

SOME REMARKS ON REPORTED EVIDENTIALITY IN FRENCH AND IN ESTONIAN: A CONTRASTIVE APPROACH

Reet Alas, Anu Treikelder

Abstract. Among the multiple meanings of the French conditional, the marking of mediated information is generally pointed out in the studies treating this mood in French. In Estonian there is a specialized grammatical(ized) form for marking reported evidentiality—the quotative mood.

Our paper aims to study the contrast between the use of evidentiality strategies in French and Estonian. The analysis will be based on a translated parallel corpus and on different types of texts and studies of monolingual corpora of both languages.

In typological studies the French conditional and the Estonian grammatical evidentials are considered as belonging to the same type of evidentiality, that of reported information (Aikhenvald 2006). However, it appears that they tend to be used in different types of discourse. This observation has served as a starting point for our study: the aim of our contrastive analysis is to find out whether these divergences are confirmed by translated texts, whether they also reveal semantic differences between these evidentiality markers, and which strategies are used in the translations in both directions.*

Keywords: contrastive linguistics, quotative, conditional mood, corpus analysis, French, Estonian

1. Introduction

The aim of our paper is to compare the functioning of two particular forms in genetically unrelated languages: one in French, the so-called “journalistic conditional”, and the other in Estonian, the *quotative* or *oblique* mood, more precisely the quotative mood manifested by the bound morpheme *-vat* suffixed to the first component of

* This research was supported by European Social Fund's Doctoral Studies and Internationalisation Programme DoRa. We thank Antoine Chalvin for his useful comments on the examples.

the verb phrase. Both of these forms have been described as evidentiality markers or strategies in typological and monolingual studies.

We understand here evidentiality as it has been defined by Alexandra Y. Aikhenvald: it is a linguistic category “whose primary meaning is source of information” (2006: 3). The two forms in our focus belong to the same subcategory of evidentiality in the system of Aikhenvald (type A3): the one of **reported evidentiality**, opposing reported or “hearsay” information to “everything else” (2006: 25).

Even if evidentiality is not the primary meaning of the French conditional, one of its particular uses has been regarded as evidential in several studies, including the book of Aikhenvald (2006: 11). This typological similarity as well as the evidence from translated texts has encouraged us to study the correlations between the Estonian quotative mood and the French conditional’s evidential use. The correspondence between these forms can be illustrated by the examples (1) and (2).

- | | | | | |
|------|------------------------------------|--------------|----------------|--------|
| (1a) | Le | Président | est | malade |
| | The | President | be:PRS.IND.3SG | ill |
| | ‘The President is ill.’ | | | |
| | | | | |
| (1b) | Le | Président | ser-ait | malade |
| | The | president | be-COND.3SG | ill |
| | ‘The President is said to be ill.’ | | | |
| | | | | |
| (2a) | President | on | haige | |
| | President | be:PRS.IND.3 | ill | |
| | ‘The president is ill.’ | | | |
| | | | | |
| (2b) | President | ole-vat | haige | |
| | President | be-QUOT | ill | |
| | ‘The president is said to be ill.’ | | | |

The sentences (1a) and (2a) are in indicative in both languages and give as a default reading that the speaker acts as the source of information. The sentences (1b) and (2b), respectively in conditional and quotative, imply that the information has been received from somebody else; the source of information stays unspecified in these examples. The question that arises is whether the sentences (1b) and (2b) convey the same meaning.

Our analysis is based on a parallel corpus of translated texts, including translations in both directions. However, in the present phase, the analysis is confined only to the French equivalents of the Estonian quotative. This is due to the nature of our corpus and difficulties related to the distinction of the meanings of the French conditional. On the other hand, other grammatical tools used in Estonian for expressing evidential values in the predicate (such as the present perfect, the pluperfect or the past participle) have not been taken into account either. The present article is thus only a first attempt to compare phenomena related to evidentiality in Estonian and in French.

Firstly, we shall discuss some general issues concerning the description of the forms in question in the studies of both languages (chapter 2), then the results of the corpus analysis will be presented (chapter 3) and finally we shall observe more

closely some examples allowing, in our opinion, to point to some essential differences between these forms (chapter 4).

2. Some general remarks on the correspondence between the French conditional and the Estonian quotative

2.1. The different status of the French conditional and the Estonian quotative

One of the difficulties of comparing these two forms results from the status they have as evidentiality markers. If the Estonian quotative is unanimously regarded as a marker of evidentiality by the Estonian linguists, in French, the evidential meaning concerns only one of the uses of the conditional mood besides its hypothetical (modal) and temporal use (see e.g. Haillet 2002, who calls it the “conditional of enunciative otherness”, for the distinction of these basic meanings of the French conditional). This form cannot thus be regarded as an evidentiality marker in the strict sense, since evidentiality is not its primary meaning, but rather as an evidentiality strategy according to Aikhenvald (2006). Opinions vary with regard to the relation between the French conditional and the category of evidentiality. Among French-speaking linguists Patrick Dendale (Dendale 1993, Dendale, Coltier 2003) has probably related it most radically to this category (his name for this form is “epistemic conditional”). He considers it explicitly as a marker of evidentiality, since according to him the value of “borrowed” information prevails over the modal value of uncertainty and the alethic value of non-commitment for the truth of the information of this type of conditional¹.

