

CRITICAL NOTICE

CRITICAL NOTICE OF *LANGUAGE TURNED ON ITSELF*, BY HERMAN CAPPELEN AND ERNIE LEPORE

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1. Introduction

To my knowledge, this is the first book-length philosophical treatment of quotation. It not only does a great job bringing the reader to the forefront of current discussions of the topic, but on the way makes many bold and well-argued claims on a variety of specific questions, and advances substantial theories about the semantic contribution of quotation marks, in their various kinds of occurrence, and about the nature of items quoted. In what follows, I will summarize the book, then discuss some of the authors' claims, dwelling on three issues: their objections to the view of François Recanati on "pre-semantic" effects; the relation between their theory of quotation and the "Proper Name Theory," which they reject; and their treatment of mixed quotation, which rests on the claim that quotation expressions are "syntactic chameleons."

2. Summary of the Book

"Advertisement"

Since this is the first book-length treatment of the topic, the authors reasonably feel it worthwhile to make the case for its importance. One must have a view on the nature of quotation, they argue, if one wants to have a view on any of the following topics: metalinguistic discourse; opacity (since quotation is the paradigm); the "language–world connection" (since whatever the right story about that is, it has to cover the possibility of the same relation showing up, in quotation, as a "language–language connection"); the nature of "what is said" (since it is with quotation, direct or indirect, that we specify things said); compositionality (since some quotations seem to be built from expressions not in the language—which seems not to square with the idea that the meanings of English sentences, say, are composed entirely from the meanings of English expressions); the semantics-pragmatics divide (since the imitative, or as

Recanati calls it, “iconic” aspect of quotation requires categorization as one or the other); and indexicality (since in mixed quotations, indexicals seem to work in a way that is “monstrous” in Kaplan’s [1977] sense).

“Data”

What are the data to be explained by a theory of quotation? For working purposes, Cappelen and Lepore choose a syntactic characterization: quotation is what happens when we use quotation marks (pp. 12–3). Their idea is that if we get a theory of *that*, then perhaps we will be able to extend it to some other cases; cases to which such a theory cannot extend are for that reason best seen as cases in which something other than quotation is going on (p. 13). They distinguish between four varieties of quotation: pure quotation, in which words are quoted but not as part of the specification of a speech act; direct quotation, in which words are quoted as part of the specification of a speech act; indirect quotation, in which no words are quoted but a “that” clause is used to specify a speech act; and finally, mixed quotation, which is like indirect except that in part of the “that” clause, some words are quoted.¹ As more of a working criterion than a final, decisive one, the authors do not rigidly adhere to the identification of quotation with what happens with quotation marks. Despite its involving quotation marks, for instance, they do not deal with scare-quoting other than to explain (pp. 16–7) their reasons for thinking (following Predelli [2003a,b]) that it is not a *semantic* phenomenon. Nor do they say they want to include the interestingly varied uses of quotation marks in programming languages (e.g., the Bash shell to Unix applies double quotes differently from single quotes, and back-tick quotes differently still [Free Software Foundation 2010, §3.1.2]). Nor do they justify counting indirect quotation as a variety of quotation despite its satisfying neither the syntactic characterization they tentatively endorse nor the semantic criterion they discuss, albeit mostly to note its uselessness. (I will return to this last point later, in discussing one of their disagreements with François Recanati.)

There are several features, or apparent features, of quotation that have at some point been proposed as things that a theory of quotation should explain. Cappelen and Lepore number them as follows (I give only labels where the idea will probably be familiar to the reader):

- D1 Opacity.
- D2 (Impossibility of) Quantifying in.
- D3 Infinitude (no limit on quotations).
- D4 (No restriction to) Extant Lexicon (quotation “doesn’t operate exclusively on a fixed lexicon of the language” [p. 23]).

1. Any attentive reading of a book or newspaper will show that this form of quotation is exceedingly common—far more common, in fact, than pure quotation. We have no trouble interpreting sentences such as the following. “When Thomas à Becket, archbishop of Canterbury, died in 1170, those who laid him out noted approvingly that his undergarments were ‘seething with lice’” (Bryson 2010, p. 346).

- D5 Proximity (a quotation expression² in some way contains or pictures what it quotes).
- D6 Syntactic chameleonism (quotation expressions sometimes behave not like terms).
- D7 Simultaneous use and mention in mixed quotation.
- D8 Indexicals inside (the quotation-marked parts of) mixed quotation, for example, “Bush said that his administration would ‘achieve our objectives’ in Iraq.”
- D9 Indeterminacy/context sensitivity/ambiguity in quotation.
- D10 Iterability in quotation.

