Evidentiality and Determination *

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Abstract

This paper investigates the semantic properties of the French determiner *quelque*. It is shown that *quelque* conveys inferential *evidentiality*, that is, it selects interpretations in which the speaker infers the proposition conveyed by the sentence that hosts the determiner. This accounts for several other properties, for instance the fact that *quelque* is *anti-specific* and does not combine freely with negation. A notable consequence of the analysis is that the free choice and positive polarity behaviour of *quelque* are reduced to its basic semantics.

1 Introduction

The French determiner *quelque*, although it is somewhat literary or formal in many of its uses in modern French[1], still attracts interest from semanticists, due to its particular combination of properties (Corblin, 2004; Culioli, 1982; Jayez and Tovena, 2002; Van de Velde, 2000). At first sight, *quelque* is an existential anti-specific indefinite, because an interpretation where the referent of the NP is identified by the speaker is precluded. In this respect, it is totally similar to *un quelconque* (Jayez and Tovena, 2002, 2006). In this paper, we show that *quelque* is an *evidential* determiner which qualifies the mode of information available to the speaker, and that anti-specificity is a side-effect of evidentiality (section 3.2). The paper is organised as follows. In section 2, we present the main properties of *quelque*. In section 3, we define the anti-specificity profile of this determiner (3.1), show how it relates to evidentiality (3.2), and how this relationship accounts for various problematic observations (3.3). In section 3.4, we clarify the similarities and differences with free-choiceness. Finally, in section 4, we address the peculiarity of the combination of *quelque* with negation and show how it follows from its semantic profile.

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[1]The situation is far from being uniform. By and large, the combination with concrete nouns in episodic sentences has disappeared, but this is not the case for other combinations. Note also that the unmarked determiner with concrete nouns in episodic sentences is *un quelconque* (Jayez and Tovena, 2002).

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2 Main properties of *quelque*

Quelque is an existential indefinite determiner and can be found in many standard contexts for the class, for instance assertive positive and negative sentences, imperative and interrogative sentences, antecedents of conditionals, etc. However, three properties distinguish *quelque* from a plain indefinite like *un* 'a'.

First, the identity of the individual referred to must not be known by the speaker, or, more generally, by any relevant agent that believes that the sentence is true.[2] (1)a is weird because one normally assumes that the speaker is able to identify the friend she met yesterday.

(1) a. ??Hier j'ai rencontré quelque amie
'Yesterday I met some friend or other'
b. Hier, Yolande a dû rencontrer quelque amie
'Yesterday, Yolanda must have met some friend or other'

Second, it was observed by Culioli (1982) that the epistemic source matters. In more general terms, we note that some inferential source must be involved in the interpretation of the sentence hosting *quelque*. So, *quelque* is infelicitous when there is clearly no inference by the relevant epistemic agent. In (2)a, the speaker, who is the default epistemic agent, depends on Yolanda's declaration, not on her own inferential capabilities. In general, *quelque* is not natural with non-inferential reportives such as *selon* NP 'according to' NP or *paraît-il* 'I hear', see (2)b. This must not be confused with a requirement of ignorance, since, in (2), the speaker may perfectly ignore who Yolanda met.

(2) a. ??Yolande m'a dit qu'elle avait rencontré quelque amie
'Yolanda told me she had met some friend or other'
b. ??D'après sa sœur, Yolande a rencontré quelque amie
'According to her sister, Yolanda met some friend or other'

However, Culioli observes that *quelque* is fine in habituals and we note that this holds in cases where there is no apparent inference, see (3).

(3) L'après-midi, elle allait habituellement voir quelque ami
'In the afternoon, she usually visited some friend or other'

Sensitivity to ignorance and inference is not found with some abstract mass nouns either. (4) is felicitous although the speaker directly witnesses Yolanda's emotional state.

(4) J'ai vu que Yolande éprouvait quelque irritation
'I saw that Yolanda felt some irritation'

[2] In what follows, we use *epistemic agent* to refer to this type of agent, the speaker by default.

