polyphony, especially in the case of juxtaposed pov's. To give just one example: is a sentence like (8), *I have seen Paul, who was sun-tanned*, to be considered polyphonic because it contains two juxtaposed points of view: pov1 – *I have seen Paul* – and pov2 – *Paul was sun-tanned*?

- (8) J'ai vu Paul, qui était bronzé.

[I have seen Paul, who was sun-tanned]

That is a question about the borders of polyphony and its defining criteria.

## 2. The modelization of polyphony by Nølke and the ScaPoLine

According to Nølke Ducrot has never been interested in creating a real *theory* of polyphony (cf. Nølke, Fløttum & Norén 2004:19), and that is exactly what the ScaPoLine wanted to do.

### 2.1. Definition of polyphony by Nølke and the ScaPoLine

First of all, a few words about the definition of polyphony by Nølke and the ScaPoLine. In 1994, Nølke wrote:

- (9) "La polyphonie, c'est bien évidemment cette présence de différents points de vue ou de "voix" dans un seul énoncé" (p.146)

[Polyphony is of course the presence of different points of view or voices in one and the same utterance]

In this citation we see that *voices* is interpreted as *points of view*.

In the version of the ScaPoLine the voices have disappeared from the definition, which only speaks of *points of view*, as we see in (10):

- (10) "Si la phrase véhicule plus d'un pdv, on la qualifiera de polyphonique" (2004:52).

[If the sentence has more than one pov, we qualify it as polyphonic]

## 2.2. Main elements of the framework of Nølke and the ScaPoLine

Nølke and the ScaPoLine clearly state that the theory is loyal to Ducrot's views, at least in principle. Over the years Ducrot's views have been elaborated, specified and made more explicit in different respects. Let us begin with the enunciative instances.

### 2.2.1. Enunciative instances or discursive entities.

#### A. The enunciator of Ducrot

The ScaPoLine explicitly states that it has suppressed the *term* of 'énonciateur' used by Ducrot (see Nølke, Fløttum & Norén 2004:20); Ducrot's *notion*<sup>2</sup> of énonciateur, however, was kept in the form of two other notions, *source of a pov* and *discursive entity* ('être discursif') (cf. Nølke, Fløttum & Norén 2004:30 n.12).

For the ScaPoLine, **sources of pov's** are variables, in the same way as the enunciators are for Ducrot. They are instantiated by one of the different discursive beings. Unlike Nølke and the ScaPoLine, Ducrot does not speak of *instantiation* of his enunciator by a specific discursive entity; he speaks of *assimilation*. In his analysis of polemic negation, the locutor *L* assimilates to the enunciator *E*<sub>2</sub>, who defends the negative pov.

**Discursive entities** are images of the discourse participants (the speaker and the hearer) or of other entities mentioned in the discourse (individual or collective third persons) (Nølke to appear a.). There are eight possible sources of pov's, eight discursive entities thus, in the ScaPoLine:

- the locutor-as-such, *I*<sub>o</sub>
- the textual locutor, *L*<sub>o</sub>

more recently Nølke has added to them:

<sup>2</sup> In reading Ducrot 2001, one has the impression, that in the author's view, the ScaPoLine not only suppressed the *term* of 'énonciateur' but also the *notion*, which is clearly not true.

- the locutor taken at a certain point in time, *I*<sub>t</sub> (equivalent, as far as I can see, to the secondary locutor of Ducrot)
- the addressees *a*<sub>o</sub> and *A* (initially distinguished by Norén)
- the individual third person *t*
- the collective non-homogeneous ON
- and a collective homogeneous ON called the LAW (2004: 40)

Discursive entities are thus themselves in a certain sense *variables* for the different "linguistic persons", in the same way as the enunciators of Ducrot. They are instantiated in the texts by more concrete entities.