Other linguists who are more concerned with a unified description of the semantics of the French conditional, i.e. the relation of the journalistic conditional to hypothetical and temporal meanings, question the legitimacy of postulating the existence of this category in French. For instance, Agnès Celle in her comparative analysis of French, English and German prefers to discard this category in the study of these languages. According to Celle, this type of conditional is rather a marker of non-commitment to the truth of the information (*non-prise en charge*). (Celle 2006)

On the other hand, the Estonian quotative, formed by adding the suffix *-vat* to the verb stem (*V-vat* for the present and *AUX-vat v-nud* for the past form), is an example par excellence of grammaticalized evidentiality. The latter is composed of the auxiliary verb *olema* ‘to be’ in present quotative followed by the past participle of the core verb. As has generally been suggested, this evidential form developed from the present participle, originally used as a complement of speech-act verbs that later came to act as the independent predicate of any clause (Erelt et al. 2006: 128, see also Sepper 2007 and Kehayov 2008). However, it has to be pointed out that the main marker of the quotative *-vat* is not exclusively reserved for this function: at the same time, Estonian uses it in its original function of present participle and also in the *vat*-infinitive forms.

¹ See Dendale (1993: 175): “Le conditionnel épistémique est avant tout un marqueur *évidentiel* parce que sa valeur de base – c’est-à-dire la valeur qui est toujours présente, qui n’est pas soumise à des variations et qui en plus détermine et explique les autres valeurs – est la valeur *évidentielle* d’emprunt.”

2.2. Semantic correspondences between the French conditional and the Estonian quotative

According to Mati Ereht, Helle Metslang and Karl Pajusalu (2006: 127), the *vat*-marked form, called “reported indicative” in that article, “shows that the speaker is not the source of the message but acts as the mediator of the message received from somewhere”. In addition to this central meaning, also mentioned for the French journalistic conditional by Dendale, Petar Kehayov (2008: 98) refers to its possible correlate meaning of uncertainty (“the cognitive remoteness of the source of information correlates with the degree of certainty”), so there is, as he points out, “an implicational relation between the meanings of evidentiality and epistemicity”. Kehayov (2008: 88) also mentions the correlation between the marking of the source of information and the degree of the speaker’s commitment to the truth of the proposition. All these meanings are pointed out by Laurent Gosselin (2005: 175) who sums up the semantic features assigned to the French journalistic conditional in different studies as follows:

- it appears in the declarative discourse with the aim of passing on information;
- the asserted information is obtained from a source other than the speaker;
- the speaker does not take any responsibility for the information;
- the information is introduced as uncertain;
- the uncertain character of the information is taken as provisional (it is expected to be confirmed).

All these features, except the last one, which is not usually mentioned by French linguists either, are thus common for the two forms in our focus.

2.3. The discursive context of the French journalistic conditional and the Estonian quotative

The name of the “journalistic conditional” refers directly to the type of discourse where it appears most often: it is particularly frequent in the French written media. It also occurs often in the scientific discourse but is relatively rare in fiction (see e.g. Aikhenvald 2006: 106–107 and Kronning 2002).

A recent corpus-based study by Maria-Maren Sepper (2007) of the share and dynamics of different means of expressing reported information in journalistic discourse and fiction shows that in contemporary Estonian the quotative is rare in the former and occurs more often in the latter. It has also been pointed out that the Estonian quotative is rather seldom used in everyday speech where other means occur instead for expressing indirect meaning (see Toomet 2000). It could thus be said that both forms in our focus are mostly used in the written language.

Unfortunately, no French-Estonian translated press corpus is available and a comparative study of these forms in journalistic discourse could thus only be made on the basis of comparable monolingual corpora—a corpus-based study would be a further aim of our research. However, our corpus also contains non-fiction texts, including those representing scientific discourse, which are likely to offer sufficient

evidence for setting out preliminary hypotheses on the equivalences and differences between the two forms in question.

It can be argued that the difference in the distribution of the “journalistic conditional” and the Estonian quotative does not necessarily indicate a semantic difference between these forms: it might also reflect divergences between the conventions of journalistic texts in both languages. For instance, Sepper (2007: 320) suggests in her article that “if the quotative is used, the source of information remains impersonal and the form does not comply with the requirements of journalistic text as a text type”. It is though also justified to argue that the disparity of the discursive context of these forms might result from differences in their meaning, since the rarity of quotative in journalistic discourse does not indicate that no reported information occur in Estonian written media but rather that other linguistic means are used to express it (cf. Sepper 2007).

3. The results of the corpus analysis

Our comparative analysis is based on the Estonian-French parallel text corpus². It consists of 2,140,872 running words and includes 5 different textual categories: Estonian fiction (50% of words), French fiction (24%), Estonian non-fiction (3%), French non-fiction (19%) and EU legislative texts (4%).³

The choice of corpus texts is inspired by 3 main principles: they are supposed to be contemporary, bilingual and diverse/representative, i.e. different authors and genres are used. As was noted before, the journalistic genre is regrettably unrepresented in the corpus due to the lack of translations. Presumably, the journalistic conditional would have been more precisely observable if the written French media texts were included.

The morphological analysis was made by means of ESTMORF search engine⁴ and based on the Estonian quotative retrieval.

3.1. General results of the corpus analysis

After the first selection only 82 quotative forms were collected by ESTMORF, 50 of them (61%) were present, and 32 (39%) past forms.⁵ This result shows that the quotative form does not appear very often even in fiction. As could be expected, it is completely absent in the EU legislative texts.

The principal results are shown in table 1 that first sorts the data by the direction of translation (that is from Estonian to French or vice versa) and secondly by the form of quotative (either present or past).

Despite the semantic and functional similarities assigned to the Estonian quotative and the French conditional in different studies, the equivalents of the Estonian quotative either in French translations or in original texts were very rarely in the conditional form. In total, in our corpus 12 quotative forms (in altogether 10 sentences) were translated into conditional, 7 of them were found in originally Estonian texts and 5 of them in French ones.

² The corpus is available at <http://corpus.estfra.ee/ee> (10.07.2009).

³ The corpus has been created in order to facilitate an extremely labour-intensive undergoing project, the composition of Estonian-French Dictionary.

