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### The Rise of Like in Spontaneous Quotations

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## The Rise of *Like* in Spontaneous Quotations

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A comparison across spontaneous speech collected in the 1980s and the 2000s reveals a dramatic flip between the use of *said* versus *like* as enquoting devices. The greater use of *like* is reflected in a wide variety of quotation types including reported speech, thoughts, exclamations, and sounds. There is no evidence that *like*'s increase in use corresponds to an increasing desire to explicitly indicate slippage between the words used in a report and those of the original source. Instead, *like* can substitute for *said* and be used in more environments, selectively depicting aspects of the original quote (Clark & Gerrig, 1990; Wade & Clark, 1993).

Speakers have numerous choices of devices to indicate quotation in spontaneous speech including the words *said*, *tell*, *ask*, *goes*, and *like* (Clark & Gerrig, 1990; Cukor-Avila, 2002). They also have other tools that they can use in the absence of explicit devices (zero quotatives), such as falsetto or creaky voice (Mathis & Yule, 1994). In this article, we focus on the use of a particular enquoting device, *be + like*, as in “and I was like, ‘You should hotwire the bus’” (all examples in this article are from dialogues between college students, except where altered to indicate contrasts). We, henceforth, refer to *be + like* as *like* in this article because we are talking about *like* as an enquoting device; the use of *like* as a discourse marker and the similarities and differences between the quotative and discourse marker uses of *like* have been discussed in depth elsewhere (Andersen, 1998; Ferrara & Bell, 1995; Romaine & Lange, 1991).

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## THE RISE OF LIKE

Many observers have noted the increased use of *like* as a quotation device in the late 20th century (Blyth, Recktenwald, & Wang, 1990; Cukor-Avila, 2002; Ferrara & Bell, 1995). This increase is not confined to American English; it has been documented in British English (Tagliamonte & Hudson, 1999) and in Glasgow vernacular (Macaulay, 2001). Analogous constructions like *ich/er so* in German (Golato, 2000) and *ba* in Swedish (Eriksson, 1995) are also on the rise.

The most recent estimates put the percentage of enquoting *likes* in speech at 23% of all enquoting devices in a 1990 corpus (Ferrara & Bell, 1995) and about 10% in a late 1990s corpus (Cukor-Avila, 2002); both corpora were of the speech of young Texans. In other parts of the world, *likes* comprised 18% of enquoting devices used by Britons in 1996 and 13% of the devices used by Canadians in 1995 (Tagliamonte & Hudson, 1999). Here, we compared two corpora collected circa 1985 and circa 2003 of the speech of Northern Californian college students (Study 1).

In the next three studies (Studies 2, 3, and 4), we examined the hypothesis that *like* is increasing because it means something different from *said*, and that speakers want to use *like*'s meaning more nowadays than in the past. Specifically, we explored the hypothesis that *like* highlights the slippage between the wording used in the original source and the quote, whereas *said* does not; that is, that *like* and *said* differ in implied *source faithfulness*. We view source faithfulness as on a continuum; that is, a quote may be more or less faithful in wording to the original. The critical issue is whether quotes introduced by *like* are, on average, heard as less faithful to their originals than quotes introduced by *said*. Because source faithfulness has often been discussed in terms of the directness or indirectness of quotes, we include in the introduction a discussion of how syntactic approaches to directness and indirectness apply to *like* and other novel quotation devices.

## THE MEANING OF LIKE

Different enquoting devices mean different things. *Said* is not the same as *tell*, which is not the same as *think*. One possibility is that *like* also does not mean the same as other devices, and that its modern proliferation is a result of an increased desire to express *like*'s meaning.

Some approaches to *like* view *like*'s meaning as centered around a "semantic core" of approximation (Buchstaller, 2002, p. 5) or looseness (Andersen, 1998, 2000). The semantic core can be thought of as a basic meaning from which other interpretations are built (see Fox Tree & Schrock, 2002, for a discussion); that is, the core meaning of approximation is apparent in all of *like*'s discourse functions, including its use as an enquoting device.

One way to interpret this semantic core of approximation in the context of enquoting devices is that *like* explicitly indicates a slippage between the words used in a report of what was said and the original statement (Andersen, 1998, 2000; Buchstaller, 2002; Romaine & Lange, 1991). We call this approach *approximation theory*. For example, in the following a student reports on the language used when observing her brother approach with a beer bottle:

1. I was like, “What were you doing? Were you just like in a café somewhere?”

Later, when retelling the same story to a new addressee, the student reports the incident as follows:

2. I was like, “What did you do? Were you just like going off and getting beer?”

Because the two quotes are of the same original source, at least one of the reproductions must be an approximation of the original wording. If *like* highlights a lack of source faithfulness, then both should be approximations. And there is some evidence for this. Quotes introduced by *like* and quotes containing hedges like *sort of* or *something like that* are less accurate than quotes introduced by *said* with no hedges (Wade & Clark, 1993). This result merits confirmation, however, because the original test did not separate the contributions of *like* and hedges.