Though "sources of pov's" and "discursive entities" are both, in a certain sense, equivalent, within the ScaPoLine, to Ducrot's notion of enunciator, there is, however, one big difference in the *status* of the first two concepts (*sources of pov's* and *discursive entities*) on the one hand, and the status of the concept of enunciator on the other.

In the ScaPoLine, the locutor-as-such, *I*<sub>o</sub> can be directly source of a pov, in the same way as for instance a third individual, the addressee *A* or the collective "ON". That is not possible for the locutor-as-such in Ducrot's theory because for him pov's are by definition linked to *enunciators*, and not in a direct way to the locutor-as-such. It's only in a second "movement" that enunciators are assimilated (or not) with the locutor.

#### B. The locutor

One of the problems with Ducrot's framework is that the definition he gives of the notion of locutor and the way he puts it to work, gives it at least three different statuses. The locutor is:

- the one who, according to the utterance, is responsible for the utterance act,
- the one who is indicated in the utterance by the marks of the first person (pronouns for instance or possessive adjectives, etc.),
- the one who puts the enunciators on stage, he is like a producer or film director.

What is really new in the ScaPoLine is that it redistributes the different functions and characteristics of the locutor over different instances, some of them newly created.

One instance that was newly created is LOC<sup>3</sup>, le locuteur-constructeur-du-sens (locutor as constructor). The characteristics of this entity are the following:

1. LOC assumes the responsibility for the utterance act (according to the utterance itself) (Nølke, to appear b.). That is also what the locutor of Ducrot does.

2. LOC constructs the elements composing the polyphonic configuration (Nølke, to appear b.). He puts the discursive entities on stage as images of linguistic persons. That is also what the locutor of Ducrot does.

3. According to Nølke (to appear b.), LOC, not only creates images of others and of himself (L<sub>o</sub>, L, and l<sub>t</sub>) but is himself an image, an image not of the *locutor* of course (because that would lead to a *regressio ad infinitum*), but of the *speaker*<sup>4</sup>, where the word *speaker* is taken by Nølke, I guess, in a non technical sense, to refer to an individual of the first grammatical person.

4. What differentiates LOC from his images L, l<sub>o</sub> and l<sub>t</sub> is that he can not himself be a source of pov's. He is the conductor, not a musician himself... This is also comparable with the locutor of Ducrot, who can not have himself a pov either.

5. In Nølke, Fløttum & Norén 2004, LOC is considered to be a *discursive entity* (as in Ducrot); but in Nølke (to appear a. and b.), strangely,

<sup>3</sup> In Nølke, Fløttum & Norén (2004) LOC seems to have a different status than its images, not being an image itself. This is not the case in Nølke (to appear), where LOC is put in line, as an image itself of the locutor, with the three other images that are distinguished.

<sup>4</sup> "LOC is defined as an image of the speaker in his activity as responsible of the very utterance act." (Nølke, to appear).

LOC seems to be a *non-discursive entity*, if I interpret the sentence in (11) correctly:

(11) "On notera en particulier que nous mettons en œuvre *deux instances du locuteur*: d'une part LOC qui, selon l'énoncé conçu comme une image de l'énonciation, est l'auteur de celle-ci, le constructeur de la configuration polyphonique; et d'autre part le *locuteur comme être discursif* et donc comme source virtuelle de points de vue" (Nølke to appear a.)

[... *on the one hand* LOC who, according to the sentence which is considered an image of the utterance act, is the author of this sentence, the constructor of the polyphonic configuration, and on the other hand *the locutor as a discursive entity and thus as a virtual source of points of view*].

6. LOC is always present in the utterance. That is not the case with the locutor of Ducrot 1984, who can be absent, namely in *historical utterances* (Ducrot 1984a:195, 1984b:16).

The main reason, in our opinion, why Nølke and the ScaPoLine distinguish different types of instances of the speaker, is that they all leave different traces in the utterance. If this is a correct interpretation, it would be very useful to have, one day, a full inventory of all the possible traces of the locutor classified according to its four instances (LOC, l<sub>o</sub>, l<sub>t</sub> and L).