Third, *quelque* has a particular profile with respect to negation (Corblin, 2004). It exhibits a 'PPI-like' behaviour (Baker, 1970; Szabolcsi, 2004) analogous to that of *some*. In particular, it is infelicitous in the immediate scope of antiadditive operators (5). Example (5) is anomalous if *quelque* has narrow scope.

(5) Yolande n'a pas dû trouver quelque fichier
'Yolanda must have not found some file'
??[neg > *quelque*] vs. [*quelque* > neg]

These properties do not seem to form a coherent set. However, we propose an analysis that shows that the behaviour of *quelque* is more homogeneous than these preliminary observations suggest.

3 Epistemic properties of *quelque*

In the previous section, we saw that *quelque* is sensitive to ignorance of and inference by the epistemic agent. This raises several questions, that we address in turn. Is there a relation between ignorance and inference? How does habituality fit into the picture? How can one account for the compatibility of *quelque* with abstract nouns?

3.1 Ignorance

Borrowing from (Jayez and Tovena, 2006), we define ignorance of an agent with respect to a description as in (6). (6) says that a ignores which individual satisfies the description Δ if and only if no individual satisfies Δ in all the epistemic alternatives she entertains.[3]

(6) Let a be an agent and $\Delta(x)$ a set of formulas in the free variable x. Note $M, d \models \Delta(x)$ the fact that $M, g^x_d \models \Delta(x)$ for some g. At w, a ignores which individual satisfies $\Delta(x)$ whenever there is no d such that, for all the epistemic alternatives w_i of a in w, $M_{w_i}, d \models \Delta(x)$.

Quelque requires that the epistemic agent ignore which individual satisfies the description provided by the sentence. We use the label *C-ignorance* to refer to this constraint in the sequel. For instance, in (1)a, the epistemic agent should ignore which individual satisfies the property $\lambda x.$*friend*(x) & *met-yest.*(x). This is implausible since the value of x is supposed to be a friend of the speaker, who is the default epistemic agent. More precisely, for an epistemic agent a with a set of alternatives W, we have (7).

[3] As shown in Farkas (2002) and Jayez and Tovena (2006), a correct representation of ignorance is actually more complex because it has to take into account scope problems. We disregard this additional source of complexity, since it is tangential to the main issues we address here.

(7) **C-ignorance** For a (modal) tripartite form $\Phi([Quelque]_x[\mathrm{R}][\mathrm{S}])$, where Φ is a possibly null/ complex modal operator, an interpretation is appropriate only if it does not entail: $\exists x(\forall w \in W(w \models \Phi(R(x)\ \&\ S(x))))$.

3.2 Where evidentiality comes in

The status of evidentiality is complex. A well-known open issue is its relation to modality. Aikhenvald (2005) equates evidentiality with linguistic marking of information source. She claims that, in itself, evidentiality "does not imply any reference to validity or reliability of knowledge or information" (p. 5). We consider that *quelque* pertains to evidentiality because it qualifies the information source. By using *quelque*, the speaker signals that she does not use perceptual or hearsay evidence containing the proposition expressed by the sentence. This is compatible with the speaker using perceptual or hearsay evidence to feed an otherwise inferential process through which she produces the proposition. Moreover, *quelque* does not commit the speaker to a particular modal force, as shown by (8).

(8) a. Yolande a peut-être rencontré quelque ami
'Perhaps Yolanda met some friend or other'
b. Yolande a nécessairement rencontré quelque ami
'Yolanda necessarily met some friend or other'

Accordingly, we propose that *quelque* marks *inferential evidentiality*, i.e. the fact that the source of information is an inferential process by the speaker. Since modal adverbs and epistemic verbs convey inferential evidentiality, they are compatible with *quelque*. *Quelque* does not require an explicit independent marking of evidentiality. Rather, it is licensed by *interpretations*. This accounts for the fact that it may be found in simple declarative sentences whenever an inferential evidential interpretation is available, see (9).