Cappelen and Lepore accept that D1–D6, D8, and D10 need to be explained; they deny D7 and D9. Next, they discuss some claims that conflict with theirs on these matters. In each case, they either deny that quotation has the feature in question, or they deny that the feature points us toward one theory rather than another:

- The phenomenon of “omitted quotation marks” has motivated some to give what the authors label “Use Theories” of quotation marks. In the sentence “My name is Britney,” the name “Britney” is quoted, these philosophers say, yet without quotation marks. This is supposed to show that there is a “quotational use” of a word, and that quotation marks merely highlight this use rather than doing semantic work of their own.³ Cappelen and Lepore argue that we need a reason in such cases to take it to be *quotation* that is going on, as opposed to “another way of talking about language, a way traditional theories of quotation were never meant to cover” (p. 38). Moreover, even if one did, for some reason, insist that a theory of quotation must explain these cases, there are strategies by which a theory that accounts for quotation-with-quotation-marks can do so. For there are good reasons to postulate ellipsis, or pragmatic mechanisms by which hearers recover quotation-marked counterparts of these sentences (García-Carpintero 1994, p. 263; Gómez-Torrente 2001, p. 13). They conclude that these data do not motivate Use Theories.
- Against several authors,⁴ Cappelen and Lepore maintain that the fact that one can truly say

Descartes said, “man is a thinking substance.”

(even though Descartes did not *utter* those words) is not a reason to say that what the quotation expression denotes in such a case differs from what it denotes in same-language cases, as in

Speaking English, the professor said, “man is a thinking substance.”

2. Following Cappelen and Lepore, by a “quotation expression” I mean a quotation mark-flanked expression together with the flanking quotation marks.
3. The targets here are Washington (1992), Reimer (1996, 2003), Saka (1998), and Recanati (2001).
4. Tsohatzidis (2003), Reimer (2003), and Saka (2003).

All it shows is that the “said” relation is not the “uttered the words” relation (p. 47).

- Cappelen and Lepore deny that the quotation-mark-flanked words in a mixed quotation are used as well as quoted; their view is that they are *only* quoted. This is incompatible with the claim, made by some, that in mixed quotations the quotation marks are semantically superfluous.⁵ Against this, Cappelen and Lepore invoke the behavior of indexical expressions in such occurrences (pp. 55–7) (i.e., they invoke D8 to deny D7).⁶ Consider how

Bush said that his administration would “achieve our objectives” in Iraq

differs in truth condition from

Bush said that his administration would achieve our objectives in Iraq.

By denying D7, though, the authors commit themselves to explaining the well-formedness of the first of these while maintaining that the quotation-marked words and *are not used*; together with their insistence that those words *are quoted*, this commits them to the “syntactic chameleonism” of quotation expressions, which I discuss later.

- Another alleged datum, D9, is the apparent context-sensitivity of quotation expressions: it seems possible, some have argued (most prominently, recently, García-Carpintero [1994] and Saka [1998, 2003]), for a quotation expression to denote different things in different occurrences. Cappelen and Lepore have two main arguments against this claim. One is that it is hard to see how it will allow us to explain D5, Proximity: “There is no requirement built in [on these views] that secures any kind of picturing or hieroglyphic relationship between the quotation and its semantic value” (p. 71). Another is that quotation expressions fail to behave as context sensitive expressions do. Here, they apply two tests. One is the “Inter-Contextual Disquotational Reporting Test”; the other is the “Collectivity Test,” both familiar to readers of the authors’ *Insensitive Semantics* (2005). Contextually sensitive expressions fail both tests; quotation expressions *mostly* pass both tests. (The remaining cases are addressed in the book’s final chapter.)

“Theories”

Next, Cappelen and Lepore move from data to theories; before presenting their own theory they discuss several others, explaining why they find them unsatisfactory.

5. Wertheimer (1999), Stainton (1999), Recanati (2001), Saka (2003), and García-Carpintero (2003).
6. In my 2007 (which appeared almost simultaneously with *Language Turned on Itself*), I argued that the theory of mixed quotation presented in Cappelen and Lepore (1997) cannot handle such cases, and proposed a kindred account that does.

The Use Theory

This theory's main proponents are Washington (1992), Saka (1998), and Recanati (2001). There are actually different configurations of claims under this heading. The core claim is that the expression *in* a quotation expression is *used quotationally* and that the quotation marks flanking it make no semantic contribution. From here, there is divergence. To the core claim, Washington adds that in such a case the expression "mentions itself"; Saka's addition is that in such a case it "directs" the audience to something associated with it other than its extension; Recanati's addition is the claim, different still, that in such a case the expression is used to "depict (mimic, simulate, provide an iconic representation of)" (2001, p. 641) some target utterance. Cappelen and Lepore's objections to this line are largely those they raised in discussing claims about cases of "omitted quotation marks" and claims that quotation expressions are context-sensitive. They devote some space to considering Recanati's defense of the view, finding it unsuccessful; later, I discuss this debate.

The Proper Name Theory

Tarski's (1935, §1) remarks on "quotation-mark names," and Quine's claim that quotation marks, flanking any expression, "produce a singular term (naming, as it happens, the expression inside)" (Quine 1960, p. 144; see also Quine 1940, p. 26) are often taken to reflect commitment to the view that quotation expressions are "unstructured singular terms" and that, consequently, "the expression quoted is *not* a component of a quotation expression itself" (Cappelen and Lepore 2007, p. 99). Following Davidson (1979), Cappelen and Lepore lodge the following objections to this view, which they call "the Quine–Tarski Proper Name Theory":

- The theory does not guarantee the truth of instances of the disquotational schema.
- The theory does not explain why it is not arbitrary that a quotation expression denotes what it denotes—it does not explain Proximity (D5).
- "To understand any given quotation on the Proper Name Theory would be much like learning the referent/meaning of a brand new proper name" (p. 102), hence "the Proper Name Theory fails to explain adequacy condition (D4)" (p. 103).
- As Searle (1983, p. 185) pointed out, the view makes nonsense out of mixed quotations: it puts

John said that he'd be home "lickety split"
syntactically on a par with

John said that he'd be home Nicaragua.