*Like*'s use in unfaithful quotes is highlighted in the following examples:

1. She's like, “Blah blah blah.”
2. Yeah, they're like, “You need to rest.”
3. And we used to do that to our little sister, and we're like, “Suzy, you're adopted.”
4. I hated it though when people clean it up for me cuz it's like, “Dude, I knew where it was, it was on the floor right there.”

In quoting “blah blah blah,” the reporter substituted the entire quote with speech stand-ins; the actual words spoken are missing. In “you need to rest” and “Suzy, you're adopted,” the quotes are introduced as being spoken by *we* and *they*, but these words were almost certainly not uttered by everyone present in unison. “Dude, I knew where it was” refers to a thought in the speaker's mind that was not uttered at all.

Highlighting slippage may be why *like* has become popular. *Like* is frequently thought of as a hallmark of youth (Romaine & Lange, 1991; Siegel, 2002). Adolescents learning how to negotiate interpersonal relationships may feel a need to release themselves from the responsibility of accurate reporting to buy themselves

an out in case their addressees are displeased with the faithfulness of the report; that is, when speakers are confident in asserting source faithfulness, they may choose to report with *said*. When they are not confident, they may opt for *like*.

Another way to apply the idea of *like*'s looseness to enquoting devices is through *demonstration theory* (Clark & Gerrig, 1990; Wade & Clark, 1993). In demonstration theory, quotations are used to selectively depict certain aspects of what was said such as the tone of voice, emotional content, or speaker's accent (Clark & Gerrig, 1990; Wade & Clark, 1993). This is especially obvious in examples where the original words used are not included in the report, such as "and his father would say, 'Blah blah blah [in a strong blustery voice]'" (Clark & Gerrig, 1990, p. 780; see also Romaine & Lange, 1991). Reporters can selectively depict a wide range of aspects of the original productions, including "drunkenness, indignation, hesitancy, arrogance, flamboyance, [and] stuffy manner" (Clark & Gerrig, 1990, p. 775).

Instead of indicating source faithfulness, the looseness aspect of *like* can be thought of as highlighting selective depiction; that is, rather than highlighting that the reported words are not the same as the original (approximation theory), *like* highlights that the quote is a selective depiction of the original (demonstration theory). With approximation theory, *like* should not introduce a quote that is relatively faithful in wording to the original. With demonstration theory, however, *like* can introduce a relatively wording-faithful quote. Although verbatim reporting is uncommon (Clark & Gerrig, 1990; Wade & Clark, 1993), there are times when people do recall quotes with more faithful wording, such as with emotionally charged statements (Keenan, MacWhinney, & Mayhew, 1977). *Like* may be used in reporting a relatively wording-faithful curse, marriage proposal, or other emotionally charged statement to selectively depict the tone of voice, accent, attitude, or other aspect of the delivery.

The concept of source faithfulness is central to approximation theory. According to approximation theory, *like* is not the same as *said*. However, the concept of source faithfulness is not central to demonstration theory, where reporters can selectively depict certain aspects of the original whether or not their wording is faithful. According to demonstration theory, *like* can substitute for *said*.

## DIRECT AND INDIRECT QUOTES AND SOURCE FAITHFULNESS

Traditionally, there are two kinds of quotations, *direct* and *indirect*:

1. Direct—He said, "I can't afford one."  
Indirect—He said that he couldn't afford one.

In English, direct and indirect quotations can be distinguished by tense change (*can't* to *couldn't*), pronominalization (*I* to *he*), and the presence of a *that* (Coulmas, 1986; Jespersen, 1924).

Whereas *said* can be followed syntactically by either a direct or indirect quotation, *like* and other “new” enquoting devices cannot (Dailey-O’Cain, 2000; Ferrara & Bell, 1995):

1. Direct—He was like, “I can’t afford one.”  
Indirect—\*He was like that he couldn’t afford one.
2. Direct—He goes, “I can’t afford one.”  
Indirect—\*He goes that he couldn’t afford one.
3. Direct—He’s all, “I can’t afford one.”  
Indirect—\*He’s all that he couldn’t afford one.

Because of this, with purely syntactic approaches, *likes* are always classified as introducing direct, not indirect, quotation.