(9) Il y a de la lumière dans le bureau; quelque idiot a oublié d'éteindre
'The light is on in the office; some idiot has forgotten to switch it off'

The representation of evidentiality is a difficult matter. Following Aikhenvald and Westmoreland (1995), we do not base evidentiality on modal status. In this case, one can consider that assertive sentences correspond to pairs $\langle s, \phi\rangle$, where ϕ is the main content and s is the source of evidence (hearsay, inference, etc.). Is it possible to order sources? One might define the strictest source of evidence as in (10). When an agent, using the maximal source σ, asserts that ϕ, either the other sources do not suggest the contrary or the agent prefers the strictest source in any case.

(10) σ is a unique maximal source of evidence $=_{\mathrm{def}}$ for every agent a and every source $s \neq \sigma$, if $\langle \sigma, \phi\rangle_a$, then either (i) $\neg\langle s, \neg\phi\rangle_a$ or (ii), if $\langle s, \neg\phi\rangle_a$, then a believes that ϕ.

There are at least two problems with this type of approach. First, the existence of a unique maximal source of evidence is not guaranteed. For some propositions, there may be several competing sources with equal strength. Second, the very term of 'source' is unclear since it covers the type of evidence and the type of processing. For instance, what 'source' does an inferential process applied to some visual evidence constitute?

We propose to distinguish sources proper and their treatment. In certain cases, the treatment determines the type of source. E.g. visual processing can only apply to visual cues. Inferential processing may apply to the result of other types of processing. E.g., an agent can infer a proposition from what she 'sees', i.e. from the result of applying visual processing to visual cues. For *quelque*, what counts is the processing. More precisely, *quelque* requires that the corresponding existential proposition be reached through inferential processing.

(11) **C-inf** A form $[quelque]_x\ [R]\ [S]$ is appropriate only under interpretations where the epistemic agent *infers* that $[\exists]_x\ [R]\ [S]$.

In most cases, inferential processing leads to conclusions that are weaker than those reached through perceptual processing, which accounts for the contrast in (12).

(12) a. Yolande a dû$_{\text{epist}}$ ouvrir la porte. En fait, je me souviens, je l'ai vue
'Yolanda must$_{\text{epist}}$ have opened the door. Actually, I remember I saw her'
b. ??J'ai vu Yolande ouvrir la porte. En fait, elle a dû$_{\text{epist}}$ l'ouvrir
'I saw Yolanda open the door. Actually, she must$_{\text{epist}}$ have opened it'

But this is not necessarily so. In (13), the mathematical conclusion is inescapable. Yet, *quelque* is licensed by the inferential origin of the proposition that there exists some extremum.

(13) Puisque la dérivée s'annule et change de signe sur I, elle a nécessairement quelque extremum
'Since the derivative has a zero and changes signs over I, it necessarily has some extremum'

Are ignorance and evidentiality, as expressed in *C-ignorance* (7) and *C-inf* (11), related in some way? A way of reformulating the question is: does the fact that a situation conforms to *C-ignorance* entail the fact that it conforms to *C-inf*, or the reverse, or is there no entailment? If a ignores which individual satisfies Δ, she cannot, in general, have direct access to this piece of information. However, she might have indirect, non-inferential, access to it, by hearsay for instance. So *C-ignorance* does not entail *C-inf*. Suppose that a can infer that some individual satisfies Δ in a situation s. a might be in a position to infer *which* individual satisfies Δ. Then, s would violate *C-ignorance*. So, there is no logical relation between *C-ignorance* and *C-inf*.

However, there is a pragmatic relationship. When a situation conforms to *C-inf*, using an indefinite makes the ignorance interpretation most plausible, as evidenced by the contrast in (14). While (14)b is not impossible, it is more difficult to interpret than (14)a.

