

# Anatomy of ne...que

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WCCFL 32, USC

March 9 2014

## Minimal configurations

(1) Paul **n'** a invité **que** Marie.

Paul NE has invited QUE Marie

*'Paul only invited Marie.'*

*Assertion:* For all x other than Marie, Paul didn't invite x.

*Presupposition:* Paul invited Marie. *(to be revised)*

► I will refer to sentences like (1) as 'minimal *ne... que* configurations' (that is, we will also encounter partial and total configurations).

## Similarity with *only*

- *Ne... que* seems to yield the same global meaning as *only*.
- Other similarities with *only*, e.g. the sufficiency reading (von Stechow & Iatridou 2007):
  - (2) a. To get good Gorgonzola, you **only** have to go to the North End.
  - b. Pour trouver du bon gorgonzola, vous **n'avez qu'**à aller...
- We will gain some direct acquaintance with the ingredients of a *ne... que* configuration. There is the hope that this way we can also get a better understanding of *only*.

# Goals

- 1 Show that *ne...que* configurations always contain **hidden** material and determine what this material is;
- 2 Show that there is a paradoxical difference between sentences with **partial** and sentences with **total** realization of this material: the main difference lies in the **presupposition**.
- 3 Determine what this presupposition really is.

# Roadmap

- 1 Hidden Material
- 2 The Paradox
- 3 The Presupposition

# Part I: Hidden Material

## About *ne* (i)

- *Ne* signals the presence of the silent negation **NEG** (the only one that French has): when *ne* appears in a given clause, NEG is its clausemate.

- (3) Il **peut** [ **ne** NEG rien dire.  
he can NE NEG anything say  
*'He can abstain from saying anything.'* CAN»NEG
- (4) Il **ne peut** NEG [ rien dire.  
*'He cannot say anything.'* NEG»CAN

## About *ne* (ii)

- (5) Il ne m' a **souvent** NEG **pas** répondu.  
he NE to-me has often NEG PAS answered  
*'He often did not answer me.'* OFTEN»NEG
- (6) Il ne m'a NEG **pas souvent** répondu.  
*'He did not often answer me.'* NEG»OFTEN
- The scope of *souvent* w.r.t. negation unambiguously depends on its position relative to *pas*; it doesn't depend on the relation with *ne*.
  - So negation is not where *ne* is: in fact, it is close to *pas* and above it.

# Negative Rule

- (7)
- a. \*Il ne boit NEG.  
he NE drinks NEG
  - b. Il ne boit NEG **pas**.  
*'He doesn't drink.'*
  - c. Il ne boit NEG **rien**.  
*'He doesn't drink anything.'*
  - d. Il ne boit NEG **jamais**.  
*'He never drinks.'*

## Negative rule (Homer&Thommen 2013):

No clause can contain NEG, the silent sentential negation, if it contains no n-word in the scope of NEG.

# N-words

- *personne* 'anyone',
- *rien* 'anything',
- *jamais* 'ever',
- *nul* 'any',
- *aucun* 'any',
- *plus* 'anymore',
- *pas* 'not'

- They are **existential NPIs**.

# Goal

- I am going to show that minimal '*ne... que*' configurations contain an n-word.

I am going to use these properties:

- N-words are existential NPIs, which are licensed by a silent, abstract negation (whose presence is signaled by *ne*), and which can be used as fragment answers.
- They can give rise to Double Negation (DN) or Single Negation (SN) readings.

## N-words in *ne... que* (i)

- The presence of *ne* makes us expect that there is an n-word.
- And we also have a direct test for n-words: they can stand alone in a fragment answer:

(8) –A: Qui est venu? ('who came?')

–B: **Personne** ('no one').

(9) –A: Qui est venu? ('who came?')

–B: **Que Pierre** ('only Pierre').

So the following is probably true:

- There is a silent n-word in *ne... que...*
- or the *que*-phrase is (in total or in part) an n-word.

## N-words in ne... que (ii)

- Evidence that there is some **polarized** element in the configuration: intervention effect by *tout* 'all' (see also von Stechow & Trudgill 2007):

(10) Tout le monde n' aime que le chocolat.  
all the people NE likes QUE the chocolate

*'Everyone only likes chocolate.'*

Doesn't mean: *'Not everyone likes something other than chocolate.'*

\*NEG >> TOUT >> QUE

Compare with:

(11) Tout le monde n'aime pas le chocolat.

