" Metalinguistic Demonstrations and Reference "

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HAL Id: ijn_00149292

https://jeannicod.ccsd.cnrs.fr/ijn_00149292

Submitted on 25 May 2007

<u>Metalinguistic demonstrations and reference</u>[1]

> In signing one's name, does one *refer* to oneself ? Do tensed verbs *refer* to the time of their utterance ? [...] A common mistake in philosophy is to suppose there must be a right and unequivocal answer to such questions, or worse yet, to suppose that unless there is a right and unequivocal answer, the concept of referring is a worthless concept. (Searle 1969 : 28)

François Recanati has been preoccupied with mention and quotation[2] for more than two decades. He initially turned his attention to the subject as part of an attempt to show just how pervasive linguistic reflexivity was, and, accordingly, just how untenable the myth of the transparency of linguistic signs (Recanati 1979). Though I understand his original position to have been very much an 'identity theory' à la Searle (1969), Recanati has proved receptive to the many assets of the 'demonstrative theory' (Davidson 1979). Amongst other things, he has now fully endorsed the fundamental assumption that quotation is an act of metalinguistic demonstration. This insight has been incorporated into what must be regarded as the most sophisticated theory of quotation (or, more broadly, of 'metalinguistic demonstration') currently available (Recanati 2000, and especially 2001). His central move has consisted in parting with the assumption that all quotations are referential NPs : some are ('closed quotations'), some are not ('open quotations'). Coupled with the development of a complex explanatory apparatus, this distinction enables him to account for a wider body of data than any previous writer, from straightforward cases of 'flat mention' (*'Boston' is a name*) to highly complex cases of 'simultaneous use and mention' (such mixed cases as *If you were a French academic, you might say that the parrot was "un symbole du Logos"*, where the sequence between quotation marks is used and quoted at the same time). Besides, Recanati's theory also throws light on most of the central properties of metalinguistic demonstrations, namely the conventional value of markers of quotation, productivity, iconicity, opacity, hybridity. There are, however, two more, albeit conjectural, properties which I regard as potentially important in the case of closed quotations, and which, I believe, do not receive a

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[1] I wish to thank those participants in the Granada workshop whose comments have helped me improve on the initial version of this paper, especially Robyn Carston, Adèle Mercier, François Recanati.
[2] Those terms, along with *use*, received classic definitions in Quine's *Mathematical Logic* (1940). These definitions have had a long-lasting impact and are still commonly referred to today.

clear explanation in Recanati's framework. These properties are <u>referential diversity</u> and <u>recursiveness</u>, and they will be my central concern in this paper.

As I have just said, the two properties that I wish to argue for can only be displayed by (some instances of) closed quotation. I cannot afford here to dwell on Recanati's distinction between closed and open quotations ; suffice it to say that I fully agree with him that only closed quotations, that is quotations that occur as singular terms in a sentence, have reference. These are necessarily (sequences of) words that are mentioned but not used simultaneously. Thus, the quotations in :

(1) He said it was all a 'pile of roobish'.

(2) What does one more lie matter anyway ? Politicians "misspeak" and are forgiven by their followers. (*Time*, 03/06/91 : 64),

are not referential. Indeed, they are not 'recruited' as NPs ; they are <u>used as well as mentioned</u>, as evidenced by the fact that the sentences that contain them do not break down as soon as the quotation marks are removed : *He said it was all a pile of roobish* is an English sentence regardless of the presence of a metalinguistic demonstration (and so is *Politicians misspeak and are forgiven by their followers*). I shall not discuss the distinction any further in the rest of this paper.

1. The various positions in the literature

The question of what a quotation refers to has been around for a very long time. I now offer a very short summary of the various positions that have been defended in the dominant theories of quotation developed in the twentieth century.

- Formal logicians (Tarski, Carnap, Quine) originally supported what has been termed a '(proper) name theory' of quotation. If quotations are names, this should presumably mean that they massively refer to individuals, since that is what proper names canonically do. Somewhat curiously, formal logicians have often claimed that quotations referred to types (or, more broadly, abstract objects) rather than tokens (individuals), a claim found in e.g. Carnap (1937 : 17) or Tarski (1944 : 370fn). The only conclusion that can be drawn from this observation is that these scholars did not use the word *name* in any strict sense, as they sometimes admitted themselves.

- Identity theorists take it that a quotation mentions itself. For some, this is interpreted as meaning that a quotation does not refer (reference is suspended by mention ; e.g. Searle

1969 : 76). For others, however, this seems to mean that a quotation refers to itself. Washington, for instance, writes that a word in quotation is "used and mentioned in the same breath" (1992 : 582). Since Washington appears to treat mention as a synonym of reference (though he does not make the claim explicitly), one is entitled to understand his position to be that quotations are self-referential. This raises an interesting issue : as reference can only be performed as part of an utterance-act (cf Searle 1969 ; Recanati 2001 : 648), and as only tokens are produced as the result of an utterance-act, this would seem to mean that a quoted token can only refer to the very token that it is. This is quite dubious (one need only think of direct speech, where the quoted sequence, if it refers at all, will refer to something else than the spoken or written token that is presented ; otherwise, it would not be a speech <u>report</u>). To make matters worse, it would seem, some identity theorists suggest that a quotation usually refers to a type (Washington 1998 : 550), which somehow implies that a referential quoting sequence in an utterance-token is a <u>type</u>. Clearly, there is a problem with the notion of identity.

