Corela

Cognition, représentation, langage

12-2 | 2014
Vol. 12, n°2

Parameters for the configuration of some qualitative SOME's

Graham Ranger

Édition électronique

URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/corela/3642>

DOI : 10.4000/corela.3642

ISSN : 1638-573X

Éditeur

Cercle linguistique du Centre et de l'Ouest - CerLICO

Référence électronique

Graham Ranger, « Parameters for the configuration of some qualitative SOME's », *Corela* [En ligne], 12-2 | 2014, mis en ligne le 29 janvier 2015, consulté le 19 avril 2019. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/corela/3642> ; DOI : 10.4000/corela.3642

Ce document a été généré automatiquement le 19 avril 2019.

Corela – cognition, représentation, langage est mis à disposition selon les termes de la licence Creative Commons Attribution - Pas d'Utilisation Commerciale - Partage dans les Mêmes Conditions 4.0 International.

Parameters for the configuration of some qualitative SOME's

Graham Ranger

1. Introduction : the problems of SOME

- 1 The marker SOME is liable to receive various interpretations in context which are often broadly divided – non-exclusively – into quantitative values (1) and qualitative values (2) as illustrated below.

- (1) I'm Dicky Roper. My chaps booked **some** rooms here. N¹
- (2) “**Some** bugger nicked my cash off of me at the camp” N
Within the set of qualitative values it is possible to make further distinctions, leading to at least three subtypes (additional distinctions will follow) :
- (2) “**Some** bugger nicked my cash off of me at the camp” N
- (3) He looked like **some** old battered idol as he sat with his pudgy hands in his lap L
- (4) “Jesus Christ, Burr. Pine must be **some** catch !” N

- 2 In this article we aim to demonstrate how such values of SOME result from the parametering of an abstract schematic form according to heterogeneous contextual factors including the type and number of the target noun, the semantic properties of any accompanying adjectives, the syntactic function of the noun phrase and the mood of the proposition, among others.
- 3 We will begin by running briefly over previous research, both on SOME generally and then on its qualitative values, more specifically. We will then posit an abstract invariant operation behind all uses of SOME, formulated within the framework of the Theory of Predicative and Enunciative Operations. The interaction between the posited operation and a number of contextual parameters will then be shown to produce a range of broadly qualitative values.

2. Previous work on qualitative values of SOME

- 4 Much of the work on SOME among English-speaking linguists focuses on the purportedly complementary status of SOME as an affirmative quantifier and ANY as its non-assertive counterpart. The link between the two, pointed out already by Jespersen (1933 : 180-1), is famously formalised by Klima (1964 :280) as the rule of *Indef*-incorporation in a chapter of his seminal article on negation entitled "The conversion of *Quant*(ifiers) into indefinites" (276). This approach posits that the appearance of a SOME or an ANY is conditioned uniquely by the syntactic environment. Both Robin Lakoff (1969) and Bolinger (1960 and 1977) for example, write against this, citing a bewildering profusion of counter-examples in doing so. Bolinger maintains that "SOME and ANY do not have affirmation and negation built into their meaning, but what correlation there is between the two systems is a matter of semantic compatibility" (26) a point of view I would tend to favour, although I would not condone Bolinger's use of Quinean logic to demonstrate his point.
- 5 In many of these exchanges, however, the qualitative values of SOME which interest us today are prudently swept under the carpet – "exorcised" in Bolinger's words (1977 : 25) – since the occurrences involve the additional disruptive factor of stress. Sahlin (1979) represents a relatively complete descriptive account of SOME and ANY which has the merit of paying special attention to the prosodic characteristics both of SOME and ANY and of the surrounding context. Her chapter on SOME II, i.e. SOME "typically having some degree of stress-prominence" (61), contains an interesting selection of authentic examples but the absence of any explicit theorisation makes discussion of her views awkward. SOME followed by a singular count noun is described, for instance, in terms of a collection of the features [+Quantifier, -Definite, -Selective, +Referential, -Specific, -Pro, +Stress] in a curious admixture of the grammatical, the referential and the prosodic.
- 6 Among French-speaking linguists, Léonard, working in the framework of the Theory of Enunciative and Predicative Operations, devotes a substantial article to systematic comparison and discussion of a selection of markers of indefiniteness, including SOME. She discusses the example, *There were some sixty spectators* in the following terms :