*'Not everyone likes chocolate.'*

Or: *'No one likes chocolate.'*

*(inverse scope)*

*(surface scope)*

## N-words in ne... que (iii)

- There is an **n-word** in minimal configurations: **ambiguity** in the presence of an overt n-word.

- (12) *Personne (n') aime personne.*  
anyone NE likes anyone  
*'No one likes anyone.'* (SN)  
Or: *'Everyone likes someone.'* (DN)
- (13) *Personne (n') aime que Paul.*  
anyone NE likes QUE Paul  
*'Everyone likes only Paul.'* (SN)  
Or: *'No one only likes Paul.'* (DN)

## N-words in ne... que (iv)

- And **lack of ambiguity** in the presence of *pas*:

(14) Il (n') a **pas** invité personne.  
he NE has PAS invited anyone  
*'He invited someone.'* (ok DN)  
Not: *'He didn't invite anybody.'* (\*SN)

(15) Il (n') a **pas** invité que Paul.  
he NE has PAS invited QUE Paul  
*'He didn't invite only Paul.'* (ok DN)  
Not: *'He only invited Paul.'* (\*SN)

- ▶ So evidence for an n-word in minimal *ne... que* configurations.

(16) a. Personne n'a invité personne d'autre que Paul. (SN/DN)  
b. Il n'a pas invité personne d'autre que Paul. (\*SN/DN)

## N-words in ne... que (v)

- There is sometimes a visible n-word:

(17) Paul n'a NEG invité que Marie.

*'Paul only invited Marie.'*

Minimal

(18) a. Paul n'a NEG invité personne d'autre que Marie.

Total

b. Paul n'a NEG invité personne AUTRE que Marie.

Partial

*Assertion: 'Paul invited no one who is not Marie.'*

## N-words in ne... que (vi)

- (19) Paul n'a NEG invité que Marie.  
*'Paul only invited Marie.'*

Minimal

► Possible analysis for (19):

- (20) Paul (n') a NEG invité PERSONNE AUTRE que Marie.  
Paul NE has NEG invited anyone other QUE Marie

Hidden material is CAPITALIZED;

GREEN CAPITALS are for covert versions of words that have a phonetic realization (e.g. NUMBER, THING, PERSON, etc. in Kayne 2003). I will be assuming that the reduction of this material is not due to ellipsis.

## N-words in ne... que (vii)

- Additional evidence against treating the *que*-phrase as an n-word:

(21) \*Que Marie (n') est NEG venue.  
QUE Marie NE is NEG come  
Intended: 'Only Marie came.'

- Compare with:

(22) a. Personne n'est venu.  
b. ?Personne que Marie n'est venu.

- The ungrammaticality of (21) could come from a violation of the EPP (not satisfied by silent subjects).

(23) Il n'est venu que Marie.

## Evidence for AUTRE: Inclusion (i)

- There is what I propose to call an **inclusion inference** with *autre* 'other':

(24) #Personne d' autre n' est arrivé que le journal.  
anybody of other NE is arrived QUE the newspaper  
#*'Nobody but the newspaper has arrived.'*  
*Inference:* The newspaper is a person.

When the associate is local, inclusion of the complement of *que* in the set denoted by the associate is inferred.

N.B.: The *associate* is the constituent that the complement of *que* is contrasted with.

## Evidence for AUTRE: Inclusion (ii)

- In (almost) minimal *ne... que* configurations, the inclusion inference obtains:

(25) #Personne **AUTRE** n'est arrivé que le journal.  
#*'Nobody but the newspaper has arrived.'*  
*Inference:* The newspaper is a person.

▶ *Que* is the comparative complementizer introduced by *autre/AUTRE*.

(26) Paul a invité une autre fille que Marie.  
Paul has invited a other girl than Marie  
*'Paul invited a girl who is not Marie.'*  
Or: *'Paul invited another girl than the girl that Marie invited.'*

# Association in Total Configurations

- Association does not have to be local (in total configurations):

- (27) Il n' a NEG rien mangé d' autre qu' hier.  
he NE has NEG anything eaten of other than yesterday  
*'He didn't eat anything other than what he ate yesterday.'*
- (28) Il n' a NEG rien mangé d' autre que moi.  
he NE has NEG anything eaten of other than me  
*'He didn't eat anything other than what I ate.'*  
Or: #*'He didn't eat anything which is not me.'*

## Que Is not an Exceptive (i)

- One could argue that *que* is an exceptive: there are inclusion presuppositions with *except*, *but*.
- But there are reasons to think that *que* with *autre/AUTRE* is **not**, per se, **an exceptive**, like *but* or *except* (von Stechow 1993, Moltmann 1995):

1 Not possible in (29):

- (29) Tous les enfants \**que* Pierre/ *excepté* Pierre sont venus.  
all the children **QUE** Pierre *except* Pierre are come  
'All the children *except* Pierre have come.'
- (30) Tous les enfants *autres que* Pierre sont venus.