These are impressive objections. I discuss later whether they apply to Tarski's theory. Following Richard (1986) and Gómez-Torrente (2003), I will argue

that the first three, at least, do not apply; what emerges is that Tarski's actual theory is quite close to the Minimal Theory that Cappelen and Lepore present—these objections threaten neither account. The parallel continues with the fourth objection, which threatens both accounts. (As I mentioned earlier, Cappelen and Lepore feel they must supplement the Minimal Theory with Syntactic Chameleonism in order to handle mixed quotation.)

The Definite Description Theory

This comes in two variants. One variant⁷ takes a quotation to describe the quoted item *as a concatenation*; the other, the Demonstrative Theory proposed by Davidson (1979), takes a quotation to describe the quoted item *as a type instantiated by some demonstrated item*. The first variant faces variants of the objections to the Proper Name Theory—restricted now to the *basic* names out of which the structural descriptions are formed. The second variant, massively influential in the years following Davidson's presentation of it, faces rather different problems, in these authors' view. Davidson's theory is attractive for several reasons: it fares well with respect to D1 (Opacity), D2 ([Impossibility of] Quantifying In), D3 (Infinity), D4 ([No limitation to] Extant Lexicon), and D9 (Indeterminacy/context sensitivity/ambiguity in quotation). But the way it satisfies that last criterion is a mark against it in these authors' view, which is not surprising given that (as discussed earlier) they reject D9 as a criterion of adequacy on accounts of quotation. In particular, they argue that Davidson's theory errs in predicting "too much context sensitivity" (pp. 117–20). Moreover, they argue, it fares poorly with respect to D5, Proximity: for it "cannot explain perhaps *the* most crucial and interesting feature of quotation: namely, its disquotational nature; nor can it explain the concomitant proximity feature connecting quotation expressions to what they quote" (p. 120).

The Minimal Theory

The theory that Cappelen and Lepore endorse, the basic idea of which they find expressed to various degrees in the works of several authors (most fully, I think, in Richard [1986] and Gómez-Torrente [2003]), consists of the claim that the following is "the fundamental axiom schema governing the semantics of quotation expressions" (p. 124):

(QS) " 'e' " quotes "e."

In this schema, " 'e' " is replaceable by *any* quotable item" (pp. 123–4). It is the business of the book's next and final chapter to present a theory of what the quotable items are. Here, though, after briefly presenting the semantic part of the theory (pp. 123–5), the authors undertake to show not only that it satisfies

7. Presented by Quine (1960, p. 144), citing Tarski (1935, §1) on "structural-descriptive names," as "an alternative device to the same purpose" as quotation; see also Geach (1957, pp. 82–3).

desiderata D1–D5 (pp. 125–8) but that it satisfies D6 and D7 as well, which now come into play in a big way. Their idea is that explaining mixed quotation, in particular, “within the confines of a semantic theory that respects QS” (p. 129) requires maintaining that although a quotation expression *always* has as its semantic value some quotable item, some entity, it can be of a different *syntactic category* in different occurrences. Later, I discuss this startling claim and the treatment of mixed quotation of which it is a crucial part.

The Theory of Quotable Items

The purpose of the book’s final chapter is—to use the authors’ summary on its last page—to present “a strategy for explaining the appearance of context sensitivity for quotation that goes beyond the scope of standard pragmatic explanations” (p. 159).

It begins with an intuitively compelling distinction between *expressions* and *signs*. We all recognize that one can speak or write or tap (in Morse code) the word “broccoli”; the distinction, then, is between the different ways of tokening that word—the different *signs*—and that which admits of expression in these different ways—the *expression*. Expressions are parts of languages; signs are not, since a given sign can be used to express (or “articulate,” in the authors’ terminology) words from different languages (as “red” does for words of English and Norwegian).

The distinction raises the question: do quotation expressions stand for signs or for expressions? Cappelen and Lepore’s answer to this question is ingenious. They start with the apparent truth of the following two sentences:

- (1) “Red” is a sign that articulates one word in English and a different word in Norwegian.
- (2) “Red” is an English word.

