

“Remind-me” presuppositions with iterated Speech Acts
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Background. English, German (1) and Japanese (2) questions can feature particles triggering a “remind-me” presupposition (**RMP**) that the answer was known to the speaker before [7, 8].

- (1) Wie ist **noch mal** Ihr Name? (2) Namae-wa nan-da-kke?
 How is again your name Name-TOP what-COP-**kke**
 ‘What’s your name again? (**I knew before**)’ ‘What’s your name again? (**I knew before**)’

In English/German, the particle is *again*, which usually presupposes its prejacent was true before (see (3)). [8] showed (3) could be used as is to yield the RMP, assuming that (i) asking a question *Q* corresponds to an injunction to the addressee (IMP2, see (5)) to make the answer Common Ground (CG[*Q*], see (4)); and (ii) *again* scopes between IMP and CG (see (6)). This yields the right at-issue meaning (equal to IMP2[CG[*Q*]]). Additionally, *again*’s presupposition that the answer to *Q* was common ground *before*, can project across IMP2 to yield the RMP. This can extend to the dedicated Japanese particle *-kke*.

- (3) $\llbracket \text{again} \rrbracket = \lambda \langle p, e \rangle : \exists e' < e. p(e'). p(e)$
 (4) $\llbracket \text{CG} \rrbracket^{\text{spk}} = \lambda \langle Q, e \rangle. 1$ iff the speaker spk partakes in *e*, and the full answer to *Q* is CG in *e*
 (5) $\llbracket \text{IMP2} \rrbracket^{\text{spk,addr}} = \lambda p. \text{it's an obligation that } \exists e. \text{addr causes } e \text{ and } p(e)$
 (6) $\llbracket \text{IMP2} [\text{again}[\text{CG}[Q]]] \rrbracket^{\text{spk,addr}} = \exists e' < e. \text{spk partakes in } e' \ \& \ \text{the full answer to } Q \text{ is CG in } e'$.
 it must be that $\exists e. \text{addr causes } e, \text{ spk partakes in } e, \text{ and the full answer to } Q \text{ is CG in } e$

Puzzle. In French, *déjà*, normally means *already* or *ever* (see (7-9)). It preferentially triggers the RMP in final positions (regardless of *wh*-extraction, see (10)), and necessarily does after *ex situ wh*-words (11). Unlike German *noch mal*, *déjà* within VP cannot trigger the RMP (12).

- (7) Tu as **déjà** lu Tolstoi? (10) (Qui) tu as vu (qui) **déjà**?
 You have DÉJÀ read Tolstoi? Who you have seen who DÉJÀ?
 ‘Have you **ever/already** read Tolstoi?’ ‘Who did you see again?(**RMP ✓**)’
 (8) Ed a (**déjà**) déclaré ses impôts (**déjà**). (11) Qui **déjà** tu as vu (*qui)?
 Ed has DÉJÀ filed his taxes DÉJÀ. Who DÉJÀ you have seen DÉJÀ?
 ‘Ed has filed his taxes **already/at least** ‘Who did you see again?(**RMP ✓**)’
once in his lifetime.’
 (9) Ed **n’a pas déjà** fait ses impôts. (12) (Qui) tu as **déjà** vu (qui)?
 Ed NEG-has NEG DÉJÀ filed his taxes. Who you have DÉJÀ see who?
 ‘Ed has **never/not** already filed his taxes.’ ‘Who have you already seen?(**RMP X**)’

Déjà may presuppose that its prejacent was *expected* (under the *already*-reading), but never that it occurred *before*. So, the RMP cannot arise *via* projection in French (as with *noch mallagain*).

Is *déjà* in RM-questions associated with a special “*again*”-meaning, similarly to Japanese *-kke*, or can one of its “standard” meanings be recycled to derive the RMP?

Upshot. We propose that the *ever*-meaning of *déjà* (presuppositionless, existential over all past events) can yield the RMP, assuming that *déjà*, just like *again*, ends up applying to CG[*Q*]. The RMP then arises from the interaction between *déjà*[CG[*Q*]] and a second CG operator outscoping *déjà*, which will ensure that *déjà*[CG[*Q*]] is CG, i.e. will presuppose that the answer to *Q* was common ground in the past (=the RMP). Under that view, *What’s your name déjà?* ends up meaning *What’s your name, which you made CG before?*—except what’s transcribed as a supplement, is fully common ground.

Assumptions. We assume *déjà* asserts *again*’s presupposition (see (13)), and starts in VP (yielding the RMP-less readings in (7-12)). (14) shows how *déjà* applies to CG[*Q*] to *assert* the RMP.

- (13) $\llbracket \text{déjà} \rrbracket = \lambda \langle p, e \rangle. \exists e' < e. p(e') = 1$
 (14) $\llbracket \text{déjà CG} [Q] \rrbracket^{\text{spk}} = \lambda e. \exists e' < e. \text{spk partakes in } e', \text{ and the full answer to } Q \text{ is CG in } e'$

Deriving the RMP. Unlike *noch mal*, *déjà* moves *overtly* to SpecCP below CG (solid → in Fig. 1). This step is in line with word order and the absence of intervention effects between *déjà* and

negation (“Beck effects” [2, 1], otherwise present in French [4, 3]). See (15). Then, *déjà* moves (c)overtly to a position above CG; see dashed → in Fig. 1.