An initial quantification is modified qualitatively by *some*, inducing a modulation in the quantification such that, while remaining within certain limits, an approximation is introduced. It would seem that this is linked to the fact that *some* 1) delimits a domain and 2) is associated with the construction of an unspecified differential property. (1983 : 49 My translation.)²
- 7 The concept of the delimitation of a domain, posited by Léonard, is developed in Mazodier (1997) in her detailed study of qualitative instability in uses of SOME followed by singular count nouns. She concludes that :

"some is the trace of an operation situating the occurrence in question inside a notional domain while at the same time marking a distance relative to the centre of the domain, the centre being understood as the norm, i.e. the organizing centre of the notional domain associated with the lexeme." (1997 : 123 My translation.)³
- 8 Baumer (2008a) and (2008b) argues, like Mazodier, for the concept of qualitative instability in describing SOME. And yet Gilbert (2005), working nonetheless within the same theoretical framework, takes a very different stance, preferring to evacuate entirely the question of qualitative determination from the invariant operation marked by SOME :

"I aim [...] to attempt to show that occurrences constructed by means of *some* may be characterised essentially by the absence of this second qualitative dimension.

The only formatting carried out by *some* is that of a merely quantitative delimitation of the notion." (My translation.)⁴

- 9 It would be rather time-consuming and not necessarily relevant here to go into the reasons underlying the slightly unorthodox line defended by Gilbert (2005). This brief summary of work on SOME and on qualitative SOME in particular does however highlight the diversity of approaches and the absence of any single theoretical consensus, even within the school of thought associated with enunciative linguistics.
- 10 The current account, which I present in the next section, draws a good deal of inspiration from the studies by Léonard and Mazodier. I aim in particular to describe SOME in terms which will be sufficiently precise for their application in different contexts to be amenable to independent verification, and which will also, it is hoped, remain compatible with other – quantitative – uses of SOME that lie outside the scope of the present paper.
- 11 After beginning work on SOME with examples culled from the British National Corpus, I have deliberately reduced the corpus. The BNC turns out to be – in most cases – rather too large a corpus to work on effectively when looking at such a frequently occurring linguistic item. The following paper does not, in any case, aim to unearth any new hitherto unnoticed uses of SOME but rather to propose a more detailed classification, supported by a formal model, to account for examples which are not particularly exceptional in themselves.

3. Hypothesis : SOME as a marker of second order determination (bracketing)

- 12 The hypothesis we will defend in the remainder of this paper, is that, in all its uses, quantitative and qualitative, SOME marks – or more precisely, is the image of – an operation of second-order determination or in other terms "bracketing". This hypothesis requires some explanation.
- 13 In his paper on SOME, Gilbert (2005) distinguishes between two types of initial, or first-order, determination: quantitative and qualitative. First-order quantitative determination or QNT1, involves the localisation of an occurrence of a given notion relative to some situation. This is fundamentally a question of existence versus inexistence.⁵ First-order qualitative determination or QLT1, involves the localisation of an occurrence relative to a notional domain – identification with the organising centre of the domain, i.e. the stereotypical representation that structures the domain.
- 14 Beyond this we can also posit two types of second-order determination, QNT2 and QLT2. QNT2 involves quantification in ordinary language use, i.e. as a certain amount, quantity of a given entity. QLT2 involves qualification and the construction of potential differences within a given notional domain or its associated class of occurrences.
- 15 The presence of SOME indicates that the target notion is the object of second-order determinations. These may be quantitative, as in (1) :

(1) I'm Dicky Roper. My chaps booked **some** rooms here. N

qualitative, as in (2)

(2) "**Some** bugger nicked my cash off of me at the camp" N

or indeed combine second-order quantitative and qualitative determinations, as in (5), for example, where some horses delimits both a quantity of horses and a subcategory of the notion /HORSE/ :

(5) The jockey hesitated fatally between pushing him on to lengthen his stride and take off sooner or shortening the reins to get him to put in an extra one before he jumped. In the end he did neither. Simply left it to the horse to sort himself out. Some horses like to do that. **Some** horses like to be told what to do. F

- 16 This operation of delimitation I refer to as bracketing. We can represent this fairly intuitively as an operation of subdivision within a notional domain :

- 17 Or, more precisely, since we are not dealing with a static representation but with a dynamic operation, as the passage from :