A philosopher who likes the sign/expression distinction could easily take the truth of these statements to show that the quotation expression in (1) denotes a sign and that the same expression, occurring also in (2), denotes an expression. Thus, the case would be one of the “recalcitrant” (p. 79) ones supporting a claim about the context-sensitivity of quotation marks while resisting treatment according to the strategies Cappelen and Lepore presented in their earlier discussion of context-sensitivity. Cappelen and Lepore go in an entirely different direction, arguing that the *quotation expressions themselves* differ. Remarkably, this is not an *ad hoc* move. It is motivated by one of the central ideas behind the Minimal Theory: that quotation expressions “contain as constituents their semantic values” (p. 151). Given that the truth of (1) and (2) requires the *semantic values* of the quotation expressions to differ, the containment principle tells us that the *quotation expressions themselves* must differ. So the “recalcitrant” cases left from their earlier discussion of context-sensitivity are best seen, they argue, as reflecting a difference not between the semantic values that one quotation expression has in different occurrences, but between

distinct quotation expressions, ones whose *articulations* are—insignificantly, from a semantic point of view—indistinguishable.

3. Commentary

This is a rich, provocative book, with many arguments and proposals that deserve detailed engagement. I have chosen in this critical notice to focus on three issues, in the order in which they occur in the book. The first is the cogency of their objections to François Recanati's claim that in mixed quotations, the quotation marks make no *semantic* contribution. The second is the relation between the Minimal Theory of quotation that Cappelen and Lepore propose, and the theory that Tarski briefly sketched in "The concept of truth in formalized languages" (1935). Finally, I consider the account of mixed quotation that the authors sketch, raising several queries about it.

Recanati and "Pre-Semantic" Phenomena

It is agreed between Recanati and our authors that deleting the quotation marks from a mixed quotation can change its truth condition.⁸ Consider the following examples (pp. 55–6):

Bush also said that his administration would "achieve our objectives" in Iraq.

Nicola said that Alice is a "philosopher."

Galileo said that the Earth "si muove."

Now consider their no-marks counterparts:

Bush also said that his administration would achieve our objectives in Iraq.

Nicola said that Alice is a philosopher.

Galileo said that the Earth si muove.

It seems undeniable in each case that the counterpart does not have the truth condition of the original. In the first case, the phrase "our objectives" goes from referring to the Bush administration's objectives to referring to those of the speaker of the sentence; in the second and third cases, the counterparts are not even well-formed.

Recanati's account of this is that removing quotation marks from around some words in a mixed quotation changes which language they should be treated as belonging to:

8. This claim will surprise the reader who recalls Recanati's claim, on p. 660 of his 2001 paper, that "the proposition expressed by the complement sentence [of a mixed quotation] is the same with or without the quotation marks." But I am focusing here, as are Cappelen and Lepore in this part of their book, on the part of his paper (pp. 674–7) in which Recanati undertakes to explain how quotation marks *do* affect truth conditions.

the quotation marks indicate that the words inside the quotes are used [imitatively] . . . the hearer understands that the speaker uses the words in the (deviant) sense they have for such and such a person. This affects the content of the utterance, by determining the language which is relevant to the interpretation of the expression in quotes. (2001, p. 676)⁹

Cappelen and Lepore have three objections to this idea, which I will discuss in turn; in my view, Recanati's basic idea survives them.

Their first objection is that quotation marks can effect a language-shift only if there is a language to shift to; but in some cases, it seems that there is not (p. 60):

No one said that Alice was a "philosopher."

Alice said that Nicole is a "philosopher"; Ted said that too.

On Recanati's view, there being no speaker's language to shift to means that someone hearing or reading one of these sentences should find them uninterpretable.

Cappelen and Lepore's objection clearly presupposes that these sentences are unproblematically interpretable. But for my own part, I do find something odd about them, especially the first; it seems to me that without knowing *whose* use of "philosopher" is at issue, we do not know *which content* it is, that we are being told no one said. One thing it could be saying is that there is a recipe for constructing contents—take whatever you "philosopher" means in some language, and stick it (as long as it is syntactically suited) into the slot in your interpretation of "Alice was a____"—and that no content generated by that recipe was said by anyone. In short, the example seems to me not to admit of a *content*-specifying reading, although it does admit of a *content recipe*-specifying reading.

Interestingly, the latter reading is pretty much what Cappelen and Lepore's construal of the "that" clause would deliver for *every* mixed quotation, not just the ones that resist construal as content-specifying. Later, I will discuss their treatment of mixed quotation in detail. Foreshadowing now, though, let me note that in my view, it is at best an account of mixed quotations construed not as content-specifying but as content recipe-specifying. I think that *if* we want to construe mixed quotations as specifying particular contents, then we are going to have to maintain that if a hearer *cannot know* which speaker's idiom determines the meaning of the quotation-marked words in a mixed quotation, then that mixed quotation is uninterpretable by that hearer.¹⁰ (In the "No one said . . ." example, it is the sentence itself that tells the hearer that there is

9. In quoting this passage, I use "imitatively" where Recanati uses "demonstratively" because using the latter will mislead anyone who has not read Recanati's explanation (pp. 640–3) of what he means by it (which is, roughly, *imitatively*).