(14) a. Yolande a rencontré une amie, Louise
'Yolanda met a friend, Louise'
b. #Yolande a dû rencontrer une amie, Louise
'Yolanda must have met a friend, Louise'

We won't try to account for this preference here, because this would involve the notoriously complex issue of the scope of indefinites. We simply consider ignorance as the default option in the context of epistemic inferential operators. This leads one to hypothesise that, at some point in time, *quelque* was basically an evidential determiner and that the expected preference for anti-specificity has been grammaticalised as a semantic rigid feature.[4]

3.3 Epistemic dimensions

3.3.1 Habitual sentences

Habitual sentences obey *C-ignorance*, as shown by (15)

(15) a. ??A l'époque, je voyais toujours Yolande avec quelque amie, Marie
'At that time, I used to see Yolanda with some friend or other, Mary'

Habituality may facilitate an ignorance reading because it presupposes a set of eventualities. In (16)a, the speaker is unable to assign a precise identity to the friends. In (16)b, ignorance is distributed over the seeing-events: the speaker is unable to list the event-friend pairs.

(16) a. A l'époque, je voyais toujours Yolande avec quelque amie
'At that time, I used to see Yolanda with some friend or other'
b. A l'époque, je voyais toujours Yolande avec quelque amie, Marie, Pauline ou Thérèse
'At that time, I used to see Yolanda with some friend or other, Mary, Pauline or Therese'

A plausible logical form for (16)a is given in (17), which says that there is a contextually relevant past interval I such that there is an appropriate set of subintervals i hosting events e where the speaker sees Yolanda with some friend[5].

[4] We leave the evaluation of this hypothesis for future research. See Combettes (2004) for the diachrony of *quelque*

[5] As many others, we use a habituality operator analogous to the generic operator. However, we do not resort to a possible world approach, in addition to intervals and events, see Lenci and Bertinetto

(17) $\exists I(Past(I)$ & $Always_{i,e}[i \sqsubset I$ & $duration(e) = i$ & $e \models$ The speaker sees Yolanda] $[[Quelque]_x[e \models x$ is a friend of Yolanda$][e \models$ the speaker sees Yolanda with $x]])$

In view of (7), the speaker does not identify the friends in question. This is in agreement with the fact that, in (16)b, three different persons (Mary, Pauline and Therese) may be the value of the variable bound by the *quelque* operator in the different epistemic alternatives.

Unexpectedly, habituality seems to allow a violation of *C-inf* (11), since the epistemic agent may have witnessed the events she refers to. In fact the crucial factor in habituality is the existence of a sort of inference from particular occasions to a regularity. Habituality judgements present a series of particular occasions as a law-like repetition [6]. Under this view of habituality, (11) is not violated since the speaker infers the habitual proposition. As expected, a limited non-inferential repetition is not compatible with *quelque*, (18).

(18) ??J'ai vu sept fois Yolande rencontrer quelque ami
'I saw Yolanda meet some friend or other seven times'

3.3.2 Tropes

In non-inferential episodic sentences, *quelque* does not combine with count nouns or concrete mass nouns, see (19)a. Such sentences are in general fine with abstract mass nouns, see (19)b,c.

(19) a. *Yolande a bu quelque eau
'Yolanda drank some water'
b. Yolande a montré quelque courage.
'Yolanda showed some courage'
c. Il y a quelque hypocrisie à prétendre cela.
'There is some hypocrisy in this claim'

The abstract mass nouns under consideration denote external qualities (beauty), feelings (irritation) and dispositions (intelligence). As noted in Jayez and Tovena (2002), with such nouns, *quelque* has a distribution very similar to that of *un certain* 'a certain', see (20).

(20) a. Yolande a montré un certain courage.
'Yolanda showed some courage'
b. Il y a une certaine hypocrisie à prétendre cela.
'There is some hypocrisy in this claim'

(2000) for this type of approach.