### 2.2.2. *Points of view*

The ScaPoLine has followed Ducrot in calling the speech objects implicated in the polyphony of an utterance "*points of view*", even if the theory surely does not subscribe to the underlying reasons for this notional choice. The ScaPoLine indeed rejects Ducrot's idea that purely objective dicta do not exist and hence that it is impossible to separate the dictum from the modus. For the ScaPoLine, each pov has a modus and a dictum (an idea put forward by Kronning since 1993). In the formulation of

Nølke, Fløttum & Norén (2004) and of Nølke (to appear b.), pov's have the following general form:

(12) [ X ] ( JUDGE ( p ) )

where X symbolizes the source, JUDGE the judgement and p the content.

In Dendale and Coltier 2005, we have presented some problems with this representation of the general form of the pov, e.g. the fact that X, the source, is put inside the pov in this formalization. I will present some of our conclusions below.

In all its efforts to make explicit the different relevant factors for the polyphonic description of utterances, there is at least one thing the ScaPoLine has not yet done, and that is to establish a clear and motivated *list of modi* necessary to describe the data. The few modi I have found in Nølke, Fløttum and Norén are the following:

(13) "VRAI", "JUSTIFIE", "INJUSTIFIE", "PEUT-ETRE" and "TOP" (Nølke, Fløttum & Norén 2004: 34, 41).

["TRUE", "JUSTIFIED", "UNJUSTIFIED", "PERHAPS" and "TOP(OS)"]

A closer look at this list suggests the following questions or remarks:

1. Are "TRUE" and "JUSTIFIED" to be used for *objects* of judgments of different kinds (propositions for TRUE *versus* speech acts for JUSTIFIED)?
2. Is it sound to name one of the judgments by the linguistic expression by which it is often expressed in the utterance ("PEUT-ETRE")?

Another point the ScaPoLine made more explicit than it was in Ducrot are the different types of pov it distinguishes:

- simple pov's
- hierarchical pov's
- relational pov's

Although Ducrot did not use these terms, the distinctions they describe are implicit in his analyses (in Ducrot's analysis of polemic negation for instance there is a *hierarchical* pov; in his analysis of the connector *mais* (1984a:229) there is a *relational* pov).

### 2.2.3. Enunciative links

Enunciative links (or "links" for short) are an invention of the ScaPoLine. They are meant to make explicit the relation between a discursive entity and a pov.

Ducrot does not use the term "enunciative link". When he speaks about the relation between a discursive entity and a pov he does not speak of *source of a pov* or *responsibility for a pov*; he speaks of it in a non-technical sense, using verbs as "*exprimer un pdv*" (*express*), "*donner (give)*", "*présenter (present)*" or "*soutenir un pdv*", see (14):

(14) "origine" de pdv (Ducrot 1984: 211) "expriment" (p. 204), "donnent" (p. 225) ou présentent" (p. 221), ils "soutiennent" (p. 211), des pdv.

The ScaPoLine has an asymmetrical opposition between the link of *responsibility*, which is unique, and different links of *non-responsibility*, ranging from complete acceptance of the pov, called *Accord (Agreement)*, to complete refutation of it, with, in the middle, a neutral position of non-commitment to the truth or zero modalization (used e.g. by Hans Kronning 2005 in his analysis of the French 'conditionnel').

The link of *Responsibility* is defined by the notion of *source*. A discursive entity which is considered the source of a pov is declared responsible for it by the ScaPoLine. A discursive entity which is considered not to be the source of a pov is declared *non-responsible* for it.

Unfortunately the notion of *source*, important in this definition, is not explicitly defined by the ScaPoLine. From some citations (for references see Dendale & Coltier 2005) we can understand that "to be



source of a pov" is simply "to have the pov", a paraphrase that shifts the problem to the meaning of the verb "to have". Under what conditions can an entity be said "to have" a pov?