10. Without wishing to distract from the discussion of Recanati, I will note that I believe that Cappelen and Lepore's 1997 account does not have this consequence, whereas my 2007 account, like Recanati's but for different reasons, does.

nothing of this sort for them to know.) So the fact that such cases are uninterpretable on Recanati's view is not a fatal problem, in my view, but could reflect a commitment on his part to the plausible idea that mixed quotations are *content-specifying*.¹¹

On now to Cappelen and Lepore's second objection, which they present under the provocative heading "Pre-semantic = semantic":

Recanati acknowledges that the quotation marks in mixed quotation have a semantic effect, and he tries to salvage his non-semantic account by calling the effect "pre-semantic." (2007, p. 60)

The objection is puzzling. It is not clear whether it is an objection to the very idea of pre-semantic factors, or to Recanati's particular application of that idea. Construed the first way, it is difficult to understand, since *any* account of pre-semantic factors that follows Kaplan's (1977, p. 559), as Recanati's does, will entail that pre-semantic factors contribute "indirectly," as Recanati puts it (p. 676), to truth conditions. Change what language you take a sentence as belonging to, and you change how you interpret it. (How could it be otherwise? You cannot figure out what language some speaker is using by consulting some clause in a compositional truth theory for a language; rather, applying such a theory to the speaker's utterance reflects one's *already* having decided which language he or she is speaking.) Construed the second way, though, it is puzzling since it is unclear what it is about Recanati's application of the idea that Cappelen and Lepore think makes it a desperate "salvage" move.

Perhaps it will help to look at how the objection continues. Cappelen and Lepore challenge Recanati as follows:

What matters . . . is whether RV ["the quotation marks in mixed quotations are semantically superfluous"] and CRV ["the semantic content of a mixed report is identical to the semantic content of the corresponding [in]direct report (i.e., one in which its complement clause has no quotation marks)"] are true. (p. 61)

They deny both (p. 53), while taking Recanati to endorse both (p. 59). But I think that on Recanati's view, RV is true and CRV is false: RV is true because there is no clause in an interpretative truth theory telling us what to do with the quotation marks in a mixed quotation; CRV is false because the decisions an interpreter must make in order to be able to apply a truth theory to some utterance (or part thereof) do affect the results she obtains after applying that theory in light of those decisions. Now, this configuration of commitments is inconsistent if RV entails CRV, as Cappelen and Lepore claim it does (p. 53).

11. Cappelen and Lepore are happy with the "Ted said that too" example being true even if Ted did *not* mean what Alice meant by "philosopher." My intuition is that it could not be true if that were the case; but at any rate, it is clear that *content-specification* is not what Cappelen and Lepore are after in their treatment of mixed quotation. As I discuss later, this will be a problem for anyone who thinks mixed quotation is a species of indirect quotation.

But I cannot see that it does, nor that Recanati's view is in some other way problematic as an application of the idea that quotation marks, in mixed quotations, function pre-semantically. On the construal of Recanati's application of Kaplan's idea that I have sketched, endorsing RV and denying CRV is just what applying that idea involves. Compare how one would describe the role of some marks whose function is to indicate that a sentence is to be treated as English. They function pre-semantically, telling interpreters which truth theory to apply—there is no clause *in* the theory that handles them. Thus, we have the counterpart of RV. But treating a sentence in light of what the marks indicate—treating it, that is, as a sentence of English—means applying to it a truth theory for English rather than a truth theory for some other language. This has an effect on the resulting assignment of truth condition. Thus, we have the negation of the counterpart of CRV, for our imagined English-indicating marks.

That brings us to Cappelen and Lepore's third objection to the Recanati line, which is that interpreting quotation marks, in a mixed quotation, is relevantly disanalogous to deciding which language an utterance is in. When hearing an utterance, an interpreter has the task of figuring out which language to interpret it as belonging to. In this, the interpreter is guided, say Cappelen and Lepore (p. 61), by facts about the speaker's intentions. This is not the case when deciding how to interpret indexicals occurring inside the quotation-marked parts of mixed quotations. No matter what context a speaker of

Bush said that his administration would “achieve our objectives” in Iraq

might *intend* you to use in evaluating the indexical “our,” it is the sentence itself that tells you that you have to use the context of *Bush's* utterance.

This objection does get at an awkwardness in Recanati's proposal, but it seems to be more on a point of detail than something problematic with the very idea of pre-semantically determined context-shifting. Perhaps the shifting is not shifting in *language*, and perhaps it is rule-governed, as we see with “our”; what this suggests to me is not that Recanati's idea is wrong-headed but that it is best elaborated differently.

I close this section by noting in a reconciliatory spirit that Cappelen and Lepore's initial demarcation of the data to be explained might allow them to put Recanati's views about mixed quotation to the side, for the simple reason that their demarcation motivates excluding so-called “indirect quotation” from the field of data to be explained by a theory of quotation, and it is plausible to view mixed quotation as a species of indirect. Cappelen and Lepore clearly take themselves to be obliged, in their book about quotation, to give a theory of mixed quotation; but it would have been illuminating for them to justify this, especially given their lively deployment of the “don't have to explain” tactic against other philosophers' claims.¹²

12. For example, as discussed earlier, in relation to the “quotation without quotation marks” phenomenon (p. 38) and in their argument, concerning “impure” direct quotation, that giving a theory of quotation does not involve giving a theory of the “says” relation (p. 47).

