

François Recanati's Radical Pragmatic Theory of Quotation

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RESUMEN

En este artículo, discuto el capítulo 7 del libro de François Recanati *Truth-Conditional Pragmatics* en el que el autor vuelve sobre su clásico artículo de 2001 "Open quotation". Reviso los niveles semántico y pragmático que la teoría articula y muestro lo radicalmente pragmático que esto es. Subrayo los escasos cambios que ha sufrido la teoría entre 2001 y 2010 y llamo la atención sobre un problema relativo a la consistencia interna: algunos 'objetivos de la cita' se presentan a la vez como enriquecimientos pragmáticos libres (de nivel bajo) y como pertenecientes a los niveles de interpretación más pragmáticos.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *cita, comunicación figurativa, mostración, figuración, procesos pragmáticos primarios y secundarios.*

ABSTRACT

In this paper, I discuss chapter 7 of François Recanati's *Truth-Conditional Pragmatics*, in which he revisits his classic 2001 paper, "Open quotation". I review the levels of meaning, semantic and pragmatic, that the theory articulates, and show how radically pragmatic it is. I highlight the few changes the theory has undergone between 2001 and 2010, and draw attention to a problem with internal consistency: some 'quotational points' are presented both as (low-level) free pragmatic enrichments and as belonging to the most pragmatic layers of interpretation.

KEYWORDS: *Quotation, Pictorial Communication, Demonstration, Depiction, Primary and Secondary Pragmatic Processes.*

Quoting, at its core, is a piece of communicative behaviour that a quoter performs in order to represent a set of (often linguistic or discursive) properties of some object. This the quoter does by establishing a pictorial relationship between a (partly) verbal display and what it represents. Stated more radically, quotation is in essence a piece of iconic signalling. Only under particular circumstances is it made to play a truly linguistic role in an utterance.

This, essentially, is the position that I understand François Recanati to have been defending for over 10 years now. The formulation I have chosen is somewhat provocative, and I could certainly have phrased Recanati's views in blander language. But that would have involved the risk of concealing their radicalism, which would have been a shame.

While Recanati holds that quotation is “at bottom, a paralinguistic phenomenon, like gesturing and intonation” [Recanati (2010), p. 262], he takes care to offer a careful, complete, and nuanced theory which no linguist or philosopher of language can neglect. His views on quotation have been expounded chiefly in his 2000 book *Oratio Obliqua, Oratio Recta* and in two seminal papers [Recanati (2001), (2008)]. These two papers have been turned into chapters 7 and 8 of *Truth-Conditional Pragmatics (TCP)*, with a number of modifications.

Recanati was not the first to voice a radically pragmatic theory of quotation. Before him, Herb Clark and Richard Gerrig, two psychologists of language had made a forceful case in its favour in a 1990 paper titled “Quotations as demonstrations”. Earlier, Benoît de Cornulier had formulated some of the foundational insights of the theory in a 1978 paper on parentheticals. Both influences are dutifully acknowledged. What sets Recanati's writings apart is that they offer a fully worked out *philosophical* account of quotation, i.e. in language that is directly understandable and evaluable by philosophers, and addresses their concerns.

In this essay, I start by presenting the main aspects of Recanati's theory, largely conforming to the order in which he introduces these in chapter 7 of *TCP*. Here and there I pause and examine at greater length the differences there may be with the 2001 paper and look into what I identify as problematic issues.

I. “OPEN QUOTATION”

Chapter 7 starts from the observation that most philosophical writings on quotation until ca. 2000 addressed questions that presupposed that (genuine) quotations were all of one kind, namely singular terms. Recanati rightly suggests that those quotations — which he labels ‘closed’ — form just a subset, and that philosophers have usually neglected the complementary subset of ‘open quotations’. Although Donald Davidson, and a few researchers who followed in his footsteps, were exceptional in making allowances for certain instances of open quotation, they still thought of quotation fundamentally in terms of reference. This prevented them from giving proper recognition to open quotation, hence from achieving an integrated theory.

I.1 *The Various Actions the Quoter Performs*

In order to provide that sort of theory, a goodly number of distinctions need to be made. First one needs to distinguish between ‘using’ and ‘displaying’ a string of words. More often than not when we speak or write, we do not seek to draw our addressee’s attention to the very words we are using; what matters is what we say and mean, not how we say it.

