

*Conventional implicature and cross language
analysis of «Insinuating words»:
Fr. MÊME - Rom. CHIAR**

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The impact of pragmatics on cross-language studies has been recently emphasized in consequence, on the one hand, of the latest theoretical developments and, on the other, because of the difficulties which the versatile and semantically rather sophisticated variations of the pragmatically definable words present in the process of communication, especially in a non-native language (see more recently, Culioli, 1981; Givón, 1984; Wildner-Bassett, 1984, et al.).

As Ducrot (1973), Karttunen and Peters (1975), Gazdar (1976), Martin (1983), Manoliu-Manea (1982, 1984) and others have pointed out in the last decade there are several words such as Fr. *même*, *mais*, *encore*, etc., Engl. *but*, *even too*, *just*, etc., Rom. *chiar*, *tot*, *dar*, *ci*, etc., which cannot be described either in terms of componential analysis (lexematics) or in terms of semantic generative approaches. Their content concerns speakers' world of beliefs, their anti-universe, their expectations. Ducrot (1980, p. 491), for example, emphasizes that Fr. *mais* «fournit l'exemple d'un morphème qui ne saurait se décrire qu'en termes pragmatiques, puisqu'il se réfère aux intentions guidant la parole». For Robert Martin (1983, p. 232), the most characteristic feature of Fr. *même* consists in its capacity of revealing an «anti-universe», a set of sentences which, in spite of the fact that they are false at to (i.e. the time of the speech), could have been true or imagined as being true, which means that there are counterfactual worlds in which they. As Leech (1977, p. 322) has pointed out, «expectation relations are not to be found in the abstract logical system of language, but rather in the pragmatics of communication, along with thematic ordering, information, focus, etc.». Unlike presupposition or entailment, expectation does not satisfy the

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criterion of «uncontradictability». According to Martin (1983), «expectation is a way of representing a «possible world», i.e. the world which had the best chances of realization according to the speaker's universe of beliefs. A similar view, in a higher formalized form, is expressed by Lauri Karttunen (1977, p. 149), who considers that «according to a pragmatic view, the presuppositions of a sentence determine the class of contexts in which the utterance could be felicitously uttered». The difference between semantic and pragmatic presuppositions is generally made in terms of the way in which a sentence whose presuppositions are not realized is characterized. So, when a semantically presupposed sentence is false, the sentence which presupposes it lacks truth value, while when a pragmatically presupposed sentence is in contradiction with the context, the sentence which presupposes it is infelicitous (see also Gochet, 1980, p. 377). For Gazdar (1976) the sufficient condition for a sentence to be considered as a pragmatic presupposition is NOT to Be IMPLIED by the context, but to be compatible with the context. Utterances which rest upon presuppositions in contradiction with the context are not infelicitous, inappropriate, incomprehensible, or insincere; they merely lose their presuppositions. A similar point of view is expressed by Parret (1980, p. 105): «l'énoncé A présuppose pragmatiquement la proposition B relatif à un ensemble de faits assumés C, si et seulement si A n'est pas vrai dans le contexte de C quand la proposition B n'est pas consistante avec C». More formalized definitions bring into the picture speaker's assumptions and beliefs. According, for example, to Stalnaker (1977, p. 173):

«A proposition p is a pragmatic presupposition of a speaker in a given context just in case the speaker assumes or believes that P, assumes or believes that his addressee assumes or believes that p and assumes or believes that his addressee recognizes that he is making these assumptions or has these beliefs» (see also Caton, 1981).

In this way, the worlds of beliefs and assumptions are integrated into the interpretation of utterances. These worlds are not connected only with presuppositions and expectations as defined above, but also with Grice's conventional implicatures, which are characterized by two main features:

(a) They are detachable, since they depend on the particular items used; the same event can be expressed without the implicature under discussion.

Let us consider for example, sentences (1.a) and (1.b):

(1.a) *Joan is pregnant, but Peter is delighted*

(1.b) *Joan is pregnant and Peter is delighted*

In (1.a) the adversative conjunction BUT *insinuates* that Peter's delight is unexpected or it is in contrast with Joan's attitude. This insinuation is conventionally conveyed by BUT. Sentence (1.a) has the same truth conditions as sentence (1.b), where the insinuation in question is missing. Sentence

(a) uttered without any insinuating intentions becomes an infelicitous utterance, although its truth conditions are satisfied.