Let us try to illustrate the problem with the description of the French concessive marker *certes*. If one says (in French):

- (15) *Certes* les pistes de ski en Suisse sont bonnes, mais tout y est plus cher qu'en France.

[For sure, the ski slopes in Switzerland are good, but everything is more expensive there than in France]

If we analyze *certes*, we see at least three components in its semantics:

1. *Certes* signals that the proposition that follows is true for the speaker  $l_0$  (that is what distinguishes this marker from *peut-être* when used in similar concessive structures). Let us call this first component the *alethic component*.
2. *Certes* signals that the proposition that follows is borrowed from someone else or at least *attributed* to someone else. Let us call this, for convenience, the *evidential component*.
3. *Certes* signals that the proposition that follows is not considered argumentatively decisive for a conclusion. Let us call this the *argumentative component*.

An utterance with *certes* expresses Non-responsibility for the ScaPoLine, more specifically Agreement (*Accord*). This means for the ScaPoLine that  $l_0$  cannot be the source of the pov (*the ski-slopes in Switzerland are good*) expressed in utterance (15). As far as the *evidential* component is concerned this is not problematic. But how can we then represent the *alethic* component of *certes*, the fact that *certes* indicates that the pov is true for the speaker? Can we represent it as in (16)a?

- (16) a. [ $l_0$ ] (true (The ski-slopes in Switzerland are good))  
b. ["The ski-slopes in Switzerland are good" is true ] is a pov  
c.  $l_0$  has the pov [It is true that "The ski-slopes in Switzerland are good"]

If the representation in (16)a is correct, what prevents us from saying, as in (16)b, that (16)a is a pov, because a pov, by definition, as we have seen, is composed of a judgment ("is true") and a content? And from (16)a and (16)b we can conclude (16)c, namely that  $l_0$  has the pov [It is true that "The ski-slopes in Switzerland are good"].

Arrived at this point, we obtain (17)a and then (17)b by inverting ScaPoLine's definition of the link of Responsibility:

- (17) a.  $l_0$  is the source of the pov ([ $l_0$ ] TRUE (The ski-slopes in Switzerland are good))  
b.  $l_0$  is responsible for the pov ([ $l_0$ ] TRUE (The ski-slopes in Switzerland are good))

The conclusion of all this is that *certes* would have to be considered a marker of Responsibility and not a marker of Agreement (and thus not a marker of Non-responsibility).

One of the premises in my conclusion must be wrong for the Scapoline because *certes* is a marker of Non-responsibility for them. But which premise?

There would be other things to say about the enunciative links. I do not have the space to go into detail here. Some observations can be found in Dendale & Coltier (2005). Let us comment on one point.

The notion of **source** is used in the ScaPoLine in two ways or two places. Let us try to show that with the link of *Responsibility*. Let us start from an utterance like the one in (18)a, which contains a simple pov "It's true (*His theory is very powerful*)"

- (18) a. *His theory is very powerful*  
pov1 = It is true (*His theory is very powerful*)  
b.  $l_0$  is responsible for pov1 =  $l_0$  is the source of pov1

- c. pov1: [I<sub>o</sub>] (true (*His theory is very powerful*))  
 d. I<sub>o</sub> is responsible for pov( [I<sub>o</sub>] (true (*His theory is very powerful*)))<sub>pov</sub>

In (18)b we see that *source* is used as a criterion for the definition of the link of Responsibility. We then speak of the "source of a pov", which means "the one who has the pov". In (18)c we see that source is part of the general form of a pov. We could speak in that case of the "source of a judgment on p", where *source* designates "the one who makes the judgment". In (18)d we combine both formulas and see that I<sub>o</sub> appears twice as source in this formula, in each case with a slightly different sense. We also observe that there is co-reference between the one who is responsible for the pov and the one who makes the judgment inside the pov. That seems typical of the link of Responsibility.