I.1.1 *Displaying and Demonstrating*

In quotation, however, we do just that: we seek to direct our addressee’s attention to the tokens we are producing. This is what we do when we ‘display’ a string of words. But the distinction between using and displaying only takes us so far, and a further term is needed: by displaying some tokens we attempt to ‘demonstrate’ something beyond them, “certain properties of it, i.e. some type which it instantiates” [Recanati (2010), p. 222]. Imagine a spoken utterance of the following example, borrowed from Clark (1996), p. 175:

(1) And then Greta Garbo said, **‘I want to be alone!’**

By displaying this token of *I want to be alone!*, the utterer makes salient a number of properties — linguistic (the words used, in that particular syntactic arrangement) and non-linguistic (say, low pitch, slow speed of delivery, a hoarse voice, a Swedish accent, accompanying gestures). Some of these properties, says Recanati, are ‘demonstrated’. The verb *demonstrate* is basically used as in Clark & Gerrig to mean “illustrate by exemplification”; “[d]emonstrations work by enabling others to experience what it is like to perceive the things depicted” [Clark & Gerrig (1990), pp. 764fn, 765]. As we have just seen, the application of this family of terms is not restricted to the use of language. There are plenty of demonstrations that are entirely non-verbal. Thus, one can demonstrate “a tennis serve, a friend’s limp, or the movement of a pendulum” [Ibid. (1990), p. 764].¹

Now, as Recanati (2010), p. 223, following Clark & Gerrig (1990), pp. 767ff., suggests, “not all the properties manifested by the displayed token are constitutive of the demonstrated type. Many properties are accidental or irrelevant [...]”. Clark & Gerrig called the relevant properties which the speaker seeks to demonstrate ‘depictive’. Recanati understands those depictive properties as allowing the interpreter to identify a ‘target’. This prompts him to write that the speaker who quotes “does three things at the same time: he *displays* a token, *demonstrates* certain properties of that token (a type), and thereby *depicts* the target” [Recanati (2010), p. 224]. Table 1 below sums up the various actions a quoter performs:

<i>what the quoter does</i>	<i>object the quoter's actions apply to</i>	<i>what that object consists in</i>
displays	an utterance- token	verbal material + non-verbal material
demonstrates	a type	certain properties exhibited by the token displayed
depicts	one or more targets	a type or token that possesses the <i>depictive</i> properties of the demonstration

TABLE 1. What the quoter does

I.1.2 *Demonstrating Types and Depicting Targets*

According to Recanati, the demonstrated type can be distinct from the target in the following ways:

- (i) the target may be a particular token. Demonstrated types being types, any target that is a token must be different from the demonstrated type.
- (ii) the target may be a type different from (i.e. richer than) the one demonstrated.

Let us start with example (1) above as an illustration of (i). The utterer is ‘echoing’² some particular utterance ascribed to Greta Garbo and, in so doing, intends only some of the properties manifested by the displayed token to be depictive: for instance, the exact pitch and the hoarse voice may not be intended as depictive (if, say, the utterer is male and has just been loudly cheering at football), but — let’s assume for the sake of the argument — the speed, accent, gesturing and the wording are so intended. The latter properties constitute the demonstrated type, and they are shared by Garbo’s initial utterance-token, the target of the demonstration. This shows both how the utterer succeeds in depicting her target and why we need a distinction between demonstratum and target.

We can now turn to the depiction of types. I will base myself on Recanati's analysis of a non-verbal demonstration in which the 'utterer' seeks to "demonstrate to a friend how [his] sister Elizabeth drinks tea" [Recanati (2010), p. 225], which I shall adapt to a different example. Imagine that I wish to depict Rafael Nadal's serve.³ In so doing, I produce a token of the type "me serving at tennis". This token makes available to my addressee a whole spate of properties, some of which are 'accidental' ("closes left eye", "bites lip"), some 'supportive' ("serves with right hand" — Nadal is left-handed),⁴ and only some depictive. The demonstrated type is just this set of depictive properties. Yet, together, these properties are less than the intended target, "Nadal's serve", which includes Rafael Nadal, a tennis ball, an actual racquet (not a fly swat), etc.

There may be a minor terminological difference in the way Recanati and Clark & Gerrig use *demonstrate* and its cognates which sometimes hampers easy comprehension. Whereas Recanati is always careful to say that what is demonstrated is a cluster of properties, he also quotes several passages from Clark & Gerrig (1990), where *demonstrate* is applied to a slightly different object (cf. "demonstrate a tennis serve, someone's limp" above, or "George demonstrates Greta Garbo's 'I want to be alone' in a Swedish accent"). Here, *depict* would be clearer since the direct objects refer to targets rather than just depictive properties). In the complex world of displayed tokens, demonstrated types and depicted targets, these minor variations can be trouble.

1.1.3 Two Kinds of Targets

In the 2001 paper, a target distinct from the demonstrated type was called 'distal'. This meant that a distal target could be a token (*that* particular utterance by Garbo) or a type (how Nadal serves). Allowances were also made for a different type of target, the 'proximal' target. This was defined as a target that is identical to the demonstrated type. Take (2):

- (2) **'With'** is a preposition.

When I write that sentence and display a token of *with*, I demonstrate a cluster of linguistic properties that go to make up the lexeme *with* (i.e. a type), and that lexeme is also what my depiction targets. Thus, the lexeme *with* is the proximal target of the demonstration. When there is no distal target, wrote Recanati, the quotation rates as a case of 'flat mention'.⁵ In 2001, Recanati explicitly "prefer[red] to say that the target is the demonstrated type itself", rather than that "there is no target" [Recanati (2001), p. 643]. In other words, all demonstrations had targets.