(b) Conventional implicatures are non cancellable, since one cannot add a conjoined phrase that effectively denies the implication. Compare (2.a) and (2.b):

(2.a) *The Duke of Norfolk has three mansions, but only one car*
and

(2.b) *The Duke of Norfolk has three mansions, but only one car, and there is in fact no contrast between these two facts.*

The implicature in (2.a) is denied by the conjoined phrase in (2.b), which does not seem to lift the force of BUT, and seems anomalous (see Levinson, 1983, p. 12).

According to these interpretations, it seems that *insinuation* turns to be the most appropriate metaphorical description for conventional implicatures. It is for this reason that I have chosen to use the label of «insinuating words» for the carriers of conventional implicatures.

Without insinuating anything. I shall not go into further details concerning the not yet fixed boundaries between semantics and pragmatics, since my intentions are much more limited and language-oriented, namely to find a unified description for the content of Fr. *même* and its Romanian counterparts, which could account for their multiple variations and their different contextual replacements.

1. FR. MÊME: FROM «SELF» TO «SAME» AND «EVEN»

Fr. MÊME has been described comprehensively in terms of Gustave Guillaume's psychomechanics in Martin (1975) as a «grammatical word» (sic!) expressing three main values:

- (a) comparative MÊME (e.g. *le même enfant*)
- (b) restrictive MÊME (e.g. *l'enfant lui-même*)
- (c) argumentative MÊME (e.g. *même l'enfant*).

All these values represent a continuous movement of thought which can be divided into four main steps.

Step I: An identifying movement which particularizes within a class: the comparative *même*; *même* expressing «repetition», «identity» (see examples 3,4 below).

Step II: The identifying movement goes beyond itself, in a restrictive direction, acting within a metonymic field; the noun is already identi-

fied. It is the case of several *effets de sens* expressed by the restrictive *même* «self₁» (see examples 5a, 6a, 7a).

Step III: The movement is reversed. It goes from the particular to the general. It still remains within the boundaries of the metonymic field, but it explores this field with a generalizing perspective. It is the case of another set of values actualized by the restrictive *même* «self₂» (see below, examples 8a, 9a, 10a).

Step IV: The reverse movement (i.e. the one which takes a generalizing direction) explores a class of reference. It is the case of the argumentative *même* «even» (see examples 21, 22, 23).

Figure A presents the kinetic structure of Fr. *même* in Guillaume and Martinet's terms.

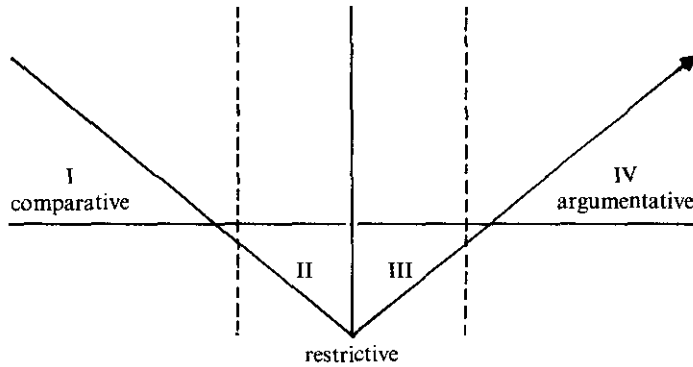


Figure A

2. ROMANIAN PRONOUNS OF IDENTITY AND THEIR ADVERBIAL REPLACEMENTS

In Romanian, the above mentioned three main values of *même* are distributed among various words as follows:

(A) The pronoun of *identity același* corresponds to all the contextual values of the comparative *même*:

- e.g. 3.a. *Pierre aime la même femme que Paul*
 b. *Petru iubește aceeași femeie ca Paul*
 «Peter loves the same woman as Paul».
- or 4.a. *Pierre et Paul aiment la même femme, hélas!*
 b. *Petru și Paul iubesc aceeași femeie.*
 «Peter and Paul love the same woman».