What is characteristic of links of **Non-responsibility** is that there is necessarily *non-co-reference* between the two implied discursive entities. To illustrate this, let us take as an example the Non-responsibility link of Refutation, present in polemic negation:

- (19) a. This wall is not white  
 b. Mister Ducrot, you are not lazy. (An authentic utterance suggested to us by Ducrot)

(19) can be described (partially) as in (20):

- (20) I<sub>o</sub> Refutes pov1 (*The wall is white / Mister Ducrot is lazy*) = I<sub>o</sub> is not the source of pov1

Let us now replace "pov1" in (20) by the general form of pov's as presented in Nølke, Fløttum & Norén 2004. We obtain something as in (21), where we see that there is *non-co-reference*:

- (21) I<sub>o</sub> is not the source of ( [non-I<sub>o</sub> = source] (true ((*the wall is white / Mister Ducrot is lazy*))))

### 3. Linguistic approach to dialogism and the praxematics of J. Bres

In parallel to the theories of polyphony of Ducrot and the ScaPoLine, Jacques Bres and a few other linguists belonging to the linguistic school of the "praxématique", have developed, since the mid-90s, a variant of those theories, more loyal and closer to Bakhtin than the existing frameworks. Bres explicitly prefers to speak of *dialogism* instead of *polyphony*. According to him and to Nowakowska, Ducrot wrongly proposed the term *polyphony* for a linguistic phenomenon that Bakhtin named *dialogism*.

#### 3.1. Definition of dialogism by Bres

The term dialogism, according to Bres and Nowakowska, has never received a linguistically operational definition in Bakhtin's work. Therefore Bres proposes the following definition:

- (22) Le dialogisme est "La capacité de l'énoncé à faire entendre, outre la voix de l'énonciateur1, une (ou plusieurs) autre(s) voix qui le feuilletent énonciativement" (Bres 2001:83)

[dialogism is the "capacity of an utterance [0] to let one or several other voices speak over and above the voice of the utterer, turning the utterance into a kind of multi-layered puff pastry"]

This definition – still rather similar to the one given by Ducrot – is accompanied by another one, which is more related to the notion of *dialogue*:

- (23) "Le dialogisme est cette dimension constitutive qui tient à ce que le discours, dans sa production, *rencontre (presque obligatoirement) d'autres discours*" (2001:84, our emphasis)

[Dialogism is the constitutive dimension that makes that a discourse, in its production, almost necessarily *encounters other discourses*]

Dialogism is defined here as the *encounter with other discourses*.

What is important is that the notion of dialogism necessarily conceptualizes the voices or discourses in a relation of *interaction*, rather than in a relation of *superposition* or *juxtaposition*.

For Bres, as for Bakhtin (see Bres 2005:53-54), dialogism is *internal dialogue*, which is opposed to *external dialogue*<sup>5</sup>. External dialogue is defined by Bres (2001:89) as a "sequence of talking turns". Internal dialogue (or dialogism) is the fact "that an utterance (even when not inserted in a real dialogue) also reacts to utterances that preceded and that gave rise to it / or anticipates utterances that are still to come"<sup>6</sup>.

A dialogical utterance is most generally characterized by a "*dédoublement énonciatif*" (*an enunciative dedoubling*). This is the "possibility to distinguish two utterances placed into a hierarchy: the *embedding utterance* ("l'énoncé enchâssant") and the *embedded utterance* ("l'énoncé enchâssé") (Bres & Nowakowska 2004).

Basing himself on Bakhtin, Bres distinguishes in his analyses between *interdiscursive dialogism* and *interlocutive dialogism* (Bres 2001:84), a distinction which is not made, as far as we know, by Ducrot nor by the ScaPoLine.

*Interdiscursive dialogism* is the most common case. It is the relation between an utterance and preceding utterances on the same subject. It corresponds to the notion of polyphony commonly used by Ducrot and the ScaPoLine.

In the *interlocutive dialogism* the enunciator anticipates the reaction an addressee could have to his utterance. This anticipation can take the form, for example, of a clarification of terms the addressee would probably not understand.