- 18 The fact that SOME indicates second-order bracketing helps to explain certain at first sight paradoxical characteristics. Lakoff (1969), comparing examples such as *Who wants to eat any / some beans*, claims that SOME carries “positive presuppositions” (613). This would appear to place SOME alongside markers such as THE or THIS, for example. Bolinger, however, considers SOME [sm] “the plural and mass equivalent of the indefinite article and [...] [sΛm] with a singular countable [...] the emphatic equivalent of the indefinite article” (1979 : 25). Quantitative bracketing indeed implies the preconstruction of the class of occurrences and qualitative bracketing implies the preconstruction of the notional domain although in neither case is it necessary to speak of existential preconstruction as such.
- 19 We have stated that it would be more precise to say that SOME is the *image* of an operation of second-order determination. The term *image* is used to refer to the representation in language of a class of potential values.⁶ The class, in this instance, is that of *different modes of second-order determination*. Another way of putting this is to say that, in the sequence SOME N, SOME stands potentially for “a number of / a quantity of / a particular occurrence of / a type of / a degree of ...” etc. In this respect it appears to work as a sort of generic classifier, marking – without specifying further – a bracketing operation within the notional domain.⁷
- 20 When the bracketing is quantitative, then it delimits part of a class of occurrences – and so minimally represents more than zero and less than all, or the set “ $0 < \text{SOME } N < \infty$ ”. The particular quantity involved is determined by contextual factors.
- 21 In the scope of the current paper we are specifically studying qualitative values for SOME. These occur most typically in association with singular count nouns. In such cases it seems self-evident that the association of SOME and the singular filters out quantitative

values to leave a form of qualitative bracketing⁸. This qualitative bracketing can be classified into three basic sorts, depending upon contextual parameters : in the first type, illustrated by (2) "*Some bugger nicked my cash off of me at the camp*", the occurrence is determined relative to other occurrences ; in the second type, illustrated by (3) *He looked like some old battered idol*, it is determined relative to the type ; in the third type, illustrated by (4) *Pine must be some catch!*, it is determined relative to a degree. I refer informally to these three modes of qualitative determination as *whichness*, *whatness* and *howmuchness*, respectively.⁹

4. Bracketing relative to the occurrence (whichness)

- 22 The first case we consider is that in which SOME targets the identification of the occurrence from among a class of occurrences. In such cases, illustrated by (2), it is frequently possible to append *or other* to the noun phrase :

(2') "*Some bugger or other nicked my cash off of me at the camp*" N

- 23 Here the qualitative bracketing concerns the characteristics of the occurrence of / BUGGER/. These are 1) not assimilable to mere typicality – since SOME introduces a differentiation within the domain, i.e. we are dealing with a potentially identifiable individual ; 2) unspecified except by means of the predication, *nicked my cash* etc, that follows.

- 24 The following case functions similarly :

(6) For some reason he gave me a sheepish grin as I passed. L

- 25 Mazodier remarks in such cases that **for a reason* appears unlikely, since the reason in question would then be qualitatively indiscernable from any other occurrence of the class of potential reasons. The use of SOME in association with *reason* (and *way*, *manner* etc.) makes sense in that SOME brackets a particular occurrence, even if the specifications of the occurrence in question can go no further than that.
- 26 This type of bracketing relative to the identification of an occurrence appears to occur in three main contexts, which correspond to the three categories of eventuality, iteration or indefiniteness, proposed by Culioli in his classification of uses of QUELQUE N (Culioli 1999b : 51-53).

4.1 In projective contexts

- 27 The first subcategory, then, concerns uses of SOME N in what I have referred to as *projective* contexts, i.e. contexts involving eventuality, as Culioli puts it, or some type of modal hiatus between the speech situation and the projected event situation.

(7) Less than a mile ahead lay my likely Waterloo, in the shape of a crossroads. A halt sign. It was I who would have to halt. Either that or risk hitting a car speeding legitimately along the major road, risk killing **some** innocent motorist, or his wife, or his child... F

(8) I've tried everything I could think of, he told her. Explored guest bedrooms, looked in parked cars. No one carries a passport round here. Been down to the post office, got the forms, studied the formalities. Visited the town graveyard looking for dead men of my own age ; thought I might apply

on their behalf. But you never know what's safe these days : maybe the dead are already in **some** computer. N
 (9) Strelski supposed he should join Prescott in **some** general damnation of the British, but he didn't feel inclined. N

- 28 In such cases the domain involved is selected but its instantiation by an occurrence is suspended simply because of a modal hiatus between the speech situation and the event situation. This is expressed in (7) by the *either... or* alternative facing the narrator, by the modal adverb *maybe* in (8) and by the modal *should* in (9). And so SOME indicates a qualitative bracketing which is necessary but not yet effective.¹⁰

4.2 In iterative contexts

- 29 A similar situation involves iterative contexts, where each new instantiation of the notion will potentially involve a new second-order delimitation, a different occurrence of the notion :