[6] This inferential move has been recently mentioned by Glasbey (2006) in connection with psychological verbs that disallow bare plurals in object position. According to Glasbey, such verbs, like *to hate* or *to like*, generalise over a limited set of events

In both cases, there is a diminutive flavour. For instance, in (19)a and (20)b, the speaker implies that she is not sure that Yolanda showed courage to a high degree or in a strong form. This corresponds to a Q-implicature (Horn, 1989) triggered by the indefinite. By indicating that Yolanda exhibited a particular degree or form of courage, the speaker implicates that, for all she knows, Yolanda did not show higher degrees or clearer forms of courage. However, *un certain* and *quelque* do not match perfectly, as illustrated in (21).

(21) a. Deux individus [...] qui se caractérisaient par une certaine laideur[7]
'Two persons [...] who were characterised by a certain ugliness'
b. #Deux individus [...] qui se caractérisaient par quelque laideur
c. Il avait une certaine claudication quand il marchait
'He had a certain limp when he walked'
d. #Il avait quelque claudication quand il marchait

How do we account for these differences? Intuitively, the NP complements in (21) denote particularised properties exhibited in particular spatio-temporal settings. These instantiations of properties are usually analysed as *tropes* (Williams, 1953; Campbell, 1990; Maurin, 2002; Moltmann, 2007), i.e. particular entities that can enter similarity classes corresponding to abstract properties, like Yolanda's kindness (in the kindness class) or the colour of my car (in the colour class). So, *quelque laideur* in (21)a,b refers to the content of a 'particular' (= spatio-temporally localised) ugliness. For contrasts like those in (21), we set up a new distinction. *External* tropes are directly observed by agents. This is the case for ugliness or limp. *Internal* tropes correspond to internal states or processes of which only certain effects can be directly observed. For instance, courage and hypocrisy may show in behaviour (language, gestures, actions, etc). As a result, although an agent witnesses the symptoms of an internal trope, she may not know what trope it is. This distinction between a trope and its manifestation makes room for an inference from the latter to the former. In the terms of (11), the speaker infers that some trope exists. Note that the distinction between two kinds of tropes has lexical correlates, as exemplified in (22).

(22) a. ??Marie a montré de la beauté / laideur
'Mary showed beauty / ugliness'
b. Marie a montré du courage / de l'intelligence
'Mary showed courage /intelligence'

3.4 Ignorance and free-choiceness

As noted in the introduction, *quelque* resembles *un quelconque*, another French anti-specific determiner. In view of the fact that *un quelconque* is an epistemic free-choice

[7] Excerpt from: http://blog.lefilmfrancais.com/index.php?2006/05/25/2888-paolo-sorrentino-realisateur-de-lamico-di-famiglia

determiner (Jayez and Tovena, 2006), one may wonder whether *quelque* is in the same class. Following Jayez and Tovena (2005), we characterise free choice items as follows.

(23) **Equity** A tripartite form [FCI] [R] [S]] is compatible with an interpretation I only if:
1. *any* member of R can be S under I
2. *any* member of R can be $\neg S$ under I

(23)1 says that no member of the restriction is excluded (NO LOSER constraint), (23)2 that no member of the restriction is imposed (NO WINNER constraint). These two constraints, metaphorically subsumed under the 'Equity' label, are responsible for the following contrasts.

(24) Yolande a probablement rencontré une amie quelconque
'Yolanda probably met some friend or other'
NO LOSER: Yolanda may have met any friend of her
NO WINNER: There is no friend of Yolanda that she has necessarily met

(25) a. ??Yolande a probablement rencontré une amie quelconque, qui n'était pas Marie
'Yolanda probably met some friend or other, who was not Mary'
NO LOSER is violated
b. ??Yolande a probablement rencontré une amie quelconque, Marie
'Yolanda probably met some friend or other, (namely) Mary'
NO WINNER is violated

It turns out that *quelque* obeys NO WINNER but not NO LOSER.

