

BE LIKE quotatives in other languages: pragmatic borrowings or independent developments?

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**“So then
I said...”**

*“so then
I was like...”*

new 'similarity' quotatives

and there was a cop and police car right there and I started screaming and

I'm like "go and get them" (Cheshire and Fox 2007)

tu ves que con Javi tu vas a tener confianza **en plan** "tia pues adelante"

you see you will feel safe with Javi like "go ahead then man" (Palacios Martínez 2014)

og han er **liksom**, "å vi må bastille tog billet" og er helt hyper

and he's like, "oh we must order our train tickets" and is totally hyper (Hasund et al 2012)

new 'similarity' quotatives

Afrikaans	<i>soos</i>	'so as'
Danish	<i>ligesom</i>	'like as'
Greek	<i>tipou</i>	'type'
Hebrew	<i>kaze</i>	'like this'
Croatian	<i>kao</i>	'like'
French	<i>genre</i>	'type, like'

(Buchstaller and Van Alphen 2012)



Multicultural London English/Multicultural Paris French (MLE/MPF) project

77 speakers, aged 8—19

recorded in friendship groups with a fieldworker

corpus of approx. 639,000 words

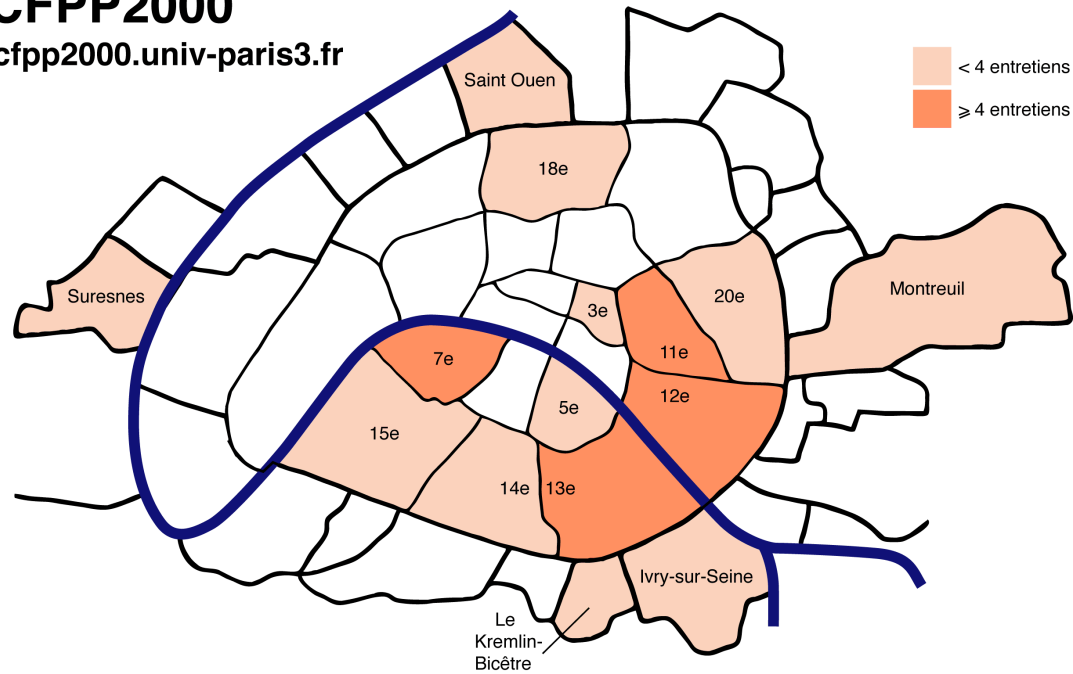
The quotative analysis is based on 60 speakers aged 14-19



Corpus de Français Parlé Parisien

CFPP2000

cfpp2000.univ-paris3.fr



<http://cfpp2000.univ-paris3.fr/index.html>

Older speakers in the CFPP

DIRE, 'say'

la propriétaire de l'époque lui **a dit** euh "nous pouvons vous le louer à une condition c'est que vous nous promettiez que vous n'avez pas d'enfants"
(Yvette Audin)

*the landlord at the time **said** to her er "we can let it to you on one condition that's that you promise us that you won't have any children"*)

ZERO

quand on nous voyait revenir dans la cité "où c'est qu'vous avez encore été vous êtes crades" et tout (Jacqueline Pelletier)

when they saw us coming back to the estate "where have you been you're dirty" and everything)

Older speakers

SE DIRE, 'think' (lit. 'say to yourself')

la mort de Claude était arrivée très tôt **j'me suis dit** "j'ai j'ai au moins la chance de n' pas avoir à déménager" (Pauline de Bordes)

*Claude's death happened very early I **thought** "at least I was lucky that I hadn't moved house"*