(10) 'To be precise, if you want me to be precise, Bert tipped a higher percentage of big-race non-starters than anyone else in the street, and he has been at his best in this direction, or worst, or at any rate his most consistent, during the past year. He'd blow **some** horse up big, tell everyone to back it at once, and then wham, a day or two before the race it would be scratched.' F

(11) The fishermen still steer a healthy berth round Lanyon Head, where brown rocks lurk like crocodiles at low water and the currents can suck you under on the quietest days, so that every year **some** fool cowboy from up-country, with a girlfriend and a rubber dinghy, diving for bits of wreck, dives his last or has to be lugged to safety by a rescue helicopter from Culdrose. N

(10) relates the dubious practices of a person involved in the world of horseracing, who habitually (cf. *He'd*) praises a horse which will, he knows, turn out to be a non-starter. The horse on each occasion is naturally distinct from other horses but that is all we can say about it. (11) describes a particularly dangerous stretch of water which still proves the undoing of tourists. Again, the tourists who succumb – *some fool cowboy* – are distinct from other occurrences of the same notion but cannot be specified further than that.

- 30 These remarks relate to Mazodier's or Baumer's characterisations of SOME in terms of qualitative instability. I would hesitate to affirm that SOME is the trace of a qualitative instability in itself, however. It appears more appropriate to consider that the qualitative instability in such examples is a result of the interaction between the minimal qualitative bracketing marked by SOME, on the one hand, and the suspended or potential validation, marked variously in the context, on the other.
- 31 The concept of a distance relative to the centre of the domain, again expressed by Mazodier, is also a consequence of this second-order determination. Bracketing within a notional domain introduces differentiation into a previously homogeneous area. Now, since this homogeneous area is structured with reference to the organising centre, or typical occurrence, bracketing necessarily implies a difference relative to this standard measure. The difference then – admittedly rather subtle – between *he'd blow some horse up big* and *he'd blow a horse up big* is that *a horse* simply constructs an occurrence of /HORSE/ which will – all things being equal – be assimilated to any typical horse, whereas the

bracketing marked in *some horse* anticipates the specific, differential features of the occurrence of /HORSE/, in the relation *he blow () up big*.

4.3 In contexts of subjective indeterminacy

- 32 One last situation where the bracketing bears upon the *whichness* of an occurrence involves assertive contexts in which the speaker cannot or will not provide specific identification of the occurrence marked by SOME. Again, SOME indicates qualitative bracketing and ipseity but takes things no further than this minimal identification :

(12) I had the heels of my hands against my mouth and my fingertips in my hair. **Some** nit on the television was advising everyone to keep their sunny side up. Ross cut him off abruptly in mid note. F

(13) So he bought her. Sarah. The bidding was so quick I didn't really follow it. He had **some** Pakistani with him and they were sort of bidding together. Then he just turned to me and said, 'She's yours. Where do you want her sent ?' N

(14) [...] she turned to Eva, and so very serenely and seriously, in answer to something the other had said about its being better to die than hear Milton Pinski, **some** local schoolboy she knew, talk about music, my Lolita remarked: "You know, what's so dreadful about dying is that you are completely on your own" L

- 33 Gilbert (1997) speaks in these cases of possible pejorative connotations associated with SOME. I reproduce one of his examples with commentary, below :

(15) "I studied with a man who used to train attack dogs," she said. "This is not **some** amateur you're looking at."

Example [15] shows clearly that it is indeed SOME that is at the origin of the pejorative connotation of the utterance. If we replace SOME with the determiner A [...] the scornful tone may give way to a simple opposition to another type of occurrence of the class of humans, i.e. *a professional*. [My translation.]

- 34 Although the current article pursues a very different line of argument to that of Gilbert, I feel that it is imprecise, whatever the approach, to attribute a pejorative connotation to SOME. The pejorative tone often associated to such qualitative uses of SOME stems, I would argue, from the fact that SOME tells us that the occurrence is qualitatively particular, but goes no further than that. The context we are currently studying is one of subjective indeterminacy : there is a fine line between *I don't know* and *I don't care*, and it is this that generates subjective valuation. Gilbert's example (15) is relatively complex : in saying *This is not some amateur you're looking at* the speaker is refuting the purported point of view of the cospeaker who is presented as considering the speaker as *some amateur*. It is – we would maintain – this mark of subjective indeterminacy applied to the – axiomatically determined – cospeaker which is potentially pejorative here¹¹. And so SOME is not in itself pejorative – if it were it would be very hard to account for quasi-exclamative uses, for example – but it may combine with other markers to contribute to minimising the significance of the occurrence in question by refusing specification.
- 35 Interestingly, a BNC corpus search for adjectival collocates to the immediate right of SOME throws up, among the first twenty results, sorted by criteria of mutual information (i.e. not on mere frequency counts alone), STRANGE, UNKNOWN, OBSCURE, MYSTERIOUS

and VAGUE, all of which appear to confirm and reinforce the rôle of SOME as a marker of subjective indeterminacy.