⁴ The ESTMORF program is a morphological analyser and synthesizer of the Estonian language; for further information: <http://www.eki.ee/keeletehnoloogia/projektid/estmorf/> (30.12.2009).

⁵ One reason for these low frequencies may be the exclusion in the present study of the quotative forms manifested by the lone past participle (the simple past of the quotative mood).

Table 1. The Estonian quotative and its French equivalents in the ESTFRA corpus

Equivalents of Quotative in the Estonian-French translations		Original French forms translated into Quotative in the French-Estonian translations		All findings
Present Quotative in Estonian	41	Present Quotative in Estonian	9	50
Present Conditional	2	Present Conditional	5	7
Present Indicative	17	Present Indicative	1	18
Imperfect	16	Imperfect	1	17
Present Infinitive	2	Present Infinitive	1	3
Present Subjunctive	2	Present Subjunctive	–	2
Present Participle	1	Present Participle	–	1
Pluperfect	1	Pluperfect	–	1
Adjective	–	Adjective	1	1
Past Quotative in Estonian	31	Past Quotative in Estonian	1	32
Past Conditional	5	Past Conditional	–	5
Pluperfect	12	Pluperfect	–	12
Imperfect	6	Imperfect	1	7
Present Indicative	2	Present Indicative	–	2
Past Simple	2	Past Simple	–	2
Past Infinitive	1	Past Infinitive	–	1
Past Perfect	1	Past Perfect	–	1
Past Subjunctive	1	Past Subjunctive	–	1
Preposition	1	Preposition	–	1
	72		10	82

Regarding the French-origin texts, the quotative is rather modestly used by the Estonian translators. It is all the more significant that half of these 10 quotatives were originally the French conditional forms. 4 out of 5 quotative-conditional equivalents were found in the non-fiction texts: 2 in *Martin Luther: un destin* by Lucien Febvre and 2 in *La volonté de savoir. Histoire de la sexualité, I* by Michel Foucault. In a further study it would be interesting to see whether these texts contain journalistic conditional forms that have not been translated into quotative in Estonian.

In the Estonian-source texts, the verbs that occur in the present quotative in Estonian are mainly translated into the present and imperfect indicative forms in French (respectively 41% and 39%). The examples in the present infinitive (2 forms), present subjunctive (2 forms), present conditional (2 forms), present participle (1 form) and the pluperfect (1 form) seemed rather insignificant.

The quotative past form is also primarily translated into indicative forms, such as pluperfect (39%) and imperfect (19%). The past conditional is represented by 5 occurrences (16%), all of them are interpretable as the epistemic conditional, like in (3). This result is partly due to the above-mentioned difference of the usual genre where the Estonian quotative and the French journalistic conditional occur.⁶

It is quite remarkable that one translator seems to use the quotative-conditional relation much more often than the others: all the examples of quotative translated into the evidential past conditional come from Jean-Pascal Ollivry's translation of Karl Ristikivi's historic novel *Põlev Lipp / L'étendard en flammes*, see (3). The

⁶ This conclusion is also observed in the results of another bilingual corpus analysis carried out in 2008 (Alas, Treikelder in press): among the 179 conditional forms found in the French novel *Le Grand Meaulnes* none were classifiable as a 'journalistic conditional' with the principal function to express the reported evidentiality.

present conditional occurrence also comes from Ollivry (this time it concerns the novel by Tammsaare) but it seems to be more likely motivated by the sequence of tenses (6). Only one example out of 7 was found in the Antoine Chalvin's translation.

One can argue that the use of form can also depend on the original author's choices and not only on the translator's preference but we believe that both the original texts and the translator's choices have influenced the result. Firstly, it is clear that in Ollivry's translations the quotative-conditional equivalence is more frequent than in the others; but secondly, evidence suggests that there are also some objective constraints for the choice of the verb form: in the other quotative-rich sources, i.e. *Vastutuulelaev* by Jaan Kross (19 forms) and *Ajaloo ilu* by Viivi Luik (15 forms) there was only case of using conditional as a counterpart for quotative. The scarceness of conditional forms is presumably brought about by the particular genre or context that does not support the use of the epistemic conditional. This difference is observable in the examples (3) and (4) and will be re-discussed in the last chapter.

(3a) *Ühe sellise legendi järgi olevat* [be.AUX:QUOT] Konradin Paviias uusaasta ööl **õnne valanud** [pour_fortune:PST.PTCP] ja sellest **olevat välja tulnud** [be.AUX:QUOT + come_out:PST.PTCP] üks imelik kuju, mida ta sõbrad igauks omamoodi **olevat katsunud** [be.AUX:QUOT + try:PST.PTCP] seletada. Üks **olevat leidnud** [be.AUX:QUOT + find:PST.PTCP], et see **kujutavat** [represent:QUOT] laeva, teine trooni, kolmas katafalki.

(3b) *Selon une de ces légendes*, Konradin **aurait interrogé** [have.AUX:COND.3SG + interrogate:PST.PTCP] le destin à Pavia dans la nuit du nouvel an, et la réponse **aurait revêtu** [have.AUX:COND.3SG + take_on:PST.PTCP] une forme énigmatique que ses amis **auraient tenté** [have.AUX:COND.3PL + try:PST.PTCP] d'interpréter chacun à sa façon. **Pour l'un** [for.PREP + the.SG.M + one.SG.M] **c'était** [be:IMPRF.3SG] un navire, pour l'autre un trône, pour un troisième un catafalque.

'According to one of these legends, Konradin **is said to have melted** lead [for predicting the future] at New Year's Eve and an enigmatic figure **had come out** of it that **his friends had tried** to interpret, everyone in his own way. One of them **is said to have guessed** that **it reminded** him of a ship, the second a throne and the third a catafalque.'