Cappelen and Lepore cite Richard (1986) and Gómez-Torrente (2001) as having previously proposed something along the lines of their theory. Each of those writers describes himself¹³ as defending a Tarskian approach to quotation. But Cappelen and Lepore reject Tarski's approach, arguing that it has such serious problems that it is best to "quietly pass over" it (p. 103). This is an odd state of affairs. What is going on?

Let us look at Tarski's introduction of what he calls "quotation-mark names":

If we are given a name for a sentence, we can construct [a T-sentence] for it, provided only that we are able to write down the sentence denoted by this name. The most important and common names for which the above condition is satisfied are the so-called *quotation-mark names*. We denote by this term every name of a sentence (or of any other, even meaningless, expression) which consists of quotation marks, left- and right-hand, and the expression which lies between them, and which (expression) is the object denoted by the name in question. (1935, §1)

Evidently, part of what Tarski had in mind is that one can *tell from* a quotation mark name, what it denotes. (This is why with their use we satisfy the condition introduced with "provided only.") And this is plausible: just look between the quotation marks! We have here the "containment" that Cappelen and Lepore present (p. 124) as central to their approach.

Davidson objects that on Tarski's theory "nothing would be lost if for each quotation-mark name we were to substitute some unrelated name, for that is the character of proper names" (1979, p. 83). But the feature that Tarski describes, and takes to be important, *obviously would* be lost: an "unrelated name" would not help you to write down the expression it denotes. Being helpful in that way is not a feature that all proper names have. Most of them stand for things that cannot be written down; moreover, it is easy to name something that *can* be written down, in such a way that someone presented with the name cannot do what Tarski points out we can do when presented with quotation-mark names. But the fact that this feature is not part of "the character of proper names" entails neither that its absence *is* part of their character nor that no item that is like proper names in some important respects can have it. Davidson's appeal to "the character of proper names" is unpersuasive.¹⁴

13. Richard elaborates Quine's and Tarski's views of quotation, finding Tarski's preferable (p. 395), and arguing that "Davidson's objections don't show Tarski's theory to be untenable" (p. 399); Gómez-Torrente argues in a similar vein that "Tarski's theory is not affected by the objections that are commonly thought to disprove it . . . the burden of proof continues to be on the shoulders of the proponents of theories alternative to the natural, Tarskian one" (p. 147).
14. Gómez-Torrente argues that Davidson's objections to Tarski rest on a misreading of Tarski as having maintained that "quotations are like proper names *in all respects*, or *in all semantically significant respects*" (2001, p. 141).

Evident though it is that we do have the ability Tarski describes, what is it about quotation mark names that explains why we have it? *Why*, when presented with a quotation mark name, are we able to tell what it denotes? It seems that this is possible in virtue of the *structure* of quotation mark names, *in some sense of "structure."* Richard (1986) helpfully distinguishes two, which he calls "productive" and "grammatical" structure, and argues that "Davidson's objections to [Tarski's] theory are cogent only if the distinction between productive and grammatical structure is illegitimate" (p. 399). Productive structure is exhibited in an infinite lexicon's items if they are generated by some procedure from a finite base, as, for example, the arabic numerals, considered as names, are generated from the base of the numerals "0" through "9." Anyone who understands such a lexicon does so by grasping the rule by which its items are generated. Grammatical structure, on the other hand, is structure of the sort more familiar in the philosophy of language: that reflected in the rules by which one understands complex expressions on the basis of understanding their components, ultimately items of the lexicon. All this seems to apply very well to what Tarski says about quotation expressions. It is their *productive* structure that Tarski describes when he tells us what the quotation names are. It is their being *grammatically* unstructured that justifies calling them a type of *name*.

These are compelling reasons to reject Davidson's objections to Tarski's theory. Strikingly, almost everything that Richard and Gómez-Torrente point out about Tarski's theory, in the course of explaining why Davidson's objections to it fail, can also be said about Cappelen and Lepore's Minimal Theory:

- Schema QS tells us *which lexical items* the (infinitely many) quotation expressions are.
- Schema QS tells us—or at least, Cappelen and Lepore treat it as telling us—*what semantic value* each quotation expression has. (More on this in a moment.)
- It is by instantiating schema QS—not by applying some phrasal axiom that gives the meanings of quotation expressions in terms of the meanings of components of them—that we *understand* novel quotation expressions.

That schema QS does all this seems to amount to its telling us about the *productive* structure of quotation expressions, just as Tarski's prose description of quotation mark names does. Despite their negative verdict on the Proper Name Theory, then, it does seem to have the virtues of Cappelen and Lepore's Minimal Theory.

Just now I said that Cappelen and Lepore *treat* instances of QS as telling us about semantic values. It is hard to see how it *actually does* this, however, and this is one puzzling aspect of their proposal. Instances of schema QS tell us what *quotes* what; to derive truth conditions though, we need to know what different expressions' *semantic values* are. Axioms of the form

“‘e’” quotes “e”

do not fit into derivations of truth conditions. What would fit are axioms of the form

The semantic value of “‘e’” is “e”

What we need in the derivation for “Quine said ‘Quotation has a certain anomalous feature’ ” (p. 132), for example, is help with

SV(“‘Quotation has an anomalous feature’”)

and the corresponding instance of QS helps us *only if* we somehow know that if x quotes y , then $SV(x) = y$. It would have been helpful for Cappelen and Lepore to tell us how, and why, to move from a claim about what “‘e’” quotes, to a claim about its semantic value. As background to this, it would be helpful to know why they chose a schema whose instances do not tell us about semantic values. The book is silent on this point.