5. Bracketing relative to type (whatness)

- 36 A second sort of bracketing, or second-order determination, that can be marked by SOME is that relative to the organising centre of the associated domain, i.e. a typical occurrence. We have referred to this variety of qualitative determination as *whatness*, by which we mean those features that enable us to locate an occurrence relative to a notion. These often involve something we will refer to here as LIKE contexts.

5.1 LIKE contexts

- 37 By LIKE contexts I mean constructions of the type LIKE SOME (ADJ) N illustrated by the following examples :

(16) And Roper himself – who had summoned this ghostly legion to the feast – floated over it like **some** presiding genius, now commandant, now impresario, now sceptic, now fairy godfather. N

(17) Mama Low waddled in and sat down on his folding chair and smiled and shook his head, as if he were remembering **some** damned tune he couldn't shake out of it. N

(18) The fatal gesture passed like the tail of a falling star across the blackness of the contemplated crime. It was like **some** dreadful silent ballet, the male dancer holding the ballerina by her foot and streaking down through watery twilight. L

- 38 In LIKE contexts the addition of OR OTHER is clearly impossible : ? ? *like some presiding genius or other* etc.
- 39 Here the bracketing no longer bears upon occurrences of the same notion. Rather an occurrence of one notion is determined in comparison to a fictitious occurrence of another. SOME indicates qualitative bracketing and, concomitantly, a difference between the fictitious occurrence in question and the organising centre of the domain.
- 40 In (16), for example, SOME determines a subtype of /GENIUS/ which is further qualified by the adjective *presiding* as well as by the following appositions *now commandant, now impresario, now sceptic, now fairy godfather*. (17) and (18) follow the same logic : in (17) SOME brackets a subtype of *tune*, determined by *damned* and the following relative, while in (18) SOME brackets a subtype of *ballet*, again further determined with both pre- (*dreadful silent*) and postmodification (*the male dancer... twilight*).
- 41 It is important to note that SOME and the adjectival elements operate together in delimiting a subcategory. In other words, a gloss of *like some presiding genius* is *like a certain type of genius, a presiding genius* and not *like a certain type of presiding genius*.¹² Our intuition is that, if such examples – which are admittedly more common in literary texts – are read aloud, this parallel function will be reflected prosodically with similar peaks on SOME and the accompanying, cooriented, qualitative determinations.
- 42 There is, furthermore, something paradoxical about this use of SOME. Normally, the term to the right of LIKE is a locator, which contributes to the determination of a locatum. As such, we would expect it to be referentially stable. SOME however merely brackets a

notion without any further specification. In such circumstances it is easy to appreciate that the additional determination provided by adjectives, relatives or appositions is more or less obligatory since these all provide focus for the differential properties posited by SOME. It is as if the speaker were elaborating the simile on the fly, so to speak, beginning by indicating qualitative bracketing and then going on to specify this differential determination. These remarks tie up with Baumer's comment that qualitative uses of SOME often involve hyperonymous nouns, these being either left explicitly vague – cf. the collocations UNKNOWN etc. – or given further disambiguating specification¹³.

6. Bracketing relative to degree (howmuchness)

- 43 The last type of qualitative bracketing marked by SOME is illustrated by example (4), which I reproduce below :

(4) "Jesus Christ, Burr. Pine must be **some** catch !" N

- 44 While in (4) *some catch* implies a good, valuable, important catch, and hence could be seen as operating an intensification of the notion /CATCH/, i.e. an occurrence for which the degree to which the property /BE CATCH/ is validated is greater than average, this is not always the case. In (19), for example, the effect is quite the opposite :

(19) He rolled against the wall, waving the pipe vaguely in his chubby fist.
 "Never leave a pub before closing. Never leave a story while it's hot. Never leave a woman on her door-step. Paragraphs and skirts should be short and pheasants and breasts should be high." / "Sure," I said sighing. **Some** advice.
 F

- 45 Here *some advice* appears rather to disqualify the previous list of injunctions as /ADVICE/ or at the least to suggest that this is a poor example of the notion, an occurrence which possesses less than the normal degree of the property /BE ADVICE/.
- 46 Both examples in any case bear upon the determinations of degree or *howmuchness* of the notion in question. In the next two sections we shall refine our classification further, looking in turn at meliorative and minorative cases.