The essentials of this account have not changed. However, there's no more talk of proximal and distal targets. Instead, two new terms have been introduced: 'internal' and 'external' target. The former designates the utterance (type or token) that the quotation is meant to echo. It therefore seems as if the new 'internal' target is the same as the old 'distal' one. As for the external target, it is defined as what the utterance that embeds the quotation is intended to characterise. This is undoubtedly different from the former proximal target, if only because it can be a token. We shall return to this shortly, but first we need to try and understand what work the new tool of the external target does that could not be done with the tools of the previous theory.

Let us note first that in many cases, for instance in the interpretation provided for (1) above, the internal and external targets are identical. Still, they need not be so. Consider this variation on (1):

(1_N) Garbo did not say, '**I want to be alone!**'

Like (1), (1_N) is about an utterance of Garbo's. But it would be contradictory to hold that the speaker's token of *I want to be alone!* is offered as a demonstration of that utterance, since, if we are to believe the utterer of (1_N), Garbo's utterance must have had properties different from those demonstrated by the quotation in (1_N). In 2001, Recanati concluded that, since Garbo's utterance was not the distal target of the quotation, the quotation had no distal target, and therefore rated as an instance of flat mention.

The revised description is more cautious. Recanati suggests that (1_N) will be a case of flat mention if it has no internal target. But it might have one, if for instance, the token between quotation marks was displayed as a picture, an echo, of Garbo's usual way of uttering *I want to be alone!*.⁶ In any case, for the quotation in (1_N) to be mimetic, its internal target has to be different from its external target, on pain of inconsistency.

All in all, I am not sure that the new description is superior to that given in 2001 (nor is it inferior to it). The terminological changes will probably not be easy on readers familiar with the previous pair of terms.⁷ Maybe the term 'internal' is more intuitive than 'distal', and that would be a plus. As for the new term 'external target', the only work that it does is to name an object which Recanati had already identified in his discussion of (1_N) but for which he had devised no special label [Recanati (2001), p. 644]. Note also that there was no absolute need for the disappearance of proximal targets, which could have fit with the new terminology. Maybe Recanati thought that they did too little work, being equated with demonstrated types. Their removal has one notable consequence, though: some cases of flat mention are now described as having no target at all [Recanati (2010), p. 226].⁸ Table 2 recapitulates the various kinds of targets.

2001			2010		
kind	what they are		kind	what they are	
proximal	= demonstratum (always a type)		(no named counterpart)		
distal	type	token	internal	type	token
	richer than type demonstrated via displayed token	exhibits depictive properties of displayed token		richer than type demonstrated via displayed token	exhibits depictive properties of displayed token
(no named counterpart)			external	type	token
				may be (partly) incompatible with demonstrated type	may exhibit properties incompatible with demonstrated type

TABLE 2. Targets in the 2001 paper and in chapter 7

II. VARIETIES OF QUOTATION

II.1 Closed Quotation

Recanati shows (i) that demonstrations are a type of pictorial communication — they *show* rather than *say* something —, and (ii) that quotations are a special case of demonstrations; they are demonstrations that resort to the display of linguistic material. He then argues that demonstrations, though not in themselves vehicles of linguistic (symbolic) meaning, can be ‘linguistically recruited’ to fill a noun phrase slot in a clause. When a quotation is so recruited, Recanati calls it ‘closed’.

I should warn in passing against hastily assuming that, put together, open and closed quotations make up the whole set of quotations. As Recanati himself

hints, some quotations can be recruited as nouns, and other authors have shown that they can also be recruited as adjective phrases or verbs. These various cases of recruitment are illustrated below:

as NP: closed quotation: (1) and (2)

as N: Suddenly, she stopped without warning to let out a “**Damn!**”
(www.rickgrunder.com/116text.htm)

as AdjP: These are not ‘**I really should**’ radishes.... [Jon Carroll, San Francisco Chronicle; cited in Clark & Gerrig (1990), ex. 5b].

as V: — No pal you are the one lying. Saving the planet?! Don’t talk such utter nonsense [sic].

— Firstly Don’t **pal** me, i’m not and never will be your pal [...].
(<http://www.didcot.com/forum/?read=18084>; an exchange on an internet forum).

To insist: the basic meaning of a quotation is pictorial. Only closed quotations are endowed with an extra layer of *linguistic* meaning. This is an additional, secondary property. As Recanati nicely puts it in chapter 8 of *TCP*, p. 271, the central meaning of a quotation is “the meaning of the speaker’s act of ostensive display. That meaning is pragmatic: it is the meaning of an act performed by the speaker, rather than the semantic content of an expression uttered by the speaker”.