(Ristikivi–Ollivry)⁷

In the example (3) which is coming from a historical novel dominated by traditional chronological past tense narration the translator has in most cases chosen to use the epistemic conditional for the quotative forms. On the contrary, in the example (4) none of these forms has rendered the conditional form and the latter is regarded completely inappropriate in this context by the translator. This example comes from a novel representing non-linear narrative with a very complex temporal structure and a constant alternation of tenses.

(4a) See on seesama õun, millest kahekümne kahe aasta pärast talle räägib linalakk Maarja, surnu tütar, seesama, kes on rootsi keeles kirjutanud 280 lehekülge eesti elust ja surmast. Isa tapeti NKVD poolt 1944.?! aastal.

⁷ The source of the example is given according to the author's and the translator's name, for further details see the corpus bibliography. The English translations have been provided by the authors of this article.

Ühes majas, mis on praegugi alles. Seda maja on Maarjale Eestis näidatud. See **olevat** [be:QUOT] igav ja harilik maja, mitte sugugi mõrvapaiga moodi, köögis **tehtavat süüa** [cook:QUOT] ja toas **seisvat** [stand:QUOT] televiisor. Maja taga aias aga **kasvavat** [grow:QUOT] vana kõver õunapuu suurte valgete õuntega, mis **kumavat** [shine:QUOT] nagu kuu.

Selle õunapuu all **olevat** [be:QUOT] üks lapp maad, kus aeg seisab. Seda, et ta seisab, **olevat** [be:QUOT] kohe näha, isegi palja silmaga. Sinna ei saja vihma, ja kui keegi midagi ütleb, siis sinna see ei kosta.

- (4b) C'est de cette même pomme que lui parlera, vingt-deux ans plus tard, la blonde Maarja – fille d'un défunt –, qui a écrit en suédois deux cent quatre-vingts pages sur une vie et une mort estoniennes. Son père a été tué par le NKVD en 1944, dans une maison qui existe encore aujourd'hui. On l'a montrée à Maarja lors d'un séjour en Estonie. C'est [be:PRS.IND.3SG] une maison triste et ordinaire, qui ne ressemble en rien au lieu d'un assassinat: dans la cuisine, on **prépare** [prepare:PRS.IND.3SG] à manger, et il y a [have:PRS.IND.3SG] une télé dans la salle de séjour. Mais dans le jardin, derrière la maison, **pousse** [grow:PRS.IND.3SG] un vieux pommier tordu chargé de grosses pommes blanches qui **luisent** [shine:PRS.IND.3PL] comme la lune.

Sous cet arbre **se trouve** [be_located:PRS.IND.3SG] une parcelle de terre où le temps s'est arrêté. On le **remarque** [notice:PRS.IND.3SG] immédiatement, d'un simple coup d'œil. Il n'y pleut jamais et quand quelqu'un y parle, on ne l'entend pas.

'It is the same apple about which blond Maarja, daughter of the one deceased, will tell him twenty-two years later; the same girl who has written 280 pages of Estonian life and death in Swedish. Her father was killed by NKVD in 1944 ?!. In a house that still exists. Maarja has been shown this house while being in Estonia. **It is** an ordinary and dreary house, not like a murder scene at all; **they cook** in the kitchen and **there is** a TV in the living room. In the backyard **there is** a curvy apple tree with big white apples **that shine** like the moon.

Under the tree **there is** a piece of land where time stops. **It can be seen** right away that time has stopped there. It does not rain in that spot; and if someone speaks, it is not heard.' (Luik–Chalvin)

3.2. The equivalents of the Estonian quotative in French according to the translated corpus

The general results of the corpus analysis have thus revealed that the French conditional form is merely one of the possible equivalents for the Estonian quotative and that in most of the cases the verb is in indicative in French texts. In this section we shall examine more closely what kind of equivalents can be found for quotative in translations. We can distinguish between four **situations**:

- 1) the French equivalent is the conditional form;
- 2) other means (mostly lexical) are used in French for referring to the information being from a remote source;
- 3) French combines conditional with another evidential marker;
- 4) no explicit evidential means are used in French.

The first situation could already be observed in the Ristikivi–Ollivry’s paragraph (3) where the quotative is used 5 times in a row. The past quotative verbs *olevat valanud* ‘is said to have poured’, *olevat välja tulnud* ‘is said to have come out’, *olevat katsunud seletada* ‘is said to have tried to explain’ render the French past conditional form: *aurait interrogé*, *aurait revêtu*, *aurait tenté d’interpréter*. However, the two last ones are translated differently: the verb *olevat leidnud* ‘is said to have found’ has been omitted and replaced by an adverbial expressing the source of information of the next predicate (*pour l’un* ‘according to the first’) and *kujutavat* ‘is said to represent’ renders the indicative imperfect form *était* ‘was’ accompanied by a lexical tool for expressing the source of information *pour l’un*. It is to be noted that the last verb is the only one in **present** quotative and the source of information is rather one of the persons mentioned in the legend—unlike in the case of the first three predicates of the example where the source of information is the legend itself.

The example (3) thus also offers an illustration for situation 2 described above where the verb is in indicative in French and there are other means referring to the source of information. The example also shows that a lexical evidential tool can occur along with the conditional form in French and the quotative in Estonian (situation 3): the whole paragraph is introduced by the construction *ühe sellise legendi järgi* / *selon une de ces légendes* ‘according to one of these legends’. The co-occurrence of such a lexical tool and the conditional or the quotative form is frequent both in French and in Estonian.⁸

Nevertheless it is important to note that this introduction itself does not evoke the presence of the conditional in French because many similar constructions followed by the indicative tenses are also found in our corpus, see (5) for pluperfect use.