<sup>5</sup> The French adjective "dialogique" for the first and the adjective "dialogal" for the second (in English this distinction is hard to make with the vocabulary at our disposal: *dialogical*).

<sup>6</sup> "Un énoncé, quel qu'il soit répond à des énoncés qui l'ont précédé et suscité et anticipe sur des énoncés ultérieurs qu'il suscite" (Bres 2001:84).

### 3.2. Main elements of the framework of Bres

Within the linguistic school of praxematics, Jacques Bres has elaborated a framework for the linguistic analysis of dialogism (Bres 2001:84). Let us have a closer look at the main elements of that system, starting with the enunciative entities.

#### 3.2.1. The enunciative entities for Bres

In Bres's system, the main protagonists in the internal dialogue are called *enunciators* (*énonciateurs*). A dialogical utterance is an utterance that has two or more enunciators. They are necessarily engaged in a *hierarchical* relation one with the other, a point which is less clearly stressed by Ducrot and the ScaPoLine.

The enunciators are symbolically represented as *E1* (with a capital) and *e1* (with a small letter), a convention that underscores the hierarchy between them. If there is a need for a third level, Bres uses *ε1*. For the moment, no more than three levels are provided for in his system.

Enunciators correspond to the *sujets modaux* of Bally: they are responsible for the modal and the deictic actualization of their respective utterances. More on this below.

Because of the hierarchy existing between them, *E1* and *e1* do not have the same status: *e1* is a variable, which can refer to different instances (*E1*, to *E2*, the addressee of the embedding utterance, a third individual person or the collective "ON").

In Bres's system there are two corollaries to the "énonciateurs" or enunciators, namely two "énonciataires" (let us call them here "*addressees*"). They are symbolized as *E2* and *e2*.

Besides the enunciators, the system also contains *locutors*, but compared to the enunciator, he is of secondary importance. The locutor corresponds to the *sujet parlant* of Bally (see Bres & Nowakowska, 2005:4). He is responsible for the phonetic or graphic actualization of the utterance. (Detrie, Siblot & Vérine 2001: 171). As an example of traces of the locutor found in the utterance Detrie, Siblot & Vérine cite the case of a reported speech in which the locutor L1 imitates the voice

characteristics of the locutor  $l_1$  of whom he reports the utterance (2001:173).

In the binary system of Bres, there are even two instances of the locutor: the *embedding locutor*,  $L_1$ , and the embedded locutor,  $l_1$ .

Let us now try to find the equivalents of all these notions in the frameworks of Ducrot and the ScaPoLine.

The enunciators  $E1 / e1$

$e1$  is a variable that corresponds to the source of the ScaPoLine. It can be instantiated by  $E1$ ,  $E2$  and a third person. In Ducrot's system  $e1$  would be an *enunciator*.

$E1$  combines characteristics of the different images of LOC ( $l_0$ ,  $l_1$  and  $L$ .) as possible sources of pov's with characteristics of LOC, the locutor-constructor (namely when Bres says that "E1 puts the enunciator  $e1$  on stage", 1998:199). It refers invariably to the instance linguistically realized by *je (I)* (Bres 1998:196, 2001:85) and is thus less a variable than  $e1$ . Within Ducrot's terminology,  $E1$  is basically an enunciator, who defends a pov (which is called *utterance* by Bres, as we will see below), but since  $E1$  can also put an enunciator on stage, he is at the same time the equivalent of Ducrot's *locuteur*, and since  $E1$  manifests himself in the utterance by the marks of the first person, he can be both Ducrot's *locutor-as-such* or his *locutor-as-an-entity-of-the-world*. The problem evoked above for Ducrot's notion of locutor, namely that it combines too many roles, is even more a problem for Bres's  $E1$ , because it combines most of the functions of Ducrot's locutor with the functions of Ducrot's enunciator.