## Que Is not an Exceptive (ii)

- 2 Exceptives are only possible when inserted in sentences that are 'complete' and can stand alone: but this is not the case with *que*.

(31) Je ne veux AUTRE CHOSE que dormir.  
I NE want other thing QUE sleep.  
*'I only want to sleep.'*

- (32) a. \*Je ne veux.  
b. \*Je ne veux (pas) si ce n'est/sauf/excepté dormir.

- All *ne...que* configurations contain hidden material;
- In minimal configurations, there is an n-word, and the comparative adjective AUTRE (maybe other things too).

## Silent Elements Require Negation

- While partial configurations give us an idea of what is in minimal configurations, they are not available outside of the scope of negation:

- (33) a. \*Paul a invité une AUTRE fille que Marie.  
b. \*Quelqu'un AUTRE que Marie est venu.

# Roadmap

- 1 Hidden Material ✓
- 2 The Paradox
- 3 The Presupposition

## Part II: The Paradox

## Same makeup but different felicity conditions

(34) *I don't know if Paul invited Marie but I'm sure that...*

a. #... il n'a invité que Marie.

*Presupposition:* Paul invited Marie.

b. ... il n'a invité personne d'autre que Marie.

*Presupposition:* None.

Minimal

Total

# A Generalization

**All and only** sentences with at least one silent element pass the test for the presupposition of the prejacent:

- (35) *I don't know if Paul invited Marie but I'm sure that...*
- a. #Paul n'a NEG invité **PERSONNE AUTRE** que Marie.
  - b. #Paul n'a NEG invité aucun **AUTRE** chirurgien que Marie.
  - c. #Paul n'a **PAS** invité de **AUTRE** chirurgien que Marie.
  - d. #Paul n'a **PAS** invité d'autre chirurgien que Marie.
- (36) *I don't know if Paul invited Marie but I'm sure that...*
- a. Paul n'a NEG invité personne d'autre que Marie.
  - b. Paul n'a NEG invité aucun autre chirurgien que Marie.

# Evidence for a Structural Ambiguity

- Observe what happens when the associate is preceded by a preposition, e.g. *à* 'to':

(37) *I don't know if Paul talked to Marie but I'm sure that. . .*

- a. Il n'a parlé à personne d'autre **que** Marie.
- b. #Il n'a parlé à personne d'autre **qu'à** Marie.

Total
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Total
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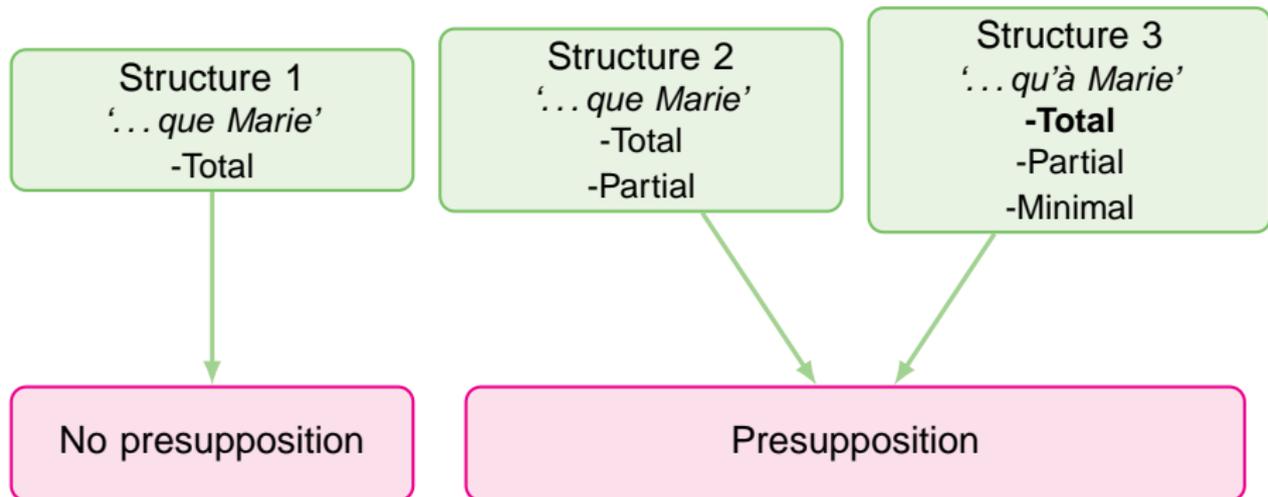
- Even in a **total** configuration, the presupposition of the preadjacent can be forced, using a preposition;
- So now have **a way of studying** the presupposition in total configurations;
- The difference between the 1<sup>st</sup> conjuncts of (37a) and (37b) seems to be a **structural** one.
- It seems to have to do with preposition stranding.