Closed quotations exhibit the important additional property of semantic inertia.⁹ This is a widely accepted property, but it must be characterised carefully. Thus, Recanati stresses that inertia is only relative: “in closed quotation, the linguistic meaning of the displayed material [...] remains segregated from the linguistic meaning of the sentence in which the demonstration serves as a singular term [...]. The linguistic material [...] remains, or can remain, [...] semantically active in the discourse as a whole” [Recanati (2010), pp. 234, 235].¹⁰

Inertia was a feature that Davidson insightfully noticed. Yet, from it, he wrongly concluded that there must be something else in the quotation ‘doing the referring’ and that that something else must be the quotation marks. In contrast, Recanati suggests that it is the demonstration itself (i.e. an act) which is recruited as a singular term. This way — and I believe it is the right one, if only because non-verbal demonstrations too can be linguistically recruited — Recanati escapes a traditional dead-end in the literature, the question as to which of the following three is the referring expression: the whole quotation including quotation marks (cf. the ‘Name’ theory), the quoted material (cf. the ‘Identity’ theory), the quotation marks (cf. the ‘Demonstrative’ theory). Re-

canati's answer is clear and refreshing: it's none of those! What is recruited linguistically is a demonstration, i.e. an act of pictorial communication.

One ends up with the following picture for the meaning of a closed quotation:

- (i) the quoted material is displayed or presented for demonstrative purposes, as in open quotation;
- (ii) the demonstration assumes a grammatical function in the sentence: that of a singular term referring to the demonstrated type;
- (iii) the quoted material itself, distinct from the presentation of that material (the demonstration), is not semantically a part of the sentence in which it is presented [Recanati (2010), p. 237].

II.2 Open Quotation

Within open quotation, a first distinction needs to be made between those cases in which the quotation is a pure display, and those in which the quoted words are displayed and used at the same time. Non-hybrid open quotations as in (3) are barely examined at all by philosophers of language, no doubt because they do not appear to be interesting from a truth-conditional point of view. By contrast, there is one hybrid use that has received a lot more attention than the others (cf. (4)), that which Cappelen & Lepore (1997) called 'mixed quotation' (henceforth MQ). Here are illustrations:

- (3) I sat on the grass staring at the passers-by. Everybody seemed in a hurry. **Why can't I have something to rush to?** [Quirk et al. (1985), p. 1033].
- (4) Quine says that quotation "**has a certain anomalous feature**".

In (3), there is a direct speech report that is autonomous, in the sense that it stands on its own, is not embedded within a broader syntactic structure. In (4), we have mixed quotation: as in all 'hybrid' instances of quotation, the quoted words play their normal syntactic and semantic roles in the mentioning clause, they are not 'inert'. Recanati sums this up as follows: "The very words which are used to express the content of the reported attitude (or speech act) are at the same time displayed for demonstrative purposes, but they are not referred to by means of a singular term" [(2010), p. 239]. As MQ involves simultaneous saying and displaying, Recanati is led to agree with Rob Stainton that "mixed quotation is equivalent to indirect quotation — give or take some mimicry" [Stainton (1999), p. 275]. This view is probably correct if one accepts Cappelen &

Lepore's original characterisation of MQ as those cases in which part of an indirect speech report (*has a certain anomalous feature* in (4)) governed by a reporting verb is enclosed in quotation marks. In the essay devoted to chapter 8 of *TCP*, I say briefly why I do not think this the best way to go.

Now, why should MQ have been singled out as worthy of special interest? According to Cappelen & Lepore, because it exhibits a semantic rather than pragmatic use of quotation marks. These authors make the strong claim that in MQ the quoted words are always ascribed to the referent of the subject of the reporting verb (the 'reportee', to use Recanati's term): if the reportee did not utter those words, then the utterance containing the MQ is false.

This claim has been much debated. Some people, including Recanati and this writer, believe it is manifestly false. Cappelen & Lepore have provided their own reply to this criticism. This question is explored in greater detail in the essay devoted to chapter 8 of *TCP*.

III. THE PRAGMATICS OF QUOTATION

III.1 *Quotation Marks*

As Recanati advocates a pragmatic view on quotation, he cannot make quotation marks a cornerstone of his theory. Still, if he is to make a dent in quotation-marks-based accounts, he has to provide a precise characterisation of the role they play. To begin with, he indicates that the question of whether they have a spoken counterpart remains open. Still, quotation marks are part of the system of written English. In that system, they are endowed with a genuine conventional linguistic meaning, which Recanati understands as a 'condition of use', "a constraint which the token must satisfy for the use to be felicitous" [Recanati (2010), p. 245]. Quotation marks indicate that the enclosed words are being demonstrated, an indication triggered every time quote marks are used and coming on top of whatever meaning the utterance can have without the quotation marks. In other words, quotation marks trigger a conventional implicature. Thus, the next two utterances are *semantically* equivalent:

(5) You say you'll be mine till the end of time.

(5_Q) You say you'll be mine **'till the end of time'**.

However, on top of their shared compositional meaning, the quotation marks in (5_Q) trigger a conventional implicature to the effect that the words *till the end of time* are being used demonstratively. This is the 'applied meaning' of the quotation marks. Interpreters, however, are not content with applied meanings; these need to be further 'fleshed out' in context:

The interpreter must identify the internal target of the demonstration, if there is one, and he must identify the properties of the token which are 'depictive' (constitutive of the demonstrated type) and those which are merely accidental or 'supportive' [Recanati (2010), p. 247].