In the same way as the LOC of the ScaPoLine,  $E1$ , according to Bres, cannot be erased from the utterance. In this respect  $E1$  is slightly different from the locutor of Ducrot, which, as we have seen, can be completely absent from some utterances, namely historical utterances.

The addressees  $E2 / e2$

$E2$  and  $e2$  are two entities absent as technical terms from Ducrot 1984. They would both correspond to what Ducrot 1984 calls "allocutaires". Compared with the ScaPoLine,  $E2$  corresponds to both  $a_0$  and  $A$ . On the

contrary there is no instance in the ScaPoLine that specifically designates  $e2$ .

Schematically:

	Bres	Ducrot	ScaPoLine
Expression of a pov	$e1$ (referring to $E1$ , $E2$ , $e2$ , third, "ON")	Enonciateurs E	Source of pov / discursive entity
Expression of a pov	$E1$	Enonciateurs E	$l_0$ , $l_1$ and $L$
The one who puts on stage	$E1$	Locuteur	LOC
The one who says "I"	$E1$	$L$ , $\lambda$	$l_0$ , $L$
Addressee	$E2$	allocutaires	$a_0$ , $A$
Addressee (secondary)	$e2$ , $e2$	(allocutaires)	-
Physical production of utterance	$L1$ , $l_1$	-	-

### 3.2.2. Utterances instead of points of view

Let us now turn to the equivalents of the pov's in Bres's system.

One of the most striking differences between the system of Bres and the frameworks of the ScaPoLine and Ducrot is that Bres does not use the notion of *point of view*. Instead he uses the notion of *actualized utterance* ("*énoncé actualisé*"). An utterance can be modally, deictically and phonetically or graphically actualized. For our purpose here the modal actualization is the most important, because it allows Bres to distinguish between monological utterances and dialogical utterances:

- A **monological utterance** is an utterance in which a modus applies to a dictum (by the operation called *modal actualization*);
- A **dialogical utterance** is an utterance of which the modus does not apply to a dictum, but to an entity ( $e$ ) presented as already having the status of utterance, a unity thus which was already modalized by another enunciator  $e1$  (Bres 2001:85).

To illustrate this, let us take the example of the confirmation marker *bien* ("indeed") in a sentence like (24):

(24) Les trois otages occidentaux des Khmers rouges ont *bien* été assassinés. (*Le Monde*)

[The three occidental hostages of the Khmers Rouges have *indeed* been assassinated]

The utterance in (24) is dialogical because, due to the presence of *bien*, it refers to a prior utterance, *The three occidental hostages of the Khmers rouges have been assassinated*, which resulted from the application of the modus "true" to an dictum of approximately the same form). The use of *bien / indeed* in (24) indicates that the enunciator E1 reapplies the modus "true" to the first utterance. E1 confirms not a sole dictum but a previous utterance.

The question that remains unanswered for the moment is what all the consequences are of the theoretical viewpoint to let modi apply to already modalized utterances.

There is first of all a terminological difficulty. By replacing the term (and notion) of *pov* by the term (and notion) *utterance*, Bres can not but use the same term *utterance* to refer to two different things, each with a different status: the actual utterance that we observe (e.g. (24)), and a non-actual utterance that we cannot observe directly and which is in a hierarchical relation to the one we can observe. This also means that utterances, since they are entities that have been actualized, are less abstract entities than some kinds of *pov*'s of the ScaPoLine or some *pov*'s in the layered representation of Kronning (1996).

Another problem is that utterances in Bres's system, because they are entities resulting not only from a *modal* actualization, but also from a *phonetic or graphic* actualization, are bound to a specific linguistic form or expression. The question then is how Bres would account for negative polarity items like *grand-chose* or *foggiest* in negative utterances, where the underlying affirmative utterances necessarily

differ in form from the negative utterance.