(26) a. Yolande a probablement rencontré quelque amie, qui n'était pas Marie
'Yolanda probably met some friend or other, who was not Mary'
b. ??Yolande a probablement rencontré quelque amie, Marie
'Yolanda probably met some friend or other, (namely) Mary'

The fact that *quelque* obeys NO WINNER is no surprise because it is predicted by *C-ignorance*. As for NO LOSER, there is no reason why *quelque* should conform to it *if* its sensitivity to ignorance is a consequence of its evidential side, as we argue. If an agent infers that some entity satisfies a given property, she is not bound to believe also that a particular entity does not satisfy the property. There is simply nothing in *C-inf* that should lead to NO LOSER. We conclude that analogy with free choice items is superficial and that the evidential inference constraint is the core of *quelque*.

4 Negative speculations

'PPIs' like *some* are out in the immediate scope of negation. More in detail, they are not easily or not at all accepted with a narrow scope interpretation, and perceived as marked with a wide scope interpretation, if accepted. For instance, (27) is rejected or taken to be about a specific undisclosed file. This type of behaviour, noted already by Baker (1970), is at the heart of the characterisation of PPIs as items constituting a specific phenomenon.

(27) Yolanda did not find some file
*[neg $>$ *some*]

Example (5), repeated below, illustrates the same phenomenon with *quelque*, where the wide scope reading is akward although not impossible. Furthermore, like *some* (Szabolcsi, 2004), *quelque* is infelicitous in the immediate scope of antiadditive operators, whose definition is recalled in (28).

(5) #Yolande n'a pas dû trouver quelque fichier
'Yolanda must have not found some file'
??[neg $>$ *quelque*] vs. [*quelque* $>$ neg]

(28) O is antiadditive $=_{df}$ $O(a \vee b) = O(a) \wedge O(b)$

Clausal negation is antiadditive, as shown by the equivalence (John didn't see Mary or Yolanda $\Leftrightarrow$ John didn't see Mary and John didn't see Yolanda). Thus, despite the evidential touch provided by the modal, the presence of clausemate sentential negation affects the status of example (5).

Given the foregoing data, it may be worth exploring a little further the similarity between *quelque* and PPIs. Indeed, they both see their statuses restored when nested under not one but two negations (Baker, 1970; Corblin, 2004), as presented in the next subsection.

4.1 The double licensor effect

Observe that, by and large, the distribution given by Szabolcsi for *someone/something* corresponds to that of *quelque*[8]. E.g. *quelque* is licensed under extraclausal negation or after an NPI-intervener.

(29) a. Je ne pense pas que Yolande ait trouvé quelque fichier
'I don't think that Yolanda has found some file'
$\Rightarrow$ I don't think that Yolanda has found any file

[8]For *quelqu'un* 'somebody' and *quelque chose* 'something', data are more complex.

b. Yolande ne trouvait pas toujours quelque excuse
'Yolanda didn't always find some excuse'
⇒ Sometimes, Yolanda didn't find any excuse

As noted by Baker, antilicensors have the special property of seeing their effect 'undone' by another antilicensor stacked upon them. In other words, an antilicensor is compatible with a 'PPI' when both are in the scope of a higher operator, which corresponds to the 'rescuing' effect discussed by Szabolcsi and exemplified in (30) for English and French.

(30) a. I am surprised that Yolanda didn't find some file
b. Je suis étonné que Yolande n'ait pas trouvé quelque fichier

Despite the years, this rescuing effect by a second occurrence of antilicensor is an old problem whose analysis hasn't found yet real agreement upon, let alone a widely accepted explanation. Let us mention two recent proposals that witness the variety of opinions in the literature. According to Szabolcsi, 'PPIs' have two NPI ('dormant') features which get activated and/or licensed under different conditions. In short, Szabolcsi's idea, found also in (Krifka, 1991), is that combinations made up by pairs of antilicensor plus PPI behave like NPIs, which means that they require another antilicensor that works as licensor of the combination. An opposite view has been proposed by Ladusaw (1979) and recently revisited by Schwarz and Bhatt (2006), who claim that rescuing is an illusion. In the concerned configurations, according to them, the apparent antilicensor is in fact a non-antilicensing negation.[9]

It is difficult to arbitrate between these two conceptions. For one, Szabolcsi's account involves spelling out, which is difficult to control. Second, the pairs made of antilicenser+PPI and NPIs do not make a perfect match. As shown by the marginality of (31), *si* ('if'), that is a good licensor for standard NPIs, does not rescue the combination *pas+quelque* in certain cases.