6.1 Meliorative S BE SOME N

(4) "Jesus Christ, Burr. Pine must be **some** catch !" N
 (20) Sometimes old Savigny had these flashes of insight, and she loved him for them. "He must be **some** boy to catch a girl like you. Is he eager ? Does he love you to distraction ? Write to you three times a day ?" N
 (21) Linden, he's **some** sailor, Jason conceded. But that Harlow, the fat one, he doesn't know his arse from his rudder. N

- 47 In each of the above examples the bracketing marked by SOME bears upon the degree to which the notion is realised. A gloss might be *no ordinary N*, *no common catch* etc. suggesting that SOME brackets a degree of a notional domain greater than or in any case different from what one would usually expect.
- 48 An important factor in the identification of this particular type of bracketing is the syntax. The basic schema appears to be, at least in the case of the meliorative use, S BE

SOME N. In other words the speaker generally predicates BE SOME N of the grammatical subject, more often than not a pronoun. Additionally, the noun in question receives no further determination : the only indication is given by SOME.

- 49 If we consider that the subject is an established topic the identification of which is unproblematic to speaker and cospeaker¹⁴, then the bracketing obviously cannot bear on the *whichness* of the noun. The fact that there is no further specification rules out *whatness* or bracketing by type. This only leaves *howmuchness* or bracketing according to degree insofar, of course, as the domain associated with the noun may be construed with a gradient.

6.2 Minorative SOME N S BE

- 50 There is a potential problem, however, since bracketing according to degree can also indicate a lower degree than what we would normally expect, as in (19) which I quote again (22) or (23) :

(19) He rolled against the wall, waving the pipe vaguely in his chubby fist.
 "Never leave a pub before closing. Never leave a story while it's hot. Never leave a woman on her door-step. Paragraphs and skirts should be short and pheasants and breasts should be high." / "Sure," I said sighing. **Some** advice.
 F

(22) Eddie George, soon to be the governor of the Bank of England, has asked to have his salary frozen for his five-year term to demonstrate his determination to fight inflation. His new salary is thought to be about 220,000 (\$ 137,000) a year. **Some** sacrifice, sneered the union representing the bank's 4,500 workers, before calling for wage talks. BNC

(23) M Want some ?

L No.

N Yes please.

L I'm on a diet aren't I ? [...]

M **Some** diet that is ! BNC Spoken.

- 51 In these examples, the speaker appears to be saying, as we have noted, that the occurrence in question does not fully correspond to /ADVICE/, /SACRIFICE/ or /DIET/, respectively, or that it possesses the property to a lower than typical degree.
- 52 How are these orientations – meliorative or minorative – generated from what is often presented as an identical schema ? In an unpublished paper, Baumer (2008b) conducts an interesting study in which he compares the syntactic and prosodic features of meliorative and minorative SOME. It appears that, syntactically, meliorative SOME generally corresponds to a S BE SOME N ! pattern, while minorative SOME correspond either to a non verbal utterance, of the form SOME N ! or to an utterance of the form SOME N S BE ! with topicalisation of the attributive complement. Prosodically, the two values are also expressed differently. In Baumer's study, native speakers asked to read aloud passages featuring both types of SOME generally marked meliorative SOME with a high fall while placing minorative SOME at a lower onset pitch, with a correspondingly smaller prosodic fall between SOME and the following N. Furthermore, when the subject is mentioned, it receives contrastive stress, marking its non correspondance with the notion involved.¹⁵
- 53 The syntactic distinction then is clearly doubled by a prosodic distinction. We would argue, along the same lines as Baumer, that the fronting and relatively weaker stress on SOME N in minorative examples indicates that the notion in question has topic status,

and hence a direct link with the previous context. More often than not, a speaker in fact uses this minorative SOME to undermine a correspondance between an occurrence and a notion established by some other speaker, present or not. This is confirmed by the above examples where the domains /ADVICE/, /SACRIFICE/ and /DIET/ are explicitly or implicitly present, and previously endorsed by some other speaker.