- (5a) *Teise jutu järgi olevat* [be:QUOT] ta aga Pisa laevadega teel Sitsiiliasse.
 ‘According to another legend, he **is said to be** on his way to Sicily with Pisa’s ships.’
- (5b) *Selon d’autres, il s’était embarqué* [board:PLP.3SG] à Pise pour la Sicile.
 ‘According to others, he **had boarded** in Pisa in the direction of Sicily.’
 (Ristikivi–Ollivry)

The use of the conditional as the equivalent of the Estonian quotative can also be due to other reasons than the indication of a different source of information. In the next example, the conditional has rather a temporal meaning, motivated by the rule of the sequence of tenses, considering that the verb in the conditional

⁸ According to Dendale (1993: 170), if the source marker (for example *selon quelqu’un* or *quelque chose*) and the epistemic conditional are used simultaneously, the latter rather expresses the uncertainty of the information than the loan of someone’s words.

form appears in a subordinate clause depending on a main clause in the past tense (*envoya* ‘sent’) and is accompanied by the future time reference (*le lendemain matin* ‘the next morning’).

(6a) Õhtul *heitis* kirikumees vara magama ja *ajas* ka Milli asemele, sest muidu **ei saavat** [NEG+can:QUOT] ta homme maast lahti.

(6b) Le soir, le bedeau *alla* se coucher tôt et *il envoya* Milli dormir elle aussi, sans quoi elle **ne pourrait pas** [NEG+can:FUT.PST.3SG] décoller de terre le lendemain matin.

‘In the evening, the verger *went* to bed early and *sent* Milli to sleep as well because otherwise she **would not come** alive the next morning.’

(Tammsaare–Ollivry)

This conditional form, the so-called “future in the past”, is used twice in our corpus and is the only one that occurs in a complement clause among quotative-conditional equivalents.

In the examples without conditional but containing other evidential means, two kinds of solutions were found: lexical tools already mentioned above (*selon X* or *pour X* ‘according to X’, etc.) or diverse introductory verbs (*dire* ‘to say’, *raconter* ‘to tell’, *accuser* ‘to accuse’, etc.) used with different definite and indefinite sources (*Schmidt* and *Courant* versus *certains* ‘some people’, *un vieil adage* ‘an old saying’, etc.). Mostly, these means were also present in the Estonian texts along with the quotative form.

Among the 10 occurrences of quotative in the French-Estonian translations, in 5 cases the conditional did not occur in the original text (the present, the imperfect, a present infinitive and an adjective were used instead). The Estonian translator also chose to use the quotative form, in addition to the plain introductory verbs and the lexical solutions like *sõnul* ‘after somebody’s words’, *arvamus* ‘(somebody’s) opinion’.

Example (7) shows how in the original text the only evidential tool is the introductory verb of the reported speech, but the Estonian translator uses the quotative mood:

(7a) Mon oncle Charles Gide me **dit** [tell:PRF.3SG], par la suite, que Tancrède Gide, mon grand-père, dans les derniers temps de sa vie, **consultait** [consult:IMPRF.3SG] toutes sortes de médicastres et de charlatans.

(7b) Onu Charles Gide **rääkis** [tell:PST.3SG] hiljem, et elu lõpu poole **olevat** [be.AUX:QUOT] minu vanaisa Tancrède Gide **pöördunud** [adress:PST.PTCP] abi saamiseks igat sorti ravitsejate ja posijate poole.

‘My uncle Charles Gide **told** me later that during his last years, my grandfather **called** upon every kind of soothsayers and charlatans.’

(Gide–Tomasberg)

In the example (8) the French original does not have any explicit evidential indication (except the colon), but the translator has still used the quotative.

- (8a) Le petit Blaise vint me chercher quelques minutes avant quatre heures: sa tante **désirait** [desire:IMPRF.3SG] me parler.
- (8b) Mõni minut enne nelja tuli väike Blaise mind kutsuma: tema tädi **soovivat** [desire:QUOT] minuga rääkida.
 ‘Little Blaise came to call me some minutes before 4 pm: his aunt **wanted / was said to want** to talk to me.’ (Gide–Tomasberg)

The last example illustrates the fourth situation mentioned in the beginning of this chapter: no explicit evidentiality markers appear in the French text. This situation can also be observed in the example (4) presented above.

In the next chapter we shall discuss some examples in order to find out whether these non-correspondences in translations are due to some specific linguistic constraints or a semantic non-equivalence.

4. Discussion of examples

The juxtaposition of the sentences containing the Estonian quotative and their equivalent sentences in French seems to point to a certain regularity in the syntactic behaviour of these forms. One of the possible French equivalents for the Estonian quotative was the use of an introductory (speech act) verb followed by a complement clause with a predicate in indicative, like in the example (9).

- (9a) Nii **olevat** [be.AUX:QUOT] neil **olnud** [be:PST.PTCP] eriline oskus ennast nähtamatuks teha ja sel kombel **olevat** [be.AUX:QUOT] nad prantslaste rünnakukatsed alati **nurja ajanud** [ruin:PST.PTCP], kuna nad viimaste piiramistornid hoolsale valvele vaatamata olid saanud põlema pista ja seda tuld **ei olevat saanud** [NEG+be.AUX:QUOT + can:PST.PTCP] **kustutada** muuga kui pühitsetud veega, mida aga raske oli parajal ajal saada.
- (9b) *On racontait* [tell:IMPRF.3SG] par exemple qu'ils **étaient** [be:IMPRF.3PL] **capables** de se rendre invisibles et qu'ils **avaient ainsi réussi** [succeed:PLP.3PL] **à déjouer** toutes les tentatives d'assaut des Français en parvenant, malgré une garde serrée, à incendier les tours de siège de ces derniers – et les feux qu'ils allumaient **ne pouvaient** [NEG+can:PLP.3PL] **s'éteindre** qu'avec de l'eau bénite, difficile à trouver au moment voulu.
 ‘So they **are said to have had / it was said that they had** a special gift to make themselves invisible and that they **had** thus always **ruined** the French attack attempts, because they could set the French siege towers on fire despite the close guard, and **(it is said that)** this fire **could not have been put out** with anything else but the sacred water that was difficult to get at the right time.’ (Ristikivi–Ollivry)