# Ambiguity

- There is a strong feeling that the prejacent holds, even in total realizations that pass the test of non presuppositionality;
- I submit that total configurations are **structurally ambiguous**:
- There are **2 LFs** for total configurations like (38), only one of which carries the presupposition of the prejacent.

- (38) –A: Paul n'a parlé à personne d'autre **que** Marie.  
–B: Attends, je ne savais pas qu'il lui avait parlé ! ('wait a minute, I didn't know he had talked to her!')

Sentence: *'Il n'a parlé (à personne d'autre)...'*



# Minimal Configurations

- Minimal configurations are only possible with 'Structure 3':

(39) a. Il n'a parlé **qu'à** Marie.  
b. \*Il n'a parlé **que** Marie.

(40) a. Il n'a parlé **À PERSONNE AUTRE qu'à** Marie.  
b. \*Il n'a parlé **À PERSONNE AUTRE que** Marie.

- This structure obligatorily yields the presupposition.
- Compare with:

(41) Il n'a parlé à personne **AUTRE** que/qu'à Marie.

Partial

## Another Difference

- Only in total configurations can the association be **non local**:

- (42) a. Il n' a rien mangé d' autre que moi.  
he NE has anything eaten of other QUE me  
#*'He only ate me.'*  
Or: *'He didn't eat anything other than what I ate.'*
- b. #Il n'a rien mangé que moi.
- c. #Il n'a mangé que moi.  
#*'He only ate me.'*

- ▶ It is tempting to think that the differences are related:

In **partial and minimal** configurations:

- The associate is local;
- The presupposition is always there

In **total** configurations:

- The associate does not have to be local;
- The presupposition is not always there.

- It seems that the triggering of the presupposition is sensitive to structural factors;
- We have gained a way of looking at total configurations that are unambiguously presuppositional, which is going to be useful now: we can actually also investigate the presupposition of *autre* in **positive** sentences!

# Roadmap

- 1 Hidden Material ✓
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## **Part III: The Presupposition**

## Presupposition of *only*

(43) Only John was in the room.

Option A (Horn 1969):

- (44) a. *Assertion*: Nobody who is not John was in the room.  
b. *Presupposition*: John was in the room.

Option B (Horn 1996):

- (45) a. *Assertion*: Nobody who is not John was in the room.  
b. *Presupposition*: **Someone** was in the room.

# Positive Sentences

- We have now access to **positive** *ne... que* configurations:

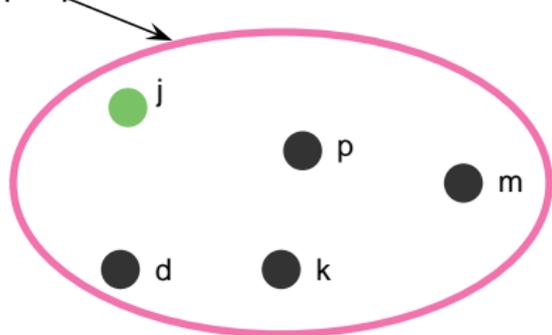
(46) Il a parlé à quelqu'un d' autre **qu' à** Jean.  
he has talked to somebody of other than to Jean  
↪ He talked to someone who is not Jean and he didn't talk to Jean.

## Negative

*Il n'a parlé à personne d'autre qu'à Jean.*

↪ He talked to Jean.

people



A: He didn't talk to anyone who is not Jean.

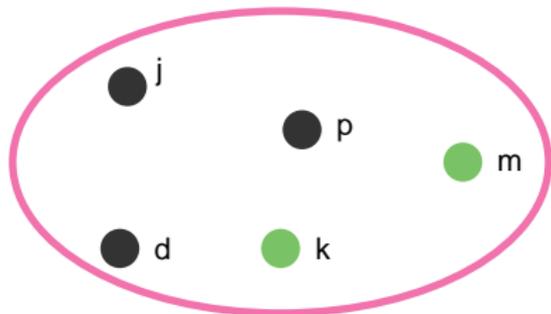
P: ~~He talked to Jean.~~

P': He talked to someone and if he talked to Jean then he talked to no one who is not Jean.