(B) The values of the restrictive *même* as an expression of Step II, when the restrictive *même* shares with the comparative *même* a particularizing

movement, are expressed in Romanian by the so-called pronoun of reinforcement *însuși* «self»:

Let us now consider various *effets de sens* of the particularizing restrictive *même* in the very terms of Martin's description:

(i) When *même* is used for circumscribing a concept' (particularly when determining an attributive noun):

- e.g. 5.a. Fr. *La ténacité qui était le fond même du tempérament du Baudouin II* (in Martin, 1975, p. 239)
b. Rom. *tenacitatea care era însăși temelia temperamentului lui Baudouin II.*
«the tenacity which was the very basis of Baudouin's temperament».

(ii) When the context offers an explicitly different predicate to the metonymic environment:

- e.g. 6.a. Fr. *Martha la regarde sortir. Elle-même sort par une autre porte* (Camus, *Le Malentendu*, p. 120)
b. Rom. *Marta o privește ieșind. Ea însăși iese pe altă ușă.*
«Martha looks at her going out. She herself goes out through another door».

(iii) When *même* accompanies the reflexive pronoun, which means that the thought does not leave the narrow domain of the subject:

- 7.a. *Peur elle-même, elle eût éprouvé de la gêne à demander la moindre chose, mais pour les siens, elle...* (G. Roy, *Bonheur d'occasion*, p. 122)
b. Rom. *Pentru ea însăși i-ar fi fost jenă să ceară cel mai mic lucru, dar pentru ai săi...*
«for herself, she would have embarrassed to ask for the smallest thing, but for hers (parents), she...»

(C) The emphatic pronoun *însuși* shares various contexts with the adverbial *chiar* (basically meaning «precisely») when expressing the values of restrictive *même* engaged in the movement from particular to general (see Step III). In Martin's terms, in these cases, «*même* restrictif est engagé à l'image du *même* argumentatif, dans un mouvement généralisant» (1975).

The «opening perspective» prevails in the following contexts:

(i) When the context explicitly specifies the «metonymic environment» in order to relate it to the same predicate (1975), p. 240):

- e.g. 8.a. Fr. ... *ni les autres queux, ni Jean Noël, ni le baron lui même, personne ne fit mine d'avoir remarqué...* (M. Druon, *Les grandes familles*, p. 15)
- b. Rom. ... *nici ceilalți cerșetori, nici Jean Noël, nici însuși baronul (însuși) nimeni nu s-a arătat a fi observat ceva.*
«neither the other beggars, nor J.N., nor the baron himself, nobody seemed to have noticed...»

(ii) The same value is actualized when the restriction on the argument is not a necessary condition for the truth value of the predicate:

- e.g. 9.a. *La déception des Australiens, classés seconds, considérés comme favoris par les Britanniques eux-mêmes, est à la mesure de leur espoir.*
- b. *Deceptia Australienilor, clasați pe locul al doilea, considerați ca favoriți de către înșiși Britanici | chiar de către Britanici, este pe măsura speranței lor.*
«The disappointment of the Australians, placed second, considered as favorites by the British themselves, equals their hope...»
- see also 10.a. *Il confesse lui-même n'avoir jamais vu aucun de ses enfants.*
- b. *El însuși/chiar el mărturisește că nu a văzut niciodată pe vreunul din copiii săi.*
«He himself confesses that he has never seen any of this children».

(iii) The cases when *însuși* has the value «in person» seem to represent a middle point in the kinetic structure, since it expresses an «unexpected coincidence with oneself» (see Coseriu, 1955) by eliminating one by one the candidates from the same metonymic field to which the predicate might have applied. A circular movement would then be the most appropriate metaphorical representation for this type of restrictive value (see figure B).

- e.g. 11.a. *Il a écrit cette lettre lui-même/hui-même a écrit...*
- b. *a scris scrisoarea aceasta el însuși/chiar el*
«he himself wrote this letter».
- or 12.a. *hier soir, dans un café de Davis, j'ai rencontré la Reine elle-même.*
- b. *ieri seară, într-o cafenea din Davis, m-am întâlnit cu însăși Regina/cu Regina însăși.*
«yesterday evening, in a Davis cafeteria, I met the Queen herself».