Only then can the interpreter be said to have understood the pictorial value of the quotation.

According to Recanati, the processes just described are already part and parcel of the pragmatic interpretation of quotation. Now, that this interpretation should have a pragmatic component is not in itself controversial: few philosophers writing on quotation would take issue with that. What they are less likely to agree on is the sheer extent of that pragmatic component. Thus, Recanati treats as pragmatic several substantial aspects of the meaning of quotations which others would classify as semantic — because they affect truth-conditions. Not that Recanati does not acknowledge these truth-conditional effects, he does. But he chooses to account for them in terms of free enrichment and context-shifts, two pragmatic mechanisms.

III.2 *The Quotational Point*

Before we tackle those two pragmatic mechanisms, we will briefly turn our attention to what Recanati regards as "the most pragmatic layer of interpretation, where one tries to *make sense of the speaker's act of demonstration in the broader context in which it takes place*" [Recanati (2010), p. 249; original emphasis]. This he calls the 'quotational point'.

When the pictorial value of a quotation has been fully worked out, the interpreter will still need to understand why the speaker inserted a quotation in her utterance. In other words, he will have to work out the 'quotational point'. Here are a few possibilities:

- referring [in closed quotation].
- dissociating oneself from a target [in ironic echoic uses].
- appealing to authority.
- letting the addressee know that some X used the words in question [in typical instances of MQ].¹¹

Though attractive, this proposal raises concerns about the internal consistency of Recanati's undertaking. Here, briefly, is why.

On the most salient interpretation of (4), one point of the quotation¹² is to inform the addressee that Quine used the very words *has a certain anomalous*

feature in the speech episode that (4) is about. Many people, Recanati included, take it that this ‘utterance ascription’ affects the truth-conditions of (4): if Quine did not write those words, then (4) turns out false. But, contrary to the semanticists-about-quotation,¹³ Recanati, in line with the central thesis of *TCP*, believes that this alteration of the truth-conditions should be explained as ‘free pragmatic enrichment’. In short, it is part of the truth-conditions of the utterance without being part of the semantics of the uttered sentence.

Again, this is a very attractive account, if only because the kind of utterance ascription just described is not mandatory, hence its ‘free’ occurrence. But here’s the catch. Free pragmatic enrichment is defined as a primary pragmatic process [Recanati (2004), ch. 2; (2010), pp. 165-167]. Recanati has argued at length (contra, notably, Relevance Theorists) that a clear distinction must be drawn between primary and secondary pragmatic processes. Primary pragmatic processes affect the determination of ‘what is said’ by means of the utterance — they affect truth-conditions —, and they operate locally. Secondary pragmatic processes, in contrast, are ‘postpropositional’, in the sense that they build upon what is said, and therefore operate globally. In addition to being located at distinct stages of the interpretation process, primary and secondary pragmatic processes, Recanati claims, also differ cognitively, a difference that is expressed in terms of the ‘availability condition’: whereas secondary pragmatic processes, which involve genuine inferences, are ‘available’ (consciously accessible) to the speech participants, *primary* ones need not be [Recanati (2010), p. 165]. An agent performing a *secondary* pragmatic process is aware of how she goes from what is said to what is meant. One who performs a free pragmatic enrichment is not (necessarily) aware of how she goes from the compositional meaning to what is said.¹⁴

For Recanati’s account of examples like (4) to hold good, identification of the quotational point must be a primary pragmatic process. Is that the case? Recanati’s talk of *the most pragmatic layer of interpretation* inevitably conjures up inferences like conversational implicatures, i.e. secondary pragmatic processes. I have to tread carefully here: first, the quotational point is not a conversational implicature, since what is said by the whole utterance of (4) is not part of the input to the inference that outputs that quotational point. Second, as standardly happens with pragmatic enrichment, the quotational point affects the truth-conditions. Third, the derived pragmatic meaning applies locally, since it concerns that part of the utterance enclosed in quotation marks.

Still, I feel reluctant to accept that we are dealing with a primary pragmatic process. The main reason is that it seems clear that identification of the quotational point must be ‘available’. Just like conversational implicatures, it seems to lend itself quite nicely to a kind of Gricean ‘rational reconstruction’, roughly “the writer has put quote marks around some words in the complement to the verb *says*, whose subject is *Quine*. That must be because the writer means that Quine used those words”. Probably, this sort of reconstruc-

tion is possible for the following reason: an utterance of (4) is a communicative act, but it is one that embeds another communicative act, the quotation. The inference to the quotational point concerns that embedded act globally. This does not prevent that inference from being local with respect to (4) as a whole, but it makes it sufficiently different from other cases of enrichment described in *TCP* to question its status as a primary pragmatic process. Though I am not sure how to sort out the above difficulty, I believe it needs to be recognised. A primary pragmatic process that *must* be available is not a proper primary pragmatic process.