	CFFP, born 1923-1948 % (N)	MPF, born 1995-2001 % (N)
DIRE	77.6 (139)	41.3 (423)
[ZERO]	9.5 (17)	12.4 (127)
SE DIRE	5.0 (9)	3.0 (31)
FAIRE	0.5 (1)	28.4 (300)
<i>genre: + DIRE genre/FAIRE genre</i>		2.0 (20+ 4)
<i>en mode</i>		0.6 (6)
<i>FAIRE style</i>		0.1 (1)
ETRE <i>la</i>		2.6 (29)
ETRE <i>comme ça</i>		1.3 (13)
others	5.6 (10)	4.7 (48)
TOTAL	179	1023

Younger speakers (MPF)

FAIRE, 'do'

il **fait** "ouais < rire> hmm bonne nuit" (Lilianne)
(he **goes** "yeah <laughs> hmm good night")

SIMILARITY QUOTATIVES

on dirait des gamins **genre** "non j'ai pas deux ans" (Letitia)
(you'd think they were kids **like** "no I'm not two years old")

et moi **en mode** euh " ouais vas-y je tombe enceinte" "ouais vas-y" <imitation>
(Livia)
(and me **like** er "yeah go on I'll get pregnant" "yeah go on" <imitation>)

et ils **font style** (.) " oh la la c'est trop simple ils ont des massages des masques et tout" <imitation> (Annabelle)
(and they **go like** (.) "oh gosh it's so easy they have massages masks and everything" <imitation>)

après j'ai mis juste les chansons du Roi Lion ma sœur et moi **on était là** "ouais" et tout (Issa)

*(afterwards I put on just the songs from The Lion King my sister and me **were there** "yeah" and everything)*

moi j'ai failli vomir **j'étais comme ça** <vomiting noises> (Elisa)

*(I was almost sick **I was like this** <vomiting noises>)*

moi le truc qui m'a le plus fait rire **c'est** (...) " eh cousin (..) je sais pas si (xxxxx) ta brosse à dent<imitation> <rires> (Abdel)

*(the thing that made me laugh the most **it's** "oh cousin (..) I don't know if (xxxxx) your tooth brush <imitation> <laughter>)*

Calque on BE LIKE?

- A frequent pattern transfer (Heath 1984) or convergent development (Weinreich 1953)
- Music from UK & USA
- Studying English
- Study trips or exchange visits
- High levels of proficiency unnecessary for pragmatic borrowing (Peterson 2017)

Spoiler

	noun	prep.	adverb	discourse marker	filler	genre que /c'est genre	quotative	Total N
1920- 1939 (4 speakers)	92 (12)	8 (1)						13
1940- 1959 (10 speakers)	85 (22)	12 (3)		3.5 (1)				26
1960- 1979 (8 speakers)	79 (23)	7 (2)	3 (1)	3 (1)		3 (1)	3 (1)	31

the noun *genre*

mais je trouve qu'il y a un mélange **des genres** quand même
*but I find that there's a mix of **types** all the same*
(Pierre-Marie)

non mais c'est ceux qui ont **c'genre de chien** c'est ceux qui travaillent
dans la sécurité (Abdel)
*no it's those who have **this kind of dog** it's those who work in the
security business*

the noun *genre*

nous on s'intéresse beaucoup au quartier parce que nous **on est on est du genre à à à à** chercher la compagnie à avoir **tu vois** à s'mettre au courant (Nicole Noroy)

*we're very interested in the neighbourhood because **we're we're** the type **to to to to** search out the company to keep **you see** to find out what's going on*

j'étais là "pourquoi tu mets **ce genre de** pantalon <bruit de bouche> pourquoi tu mets **ce genre de** pantalon!" (Magali)

*I was there "why are you wearing **these kinds of** trousers <tuts> why are you wearing **these kinds of** trousers!"*

Quotative genre

mais c'est pas une influence négative **du genre** "tiens si t'arrêtais de travailler euh fais comme nous" c'est pas tout à fait comme ça (Pierre-Marie Simo)

*but it isn't a negative influence **like** [lit. 'of the type'] "well if you stopped working er do the same as us" it isn't quite like that*

je sais pas c'était trop cramé (.) mais rien que du fait que (.) les publications c'était **du genre** (.) " ouais tu m(e) manques" ouais nanana (.) nanana (.) nanana" (Lynne)

*I don't know it was too obvious (.) but just because of (.) the publications it was **like** [lit. 'it was of the type'] "yeah I miss you" yeah and stuff*

Preposition

y avait plusieurs bistros euh tous les anciens commerces **genre** crèmerie fromagerie boucherie boucherie-chevaline (Leo Valentin)

*there were several bistros er all the old shops **like** a dairy, cheese shop, butcher's, horse-butcher's*

pour moi riche c'est d'acheter des trucs **genre** Dior Chanel et tout enfin les grandes marques (Frederique)