(31) ??Si la police n'a pas trouvé quelque preuve, il sera relâché
'If the police didn't find some evidence, he will be freed'

Third, Schwarz and Bhatt postulate a light negation and look for a German realisation (*nicht*), which is expletive in certain environments. The expletive negation in French is *ne*, but *ne* does not behave like a 'light' negation in their terms, as illustrated by (32)c.

(32) a. Ich gehe nicht, bevor du nicht aufgeräumt hast (Schwarz and Bhatt, ex. 21)
'I won't leave before you have cleaned'
b. Je ne partirai pas avant que tu n'aies nettoyé
c. *Je suis surpris que Yolande n'ait trouvé quelque fichier
lit. I am surprised that Yolanda neg-expl have-subj found some file

[9] An NPI under Ladusaw's analysis, but see Schwarz and Bhatt (2006, 189) for a more cautious view.

Finally, it is possible to build cases that are acceptable although they feature some non-light antilicensors, such as negative concord words *rien* (nothing) and *personne* (nobody) in (33).

(33) a. Je suis surpris que rien n'ait troublé quelqu'un
'I am surprised that nothing has puzzled somebody'
b. Je suis surpris que personne n'ait vu quelque chose
'I am surprised that nobody saw something'

In the remainder, we explore a different path. Instead of arguing for or against some form of licensing, we point out the connection between the meaning of *quelque* and certain aspects of its PPI-like behaviour and we try to build on it.

4.2 Negating a composite meaning

First, recall that *quelque* is sensitive to evidentiality, as it has been proposed in this paper. By using [*quelque* R S], the speaker signals that she has only indirect and inferential evidence that an unidentified individual (Conventional Implicature part) satisfies the restriction and the scope ('at issue content', in the terms of Potts (2005)).

(34) *quelque* R S:
a. at issue content = $\exists x(x = y \ \& \ R(x) \ \& \ S(x)) = \phi$
b. CI = y is not identified and ϕ is only inferred

Next, we exploit the well established fact that negation does not see CIs in general. The scoping *pas* > *quelque* is odd in a clause because it amounts to conveying two contradictory pieces of information. On the one hand, the speaker negates the existence of an individual satisfying R and S (34)a, but on the other hand, she simultaneously signals that it must be an unidentified individual (34)b. For instance, the interpretation of example (5) comes out something like 'Yolanda must not have found any file, an unidentified one', which is queer. It is not clear how one is expected to resolve the anaphora if the antecedent is to be found within an empty set. Let us note by $\otimes$ the conjunction of at issue content and CI. Let a be the epistemic agent. The interpretation of example (5) with *quelque* under the scope of negation is provided in (35).

(35) $\Box_{\text{must-epist}}[\neg\exists x(x = y \ \& \ \mathit{file}(x) \ \& \ \mathit{found}(x)) \otimes \mathit{unknown}(y, a)]$

In words, (35) says that it is necessary from the point of view of the epistemic 'must' modality that there is no x that is a file and is found and the value of x is equal to that of an unbound variable y, and it is conventionally implicated that y is unknown to the relevant agent. Compare (35) with the wide scope interpretation of *quelque*, paraphrased as 'There is a file–an unidentified one–which Yolanda must have not found'.

This is for the behaviour of *quelque* under one sentential clausemate negation. Extra-clausal negation does not count as antilicensor, as it was pointed out above with respect to (29)a. In our proposal, we notice that this negation is fine when it provides the evidential touch, as in (36) where 'not-excluding' means 'accepting as possible'.