III.3 Context-Shifts

The hybrid cases just discussed, where Recanati invokes free pragmatic enrichment, are labelled 'cumulative'. They are so-called because the utterance with quotation entails the one without. Thus if (4) is true, then so is

(4_{DISQ}) Quine says that quotation has a certain anomalous feature.

Recanati presents the truth-conditional difference between (4) and (4_{DISQ}) as resulting from the removal of the quotation *marks*. I believe this is either an error or an excessive concession to the semanticists-about-quotation, for it suggests that the quotation marks are *essential* to quoting. The right phrasing is as follows: removing the *quotation* affects the truth-conditions. It just so happens that the removal of the quotation can be *made plain to the reader* by the removal of the quotation marks. Still, just as quotation marks do not, of themselves, create a quotation, their removal does not, of itself, remove the quotation.

Contrasting with the cumulative hybrids are the 'non-cumulative' ones. Imagine that you and I know that James wrongly takes the philosopher McPherson to be W. V. O. Quine. In a situation in which we see McPherson coming up to us, I can utter (6) sarcastically, and expect you to understand both that McPherson is walking towards us and that I am making fun of James. Recanati suggests that the asserted content of (6) is about McPherson, not about Quine, and I think that, provided a context like the one just outlined, that is accurate:

(6) '**Quine**' wants to speak to us.

Now, clearly (6) does not entail its disquoted counterpart:¹⁵

(6_{BARE}) Quine wants to speak to us.

That makes cases like (6) non-cumulative. So here again we have different truth-conditions, but the difference does not result from enrichment,

since enrichment means cumulativity. To account for those facts, Recanati appeals to ‘context-shifts’. He begins by reminding us that, as Bar-Hillel put it, “[a]ny [linguistic] token has to be understood to belong to a certain language” [Bar-Hillel (1954), p. 80; quoted in (2010), p. 257]. With no language identified, semantic processing cannot even get off the ground. In examples like (6), the speaker engineers a shift in the ‘language parameter’ of the context, by getting her addressee to understand that the demonstrated string is echoic and has to be interpreted with respect not to ‘ordinary’ English but to someone’s idiolect, in this case James’s. Thus, there occurs a “sentence-internal language-shift”,¹⁶ the result of which is that the quoted string is endowed with a distinct character, yielding a different content. As a consequence, the compositionally articulated content is affected. This is how non-cumulativity comes about. Recanati stresses that, within the framework of this analysis, the impact on the truth-conditions is only indirect. The language-shift operates at a ‘pre-semantic’ level, before semantic composition begins (cf. the Bar-Hillel quote above). So analysed, “the non-cumulative counterexamples no more threaten the pragmatic view than the cumulative counterexamples do” [Recanati (2010), p. 259].

Recanati then extends his shift-based account of non-cumulativity to cases in which it is not the language of the utterance that shifts but some other contextual parameter. We begin with a case in which what is involved is a difference between ‘belief-worlds’. Imagine that John and I know that Peter mistakes Mary for my sister. Now Mary is coming our way and John says:

(7) Look! **‘Your sister’** is coming over.

Note that no language-shift can be involved, since the words *your* and *sister* mean the same in Peter’s idiolect as they do in English. So what sort of context-shift takes place here? In Kaplanian semantics, a context is a set of parameters for the interpretation of indexical expressions. A subset of these (speaker, addressee,¹⁷ time, place) constitute what Recanati calls the ‘situation of utterance’. But the context also contains a possible world, i.e. the world of which the situation of utterance is a part. From a logical point of view,¹⁸ the context must be selected (its parameters must be identified) before semantic composition can get under way.

Now, what happens in (7) is this. The content of *your sister* is fixed with respect to the situation of utterance (that is, *your* refers to the addressee, i.e. me). Yet, instead of being evaluated at the world of the context, the utterance is evaluated with respect to another ‘circumstance’, (what you and I take to be) Peter’s belief-world. That this must be so is made manifest by John’s demonstration of *your sister*. This way I understand John to be talking about Mary, not about my actual sister.

As we can see, it is not the whole context that shifts: only the circumstance does, not the situation of utterance, nor the language. In the original “Open quotation”, Recanati accounted for this selectivity in terms of an extension of the Kaplanian context to “a triple $\langle L, s, c \rangle$ where L is a language, s is a situation of utterance comprising a number of parameters, and c a circumstance of evaluation” [Recanati (2001), p. 679]. In *TCP*, he no longer does so, because he can now rely on conceptual tools developed in the meantime, and which are set out in chapter 6. The new description is as follows: the utterer of (7) shifts the ‘illocutionary context’, while the ‘locutionary context’ remains unchanged. Still, there are many utterances, notably in journalistic prose, which involve just such a locutionary context-shift:

- (8) Wright won’t disclose how much the Nike deal is worth, saying only that “they treat me well” [*The Face*, Sept. 1993, p. 55].