- 54 In meliorative examples, on the other hand, there is no such tapping in to another speaker's representation. The speaker predicates BE SOME N of a given topic, selecting both the notion and the determination, a point made both by the syntax as well as by the prosody.¹⁶

7. Remarks in conclusion

- 55 Let us run briefly over the ground covered in the previous discussion.
- 56 SOME, in constructions of the general form SOME N, is claimed to mark an operation of second-order determination or bracketing, relative to a notional domain.
- 57 This may in turn be interpreted contextually as quantitative – in which case SOME brackets an amount of the notion in question – or qualitative – in which case SOME brackets a quality of the notion in question.
- 58 Such qualitative uses may be categorised further into at least three subtypes, according to the type of determination involved.
- When SOME brackets an occurrence of a notion, the determination bears on *whichness*, typically in contexts of modal hiatus, iteration or subjective indeterminacy.
 - When SOME brackets a subcategory of a notion, the determination bears on *whatness*, typically in contexts of comparison, and in association with further marks of sortal determination.
 - When SOME brackets a degree of a notion, the determination bears on *howmuchness*, which will typically tend towards meliorative or minorative effects. These are closely linked to topic selection.
- 59 The concept of second-order determination enables us to provide an innovative explanation for the different qualitative values of SOME as so many configurations of an abstract schematic form.

BIBLIOGRAPHIE

- BAUMER, Emmanuel. 2008a. "Etude contrastive de 'some + nom' discontinu singulier et de ses traductions en français". *Anglophonia* 20. Toulouse : Presses Universitaires du Mirail. pp. 51-82.
- BAUMER, Emmanuel. 2008b. "Les emplois appréciatifs de SOME : prosodie et syntaxe." Communication orale au Treizième colloque d'avril sur l'anglais oral de l'ALOES, Université Paris-Nord, Villetaneuse.
- BOLINGER, D. 1977. "Any and Some", in *Meaning and Form*, London, Longman, 21–36.

- CULIOLI, Antoine. 1999 [1983]. "A propos de *quelque*", in *Pour une linguistique de l'énonciation*. Paris : Ophrys. pp. 49-58.
- DUFAYE, Lionel. 2001. "Le système des auxiliaires de modalité et la négation." in BOUSCAREN, Janine, Alain DESCHAMPS, and Lionel DUFAYE (eds). 2001. *Modalité et Opérations Énonciatives*. Paris : Ophrys.
- DUFAYE, Lionel. 2009. *Théorie des opérations énonciatives et modélisation : cheminement d'une réflexion linguistique*. Paris : Ophrys.
- GILBERT, Eric. 2005. "SOME et la construction d'une occurrence", *Cycnos* Vol 16 N° 2. Mis en ligne le 30 août 2005.
- JESPERSEN, Otto. 1933. *Essentials of English Grammar*. London. Unwin and Allen.
- LAKOFF, Robin. 1969. "Some reasons why there can't be any some-any rule". *Language*. 45.3. Linguistics Society of America. 608-615.
- LANCRI, Annie. 2006. "Les emplois qualitatifs de ALL, SOME et NO ou la notion revisitée". *Cycnos*, vol. 23 N° 1. Mis en ligne le 30 juin 2008.
- LEONARD, Anne-Marie. 1983. "Etude différentielle de quelques indéfinis anglais," in Fischer, S. and Franckel, J.-J. (Eds.), *Linguistique, énonciation. Aspects et détermination*. Paris : EHESS. pp. 45-80.
- MAZODIER, Catherine. 1997. "'I must have read it in some article' : Instabilité qualitative de some + discontinu singulier". *Cahiers de Recherche en Grammaire Anglaise*. Tome 7. Paris : Ophrys. pp. 109-126.
- RANGER, Graham. 2012. "Quotative LIKE in contemporary non standard English", in *Arts et savoirs* no. 2. <http://lisaa.univ-mlv.fr/arts-et-savoirs/>
- SAHLIN, Elizabeth. 1979. *Some and Any in Spoken and Written English*. Studia Anglitica Upsaliensia 38. Stockholm : Almqvist & Wiksell International.
- Corpus :
- FRANCIS, Dick (1968). *Forfeit*. London : Michael Joseph. (F)
- LE CARRÉ, John (1993). *The Night Manager*. London : Hodder and Stoughton. (N)
- NABOKOV, Vladimir (1955). *Lolita*. Paris : Olympia Press. (L)

