

Cosmina Maria Hodoroaga  
**Reasoning with Quotation**

One of the fundamental aims of a scientific theory of meaning and interpretation is the characterization of (all) truth-preserving patterns of reasoning. This is no less true for statements involving quotation, even though the evaluation of acceptable arguments will have to take notice of information provided contextually (who is speaking, in which language, what the current question under discussion is, etc.). We present a set of inferential data and formulate basic hypotheses with regard to the rules for exporting and importing quotation marks that are active in natural deduction.

Given their reliability in intuitive reasoning, inferences that derive the truth of an indirect report from the truth of the corresponding direct report must come first.

- (1) a. Sondheim says, ‘Good reviews can be as harmful as bad ones.’  
∴ b. Sondheim says that good reviews can be as harmful as bad ones.

We argue that (1) is judged valid inasmuch as unquotation (Shan 2010) is licensed on the entire quoted sentence, and further hypothesize that constituents of a quotation are always unquoted, unless ostensibly marked as prominent, i.e. unless focused. A direct report will then be interpreted as minimally mixed, with only focused constituents kept opaque and background zones processed by unquotation. For instance, this predicts that deriving (1b) from (2a) is illicit, while an inference to (2b) is valid:

- (2) a. Sondheim says, ‘Good reviews [can be]<sub>FOC</sub> as harmful as bad ones.’  
b. Sondheim says that good reviews ‘can be’ as harmful as bad ones.

In discourse, (2b) is positively infelicitous when uttered out of the blue (as athetic statement), but felicitous if what is under discussion at the moment of report is whether Sondheim says that good reviews always are or merely can be as harmful as bad ones. The mixed quotation projects a set of alternatives, which is why connecting it to focus appears justified.

The second batch of inferences we present explores the road leading from an indirect report back to a direct quotation. Reported clauses in the left periphery are a good candidate for this sort of inferential capacity, considering that fronting a constituent, coupled with quotative inversion (Collins & Branigan 1997), triggers a quotational or demonstrative effect on the dislocated constituent:

- (3) a. Mary said nothing.  
b. Nothing, said Mary.
- (4) a. Mary said some mean things.  
b. Some mean things, said Mary.

In Clark & Gerrig's terms (1990), the preposed sequences are understood as depicting rather than describing what the reported speaker said. Therefore, if (3b) is true, it is false that Mary said nothing.

When doubled by a pronoun referring to the proposition asserted, *as*-parentheticals also appear to bring about a quotational effect, i.e. to license the import of the quotation marks, as in (5).

- (5) a. As Sondheim says / puts it, good reviews can be as harmful as bad ones.
- ∴ b. Sondheim says, 'Good reviews can be as harmful as bad ones.'

In the third group of inferences presented, the premise is a sentence involving scare-quotation – a variety which is expected to invalidate disquotational strategies of reasoning such as the following:

- (6) a. Nothing merely 'happens' any more: every occurrence is now an 'event', which leaps up and down pointing excitedly at itself.
- ∴ b. Every occurrence is now an event.

We show that the presuppositional account, according to which subclausal quotation triggers an existential presupposition over a speech event, an expression uttered to express some property, and a speaker (Geurts & Maier 2003), is not appropriate for scare-quoting. Rather than presuppose the existence of a speaker, (6a) asserts it, as revealed in standard tests for presupposition:

- (7) a. Is it the case that every occurrence is now an 'event'?
- b. Is it the case that, for every occurrence, there now exists someone who calls it an event?

Finally, we discuss the behaviour of quotation when selected by metalinguistic negation, and argue that it is scare-quoted constituents, as opposed to mixed-quoted ones, that co-occur with this phenomenon. This is illustrated in (8) – (11).

- (8) a. We saw the 'hippopotami'.
- ∴ b. We saw the hippopotami. (*mixed quotation*)
- (9) a. We saw the 'hippopotami'.
- ∴ b. We saw the entities dubbed 'hippopotami' which aren't really / quite hippopotami.
- ≡ We didn't see the hippopotami. (*scare quotation*)
- (10) a. We didn't see the 'hippopotami'.
- ∴ b. We didn't see the hippopotami. (*mixed quotation*)
- (11) a. We didn't see the 'hippopotami'.
- ∴ b. We didn't see the entities dubbed 'hippopotami' which aren't really / quite hippopotami. ⊃ We saw the hippopotami. (*scare quotation*)

## Bibliography

- CAPPELEN, H. & LEPORE, E. 1997. Varieties of quotation. *Mind* 106, 429-450.
- CAPPELEN, H. & LEPORE, E. 2007. *Language Turned On Itself. The Semantics and Pragmatics of Metalinguistic Discourse*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- CARSTON, R. 2002. *Thoughts and Utterances. The Pragmatics of Explicit Communication*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- CLARK, H. H. & GERRIG, R. J. 1990. Quotations as Demonstrations. *Language* 66, 764-805.
- COLLINS, C. & BRANIGAN, P. 1997. Quotative Inversion. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 15, 1-41.
- DAVIDSON, D. 1979. Quotation. *Theory and Decision* 11, 27-40.
- GEURTS, B. & MAIER, E. 2003. Quotation in Context. *Belgian Journal of Linguistics* 17, 109-128.
- HAEGEMAN, L. 2006. Conditionals, factives and the left periphery. *Lingua* 116, 1651-1669.
- KADMON, N. 2001. *Formal Pragmatics. Semantics, Pragmatics, Presuppositions, and Focus*. Blackwell Publishers.
- KRIFKA, M. 2008. Basic notions of information structure. *Acta Linguistica Hungarica* 55, 243-276.
- MAIER, E. 2008. Breaking Quotations. In Satoh, K. et al. (eds.), *New Frontiers in Artificial Intelligence* (Vol. 4914), 187-200. Berlin / Heidelberg: Springer.
- TER MEULEN, A. 2011. Formal methods in semantics. In Maienborn, C., von Stechow, K. & Portner P. (eds.), *Semantics: An International Handbook of Natural Language Meaning*, 285-305 Mouton de Gruyter.
- PARTEE, B. H. 1973. The Syntax and Semantics of Quotation. In Anderson, S. R. & Kiparsky P. (eds.), *A Festschrift for Morris Halle*, 410-418. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.
- POTTS, C. 2002. The syntax and semantics of *as*-parentheticals. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 20, 623-689.
- POTTS, C. 2007. The dimensions of quotation. In Barker C & Jacobson P. (eds.), *Proceedings from the Workshop on Direct Compositionality*, 405-431. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- PREDELLI, S. 2003. Scare quotes and their relation to other semantic issues. *Linguistics and Philosophy* 26, 1-28.
- RECANATI, F. 2000. Opacity and the attitudes. In Orenstein, A. & Kotatko, P. (eds.), *Knowledge, Language and Logic: Questions for Quine*, 367-406. Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- RECANATI, F. 2001. Open Quotation. *Mind* 110, 637-687.
- SCHLENKER, P. 2003. A plea for monsters. *Linguistics and Philosophy* 26, 29-120.
- SHAN, C. 2010. The character of quotation. *Linguistics and Philosophy* 33, 417-433.