This is a problem because in addition to the syntactic distinction, directness and indirectness have often been discussed alongside source faithfulness. Whereas indirect quotations carry no implied faithfulness to the original source, direct quotations do imply faithful, perhaps even verbatim, reporting (Clark & Gerrig, 1990; Romaine & Lange, 1991; Short, Semino, & Wynne, 2002). So, a speaker can choose to use *said* with a direct quote for a faithful report and with an indirect quote for a looser report.

This creates a contradiction for *like*. On the one hand, *like* must, syntactically, be represented as a direct quote. On the other hand, *like* is hypothesized to indicate approximation, which is better expressed indirectly (as direct quotes imply faithful reporting).

One way out of the contradiction rests on the fact that studies of spoken direct quotations have consistently shown that they are not verbatim (Tannen, 1989). Although reporters can report verbatim when they are asked to memorize dialogue and report it as accurately as possible, they generally do not do so (Wade & Clark, 1993). Even when reporters had studied quotations for 45 min and recited them with 100% accuracy to an experimenter, they failed to quote verbatim 38% of the time when told to retell the story in an entertaining way (Wade & Clark, 1993). Although factors such as the ability to check a reproduction against an original can increase the likelihood of faithfulness (Short et al., 2002), a comparison of accuracy in verbal reporting revealed that direct quotations are in fact no more faithful than indirect quotations (Wade & Clark, 1993). So, *like* may still indicate approximation, even though it is used in direct quotation form.

## JUST LIKE AND ALL LIKE

Speakers sometimes quote using the expressions *just like* or *all like*, as in the following:

1. And I was just like, “Oh just go, I’ll talk to you, call me when you get to San José.”
2. All the girls on the bus were all like, “Oh, *Remember the Titans!*”

These may be interchangeable variants of enquoting *like*, or they may be carefully chosen contrasting forms. Either approach can be accommodated by approximation and demonstration theory. However, particular hypotheses suggested by research literature lend themselves more easily to one or the other theory.

Many hypotheses about the use of *just* have no implications for approximation or demonstration theory. For example, one hypothesis is that *just* is used to “convey familiarity and sympathy with the listener” (Aijmer, 1985, p. 4); in this case, *just like* might indicate friendliness amongst interlocutors. Approximation and demonstration theory do not differ with respect to their predictions for this use of *just like*.

Other proposals for the use of *just* do have implications for approximation and demonstration theory. One of these is that *just* “modifies the whole utterance by strengthening or emphasizing that it is true” (Aijmer, 1985, p. 4). In approximation theory, the combination *just like* might be seen as *just*’s truthfulness canceling out *like*’s approximateness, so that quotations after *just like* are more source faithful than quotations after *like*. On the other hand, *just* also frequently co-occurs with *sort of* (Aijmer, 1985) and can be used to emphasize that the following word is being used appropriately (Aijmer, 1985). In this case, *just* may emphasize the hedging, approximate nature of *like*, such that quotations introduced by *just like* may be even less source faithful than those introduced by *like*. If *just* itself is a hedge, then a quote following *just like* would be less source faithful in both approximation and demonstration theory.

Research on *all* suggests that it is used in quotations to highlight a speaker’s “unique depiction” of a quoted report (Waksler, 2001, p. 134); That is, “quotative *all* is used to introduced the reported dialogue of the original speaker, but in the voice and manner of the current speaker” (p. 132). As such, quotations introduced by *all like* might be less source faithful than those introduced by *like*, because *all* explicitly indicates that the quote will incorporate some aspect of the reporter’s attitude, rather than being a faithful reproduction (p. 136). Such a difference would not necessarily distinguish between approximation and demonstration theories, however. According to approximation theory, both *all* and *like* add approximation, so *all like* should be less source faithful than *like* (or *said*). According to demonstration theory, *all like* may be less source-faithful, but it also may not be; That is, *like* and *said* may be interchangeable expressions (as Waksler, 2001, suggests on p.

136), but adding *all* to *like* may reduce the source faithfulness of *all like* as compared to *like*. On the other hand, adding *all* to *like* may not imply a less faithful report if all quotes are interpreted as equivalently-faithful-or-unfaithful demonstrations, whether they are introduced by *all*, *like*, *all like*, or *said*. *All* may add the information that the quotee is “fully characterized” by the quote (Waksler, 2001, p. 136), but this may not affect the sense of source faithfulness as compared to other devices.

## SUMMARY OF STUDIES

We begin by further documenting the rise of *like* (Study 1). We then test whether *like* exhibits a trading relation with *said* or is a newer replacement for *said* by analyzing uses in a 2000s corpus of spontaneous speech (Study 2). To explore the relation between devices and source faithfulness, we compare judgments of source faithfulness when reading (Study 3) or hearing (Study 4) different types of quotations.