In this sentence, the translator adds *on racontait* ‘it was told’ and the verbs in quotative in the original (*olevat neil olnud* ‘they are said to have had’ and *tuld ei olevat saanud kustutada* ‘it is said that the fire could not have been put out’) are in imperfect indicative (*étaient, pouvaient*). Unlike the example above, in most of the

cases where the introductory verb refers to the source of information, it is present also in Estonian but the predicate is nevertheless in quotative (10).

(10a) Perenaine *arvas* [think:PST.3SG], et kella viie ajal pärast lõunat **ei viibivat** [NEG+be:QUOT] ta seal kunagi.

(10b) Elle nous *répondit* [answer:PRF.3SG] qu'il **ne s'y trouvait** [NEG+be_located.IMPRF.3SG] jamais à cinq heures de l'après-midi.

'The hostess *guessed* that he **would never be** there at 5 p.m.'

(Kross–Moreau)

On the other hand, in the examples where the journalistic conditional is used in French the predicate in that form **never** occurs in a complement clause. The journalistic conditionals of our corpus are used in independent clauses or in relative clauses, see the example (3) that contains both clause types. The only example of conditional in a complement clause seems to offer a temporal reading:

(11a) je me souviens spécialement d'une phrase où *il était dit* [tell:PASS.IMPRF.3SG] que son geste **ne suffirait pas** [NEG+suffice:FUT.PST.3SG], hélas ! à couvrir l'arriéré ...

(11b) iseäranis on mul meeles üks lause, mis *ütles* [tell:PST:3SG], et Abeli žestist paraku **ei piisavat** [NEG+suffice:QUOT] maksevõla kustutamiseks ...

'I can especially remember one sentence that *said* that Abel's gesture **was** unfortunately **not sufficient enough** to erase his debt ...'

(Gide–Tomasberg)

On the contrary, in the cases where the journalistic conditional is not used, the complement clauses are rather frequent—we have found 22 sentences on the whole, plus examples where the predicate is not formally in a complement clause, but accompanied by a parenthetical clause (*disait-il, paraît-il*), like in the example (12).

(12a) ta **kadestavat** [envy:QUOT] mind, sest siin **ei toimuvat** [NEG+happen:QUOT] ammu enam midagi: seisev vesi.

(12b) Il m'**enviait** [envy:IMPRF.3SG], car ici, **disait-il** [tell:IMPRF.3SG], il **ne se passe plus** rien [NEG+happen:PRS.IND.3SG] depuis longtemps: tout est comme une eau dormante.

'He **envies** me because, as he says, **nothing** ever **happens** here: still water.'

(Tode–Chalvin)

The French journalistic conditional appears to behave differently with respect to subordination but it seems that this is not a mere linguistic constraint but rather points to some particular and essential properties of the French conditional in comparison with the evidentiality marking in Estonian.

The Estonian quotatives without conditional equivalents also occur very often in independent clauses. The majority of these clauses represent the so-called "free indirect speech" where the speech or the point of view of a character is presented without explicit speech act verbs and markers of subordination, like in the example (13).

(13a) Nende aktsiate omamine **ei sobivat** [NEG+accommodate:QUOT] küll kokku tema üldiselt pahempoolsete vaadetega, aga lõppude lõpuks **olevat** [be:QUOT] see ükskõik, kelle käes nad on, see **ei muutvat** [NEG+change:QUOT] midagi.

(13b) Ces actions **ne s'accordaient guère** [NEG+accord:IMPRF.3PL] avec ses opinions de gauche, mais en fin de compte l'identité de leur propriétaire **importait** [matter:IMPRF.3SG] peu, cela **ne changeait rien** [NEG+change:IMPRF.3SG] à l'affaire.

'Having these shares is said **not to fit** with his mainly left-leaning political views but in the end it **does not matter** who has them, it **changes nothing**.'
(Tode–Chalvin)

In this example, the predicates (*ei sobivat*, *olevat*, *ei muutvat*) are all in quotative in Estonian and they are all translated by using imperfect which is in the sequence of tenses for marking simultaneity to a past reference point and reckoned to be a form par excellence for expressing subjectivity (see also example (8) for a similar case).

The actions of complement clauses including indirect speech as well as those of “free indirect speech” are interpreted from a point of view internal to the text. Their perception is thus subordinated to this source of information which is represented by a character created in the text and the narrator’s role is merely that of mediator. These utterances often contain other linguistic means only interpretable from the character’s point of view, like the emphatic particle *küll* and the adverbial *lõppude lõpuks* ‘in the end’ in the example (13).

Thus, according to our corpus-study, the non-correspondence between the French conditional and the Estonian quotative seems to result from their relation to the speaker acting as the mediator of the information: the French conditional seems to be incompatible with the internal point of view (particularly frequent in fiction), while the Estonian quotative can be used to express both external and internal points of view.

This observation seems to corroborate Agnès Celle’s viewpoint on the meaning of the French journalistic conditional: she argues that even if this form expresses the non-commitment of the speaker (the enunciator) to the truth of the proposition, the speaker still acts as the main structuring centre of the utterance, and thus, the French conditional, unlike the Estonian quotative, always remains related to the primary source of the utterance.

