EMPHATIC 'QUITE' IN ACADIAN FRENCH AS FOCUS OPERATOR
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Introduction. The Baie Sainte-Marie, Nova Scotia variety of Acadian French (henceforth, AF) has borrowed the English degree modifier *quite* in constructions such as (1):

(1) a. *Vous aviez fait une quite de visite.*   (King 2013: 102)
    'You had had quite a visit'
  b. *C'était une quite de Carole.*
    'Carole was quite something'

Semantically, the presence of *quite* emphatically evaluates the lexical noun. Furthermore, the presence of *de* in (1) indicates a complex nominal construction whose syntax begs clarification.

Analysis & Conclusions. King notes that the hyperbolic connotation of the data in (1) resemble the French construction containing epithet nouns, like *un espèce de cochon* ("a real pig", literally, "a sort of pig") and *ce putain de livre* ("this bloody book", literally, "a whore of book").

French has a number of binominal constructions of the (Det) N1 DE N2 type (on par with Romance, more generally): (i) partitive: *un verre d'eau* ("a glass of water"), (ii) quantitative: *beaucoup de livres* ("many books"), (iii) possessive: *la soeur de Marie* ("Mary's sister"), and (iv) qualitative: *un bijou de voiture* ("a jewel of a car"). Since both the AF *quite* construction and the epithet N construction are semantically evaluative, they would fall under (iv), for which both Kayne (1994) and den Dikken (2006) propose a predicate inversion structure. For Kayne, *de* is a C head in a reduced relative clause, for den Dikken, it is the overt realization of a relator (i.e. a nominal copula). However, there is no comparison between *quite* and *visite*, as there is between *bijou* and *voiture*. Nor does *quite* in AF behave as a predicate: **La visite est (une) quite* so a subject-predicate analysis is difficult to maintain. Doetjes/Rooryck (2001) argue against predicate inversion for qualitative binominals and propose (2) with N1 in Spec,EvalP instead:

(2) [$_{EvalP}$ [$_{DP}$ *ce phénomène*] [$_{Eval}$ [$_{DP}$ [$_D$ *de* [$_{NP}$ *fille*]]]]]

The structure in (2) is appealing in view of presence of an adverbial Evaluative head (à la Cinque 1999) and the likely adverbial status of *quite* – (3) shows that, while N2 can be modified by an Adj in AF, *quite* cannot, clearly indicating that *quite* is not of N category:

(3)   *J'avons eu un (*bon) quite de bon souper.*

However, while (2) correctly rules out *en*-cliticization for French epithet N constructions given the D nature of *de*, assuming *en* is a *pro* PP (Kayne 1975), it also rules out *en*-cliticization with evaluative *quite* in AF, which is empirically incorrect. Compare (4a)-(4b):

(4)   a. **Il en est un espèce ~~de cochon~~.*   b. *Il en contait une quite ~~d'histoire~~.*

Rather, (4b) points to similar *en* extraction properties as in partitives (Kayne 1975) and quantitatives: *Il en a acheté une douzaine ~~de pommes~~*, and where [$_{PP}$ *de* NP] (Kayne 1975, 1994). As with qualitative binominals (Hulk/Tellier 2000), N(2) must be a bare NP in (1). As only DP (but not NP) needs Case (Kayne 1999), *de* is not a P case-assigner (pace Jones 1996). Likely, its function is to indicate N(2) as a property/kind, on par with the IE genitive it has replaced (Ihsane 2008). In sum, we propose (5), which captures both syntactic & semantic properties of AF *quite*:

(5) [$_{DP}$ [$_D$ *une*[$_{FocP}$ *quite* $_{Foc}$ SCALAR EMPHASIS [$_{dP}$ [$_d$ *de* [$_{NP}$ *visite/Carole*]]]]]]

(5) capitalizes on Giusti's (2006) proposal that DPs have left peripheries hosting TopP and FocP on par with clauses (Rizzi 1997), with D equivalent to Force and 'd' equivalent to Fin. *Quite* is an operator in Spec,FocP, checking scalar/emphatic Focus (à la Krifka 2007), and ensuring a greatest/hyperbolic alternative reading on N. In effect, on par with *de/di* in Romance infinitives (Kayne 1999, Rizzi 1997), *de* in (5) is the C/P category of reduced nominals (NumP in Giusti 2012), forced to lexicalize whenever D and 'd' project separately.

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