

Cognitive Semantics Goes Multimodal

Looking at Quot(ativ)es in Face-to-Face Settings

The research agenda

- quotatives: introducers to quotations in interactive settings
 - *say*
 - *be like*
 - *quote (unquote)*
 - air-quotes
- Len TALMY's (forthcoming) *The Attention System of Language*
- modality-sensitive attentional profiles
 - highlight a modality-specific attribute of the original speech event
 - motivate the selectional preference of one quotative over its competitors

Dedicated Causal Triggers

- Attentional effects of one entity on another
- Targeting a concomitant of a referent
- quotatives as selectionally dedicated meta-linguistic forms differentially direct hearer attention to
 - the selected-out concomitant increasing its attention
 - attenuating the direct (default) referring function
 - invoking a meta-linguistic awareness of modality-specific nonverbal attributes of a previous speech event
 - typically conveying an attitudinal stance toward the quote(e)

Discriminating between the quot(ativ)es

- highlighting properties inherent in the linguistic event reported by concomitance activation
- options and constraints of verbal, vocal, and visual production and reception circumstances
- ‘inducing’ a specific vocal and gestural ‘overlay’ on the quote, differentially (?) recruiting facial, manual, and bodily gestures
- apparently varying along a continuum of perceptual distinctness
- accommodating the air-quotes, a manual gesture visualizing quotation marks in writing



- the high-frequency, referential-default, affectively and modality-neutral case
- the most versatile variant of (say)
- serving as a kind of ‘reference frame’
 - *He **said** that* vs. **He told that, ?He was like that, *He quoted that*
 - *The Times’ article **says** the A.M.A. [American Medical Association] opposes the Democrats’ public plan option, but then **says** the A.M.A. “does not speak for all doctors” and characterizes the Physicians for a National Health Program as some kind of fringe group with a minority opinion.*
 - *“I realized I just wasn’t ready to retire,” he **says** in an unemotional, matter of fact tone.*

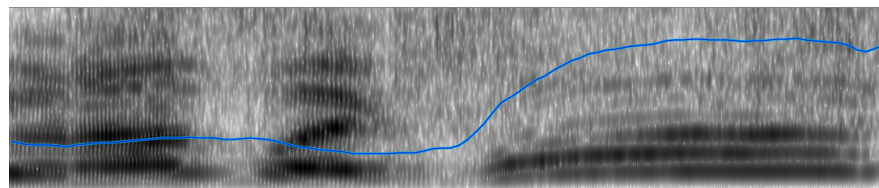
Serena Williams: *be like*



Initial observations

- (1) Cuz I think she said I w'd kill you,
- (2) bu' **I w's like, What?**
- (3) I w's like, Wait a minute.
- (4) But th-then I had misheard.
- (5) She'd never said that.
- (6) So that was just something --
- (7) I w's like -- [y'know]
- (8) **I w's like, Who-oa.**
- (9) Cuz I w's like, Wait a minute.

I w's like, What?



bu'I

w's like

wha'

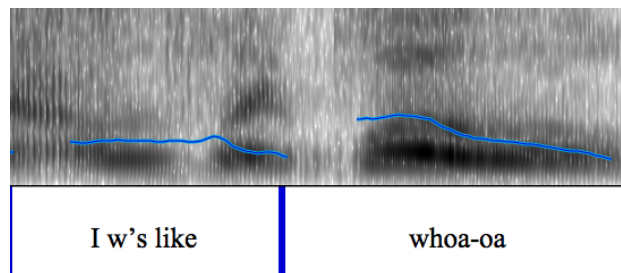
198 Hz

508 Hz

Serena's baseline on average not exceeding 190 Hz



I w's like, Who-oa.

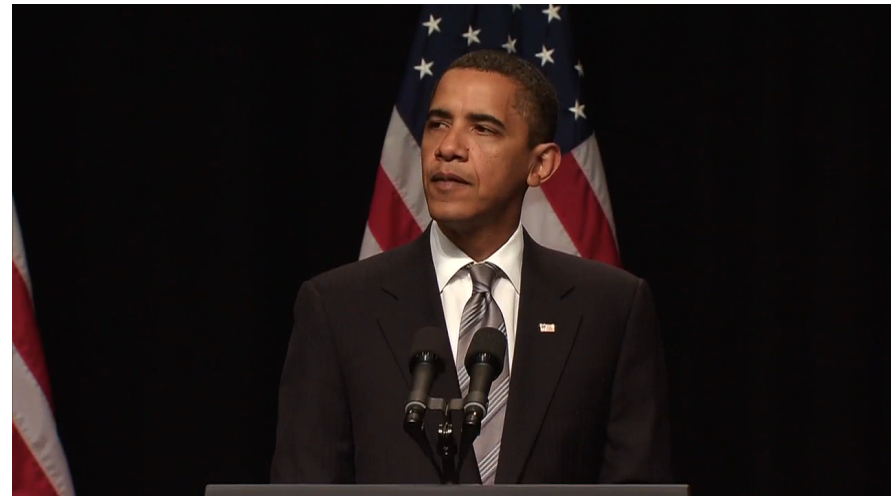


190 Hz 215 Hz
Serena's baseline on average not exceeding 190 Hz



Obama: *quote*

He **said** that they must not be demobilized, and I **quote**, “to a place on a bread line” -- demobilized “to a place on a bread line or on a corner selling apples.” Instead, Roosevelt **said**, “The American people will insist on fulfilling this American obligation to the men and women in the Armed Forces who are winning this war for us.”



Obama: *quote unquote*

It was second nature to [Bush] -- the continuation of a proud family tradition that he and Mrs. Bush clearly passed on to their children and grandchildren. And one which he's carried on throughout his **quote, unquote** "retirement."



McCain: Air-quotes

Just again, the example of the eloquence of Senator Obama. He's **health** for the mother. You know, that's been stretched by the pro-abortion movement in America to mean almost anything. That's the extreme pro-abortion position, **quote, "health."**



Where to go from here

- non-random relations -- or: correlations?
 - gestural and vocal: beat gestures concur with pitch changes
 - gestural and verbal: iconic gestures in consonance with meanings
- interactive quotatives indicate their characteristic ‘situatedness’ as modality-sensitive conceptual alternatives, motivated by the principle of iconicity
- Linguistic Attention -- an effective, systematic, and cognitively motivated analytical tool

References

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**Thank you
for your attention**