We recall here the examples (3) and (4) presented above (in the section 3.1.) in which the quotative forms were regularly translated in a different way (epistemic conditional *versus* present indicative) and this difference seemed to refer to a more profound reason than the accidental choice made by the translators. The translated forms found in the Karl Ristikivi’s historic novel (3) report the so-called “hearsay” facts from the past and the journalistic conditional seems a perfect option to express this. On the contrary, the narration in Viivi Luik’s paragraph (4) is presented from the character’s point of view which does not support the intervention of the enunciator as a structuring centre that the use of conditional evokes.

According to Celle (2006: 84), it is not the reported character of the information (the marking of a second point of view) that prevails in the meaning of the French

journalistic conditional but rather the comment of the enunciator.⁹ The Estonian quotative, on the contrary, does not necessarily give this central position to the main source of enunciation because in this form the indirectness of the information is in the foreground and the meanings of uncertainty and non-commitment can merely be considered as corollary values appearing in different degrees according to the context (see also Kehayov 2008: 88). This difference seems to explain the almost total absence of the French journalistic conditional in fiction where the “effacing” of the narrator, i.e. the main origin of enunciation, is a regular procedure. On the other hand, this difference is not sufficient for explaining the rareness of the Estonian quotative in the written media that should be studied on the grounds of a different corpus.

5. Conclusion

In comparison with the various typological and monolingual studies of the Estonian quotative and the French conditional, our corpus-study on the translations of the Estonian quotative form into French has given somewhat surprising results on the alleged semantic and functional affinity between these forms. The corpus-study has revealed that in translations the French conditional appears very rarely as the equivalent of the Estonian quotative. This result might be due to two reasons:

- 1) As both Estonian and French have, besides the forms in question, other tools for expressing the reported character of the information, the translator makes the choice according to his/her personal preferences and/or the discursive or stylistic constraints imposed by the type of text (namely fictional or journalistic/scientific in our case);
- 2) There are linguistic restrictions resulting from the semantic or pragmatic difference between these forms.

Both of these explanations seem to apply to our translated corpus. On one hand, our corpus mainly contains fictional texts where the French conditional is generally not used. Additionally, some translators seem to avoid the conditional form and always use other ways for expressing the reported nature of the information.

A closer look at the examples reveals differences in the behaviour of these forms in relation to the syntactic relations and the phenomena of point of view and focalisation that could also actually explain the discursive and stylistic differences described in the first point. It namely seems that the Estonian quotative is completely neutral with respect to the focalisation of the utterance, allowing the presentation of the actions both from the narrator's (i.e. the primary source of information) and a character's point of view (internal to the text). The French conditional, on the contrary, maintains the position of the narrator as the structuring centre of the utterance and is thus incompatible with the internal point of view that supposes the “erasing” of the narrator.

This study could and should be complemented in many aspects. Some of them have already been mentioned above. Studies of different corpora (for instance a journalistic comparable corpus) would certainly offer important supplementary data to the understanding of the meaning and the functioning of the two forms. It

⁹ See Celle (2006: 84): “Ce n'est pas la reprise du point de vue de l'autre qui est au premier plan avec le conditionnel, mais le commentaire de l'énonciateur-origine que ne peut éliminer le décrochage fictive sur une coordonnée”. (It is not the repetition of somebody else's point of view that is in the foreground in the use of conditional but rather the comment of the enunciator or origin that cannot be eliminated by the fictive disconnection on one of the enunciativ coordinates.)

is also obvious that the study of evidentiality in general cannot only be confined to these two forms: both French and Estonian have several other means related to this category that should be studied in a comparative perspective. The findings of our first research in this field will hopefully give some starting points to these further studies.

Abbreviations

3	3rd person	PL	plural
AUX	auxiliary	PREP	preposition
COND	conditional	PRF	perfect
FUT.PST	future in the past	PRS.IND	present indicative
IMPRF	imperfect	PST.PTCP	past participle
M	masculine	PST	past
NEG	negative	QUOT	quotative
PLP	pluperfect	SG	singular
PASS	passive		

Corpus bibliography

- Gide, André 1955. *Si le grain ne meurt*. Paris: Editions Gallimard.
- Gide, André 2006. *Surra, et elada*. Tallinn: Varrak. (Translated by Leena Tomasberg.)
- Kross, Jaan 1987. *Vastutuulelaev*. Tallinn: Eesti Raamat.
- Kross, Jaan 1997. *L'œil du grand tout*. Paris: Editions Robert Laffont. (Translated by Jean-Luc Moreau.)
- Luik, Viivi 1991. *Ajaloo ilu*. Tallinn: Eesti Raamat.
- Luik, Viivi 2001. *La Beauté de l'Histoire*. Paris: Éditions Christian Bourgois. (Translated by Antoine Chalvin.)
- Ristikivi, Karl 1990. *Põlev lipp*. Tallinn: Eesti Raamat. (1st edition: 1961.)
- Ristikivi, Karl 2005. *L'étendard en flammes*. Éditions Alvik. (Translated by Jean Pascal Ollivry.)
- Tammsaare, Anton Hansen 2003. *Tõde ja õigus* (1. osa). Tallinn: Avita. (1st edition: 1926.)
- Tammsaare, Anton Hansen 2009. *La Colline-du-Voleur* (Vérité et Justice, 1). Larbey: Gaïa éditions. (Translated by Jean Pascal Ollivry.)
- Tode, Emil 1993. *Piiririik*. Tallinn: Tuum.
- Tode, Emil 1997. *Pays frontière*. Paris: Gallimard. (Translated by Antoine Chalvin.)