Whatever the answer of Bres to those questions would be, the idea that there should be objects in the polyphonic utterance that are not only *pov*'s but utterances has also found an application in Kronning's recent analysis of the 'conditionnel' (Kronning 2005). In his analysis certain *pov*'s are utterances (linked to a previous or future act of utterance), others not. A consequence of that is that some *pov*'s are bound to a specific form or expression, while others are not, as Kronning explicitly recognizes.

A big difference between Bres's system and the systems of Ducrot and the ScaPoLine is that for the latter polyphony is a relation between two contents (*pov*'s) in the utterance, with the utterance itself as the trace-bearer of the superposition of *pov*'s. For Bres, it is the utterance itself that enters into a dialogical relation with other utterances and not some of its content.

More generally, what is typical of Bres's system is that a basic and systematic distinction is made between the instances related to the *embedding utterance*, E, and the ones related to the *embedded utterance*, e. This has of course to do with the importance Bres attaches to the hierarchical character of the relation between the two utterances. This systematic distinction in level for the indication of utterances, enunciators and addressees is absent in Ducrot and the ScaPoLine, where the numbering of the enunciators E1, E2 or *pov*1, *pov*2, has nothing to do with hierarchy.

### 3.2.3. Enunciative links?

In Bres there is no theorization of the enunciative links between the discursive entity and the *pov* the ScaPoLine distinguishes. In this respect Bres resembles Ducrot: he is of course forced to specify the position of E towards e, speaking of refutation of e (1998:198) or rejection ("rejet", 1998:203), but there is no effort of axiomatization or even classification of these links at all.

### 3.3. Polyphonic data

If we compare as a final point, the polyphonic or dialogical markers described by the different authors we have studied here, we see that the largest inventory of described markers is to be found in Bres. Below is a list based on Bres 1998 and 1999:

- irony
- negation (comprising rectification and what Bres calls "renchérissement" (re-enforcement): *pas seulement mais aussi...*)
- confirmation
- concession and opposition
- presupposition
- interrogation
- comparison (e.g. *plus que, moins que, autant que*)
- cleft sentences
- extraposition (at the beginning or the end of the sentence: *le X, c'est Y*)
- use and alteration of proverbs or well-known phrases, called "détournement"
- the French 'conditionnel' with hearsay value
- echo-utterances
- autonymical modalisation (e.g. *si je puis me permettre l'expression*)
- reported speech

Most of the described data have previously been described in the polyphonic frameworks of Ducrot or Nølke, but some of them are new. One of the most obvious advantages of Bres's approach is that all the data are apparently analyzed with exactly the same basic theoretical apparatus, the same symbols and the same description-principles<sup>7</sup>. This has not always been the case, in my view, with Nølke and the ScaPoLine, probably because their studies are spaced out over many years and were never

<sup>7</sup> Cf. "l'ensemble de ces faits, que nous regrouperons dans la catégorie des marqueurs de dialogisme, relève d'un même phénomène, et peut être analysé à partir des mêmes outils théoriques." (Bres & Vérine 2002:161, our emphasis).

reintegrated in the developed theoretical model, that itself, was under constant evolution.

### Conclusion

In this paper I have given a presentation of the main elements and aspects of Ducrot's 1984 account of polyphony and compared them with the corresponding elements in two other frameworks: the model of the ScaPoLine by Nølke and the Scandinavian Polyphonists on the one side and the descriptive system of Bres on the other. Other frameworks or variants of the three previous ones have not been taken into account here.

The differences between the frameworks which this comparison highlights has shown us some elements which deserve closer scrutiny: e.g. the nature of the objects of polyphony (points of view or utterances) or the necessity to distinguish an instance responsible for the *content* of the point of view (or utterance) and an instance responsible for the *form* of the utterance (cf. the distinction between E1 and L1 for Bres for example).

In some further work different analyses – polyphonic and non polyphonic – of the same phenomenon will be examined and compared, which will complete the comparison of these more theoretical aspects.

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# **Sproglig polyfoni**

## **Arbejds papirer**

**5**

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