Mixed Quotation and “Syntactic Chameleonism”

Cappelen and Lepore take the Minimal Theory—the claim that QS gives the semantics of quotation expressions—to entail that quotation mark-flanked words in a mixed quotation are not used, only quoted (p. 128). This exposes them to the Searle objection, noted earlier: how is it that noun phrases that are not quotation expressions are syntactically unsuitable to take the places (in mixed quotations) of quotation expressions, if quotation expressions function syntactically as noun phrases, as rule QS seems to suggest?

Cappelen and Lepore address this ingeniously by proposing that quotation expressions do not always function syntactically as noun phrases, even though they always have entities as their semantic values. A quotation expression can be a verb phrase, for instance, even though its semantic value is an entity, as QS says. In such a case, no noun phrase is a grammaticality-preserving substitute, so Searle’s objection does not arise.

For this idea to work, we need a QS-based story about the semantics of mixed quotations, and a QS-compatible story about their syntax.

First, semantics. Cappelen and Lepore’s idea (pp. 135–6) is that the “said” of mixed quotation relates someone not to a proposition or to an expression, but to an ordered pair of an expression (or ordered sequence of expressions, as appropriate) and a propositional function. Preliminarily, they express this idea as follows.

A mixed quotation sentence of the form:

A said that F_1 Q F_2 .

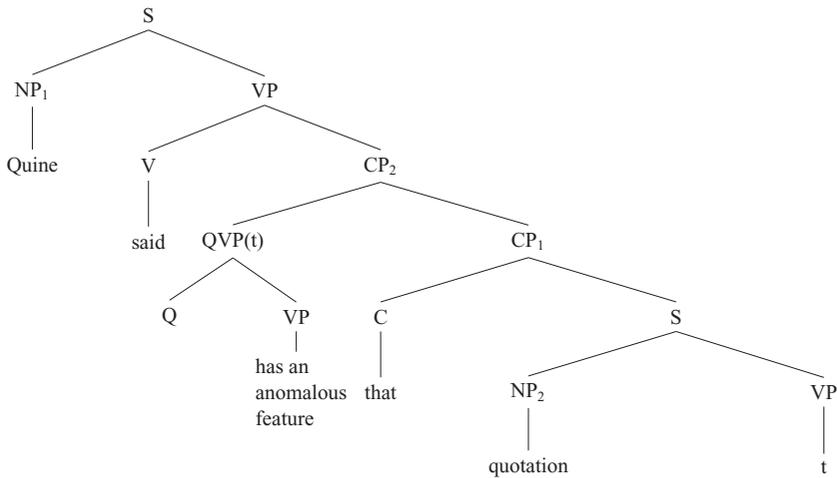
(where F_1 and/or F_2 are either empty or replaced by an appropriately used expression and Q is replaced by an appropriate quotation) is true just in case A said $\langle Q; F_1, F_2 \rangle$. The saying relation obtains when the speaker A applied Q to whatever F_1 and F_2 discuss (p. 136).

That the “said” of mixed quotation relates a speaker to an ordered pair (or triple, as need be) suggests that its complement clause has such an ordered pair (etc.) as its semantic value. That makes us think of some grouping of NPs in the syntax. But now we face “the obvious syntactic fact” that in

Quine said that quotation “has a certain anomalous feature,”

the quotation expression “combines with an NP to form a clause” (p. 138), which should make it a VP. To this, Cappelen and Lepore say: for that very reason it *is* a VP, despite its having a quotable expression—an entity—as its semantic value. This is the “syntactic chameleonism” of quotation expressions in mixed quotations.

Consider now the full logical form that Cappelen and Lepore give for our “Quine said . . .” example of mixed quotation:¹⁵



The tree shows how they implement their ideas. What Quine is related to by the “said” relation is the semantic value of CP₂, which is the ordered pair

⟨“has an anomalous feature”; [[quotation *t*]]⟩

Cappelen and Lepore say that theirs is a sketch of a proposal, and is “far from complete” (p. 134). Nevertheless, it is intriguing, and I hope that it is not unfair to raise some queries concerning it.

- Earlier, I expressed the thought that what Cappelen and Lepore’s account gives us is at best an account of mixed quotations construed as content recipe-specifying rather than as content-specifying; here is how that worry

15. I have corrected what I believe is a small error in their diagram on p. 140, which has a VP as the only daughter of an S node.

shows up in terms of the details of their proposal. Suppose Julian and Sharon each say, “cruelty to children enrages me.” Then the following mixed quotations are true:

Julian said that cruelty to children “enrages me.”
Sharon said that cruelty to children “enrages me.”