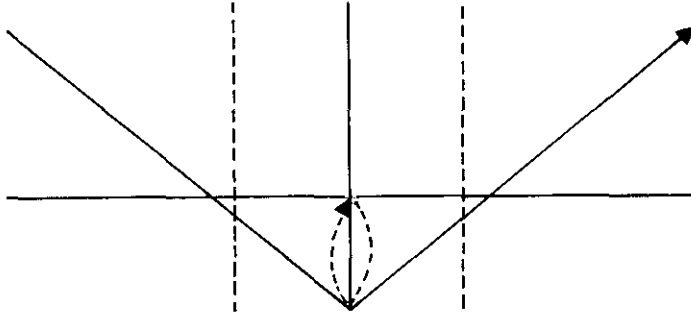


Figure B

A similar unexpected coincidence is expressed by *même* when applied to time-space conditions:

- see 13.a. *ici même*;
 b. *à Paris même*;
 c. *aujourd'hui même*, etc.

In these cases, Fr. *même* corresponds only to the adverbial *chiar*, due to the fact that *însuși* has strong adjectival characteristics, as shown by its agreement in gender, number and person with its head noun.

- comp. 14.a. *Pierre est parti aujourd'hui même*
 b. *Petru a plecat chiar azi/*însuși azi*
 approximatively «it is just/precisely today that Peter left».
- 15.a. *Pierre habite à Paris même*
 b. *Petru locuiește chiar la Paris/*însuși la Paris*
 «It is exactly in Paris that Peter lives».
- 16.a. *C'est ici même que je l'ai rencontré*
 b. *L-am întâlnit chiar aici/*însuși aici*
 «It is exactly here that I met him».

(iv) As an adverb, *chiar* can express a wider range of values carrying the conventional implicature of unexpected coincidence than *même*.

a. in connection with verbs:

- e.g. 17.a. *Fetița chiar plînge, nu-i glumă.*
 b. *La petite fille pleure, vraiment, sans blague.*
 «the little girl is really weeping/is weeping indeed, no joke».

b) as an adjective modifier:

- e.g. 18.a. *Dacă a făcut asta e chiar prost.*
 b. *S'il a fait cela il est vraiment sot*
 «if he has done that he is really stupid».

c) as a sentence modifier:

- 19.a. *Rochia asta chiar că-ți vine bine.*
 b. *Cette robe, c'est vrai qu'elle te va bien*
 «this dress, it is true that it is very becoming on you».

When *même* has a restrictive value representing a particularizing movement, *chiar* cannot replace *însuși*:

- com. 5.b. *tenacitatea care era însăși temelia temperamentului lui Baudouin II/* (c) chiar temelia...*
 or 6.b. *Marta o privește ieșind. Ea însăși iese pe altă ușă.*
 c. **Chiar ea iese pe altă ușă.*
 and 7.a. *Pour elle-même, elle eût éprouvé de la gêne à demander la moindre chose, mais pour les siens...*
 c. **Chiar pentru ea, i-ar fi fost jenă sa creară cel mai mic lucru.*

c) The argumentative *même* never corresponds to the Romanian pronoun of reinforcement *însuși*. Usually it has to be translated by the adverbial *chiar* in the following positions:

(i) as a predicate modifier:

- e.g. 20.a. *Quand je suis parti de chez vous, Jean était furieux. Qu'est-ce qui s'est passé ensuite? - Rien de grave. Marie a réussi à le calmer, même à le convaincre de nous aider.*
 b. *Cînd am plecat de la voi, Ion era furios. Ce s-a mai întîmplat după aceea? Nimic grav. Maria a reușit să-l calmeze, chiar să-l convingă să ne ajute.*
 «When I left you, John was furious. What happened later? Nothing serious. Mary succeeded in pacifying him, even in persuading him to help us».

(ii) as an attribute modifier:

- e.g. 21.a. *il est gros, même obèse* «he is fat, even obese»
 b. *e gras, e chiar obez*

(iii) as a noun modifier, the argumentative *même* can be translated in two ways:

(a) by *chiar și* or (b) by *pînă și*:

- e.g. 22.a. *La conférence a eut un succès formidable. Même Yakov est venu.*
 b. *Conferința a avut un succes formidabil.*
Pînă și Y. a venit
Chiar și Y. a venit.
 «the convention was a tremendous success. Even Yakov came».