*in my opinion to be rich is to buy things **like** Dior Chanel and stuff the big names*

Quotative genre

il y a quelqu'un de la cité nanana direct elles sont là à prendre des grands airs **genre** " ah tu viens de la cité ah d'accord" <imitation> (Aimée)

*when someone comes from an estate blah blah automatically they are there giving themselves fancy airs **like** "ah you come from the estate ah alright" <imitating>*

	noun	prep.	adv.	discourse marker	filler	c'est genre	quotative	Total N
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1940-59 (10 spkrs)	85 (22)	12 (3)		3.5 (1)				26
1960-79 (8 spkrs)	79 (23)	7 (2)	3 (1)	3 (1)		3 (1)	3 (1)	31
1980-95 (11 spkrs)	37 (20)	5.5 (3)	4 (2)			4 (2)	15 (8)	54
1992-99 (MPF spkrs)	2.6 (13)	2.8 (14)	2.6 (13)	76.5 (378)	3.4 (17)	7.9 (39)	4.0 (20)	494

Adverb

le Texas ça fait **genre** douze fois la France (Nadia)

*Texas is **like** twelve times as big as France*

Discourse marker

et j'étais au téléphone avec elle (.) après (.) **genre** j'allume mon téléphone (.)

et d'un coup le téléphone il est tombé tu vois (.) dans l'eau sans faire exprès
(Christine)

*and I was on the phone to her (.) afterwards (.) **like** I turned on my phone and
all of a sudden the phone fell you see in the water I didn't do it on purpose*

Discourse particle

il y a tous les casinos il y a le Venise **genre** avec des gondoles et tout

(Christophe)

*There are all the casinos there's Venice **like** with gondolas and everything*

C'est genre

Magali: c'est pas

Aisatta: jaune !

Magali: **c'est genre** blond rouge vert bleu

*it's not yellow! **It's like** pale red green blue*

Filler

Fernand c'était un italien (.) et **genre** (.) et **genre** qu'est-ce que je veux dire (.) et en fait ils étaient super proches

*Fernand was Italian (.) and **like** (.) and **like** I mean (.) and actually they were really close*

c'est encore l'époque où les gens ils voyaient un noir ils sont choqués
genre "oh (.) un noir ?" <with mimesis> (Jordan)

it's still the period where when people saw a black person they were shocked **like** "oh (.) a black person?" <with mimesis>

il dit ça comme ça **genre** "putain il pleut heu" <voix désinvolte>
(Suzanne)

(he said it like that **like** "[swear word] it's raining huh" <flippant tone>)

pendant l'été je trainais avec eux dehors (.) **c'est genre** "oui je suis bien là et tout . (Laura)

during the summer I hung out with them outside (.) **it's like** "yes I'm there alright and stuff"

The shared meanings of *like* in its different syntactic categories produce a “syntactic-semantic field” of mutually overlapping and reciprocally reinforcing functions that are relevant to the emergence of the quotative function (Buchstaller 2001)

Many forms used as quotatives are “notoriously polyfunctional outside the quotative frame” (Güldemann 2001)

The discourse marker use increases the frequency of *genre*, therefore increasing its chance of being used in a new way (de Smet 2016)

Entry into the quotative system

Content of the quote is a classic factor affecting the use of BE LIKE (Tagliamonte and D'Arcy 2007)

internal thought

je me suis dit 'ça c'est pas lui'

I thought "that's not him"

hypothetical quotes

on dirait des gamins **genre** "non j'ai pas deux ans" (Letitia)

you'd think they were kids like "no I'm not two years old"

non-lexicalised sound

moi j'ai failli vomir **j'étais comme ça** <vomiting noises> (Elisa)

I was almost sick I was like this <vomiting noises>

direct speech

après **j'ai dit** " non vas-y laisse tomber" (Letitia)
*then I **said** "no go on drop it"*

Input			0.06
Total N			359
	FW	%	n
Content			
hypothetical quotes	.74	16	10/61
non-lexicalised sound and gesture	.71	27	4/15
internal monologue	.66	12	5/42
direct speech	.07	0.4	1/241
<i>range</i>	67		
Mimesis			
yes	.69	14	15/108
no	.31	2	5/251
<i>range</i>	38		

Two language changes

(1) Grammaticalisation of *genre*

noun > preposition > adverb > discourse marker > discourse particle > filler

(2) Emergence of a quotative function for *genre*

- now polyfunctional
- with an appropriate syntactic-semantic field

Emergence of dramatised style of quoting:

New forms for: mimetic quotes
 non-lexicalised quotes
 what someone might have said or might say



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- Güldemann, T. (2001) Quotative constructions in African languages: A synchronic and diachronic survey. Unpublished Habilitationsschrift, University of Leipzig.
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