According to Cappelen and Lepore, the former is true iff Julian stands in the “saying” relation to

⟨“enrages me”; [cruelty to children *t*⟩

while the latter is true iff Sharon stands in the “saying” relation to

⟨“enrages me”; [cruelty to children *t*⟩,

which is the same thing. This will be a problem to anyone who hears the two mixed quotations as specifying *different* things—different complete contents—to which Julian and Sharon relate. Someone who hears these mixed quotations as content-specifying hears them not as specifying something that both speakers do. (Of course, if they are both true, there certainly is something both of them do, namely, use the words “enrages me” in saying what cruelty to children does.) Rather, she hears them as each specifying a different thing: Julian’s statement that it enrages *him*, and Sharon’s statement that it enrages *her*. The Cappelen and Lepore proposal only gets at what they are *both* doing, which is to say, it does not reconstruct the mixed quotation *as a specification of content*.

Cappelen and Lepore will reply that this is as it should be, since we can understand, for example, “Nicola said that Alice is a ‘philosopher’” without knowing “what if anything Nicola said Alice was” (p. 142). Someone who thinks of mixed quotation as a species of indirect quotation, though, will deny this—perhaps while acknowledging that the Cappelen–Lepore construal is still available as a construal of what it is to understand the mixed quotation less than fully.

- I have described the proposal as a proposal about “the ‘said’ of mixed quotation,” pointing out how on their view, “said” in a mixed quotation relates a speaker not to a proposition but to an ordered pair (triple, etc.), of a quotable expression and a propositional function. Is the idea that there is one “said” relation that is versatile in this way, or that sometimes “said” stands for one relation, other times for another? The former answer is suggested by the apparent interpretability of sentences like

Quine said that quotation “has a certain anomalous feature,” and Nietzsche that it makes you stronger.

Some comments on the semantic value of “said” would have helped in clarifying their proposal.

- On Cappelen and Lepore’s treatment of the “Quine said” example, the complement clause CP₂ has as its semantic value an ordered pair: a quotable expression, and a propositional function. Since this clause is

syntactically a CP, we should expect it to make sense grammatically in other places where CPs can occur. But the ordered pair semantic value seems not to work in some of these places. Consider:

It is true that quotation “has a certain anomalous feature.”

What could it be for the ordered pair

⟨“has an anomalous value,” [[quotation *t*]]⟩

to be in the extension of “true?” Recall that Cappelen and Lepore claim that this ordered pair is in the extension of “said” just in case the speaker “tried to apply” the first component of it (a quotable expression) to the second (a propositional function). But predications of truth do not bring speakers with them; we cannot say that the ordered pair is in the extension of “true” just in case *the speaker* did this or that, since there is no speaker referred to in the sentence. What then should we say about cases such as these? Or is there a restriction ensuring that mixed quotational “that” clauses are complements only to “said?”

- Finally, as Cappelen and Lepore note, this approach is restricted to handling only mixed quotations whose quotation-marked parts are of some syntactic category. This is a nontrivial assumption, and it has been denied (Cumming 2003; McCullagh 2007). Cappelen and Lepore say “the data are mixed” on this, but they do not elaborate, and I am not sure what they mean by that. Perhaps they mean that there are some cases of this sort that are ill-formed. Certainly, there are; I would have trouble when presented with

John said that he wanted to get a bet“ter refrigera”tor.

But it is a problem for their account if there is even one case where a mixed quotation with a quotation-marked noncomponent is well-formed, and there do seem to be many.

I do not claim that these worries are decisive against their proposal, since there are probably relevant points in linguistics of which I am unaware, and it is a sketched proposal anyhow. Be that as it may, some further explanation of the “syntactic chameleonism” proposal would have been very helpful.

4. Conclusion

There are issues that I have not touched on in this critical notice; for example, the authors’ severing of their longstanding commitment to the Davidsonian approach to quotation is itself a substantial topic. As I hope this critical notice shows, reading through the book and thinking about the many lively arguments it contains has been very rewarding. I picked for extended discussion three issues on which I wished to engage their views; I should note that most of the other issues they handle in the book are dealt with so cogently and

decisively that all I could do would be to register my agreement (which would have been tedious to do, repeatedly, in the course of my summary).

Despite their harsh words for what they take to be Tarski's theory, I believe that a fan of Tarski should be happy with Cappelen and Lepore's treatment of quotation "proper," for it really does a great job explaining how the master's simple idea withstands a barrage of objections from various quarters.¹⁶ The simple idea does not survive contact with the phenomenon of mixed quotation, but then no simple idea does; it is bewildering enough to make one wonder whether there is a second sense in which the title *Language Turned on Itself* is apt!

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16. There is some straying from the Tarskian line, though. In an Appendix to chapter 11, the authors augment their Tarskian semantics for direct quotation with a Q-involving syntax on which "the expressions within the direct quotation are still in the underlying form of the sentence" p. (146). Their reason for doing so is to account for phenomena such as those discussed by Barbara Partee. Consider:

The sign says, "George Washington slept here," but I don't believe *he* really did. (Partee 1973, p. 417)

Partee, however, argued that such cases are unproblematic for the view that "the quoted sentence is not syntactically or semantically a part of the sentence that contains it" (p. 418). In their brief Appendix, Cappelen and Lepore do not weigh the relative merits of their proposal and Partee's.

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