The quotation is clearly not meant to be interpreted as including a reference to the journalist, the ‘reporting speaker’: *me* refers to Wright, the speaker in the speech episode being reported. This is only possible if the utterance includes a shift in the situation of utterance, in other words in the locutionary context. If the quotation were removed, *me* would refer to the reporting speaker, with Wright saying that Nike treat the journalist well.

In the end, we have three types of ‘non-cumulative hybrids’:

- with a language-shift (6)¹⁹
- with a shift in the illocutionary context (7)
- with a shift in the locutionary context (8).

On p. 262, Recanati suggests that language-shifts too can be regarded as locutionary context-shifts provided we take the language to be a feature of the context, which is precisely what we have done in the analysis of (6).

To sum up, all three (or both) kinds of shifts are capable of affecting the truth-conditions of the utterance that contains the linguistic demonstration, but, to repeat, they do so only indirectly: the truth-conditional effects stem from the pre-semantic process of context-selection, which affects the input to semantic composition. The pragmatic account of quotation stands.

IV. CONCLUSION

In his conclusion to chapter 7, Recanati recapitulates the various ways in which a quotation — an essentially paralinguistic phenomenon — can

affect the linguistic meaning of an utterance. Three of these are “somewhat peripheral” [Recanati (2010), p. 263]; they are:

- the fact that quotation marks conventionally indicate that the enclosed words are being demonstrated by the speaker;
- the various context-shifts which affect the input to semantic composition;
- free pragmatic enrichment.

Only the fourth one, linguistic recruitment as a singular term, makes quotation (of the closed kind) a “genuine linguistic phenomenon” (ibid.).

This recapitulation also serves the purpose of highlighting why linguists and philosophers of language should busy themselves with quotation, notably of the open kind: interactions with language use are manifold, and not just in the case of closed quotations. Philosophers’ nearly exclusive preoccupation with the reference of quotation has sometimes led them on the wrong track: many have rejected scare quotes outside the province of genuine quotation because these were not about words but about distancing oneself from some linguistic practice. In so doing, Recanati argues, they have confused an essentially syntactic-semantic issue — whether a quotation functions as a singular term — with a pragmatic one — what the quotational point is. Recanati offers a fine illustration of the usefulness of the distinction:

(9) A **‘fortnight’** is a period of fourteen days.

This is not a closed quotation: *fortnight* is not recruited as an NP (nor as a noun, for that matter); it is used and mentioned at the same time. This means that, syntactically and semantically, it is a case of open quotation, like scare quoting. Yet, the speaker’s quotational point is not to distance herself from the use of *fortnight*. Instead, her utterance is clearly about words, since (9) is a definitional statement. In that respect, in terms of its pragmatics, (9) is a case of ‘flat mention’ like the basic cases of ‘metalinguistic citation’ or ‘pure quotation’ of the *Boston is disyllabic* kind.

Integration of all the relevant distinctions (syntactic, semantic, pragmatic) yields a picture of the ‘varieties’ of quotation as below:

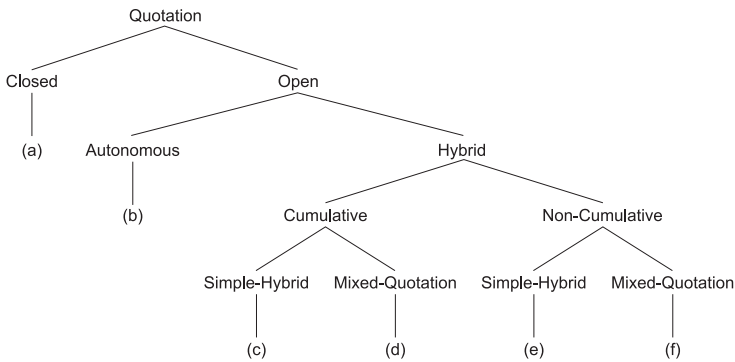


FIGURE 1. Varieties of quotation according to “Open quotation”

I illustrate each variety with one or two examples:

- (a) **“With”** is a preposition
She said **“I know what it’s like to be dead”**
- (b) I sat on the grass staring at the passers-by. Everybody seemed in a hurry. **Why can’t I have something to rush to?**
‘He has a future’, she remarked, **‘and I have a past, so we should be all right.’** (BNC GSY)
- (c) The badger looked up and uttered the only really **“strangled cry”** I have ever experienced outside fiction [W. Golding, *The Paper Men*, Faber & Faber (1985), p. 11].
- (d) Quine says that quotation **“... has a certain anomalous feature”**.
- (e) **‘Quine’** wants to talk to you.
- (f) James says that **‘Quine’** wants to talk to you.

Chapter 7 of *TCP* puts forward an account of quotation that is quite complete from an empirical point of view — and should therefore appeal to the linguist, even of the data-driven persuasion — and very satisfactory from

a philosophical point of view, as it explains a variety of truth-conditional effects. This it does without giving up on the crucial insight that quotation is essentially a pictorial act of communication. The theory set forth in “Open quotation” was and remains a veritable tour de force.*

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NOTES

* François Recanati’s reply to Philippe De Brabanter is to be found after De Brabanter’s second contribution to this symposium.