The Romanian adverbial ȘI (not to be mistaken for the copulative conjunction «and»), which brings in the meaning of «an additional entity», is a desambiguating means, since *chiar* alone, before a NP, has a nonargumentative value:

- comp. 23.a. *Ion a văzut chiar casa lui Petru*
 b. *Ion a văzut chiar și casa lui Petru*
 a. «it is exactly Peter's house that John saw»
 b. «John saw even Peter's house».

In pragmatic terms, the argumentative *même* (*chiar*) has an impact on a complex anti-universe. It carries the implicature that a sentence P (when modified directly by *chiar* or *même*) is contrary not only to the expectations of this every sentence P, but also to the expectations evoked by a preceding sentence, Q (see also Ducrot's *théorie de l'argumentation*). So, in (22), the denied expectations are: for P «it was not Yakov who came» and for Q «the convention was not such a tremendous success». In (21) the denied expectations are: for P «John did not want to help us» and for Q: «John was still furious».

(iv) Under the effect of negation, Fr. *même* keeps its argumentative value:

- e.g. 24.a. *ella n'aime pas Pierre; elle n'est même pas allée le voir à l'hôpital* «she does not love Peter; she did not even go to see him at the hospital».

In (24) *même* introduces an argument in favor of the first negative sentence, which cancels the positive expectation «she loves Peter». In such cases, Romanian chooses a completely different operator, namely *nici măcar* (*nici* «nor»; *măcar* «at least»):

- see 24.b. *Nu-l iubește pe Petru; nici măcar nu s-a dus la spital să-l vadă...* (same meanings as 24.a).

(v) As a modifier of conditions, *même* has the capacity of revealing the fact that, according to the speaker's expectations, the condition(s) would not allow the consequence to take place:

- e.g. 25.a. *même si vous venez à cinq heures, nous avons tout le temps d'aller au cinéma ce soir*
 b. *chiar dacă vii la cinci, tot avem timp să mergem la cinema diseară.*
 «even if you come at five o'clock, we still have time to go to the movies tonight».

- or 26.a. *quand,même le danger serait dix fois plus grand, il l'affronterait encore.*
 b. *chiar dacă pericolul ar fi de zece ori mai mare, tot l-ar înfrunta.*
 «even if the danger were ten times stronger, he would still face it».

The necessary condition (i.e. «to come before 5», «the danger does not increase ten times») becomes just an unfavorable circumstance, which, in fact, cannot hinder the accomplishment of the events.

The distribution of *același*, *înșuși* and *chiar* is shown in figure C.

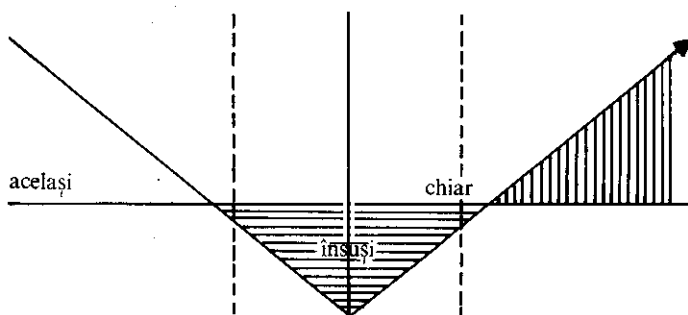


Figure C.

CONCLUSIONS:

Even if psychomechanical approaches are not always convincing, the fact that Fr. *même* corresponds to Rom. *chiar* only when representing steps III and IV, which share a generalizing orientation, cannot be considered a mere coincidence (comp. schèmes A and C). These two values have in common a pragmatic dimension which can be roughly characterized as «a capacity of influencing the degree of utterance assertiveness» (see Manoliu, 1984). In pragmatic terms, in affirmative contexts, *chiar* expresses the speaker's attitude concerning the addressee's expectations on «coincidence», i.e. the speaker intends to persuade his addressee to believe what the speaker asserts, in spite of the addressee's assumption about the «state of affairs». Briefly, it is an invitation which could be paraphrased as «(Please,) believe me!». In other terms, *chiar* is a means of increasing the degree of assertiveness by eliminating the addressee's doubts. Sometimes the «person persuaded» may be the speaker himself.