### STUDY 1: COMPARING TWO CORPORA

We evaluated whether the use of *like* as an enquoting device has changed over the course of a 20-year period by counting the number of times the devices *like*, *said*, and *goes* were used before direct quotes in corpora collected around 1985 and around 2003. Other devices and combined forms such as *all like* and *just like* were not evaluated.

#### Method

**Materials.** The 1980s corpus was collected by Herbert Clark at Stanford University. In pairs, students took turns retelling three stories each. The stories were selected by the experimenter. The corpus contains about 83,000 words from 60 different speakers.

The 2000s corpus was collected in Jean Fox Tree’s laboratory at the University of California Santa Cruz (UCSC). Students either retold one personal story of their choice to a fellow student, or they engaged in a conversation with a fellow student that started with the topic, “Describe a bad roommate experience.” The corpus contains about 76,000 words from 46 different speakers.

The populations these data were collected from do vary in ways other than time. Stanford is a private university; UCSC is public. The majority of students at UCSC are from California (85%), whereas at Stanford only a large minority (40%) are from California. But in many ways, the two populations are similar. Both are populations of undergraduates at research universities in Northern California (Stanford



and UCSC are about 40 miles apart). From information available in 2005 describing student demographics at the two universities, 48% of Stanford students are women, and 44% are White. At UCSC, 54% are women, and 52% are White.

**Analyses.** A minimum of two raters identified every enquoting *said*, *like*, and *goes* in the two corpora. Included in the analyses were the following versions: *says*, *saying*, *said*, *goes*, *going*, *went*, *is like*, *was like*, and *be-less like* (*like* with no version of *to be* or pronoun, as in “he always calls me up *like*, ‘Hey baby, I’m the poorest one here’” or “and then you’re *like*, ‘ok bye,’ *like*, ‘I lived with you for a year last year and uh um that’s about it;’” our corpus contained only 8 examples).

Because the percentage of direct to indirect quotes people favor may have changed over time, and because the use of *like* may be associated with such a shift, only direct quotes were included in this longitudinal comparison. Raters followed a list of rules to determine whether a quote was direct or indirect, including the following: (a) grammatical changes in pronominalization as in, “She says her medical bills were *like* eighteen hundred dollars”; (b) use of past tense in a quote that would have had present were it direct, as in, “She said ten cents sounded good”; and (c) use of *that* as in, “she said that she’d *like* to pay ten cents” (see also Coulmas, 1986; Li, 1986). In addition, because the desire to report faithfully may have changed over time, and because *like* may be associated with this shift, only source-faithful items were included in this longitudinal comparison. Raters excluded from analysis any items with flags that they were reported unfaithfully such as, “It was *like* ‘Michelle blah blah blah’” and “She said something *like* she—he can walk into a room and visualize just how it should look.” Items were discussed until consensus on coding was reached.

## Results and Discussion

Twenty years ago, the most frequent quotative in spontaneous speech was *said*. *Like* made up about 4% of the quotatives. Today, those percentages have flipped. *Goes*, which was once twice as popular as *like*, is now rarely used. Table 1 summarizes this dramatic shift:  $\chi^2(2, N = ) = 1,334.2, p < .001$ .

TABLE 1  
Direct Quotation Devices Used in 1980 and 2000(N)<sup>a</sup>

Variable	1980s	2000s
Said	85% (1,421)	7% (17)
Like	4% (58)	92% (236)
Goes	11% (184)	2% (5)

<sup>a</sup>The total number of quotation devices used in the 1980s is higher because the retold stories were based on dialogues from movies and TV shows.

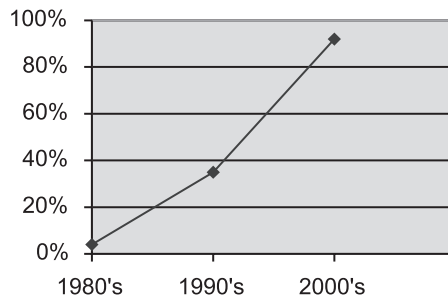


FIGURE 1 Percentage of *likes* out of all *said*s and *likes* (direct quotation).

Combined with other researchers' data, we conclude that this flip has been taking place gradually over the last 20 years (see Figure 1), with estimates of ratios of *like* to *said* in the 1980s at 4% (Clark's corpus), in the 1990s at 35% (Ferrara & Bell, 1995), and in the 2000s at 93% (Fox Tree's corpus).