¹ That family of terms sometimes gives rise to misunderstandings, notably because of the widespread use of *demonstrative* to designate an indexical sign. Note also that Recanati’s own use of *demonstration* is slightly narrower (or less loose) than Clark & Gerrig’s, and that this may cause some difficulties too, as I point out in the next section.

² In the 2001 paper, he more routinely used the term *mimicking*.

³ This updates Clark & Gerrig’s McEnroe example [Clark & Gerrig (1990), pp. 768-769].

⁴ Those are properties which, although not depictive, are necessary to the performance of the demonstration [Clark & Gerrig (1990), pp. 768f].

⁵ It is perfectly possible to imagine a mimetic utterance of (2), especially a spoken one. Suppose you have just said that *with* was an adverb, and did so with a noticeable French accent. In response, I can utter (2) with a mock French accent, thereby targeting your previous utterance. The non-mimetic, flat, renditions, however, remain the most salient ones, especially in writing.

⁶ One thing Recanati leaves implicit in connection with this example is that the negation need not bear on the *words* used; it may serve to object to paralinguistic or non-linguistic features of the demonstration.

⁷ An extra difficulty may stem from the fact that, in chapter 8, Recanati often sounds as if he conceives of the internal target only as a token: “In chapter 7 I used the notion of ‘internal target’ to refer to the use being echoed. The target, thus understood, involves *both a particular agent and a particular speech event*” [Recanati (2010), pp. 293fn; italics mine]. And also: “[...] the echoee and the reportee — the internal and external targets, in the terminology of chapter 7 — will be identified” [Ibid. p. 301]. It feels as if those cases where targets are types distinct from the demonstrated type have by then receded into the background.

⁸ Note, however, this ambiguous formulation in a discussion of ‘*Cat*’ is a three-letter word: “there is no target over and beyond the word-type ‘cat’ which is demonstrated by displaying a token of it” [Recanati (2010), p. 393].

⁹ I have tried to locate the first occurrence of the now widely used terms *semantically inert* or *semantic inertia*, which in De Brabanter (2005b) I wrongly attributed to Davidson (1979). I have found nothing before Cappelen & Lepore (1997). Davidson's own formulation had it that "those words within quotation marks are not, from a semantical point of view, part of the sentence at all. It is in fact confusing to speak of them as words" [Davidson (1979), p. 37]. To be fair, he wasn't the first theorist to hit upon that idea. The so-called 'Name' theorists, notably Quine and Tarski, both insisted that, from a logical point of view, the words inside 'quotation-mark names' were not words. Thus, the occurrence of *Cicero* in '*Cicero*' has six letters was to be regarded as just as accidental as that of *let* in *letters* or *cat* in *cattle* (cf. Quine (1940), p. 26).

¹⁰ In line with Recanati's account, I have limited this discussion to semantic inertia, but I agree with Barbara Abbott (2005), p. 15, that "this way of describing the situation misses the fact that, in general, ALL of the linguistic properties of closed quotations are inert with respect to the containing sentence, and not just the semantic properties."

¹¹ What is regarded by Recanati as an 'ascriptional' point of quotation, worked out on the basis of the speaker's intentions, is taken by others to be part of the *semantics* of (certain uses of) quotation marks. In "Open quotation", Recanati rejects the view that the quotation marks in (5_Q) mean (i) that the quoted words are attributed to the person mentioned by the subject of the reporting verb [cf. Cappelen & Lepore (1997), (2005)], or, less determinedly, (ii) that the quoted words are attributed to some agent [cf. Gómez-Torrente (2005); Geurts & Maier (2005)]. In chapter 8 Recanati continues to oppose (i) but is now quite ready to accept (ii).

¹² A quotation may have several.

¹³ I adopt a compound term I first saw used by Marga Reimer (2005), p. 175.

¹⁴ For a more detailed discussion of 'Availability', see Recanati (1993), pp. 246-250; (2004), pp. 42-44.

¹⁵ I assume for convenience that the absence of quotation marks in (6_{BARE}) reflects an absence of quotation.

¹⁶ As Recanati points out, *language* needs to be understood in a broad sense. Like him, I don't think this is a problem.

¹⁷ The addressee is an addition to Kaplan's definition, but an innocuous one for our purposes here.

¹⁸ This I am adding because I don't mean to suggest (nor does Kaplan or Recanati) that pre-semantic processes chronologically precede semantic interpretation, which itself would be carried out before postpropositional inferences were derived. From a processing point of view, it is fairly clear that the three levels of meaning are computed concurrently.

¹⁹ Examples involving languages in the ordinary sense exist too: [...] *politicians, with their speeches on "la fracture sociale", will simply promise reforms and still more laws* [*Times Literary Supplement*, May 2nd, 2002].

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