- see 27. — *Știi ce-a făcut Petru ieri? L-a insultat pe Director în ședință.*
 — *Dacă a făcut asta e chiar prost. Eu îl credeam mai deștept.*

- «Do you know what Peter did yesterday? He insulted our Director in the board meeting».
- «If he did that, he is really stupid. I thought he was smarter than that».

In such cases, *chiar* may even confirm the assumptions of the previous speaker:

- e.g. 28. — *Cred că Petru mă iubește. Când am fost bolnavă, a stat la căpățîiul meu zi și noapte.*
— *Dacă a făcut asta, chiar că te iubește.*
— «I think Peter loves me. When I was ill, he was there, beside my bed, day and night».
— «If he did that, he really loves you».

When replacing *însuși* as a nominal phrase modifier, *chiar* takes the same pragmatic value:

- see 29. — *M-am întâlnit chiar cu Împăratul (a)*
cu însuși Împăratul (b)
«I met the emperor himself».

Both (29 (a) and (b) insinuate that «nobody around (t)here expects to meet the emperor»; but *chiar* (or *însuși*) is meant to persuade the addressee to believe the fact that the realm of events has chosen the unexpected argument for the predicate under discussion.

Under the effect of negation or interrogation, *chiar* has a reverse role, it introduces doubts, expressing the speaker's disbelief concerning the addressee's statement in an attenuated way. The corresponding paraphrase for this attitude would then be: «I do not believe you entirely». «You are not entirely right».

- e.g. 30. — *Ai făcut tot ce ai putut ca să mă superi!*
— *Nu e chiar așa!*
— «You did everything you could to upset me!»
— «It is not exactly like that!».
- or 31. — *Mă duc la aeroport* «I am going to the airport»
— *Chiar te duci?* «Are you going, really?»

In (30) and (31) *chiar* becomes a means of lowering the degree of assertiveness.

The opposition triggered by the intervention of negation or interrogation may therefore be stated in terms of «increasing versus lowering the degree of assertiveness». In both cases the addressee's expectation of identity or

coincidence is invalidated, but the speaker's attitude changes from persuasion to disbelief.

Depending on the nature of the modified constituent, the *effets de sens* of the corresponding conventional implicature carried by *chiar* may vary from «unexpected event» (additional or not), «unexpected attainability of the upper limit of a quality» or even «concession», to «unexpected coincidence in space or time», or «unexpected identity with oneself».

The pragmatic description under discussion can also account for the fact that Rom. *chiar* does not always correspond to Fr. MÊME, but also to a variety of French adverbials bearing the same effect as *chiar* on the degree of assertiveness. It is the case of the contexts in which «restrictive» *chiar* modifies a sentence or its predicate as a whole and, consequently, meets the domain of modality, which has a similar pragmatic dimension:

- comp. 32.a. *chiar cã plînge*
 b. Fr. *il est vrai qu'elle pleure*
 33.a. *e chiar prost*
 b. *il est vraiment sot*
 «she is weeping indeed»
 «he is really stupid».

The comparison of Fr. *même* and Rom. *chiar* and *însuși* is, in our opinion, thought-provoking and rich in theoretical implications, not only because of their overlapping areas revealing the importance of pragmatic relations in the semantic micro-structure of the particular category of words which I have labeled as «insinuating particles». It also reveals the extraordinary extensibility of the entity carrying the value of «precisely», «clearly», which represents the merest pragmatic means capable of expressing various degrees of assertiveness. If Fr. *même* developed from restrictive IPSE «self» in both directions, Romanian has remade the opposition between Lat. IPSE and IDEM «same» through a different morpho-semantic combination: *însuși* rests on IPSE (*îns*) and —*si* (reflexive clitic in dative— Lat. SIBI, while *acelasi* «same» combines the demonstrative pronoun *acela* «that» with the same reflexive clitic —*si*. But the most interesting development from a pragmatic point of view is represented by the adverbial *chiar*, which originally meant «(it is) clear (that P)» (see Lat. *clarum*) and evolved in two directions: on the one hand, it became a replacement for restrictive *însuși* «self» and, on the other hand, it developed into a means of expressing an argumentative value in combination with any sentence constituent.

Davis, July 18, 1984.

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