NOTES

1. This is not a quantitative study and our corpus is deliberately limited to three novels of contemporary English, referred to respectively as F, L and N: Dick Francis, *Forfeit* (1968), Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita* (1955), John Le Carré, *The Night Manager* (1993).
2. Dans le texte : "on a d'abord une quantification sur laquelle some joue qualitativement, ce qui entraîne une modulation de la quantification telle que, tout en restant dans un certain ordre de grandeur, on introduit une approximation. Il semble bien que ceci soit lié au fait que some, d'une part, délimite un domaine et est, d'autre part, associé à la construction d'une propriété différentielle hors explicitation" (49).
3. "On peut de nouveau considérer *some* com[m]e la trace d'une opération qui situe l'occurrence en question à l'intérieur d'un domaine notionnel tout en marquant son écart par rapport au centre, le centre correspondant cette fois-ci à la norme, c'est-à-dire au centre organisateur du domaine notionnel associé au lexème." (123)

4. "Mon propos [...] sera d'essayer de montrer que les occurrences construites au moyen de *some* se caractérisent essentiellement par l'absence de cette deuxième dimension qualitative, le formatage effectué par ce marqueur se ramenant à une simple délimitation quantitative de la notion".
5. Cf. in a similar vein, the distinction made by Dufaye between intra- and extra-notional determinations (2001: 107) or between a defining QLT (QLT *définitoire*) and a differential QLT (QLT *différentiel*) (2009: 87).
6. Cf. Culioli (1999a: 50) "Nous dénommerons *image* ce représentant d'une classe de valeurs imaginaires : ainsi QUI dans *Qui a ouvert la fenêtre ?*"
7. Cf. Léonard (1987: 48) and note 6 or Culioli (1999b: 181), where the feature is referred to as *quantifiabilisation*.
8. The converse is not necessarily true, however. Plural or non-count nouns can function with qualitative values for SOME.
9. A more traditional terminology might talk of ipseity, quiddity and intensity.
10. Baumer (2008a) notes that in such cases SOME N may be translated into French by QUELQUE N.
11. The contemporary use of *Whatever* to display a certain adolescent indifference in response to affirmations or injunctions appears to obey a similar logic.
12. This is not the case with (14) above, for example, *some local schoolboy she knew*. Compare again : [...] *he stared down at the floor and shuffled his feet like some clumsy schoolboy* BNC.
13. "Il est tout à fait logique que l'on trouve des éléments qui contribuent à stabiliser une référence qui, du fait de la présence de *some* dans l'énoncé, apparaît initialement comme floue". (Baumer 2008a: 58) "It makes sense for there to be elements that contribute to stabilising a reference which, thanks to SOME in the utterance, appears initially fuzzy" [My translation.]
14. I use the term *topic* in the technical sense of the French term *repère constitutif*.
15. My thanks to Emmanuel Baumer for giving me access to this unpublished paper which points out differences that appear to have escaped the notice of many other authors. Even Sahlin (1979) who is one of the rare linguists to have studied the prosodic issues involves considers the two indifferently, possibly because her corpus contains only two examples.
16. Both Gilbert and Baumer point out the existence of certain examples which, although they appear to bear on questions of degree, are not clearly meliorative or minorative.

RÉSUMÉS

In this article we maintain that the marker SOME, in constructions of the general form SOME N, refers to an operation of second-order determination or *bracketing*, relative to a notional domain. This may in turn be interpreted contextually as quantitative – in which case SOME brackets an amount of the notion in question – or qualitative – in which case SOME brackets a quality of the notion in question.

Such qualitative uses may be categorised further into at least three subtypes, according to the type of determination involved: *whichness* (ipseity), *whatness* (quiddity) or *howmuchness* (intensity).

The theoretical framework used is that of the *Theory of Predicative and Enunciative Operations*. The concept of second-order determination enables us to provide an innovative explanation for the different values of SOME as configurations of an abstract schematic form.

Dans le présent article nous défendons la thèse selon laquelle le marqueur SOME, dans des constructions du type SOME N, signale une opération de détermination de deuxième degré – une délimitation – par rapport à un domaine notionnel donné.

Cette délimitation peut être interprétée de manière quantitative, auquel cas SOME délimite une quantité de la notion concernée – ou qualitative, auquel cas SOME délimite une qualité de la notion concernée.

De tels emplois qualitatifs peuvent par ailleurs être regroupés en au moins trois sous-catégories supplémentaires, selon que la détermination porte sur l'identité d'un terme (l'ipséité), sur son appartenance à une catégorie (la quiddité) ou encore sur le degré auquel il se réalise (l'intensité). Le cadre théorique employé est celui de la Théorie des Opérations Prédicatives et Enonciatives. Le concept d'une détermination de deuxième degré permet une explication innovante pour les différentes valeurs de SOME qui apparaissent comme autant de configurations d'une forme schématique abstraite.