One potential concern regarding the comparison between the 1980s and the 2000s corpus is that the differences in use of quotation devices resulted from differences in the tasks speakers performed. In the older corpus, speakers retold other's stories; however, in the newer corpus, speakers told their own stories. Analysis of a corpus similar to the 1980s corpus, but collected in the 2000s, belies this explanation. In work carried out for another research project (Fox Tree, 2006), 13 speakers retold other's stories. The corpus contains about 6,000 words and 29 uses of direct quotation. One of these uses was a zero quotative (Mathis & Yule, 1994), 2 were *just like*, and 1 was *all like*. Of the remaining 25 uses, 24 were introduced by *like* and 1 by *said*; that is, 96% (24 out of 25) were a form of *like* (83% of all direct quotations), which still differs dramatically from the 4% of *likes* used in a similar corpus of retold stories collected in the 1980s.

## STUDY 2: TYPE OF QUOTE BY DEVICE USED

If *like* is used to highlight approximations, then quotations introduced by *like* should differ from those introduced by *said*. We tested whether there was a trade-off, or trading relation, between *likes* and *said*s by analyzing how *likes* and *said*s were used in the 2000s corpus. As a further test of trading relations, we also explored uses of *just like*, *all like*, *all*, and *goes*.

Our coarse categorization scheme (reported speech vs. thoughts vs. sounds and exclamations) may preclude detecting differences among these devices. However, prior work suggests some differences may be found. Because thoughts and sounds have no spoken lexical production for the reporter to attempt to reproduce faithfully, and because *just* can be used as a hedge, thoughts and sounds might be more

common after *just like* than after other devices. Because *all* can be used to quote nonverbal behavior, sounds may be more common after *all* than after other devices. Because *all* can emphasize attributes, thoughts and exclamations may be more common after *all* than after other devices.

## Method

**Materials.** The 2000's corpus was used for this analysis.

**Analyses.** Two raters identified every enquoting device in the corpus. These included *said*, *like*, *goes*, *all*, *just like*, and *all like*. This more fine-grained division of enquoting devices grouped devices that changed in tense (*is like* grouped with *was like*) but separated the devices *like*, *just like*, and *all like*. Infrequent devices were grouped together and include *tell* and *think*, and unusual combinations such as *just saying like* and *going like*.

Quotations were then categorized into three groups by two raters: (a) reported speech, including both direct and indirect speech as discussed in Study 1; (b) thoughts; and (c) exclamations and sounds (Cohen's kappa = .73). In cases of disagreement, a third rater evaluated the item and acted as a tie breaker. Examples of device use can be found in the Appendix.

Thoughts were defined as references to the quoter's thoughts at the time of the reported speech. If the raters judged that the quote could not have been said aloud to an addressee, it was coded as thoughts. In the following example, for instance, the speaker had set the scene as being home alone wishing that her housemates were there to take out the trash: "I'd like to wait a little while and just be like, 'You know, I've taken it out the past couple of times, so I think I'll just wait a little while.'" Because she was alone, the quote must describe thoughts and not verbalizations.

Exclamations were defined as conventional interjections expressing emotion, such as "and then it just got to the point now it's just like, 'fine!' [laughing]," or "I was like, 'f\*ck, I can't do it.'" Sounds were defined as non-lexical imitations of specific noises such as, "he's like, 'rarr!'" and "his alarm clock is like the most annoying alarm clock; his is just like, 'Waaah, waaah, waaah, waaAAH, WAAAH' [getting louder]."

## Results and Discussion

If *like* and *said* are trading off functions, they should differ in their proportions across different types of quotations. *Said*, for example, might be proportionately more likely before reported speech and *like* might be proportionately more likely before exclamations and sounds. In fact, *said* and *like* were both far more likely before reported speech (see Table 2). This suggests that *like* can better be seen as replacing *said* as the quotative of choice, rather than complementing *said*.

TABLE 2  
Enquoting Device by Function

Variable	Reported Speech	Thoughts	Exclamations and Sounds	Total
Said	25	0	0	25
Like	248	124	19	391
Just like	11	49	7	67
All like	11	0	0	11
All	23	1	2	26
Goes	5	1	0	6
Other	10	5	0	15
Total	333	180	28	541

However, the data illustrate that in addition to replacing *said*, *like* is performing functions that *said* cannot perform. This may be why *like* is rising in popularity. Unlike *said*, *like* can be used to introduce thoughts. Because it reports a verbalization, *said* cannot be used to indicate thoughts. As already noted, *said* is also not used before exclamations or sounds. Earlier researchers have observed *goes* preceding exclamations and sounds (Butters, 1980), but the few *goes* in the current corpus did not perform this function.