(15) Qui (déjà) tu n’as pas vu (déjà)?
 Who DÉJÀ you NEG-have NEG seen DÉJÀ
 ‘Who haven’t you seen again (RMP ✓)’

If this step is *covert*, *wh*-movement (dashed arrow in Fig. 1) must be *overt*, granted *déjà* needs to attach to a host *wh*-word in SpecCP (perhaps similarly to *diable*, ‘the hell’ [6]). This condition bans forms like **Déjà tu as vu qui?* In any case, we take that only the highest copy of *déjà* ($\langle déjà \rangle_2$) gets interpreted. If IMP2 were directly inserted at the top of Fig. 1, a weird meaning would arise: that the speaker asks the addressee to cause (14) to be true, i.e. to cause an event preceded by another event (i) involving the speaker and (ii) in which the answer is CG. Instead, Fig. 2 assumes that a 2nd CG operator is merged (the extra ?-operator below it just lifts the preadjacent *p* into the question $\{p\}$). The lower constituent CG[Q], subsequently moves past the higher CG, leaving an interpreted copy behind. At this stage, node ② denotes the RMP. But in order to be fully presupposed at the matrix level, it should escape the scope of IMP2. This is achieved in Fig. 3, where node ② is assumed to extrapose to the very top after IMP2 gets merged. In Fig. 3, node ③, yields the at-issue contribution of the question, equal to IMP2[CG[Q]], i.e. a request to the addressee to make the full answer to the question CG. Node ② (applied to the utterance event) yields the RMP.

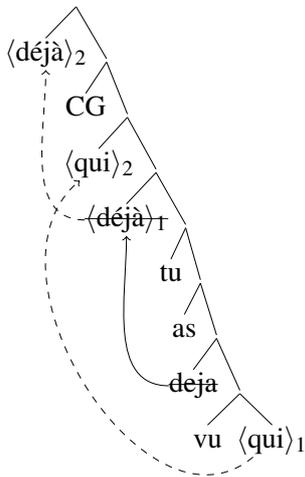


Fig. 1: Movement below and above CG.

Conclusion. We derived the French RMP assuming that *déjà*, unlike Japanese *-kke*, does not have an idiosyncratic meaning. Instead, *déjà* retains a unified meaning akin to *ever*, asserting what *again* presupposes, and undergoes several operations in the treetops “forcing” this assertion into the CG.

Extensions. (1)-Speech Act use of *déjà* in *assertions*: *Déjà, il est arrivé en retard* (‘Déjà, he’s come late’), means I’m *already* asserting he was late; i.e. the other meaning of *déjà* is recruited. (2)-Other Q-particles: *wh+donc* (‘wh+then’) and *wh+au juste* (‘wh+exactly’) may respectively presuppose that the question was previously left unresolved, or non-maximally resolved. **Further questions.** Why not readily use *de nouveau* (‘again’) in French RM-questions? If French allows *overt* movement past CG (see Fig. 1), why are there no RM *polar* questions?

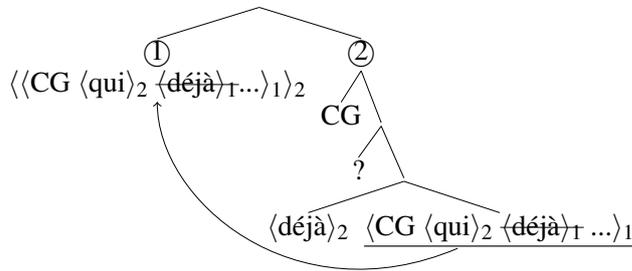


Fig. 2: Merger of a 2nd CG and extraction of the inner CG[...]

- ① = $\lambda e. 1$ iff the speaker partakes in *e*, and who the addressee saw is CG in *e*
- ② = $\lambda e. 1$ iff the speaker partakes in *e*, and the fact that $\exists e' < e$ s.t. the speaker partakes in *e'*, and s.t. who the addressee saw is CG in *e'* is CG in *e*
 = **the RMP if *e* is the utterance event.**

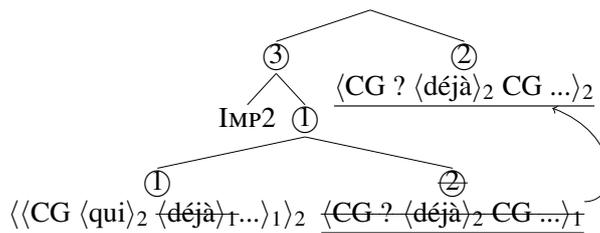


Fig. 3: Extraposition of the doubly-CGed material

- ③ = it’s an obligation that $\exists e. e$. the addressee causes *e*, the speaker partakes in *e*, and who the addressee saw is CG in *e*
 = **the question without *déjà*.**

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