## Positive

*Il a parlé à quelqu'un d'autre qu'à Jean.*

↪ He didn't talk to Jean.



A: He talked to someone who is not Jean.

P: ~~He talked to Jean.~~

P': He talked to someone and if he talked to Jean then he talked to no one who is not Jean.

# Conclusions

- 1 It is possible to show that *ne. . . que* configurations always contain **hidden** material;
- 2 There is some **link** between the use of silent elements (in CAPS) and (i.) the locality of the associate and (ii.) the presupposition;
- 3 The presupposition of *ne. . . que* is the **presupposition of *autre***;
- 4 It is not what previous researchers have proposed that it is.

Thank you!

The research leading to these results received funding from the European Research Council under the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme (FP/2007-2013) / ERC Grant Agreement N°324115–FRONTSEM (PI: Schlenker). Research was conducted at Institut d'Etudes Cognitives (ENS), which is supported by grants ANR-10-IDEX-0001-02 PSL\* and ANR-10-LABX-0087 IEC.

# Appendix

# Hidden Material

# Hidden Material

- It is not possible to treat *que* as an adjunct to the element that follows: it acts as the introducer of that element:

(47) Marie n' a **fait que** m' embrasser.

Marie NE has done QUE me kiss

*'Marie just kissed me.'*

(48) \*Marie a fait m'embrasser.

(47) = Marie n'a **fait** NEG **RIEN AUTRE** **que** m'embrasser.

(47) ≠ (48)

- ▶ Some silent (nominal) element is needed.

# **N-words in Minimal Configurations**

## N-words in Minimal Configurations (i)

- The SN reading is very hard (not impossible) when certain n-words are **displaced**:

- (49) a. Il ne boit jamais rien.  
he NE drinks ever anything  
*'He never drinks anything.'* (SN)  
Or: *'He always drinks something.'* (DN)
- b. Jamais, il ne boit rien. (DN; ?SN)

## N-words in Minimal Configurations (ii)

- **Parallelism** between minimal configurations and partial configurations effect with *que*:

- (50) a. Il ne boit jamais que du vin.  
he NE drinks ever QUE of-the wine.  
*'He always drinks wine and nothing else.'* (SN)  
Or: *'He always drinks wine and something else.'* (DN)
- b. Jamais, il ne boit que du vin. (DN; ?SN)
- c. Jamais, il ne boit rien d'autre que du vin. (DN; ?SN)

## N-words in Minimal Configurations (iii)

- No such problem to get an SN reading with a slightly **different makeup** (which we can thus **discard** as an underlying makeup of minimal configurations):

- (51) a. Il ne boit jamais autre chose que du vin.  
he NE drinks ever other thing QUE of-the wine  
*'He never drinks anything but wine.'* (SN; \*DN)
- b. Jamais, il ne boit autre chose que du vin. (SN; \*DN)

▶ Not only is the DN reading impossible, but the SN reading is not marked at all.

▶▶ Further evidence in favor of postulating a **hidden n-word** in minimal configurations.

# Comparatives

## Run-of-the-mill Comparatives (i)

- With run-of-the-mill comparatives, similar effects obtain:  
**presupposition of the prejacent** only when silent categories are used:

- (52) a. Il ne connaissait pas de plus grande linguiste que Marie,  
he NE knew PAS of more great linguist QUE Marie  
et il ne connaissait pas Marie non plus.  
and he NE knew PAS Marie either  
*'He didn't know any greater linguist than Marie, and he didn't know M. either.'*
- b. Il ne connaissait PAS (de) plus grande linguiste que Marie,  
#et il ne connaissait pas Marie non plus.

## Run-of-the-mill Comparatives (ii)

- **Locality of the associate** is forced when silent material is used:

- (53) a. Il n' a pas mangé de meilleure pizza que moi.  
he NE has PAS eaten of better pizza QUE me  
*'He didn't eat a better pizza than I did.'*  
Or: #*'He ate me and ate no better pizza than the pizza that I am.'*
- b. #Il n'a PAS mangé (de) meilleure pizza que moi.  
*Presupposition:* He ate me (and I am a pizza).

**But**

# Silent Elements in English

## About *but* in English

- How exotic are those silent elements that I postulate for French?
- It seems that some elements can be kept silent in English as well because of the equivalence between those two sentences:

- (54) a. Music is but a thrill show.  
b. Music isn't but a thrill show. (found on Google)