In a 1995 sample, *like* introduced more thoughts than direct quotations (Dailey-O'Cain, 2000). In the current sample, *like* is the standard quotative for all types of quotes (see Table 2). However, three other quotatives (*just like*, *all like*, and *all*) may be indicating different kinds of quotes. Although *just like* can be used to introduce reported speech, it usually introduces thoughts, and to a proportion far greater than *like* introduces thoughts:  $\chi^2(1, N = 432) = 50.3, p < .001$  (comparing *like*'s and *just like*'s numbers of reported quotes and thoughts). This means that when a *like* is heard, it is most likely to be followed by a direct quote, but when *just like* is heard, it is most likely to be followed by a thought. To ensure that listeners take speech as reported, and not thoughts, speakers can introduce quotes by *all* or *all like*. This accords with earlier findings that *all* is used to indicate direct quotes that either mimic the voice of the source or superimpose the reporter's own attitude onto the reproduction (Waksler, 2001). But it goes against observations that *all* is used with imagined dialogue and descriptions of mental states (Waksler, 2001). Further study is needed to assess whether *all* and *all like* are more commonly used for reported speech.

Finally, the percentage of *likes*, *said*s, and *goes* in the direct quote subset compared in Study 1 was similar to the overall set of functions analyzed in Study 2, 7% direct quotes *said* to 6% all quotes *said* (25 out of 422), 91% direct quotes *like* versus 93% all quotes *like* (391 out of 422), and 2% direct quotes *goes* versus 1% all quotes *goes* (6 out of 422):  $\chi^2(2, N = 680) = 0.40, p = .82$ . Therefore, we conclude

that the data for Study 1 would not change substantially were all quotation types included in the analysis.

To further evaluate the predictions of approximation theory and demonstration theory, we assessed listeners' ratings of source faithfulness of quotations read as a transcript (Study 3) or heard (Study 4). If *likes* indicate that the quotation that follows is less faithful to the original, then there should be some indication that people interpret the quotes this way. Because the corpus contained few testable *said* and *all* quotations, ratings of *like* quotations were compared to ratings of quotations containing indicators of lack of adherence to the original, such as use of *blah blah*, as in the following:

1. it was weird because every time I brought people in I would always be like, "Hi, this is my roommate Brandon, blah blah blah,"

or use of disfluencies (see Wade & Clark, 1993), as in the following:

2. and then, I guess this one night I was talking to my friends I'm like, "No, I'm over him, I don't w- I don't like him anymore I don't want to see him, he's out of my life,"

or use of a plural noun or pronoun introducing the quote (presuming the original quote was not uttered as a chorus), as in the following:

3. needless to say I thought that we would go home from the trip because I'm broken and in pain, but no, my family's like, "No no no, we only do this once a year."
4. I went out to like, go to the bathroom, came back and like two proctors were like right on our floor and they're like, "Yeah, I can smell the weed from here."

A handful of *said* and *all* quotations were also included for comparison. We did not attempt to include *just like* quotes because we suspected our participants would have trouble applying the concept of source faithfulness to thoughts.

According to approximation theory, *like* quotations without indicators of disparity between the quote and the source should be rated either as either more faithful than the doubt-ridden quotations, or equally faithful, depending on the relative impact of introducing the quote with *like* versus, say, using *they*. This relation should hold regardless of whether the quote is read or heard. They should further be rated as less source faithful than quotations introduced by *said*. Because *all* as an enquoting device can be used to inform about both the original statement and the reporter's attitude (Waksler, 2001), listeners may consider *all like* quotes even less source faithful than *like* or *said* quotes.

## STUDIES 3 AND 4: RATINGS OF SOURCE FAITHFULNESS

People rated the source faithfulness of quotations they read on a computer screen (Study 3) or heard over headphones (Study 4). The quotations tested in Study 3 were verbatim transcripts of the stimuli used in Study 4.

### Method

**Participants.** In Study 3, forty UCSC undergraduates participated in exchange for course credit; in Study 4, thirty-three different UCSC undergraduates participated.

**Materials.** From the 2000s corpus, 43 quotations were identified that fit the following criteria: (a) there was non-overlapping antecedent speech by the quote producer that provided a contextual setting for the quote, and (b) the quote following the enquoting phrase was not truncated or overlapped. The quotations ranged from 3 to 34 words, 1 to 9 sec in length ( $M = 12$  words,  $SD = 8$  words; and  $M = 3$  sec,  $SD = 2$  sec) with each quotation containing a short introduction, the enquoting phrase (“and then he was *like*”), and the quotation. There was between 2 and 7 sec of speech in addition to the quote ( $M = 4$  sec,  $SD = 1$  sec). Quotations containing interleaved speech from an interlocutor were cut down to exclude the interlocutor’s turns. These criteria allowed for testing of 26 *like* quotations without any indicators of a possible lack of faithfulness between the quotation and the original source (*faithlessness markers*), 8 *like* quotations with faithlessness markers, 3 *said* quotations without and 4 with, and 1 *all like* without and 1 with.