(36) Je n'exclus pas que Yolande ait trouvé quelque fichier
'I do not exclude that Yolanda might have found some file'

For other examples, we ascribe the improvement in the status of the sentence to the fact that the CI of ignorance is integrated into the interpretation because intermediate scope is possible. The sequence [$_{\text{matrix clause}}$Neg XP] [$_{\textit{that clause}}$ *quelque* R S] negates the existence of a situation where some individual, an unidentified one, satisfies R and S. Sentence (37)a reports Mary's personal thought and is acceptable. It is paraphrased as 'According to Mary, it is not the case that, for some scruple s, an unidentified one, Yolanda experienced s'. On the contrary, sentence (37)b, paraphrased as 'Mary did not say that for some scruple s, an unidentified one, Yolanda experienced s', reports Mary's words and is more marginal. The problem in interpreting it is that it is unclear whether (and how) the form of words used by Mary involves non-identification.

(37) a. Marie ne pense pas que Yolande ait eu quelque scrupule
'Mary does not think that Yolanda had some scruple'
b. ?Mary n'a pas dit que Yolande avait eu quelque scrupule
'Mary didn't say that Yolanda had had some scruple'

More generally, there is some improvement whenever negation targets a situation that would license the use of *quelque*. Possible causes for this improvement are the local computation of felicity[10] and the presence of subjunctive in French, which indicates a possible (but unrealized) situation, see the examples with semantic negation and regular negation in (38). At the present moment, we see no evidence in favour of one cause and against the other. In the end, it may well be the case that both contribute.

(38) a. Il est faux que Yolande ait trouvé quelque fichier
'It is false that Yolanda has found some file'
b. Il n'est pas vrai que Yolande ?a / ait trouvé quelque fichier

Finally, as for (29)b, *toujours* acts as a quantifier on situations. The sentence says that it is not the case that, for a given period T, $\forall s \in T[_s quelque\ R\ S]$. As pointed out already by Culioli, *quelque* is licensed by habitual operators.

(39) [(29)b] Yolande ne trouvait pas toujours quelque excuse
'Yolanda didn't always find some excuse'

[10] On this point, we refer the reader to the ongoing discussion about local/global implicatures.

Independent evidence supporting our proposal of exploiting the meaning of *quelque*, rather that stipulating licensing/antilicensing constraints, comes from the striking parallelism with the expression *Je ne sais quel* (lit. 'I don't know which'), which has gone unnoticed in the literature, to the best of our knowledge. The data in (40) show that *Je ne sais quel* with narrow scope is awkward in the scope of clausemate sentential negation, see (40)a, while negation in a higher clause does not affect it, see (40)b. This is all the more interesting because *Je ne sais quel* is generally not considered to be polarity sensitive.

(40) a. #Yolande n'a pas trouvé je ne sais quel fichier
'Yolanda did not find I do not know which file'
b. Marie ne pense pas que Yolande ait trouvé je ne sais quel fichier
'Mary does not believe that Yolanda found I do not know which file'

5 Concluding remarks

Quelque is an indefinite determiner that marks that the existence of an entity satisfying restriction and scope is information gained via inference. The availability of this type of reading suffices to make its use felicitous. This 'light' way of constraining its use, as opposed to heavier constraints expressed in terms of syntactico-semantic marked contexts, makes it possible to encompass a distribution that cannot be characterised in terms of licensing configurations. The relevance of the distinction between external and internal tropes is an example in point. Furthermore, our analysis draws attention to the fact that the nominal domain may also convey evidential information, although evidentiality is most often discussed with respect to the verbal domain.

Cases of items that exhibit free choiceness and negative polarity sensitivity are well known, e.g. English *any*. The proximity of free choiceness with positive polarity is more rarely mentioned. At first sight, *quelque* might look as a candidate to this double labelling, but we show that both labels do not help us to unravel its meaning. The unfelicity of *quelque* under clausemate negation is a manifestation of the more general issue of computing implicatures. The striking similarity with the behaviour of *je ne sais quel*, which can be treated as a case of conflict with the CI, provides support to our position.

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