References

- Aikhenvald, Alexandra Y. 2006. *Evidentiality*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Alas, Reet; Treikelder, Anu in press. *Remarques sur le conditionnel en français et en estonien: variations modales dans la traduction*.
- Erelt, Mati; Metslang, Helle; Pajusalu, Karl 2006. *Tense and evidentiality in Estonian*. – B. Cornillie, N. Delbecque (Eds.). *Topics in Subjectification and Modalization*. *Belgian Journal of Linguistics*, 20, 125–136.
- Celle, Agnès 2006. *Temps et modalité. L'anglais, le français et l'allemand en contraste*. Bern etc.: Peter Lang.
- Dendale, Patrick 1993. *Le conditionnel de l'information incertaine: marqueur modal ou marqueur évidentiel?* – Hilty Gerold (Ed.). *XXe Congrès International de Linguistique et Philologie Romanes, Tome I, Section I*. Tübingen: Francke, 165–176.

- Dendale, Patrick; Coltier, Danielle 2003. Point de vue et évidentialité. – Cahiers de praxématique, 41, 105–129.
- Gosselin, Laurent 2005. Temporalité et modalité. Bruxelles: Editions Duculot.
- Haillet, Pierre Patrick 2002. Le conditionnel en français: une approche polyphonique. Paris: Ophrys.
- Kehayov, Petar 2008. An Areal-Typological Perspective to Evidentiality: the Cases of the Balkan and Baltic Linguistic Areas. *Dissertationes linguisticae Universitatis Tartuensis*, 10. Tartu: Tartu University Press.
- Kronning, Hans 2002. Le conditionnel “journalistique”: médiation et modalisation épistémique. – *Romansk forum*, 16, 2, 561–575.
- Sepper, Maria-Maren 2007. Indirectal in literary Estonian. – *Trames*, 11, 3, 299–323.
- Toomet, Piret 2000. Mõnest kaudsuse väljendamise võimalusest tänapäeva eesti keeles. – *Keel ja Kirjandus*, 42 (1), 251–259.

Online references

- Estonian-French parallel text corpus ESTFRA. <http://corpus.estfra.ee/ee> (10.07.2009).
- ESTMORF. <http://www.eki.ee/keeletehnoloogia/projektid/estmorf/> (30.12.2009).

Reet Alas (University of Tartu). Her research interests are comparative linguistics, conditional and modality in Estonian and French.
reet.alas@ut.ee

Anu Treikelder (University of Tartu). Her research interests are comparative linguistics, semantics of tenses, historical linguistics.
anu.treikelder@ut.ee

MÄRKUSI KAUDSE EVIDENTSIAALSUSE KOHTA PRANTSUSE JA EESTI KEELES: KONTRASTIIVNE LÄHENEMINE

Reet Alas, Anu Treikelder

Tartu Ülikool

Artikli eesmärk on võrrelda kahe konkreetse vormi toimimist geneetiliselt kauges keeltes: prantsuse keele “ajakirjanduslikku konditsionaali” ja eesti keele kvotatiivi. Mõlemaid vorme on tüpoloogilistes ja kummagi keele uurimustes määratletud kui evidentsiaalsuse markereid või strateegiaid: kui eesti keele grammatiseerunud kvotatiiv on spetsialiseerunud kaudse informatsiooni väljendamisele (vt Erelt jt 2006, Sepper 2007, Kehayov 2008), siis prantsuse konditsionaali puhul on see hüpoteetilise ja ajalise kõrval vaid üks tema põhitähendustest (Haillet 2002).

Tüpoloogilistes uurimustes (Aikhenvald 2006) on mõlemat vormi peetud kaudse evidentsiaalsuse väljendajaks, kuid eesti kvotatiivi ja prantsuse “ajakirjandusliku konditsionaali” puhul on täheldatud (Sepper 2007, Kronning 2002) erinevusi kasutuskontekstis (esimest kasutatakse pigem ilu- kui ajakirjanduses ning teist just pressi- ja teadustekstides). Käesoleva analüüsi aluseks on vormide kirjelduste semantilised sarnasused: lausungi eesmärk on info edastamine, edasiantav info on pärit kelleltki teiselt kui lausujalt, lausuja ei vastuta info eest, info on tõlgendatav ebakindlana (Erelt jt 2006, Kehayov 2008, Gosselin 2005).

Peamiselt erinevaid tekstitüüpe sisaldavast paralleelsest tõlkekorpusel leitud kvotatiivvormid olid ülaltäheldatud semantilistele ja funktsionaalsetele sarnasustele vaatamata väga harva prantsuskeelses versioonis konditsionaalis.

Detailsem lingvistilise konteksti uurimine kinnitas erinevust uuritavate vormide kasutuses vastavalt tekstis avalduvale vaatepunktile: kui prantsuse konditsionaali puhul esitatakse informatsioon alati lausumise põhiallika (ilukirjanduslikus tekstis jutustaja kui informatsiooni vahendaja) vaatepunktist, siis eesti kvotatiivi saab kasutada nii tekstisisese tegelaskuju kui ka jutustaja vaatepunkti väljendamisel. See erinevus andis seega ka võimaliku seletuse prantsuse “ajakirjandusliku konditsionaali” puudumisele ilukirjandustekstides.

Kuna eesti ja prantsuse keeles on lisaks eelnimetatud vormidele evidentsiaalsuse väljendamiseks veel mitmeid võimalusi, võib kvotatiivi konditsionaalis vastete vähesus tuleneda nii tõlkija isiklikest eelistustest kui tekstitüübi diskursiivsetest ja/või stilistilistest piirangutest. Tõlkelause analüüs osutab aga ka semantilistele ja pragmaatilistele erinevustele nende vormide vahel.

Võtmesõnad: kõrvutatav lingvistika, kvotatiiv, konditsionaal, korpuseanalüüs, prantsuse keel, eesti keel