**Procedure.** Listeners read each quote on a computer screen in a random order. For each quote, listeners selected a number from 1 (*restatement*) to 7 (*the exact wording*) to describe that quote.

To gain a sense of what these labels meant to participants, the lowest rated and highest rated items in the visual study follow, looking only at those items without potential faithlessness markers:

1. Restatement: Ok, so o- one was very controlling, and the other one was like, “I know everything that there is to know.”
2. Exact wording: I was— it was the meanest thing, I would start crying and be like, “Dad am I adopted?”

For comparison, the lowest rated and highest rated items in the auditory study follow, once again looking only at those items without potential faithlessness markers:

3. Restatement: Well and then he was- he was rapping about like Tony Hawk, but the, the Tony Hawk pro-skater, the PlayStation game, he's like, "I'm really good at that game."
4. Exact wording: He would come in just like start like making noise like talking and I'm like, "Sean, get out."

## Results

Potential markers of faithlessness did lead to lower ratings of faithfulness, but only when the quotes were read. When read, the mean rating of quotations with potential markers of faithlessness was 3.6 ( $SD = 1$ ), which leans much further to the restatement side of the scale than the ratings of quotations without potential faithlessness markers, 4.5 ( $SD = 1$ );  $minF'(1, 51) = 8.27, p = .006$ . But when heard, the mean rating of quotations with potential markers of faithlessness was 4 ( $SD = 0.5$ ), which was not different from the ratings for quotations without these potential markers, 4.2 ( $SD = 0.7$ );  $minF'(1, 55) = 0.34, p = .56$ . This pattern was mirrored in the subset of *like* quotations; the mean rating of read quotations with a faithlessness marker was 3.8 ( $SD = 0.9$ ), but without such a marker was 4.6 ( $SD = 1$ );  $minF'(1, 37) = 3.27, p = .08$ . The mean rating of heard quotations with a faithlessness marker was 4 ( $SD = 0.7$ ), but without such a marker was 4.1 ( $SD = 0.7$ );  $minF'(1, 44) = 0.21, p = .64$ .

*Like* quotations and *said* quotations did not differ in their average ratings, both when all *like* and *said* quotations were considered, and when only quotations free of potential markers of faithlessness were considered. The mean rating for read *said* quotations was 3.9 ( $SD = 1.2$ ), and read *likes* was 4.4 ( $SD = 0.9$ );  $minF'(1, 47) = 1.28, p = .26$ . The mean rating for heard *said* quotations was 4.4 ( $SD = 0.7$ ), and heard *likes* was 4.1 ( $SD = 0.6$ );  $minF'(1, 59) = 0.81, p = .37$ . The mean rating for read *said* quotations without a faithlessness marker was 4.4 ( $SD = 1.4$ ), and read *likes* was 4.6 ( $SD = 1$ );  $minF'(1, 31) = 0.06, p = .8$ . The mean rating for heard *said* quotations without a faithlessness marker was 4.6 ( $SD = 0.9$ ), and heard *likes* was 4.1 ( $SD = 0.7$ );  $minF'(1, 36) = 1.02, p = .32$ .

For comparison, the mean rating of the *all like* quotation without a faithlessness marker was 4 when read and 3.2 when heard. The *all like* quotation with a faithlessness marker was 1.8 when read and 3 when heard. Although two items preclude firm conclusions, the overall tendency for *all like* ratings to be closer to restatement than *like* and *said* ratings suggests that people are interpreting *all likes* as reflective of a reporter's attitude.

Finally, ratings across the read and heard studies were highly correlated,  $r(43) = 0.58, p < .001$ , even when only *likes* with no faithlessness markers were tested,  $r(26) = 0.7, p < .001$ . This means that the words used in the quotations had more of an effect on the ratings than anything about the way the quotes were pronounced.

## Discussion

When people read “blah blah” or disfluencies in the quotations or see that the quotation is introduced by “we’re like,” they rate those quotations as less source faithful. These elements have no effect on auditory judgments of source faithfulness, however. This may be because people notice these elements more in writing.

Although people can make distinctions between more faithful and less faithful quotations, they do not apply this distinction systematically to quotations introduced by *like* versus quotations introduced by *said*, either when reading or hearing the quotations. There is some suggestion that *all like* quotations are rated as less source faithful than *said* or *like* quotations, which is a finding that would accord well with the argument that *all* highlights the reporter’s attitude about the upcoming quote (Waksler, 2001).

## GENERAL DISCUSSION

The use of *like* as an enquoting device has increased dramatically in Northern California in the last 20 years, and has replaced *said* as the quotative of choice among college students. *Like* may be favored because unlike *said* it can be used to express direct quotes, indirect quotes, thoughts, exclamations, and sounds. To unambiguously highlight particular quotations, speakers can use *just like* for thoughts, or *all* or *all like* for reported speech.

We found no evidence that *like*’s increase in use corresponds to an increasing desire to explicitly indicate slippage between a report and the original source, according to approximation theory. There was no evidence that *like* trades off with *said* with respect to which quotations they introduce (Study 2), nor do *like* and *said* differ in source faithfulness ratings (Studies 3 and 4). In fact, *like* quotes express a range of faithfulness, with some leaning toward restatement and others toward verbatim reporting (Studies 3 and 4).

In contrast to the predictions of approximation theory, we propose that speakers use *like* according to demonstration theory, as a catch-all enquoting device to cover the many ways that a quote can be a selective depiction of the original including the words, delivery, emotional content, or any other aspect the speaker wishes to demonstrate. Speakers may choose to approximate wording with their quote, but they may also choose to use relatively accurate wording while demonstrating some other aspect of the original production. We propose that *like* has risen in popularity because it has an expanded range of use as compared to other enquoting devices.

Although demonstration theory was developed with respect, primarily, to speakers’ uses of *said* (Clark & Gerrig, 1990; Wade & Clark, 1993), *like* may have risen in prominence because it is more felicitous before a wider range of demon-



strations than *said* is. Unlike *like*'s predecessors, *said* and *goes*, *like* can be used to express thoughts (Andersen, 1998; Blyth et al., 1990; Buchstaller, 2002; Cukor-Avila, 2002; Romaine & Lange, 1991):

1. And he would use that excuse, and I'm like, "What are you talking about?"

Substituting *like* with *go* or *said* changes "What are you talking about?" to a quote of something that was actually said instead of a thought (the 2000s corpus contained 1 rare case of *goes* before a thought; see the Appendix). *Like* can also be used to highlight emotional or dramatic content (Blyth et al., 1990; Romaine & Lange, 1991) and to mimic vocal effects, sound effects, or gestures in a way that *said* cannot (Buchstaller, 2002):

2. And you know how loud his alarm clock is, it's like, "dura dura dura dura duRA DA." (theme from *Bonanza*)

And it's not just because objects cannot say things:

3. He was like opening his drawers but they were like stuck so he was like, "Raah aah." (growling sounds)

In our data, quotes like these were never introduced by *said*.

All of the types of quotes *like* introduces—speech, thoughts, emotional content, dramatic content, vocal effects, sound effects, and gestures—can easily be understood as selective depictions of the original sources.

Future studies can further tease apart approximation theory and demonstration theory. For example, according to approximation theory, if speakers are explicitly told to reproduce quotations verbatim, they should prefer to introduce the quotations with *said* over *like*. No such preference is predicted by demonstration theory, where *like* merely replaces *said* as the quotative of choice.

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## APPENDIX: EXAMPLES OF DEVICE USE

### Reported Speech

*Said.* So I said, “Okay, let’s go with Plan B.”

*Like.* Andy knows how to hotwire cars and I was like, “You should hotwire the bus.”

*Just like.* I was just like, “Eric, there are much better times.”

*All like.* And he’s all like, “No, you don’t understand true love man.”

*All.* She was all, “That wasn’t even a game. You guys just slaughtered them.”

*Goes.* He goes, “At least you know where he is.”

*Other.* They would like tell me that “Oh you can’t come in here blah blah blah.”

### Thoughts

*Like.* Now that I’m thinking about it I’m like, “Ok it’s not that big of a deal”

*Just like.* Everybody wakes up and goes straight to the bathroom, you know, putting on all their make up and everything. And I’m just like, “I don’t wear make-up, I’ll just wait til afterwards.”

*All.* You’re all, “I replace everything, you don’t.”

*Goes.* And I was just sitting there going, “How am I gonna get back?”

*Other.* But I thought, “Do you know how much clothes I could buy with a thousand dollars?”

### Exclamations and Sounds

*Like.* He threw them too far. So I was like, “Dang it!”

*Just like.* I was just like, “Whoooo!”

*All.* You were all, “Crrr.”