- Demonstrative theorists widely hold that quotations refer to types (Davidson, Bennett, Reimer, Recanati) or classes of tokens (Cappelen & Lepore).[3] Still, some of them are willing to qualify this assumption. Thus, Davidson (1999 : 716-17) offers this corrective : "Typically, <u>though by no means always</u>, what we want to pick out [by pointing to a token, an inscription] is an expression, and expressions are abstract entities we cannot directly pick out by pointing" (my emphasis). Similar qualifications can be found in Bennett (1988 : 400) and Reimer (1996 : 136fn). Other writers, Recanati among them, take up a more radical stance : for them, the referents of quotations are always of the same sort.

- Less frequently, there have been scholars who have acknowledged the existence of a variety of potential referents for quotations. This position can be found in Carnap (1937 : 154-56 ; in apparent contradiction to the statement made on page 17 of the same book), and especially in Saka (1998 : 133).

One of my main goals in the following pages will be to determine who is right. In particular, I will focus my attention on Recanati's views, especially the way that he tries to accommodate the idea that a quotation refers to a type even when it is used to 'talk about' a particular token. But, in order to be able to complete that task, I shall first have to give an outline of Recanati's theory of quotation.

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[3] In this context, a few writers (e.g. Cappelen & Lepore 1997) make a point of keeping the notions 'type' and 'class of tokens' apart. Others (e.g. Davidson, Recanati) appear ready to regard them as equivalent.

2. Recanati on quotation

I repeat examples (1) and (2)

(1) He said it was all a 'pile of roobish'.

(2) What does one more lie matter anyway ? Politicians "misspeak" and are forgiven by their followers.

Recanati assumes all metalinguistic demonstrations to be complex acts involving a number of 'smaller' actions : in a metalinguistic demonstration, a linguistic token is <u>displayed</u> for the purpose of <u>demonstrating</u> one or more properties that are made available by the token (e.g. its form, pronunciation, sense, 'connotations'). Moreover, the 'quoter' seeks to <u>depict a target</u> ; in other words, the display of the token serves to 'talk about' or 'evoke' something (e.g. a linguistic string, someone's personal manner of speaking, a particular language variety). I propose the following Recanati-like analyses for the examples above : the utterer of (1) wishes to direct the hearers' attention to an earlier utterance made by Mr. Vic Wilcox (= target), inasmuch as it is pronounced with a Midlands accent (= demonstratum), a property that is made accessible by the (truncated) token displayed.[4] The utterer of (2) wishes to evoke a particular sociolect (= target) as being typified by the use of euphemism (= demonstratum), a property made available by the display of the token of *misspeak*.

The quotations in examples (1) and (2) did not display the extra property of referentiality. Let us now look at an example in which the quoted sequence does :

(3) […] he says to the passenger, 'You can't smoke in this compartment, Sir.' (Toulmin 1958 : 28)

In (1) and (2), the demonstration did not play a syntactic role — it came as a <u>pictorial</u> 'supplement' to a sentence that was already semantically complete and interpretable without it (cf my earlier discussion) : the metalinguistic demonstration makes a contribution entirely at the pragmatic level of 'what is meant', not at the semantic level of 'what is said'. The situation is different in the case of (3), where the metalinguistic demonstration performs a syntactic function at the level of the embedding sentence (direct object of *says*) : were there no demonstration, the utterance would not be an English sentence. In other words, some of the contribution of the demonstration in (3) is already encoded as part of the proposition

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[4] Clearly, such an interpretation requires additional contextual clues. I ask my reader to trust me on that information.

expressed ('what is said') by an utterance of the sentence. In a case like this (but not in (1) or (2)), we have a closed quotation, and it refers.

The utterer of (3) presumably wants to depict an utterance made by a guard on a train (= target). What then is the property made manifest in order for this target to be identifiable ? Two main cases should be distinguished. On the one hand, an utterance of (3), especially a spoken one, might involve mimicry of a special pronunciation (that of the guard). On the other hand, especially in writing, it might well involve no such mimicry. In a case like this, the demonstratum may well turn out to be the very expression *You can't smoke in this compartment, Sir*.

If I understand him well, Recanati would say that the quotation in (3) does not have a target that is different from the demonstratum ; which means that the quotation is an instance of so-called 'flat mention'.[5] Since Recanati seeks — with reason, I believe — to avoid having to concede that some instances of quotation are deprived of a target, he chooses to call the demonstratum a 'proximal' target. As a consequence, even when a quotation does not have what Recanati now calls a 'distal' target, it will still have a proximal target. Let us see how this applies to the two possible readings of (3) made out above : on the first, there are both a demonstrated property (the special pronunciation mimicked by the quoter, for instance) and a distal target (the words used by the guard) ; on the second there is no distal target : the only target is the demonstrated property, namely the quoted linguistic expression.

As regards the nature of the referent, Recanati (2001) has this to say : (i) the referent of a closed quotation is the same as its 'proximal target', (ii) this proximal target is a 'demonstrated property', (iii) demonstrated properties are always types (cf 2001 : 645, 655, 656). For reasons of internal consistency, Recanati's theory must assume that referential metalinguistic demonstrations have a single, homogeneous, kind of referent. One of my questions in the present paper is whether this view, which is necessary for the consistency of the framework, is ultimately correct.

3. An 'intuitive' approach

The first few remarks that I wish to make are meant to approach our problem in a fairly intuitive manner. Intuitive comments of this sort are not, of themselves, enough to win an argument that centres on a technical notion like reference, but they help explain where my

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[5] Flat mention is rife in the traditional logician's writings, most of whose examples are modelled on such sentences as *'Socrates' is a name* or *'Boston' is disyllabic*.

own preferred position comes from and they may also show that the 'burden of proof' is on the shoulders of those who claim that reference is systematically to a type.

Let me begin by pointing out that metalinguistic demonstrations would be peculiar demonstrations indeed if their reference was thus restricted to types. Other kinds of demonstrations, notably acts of pointing, accompanied or not by a linguistic demonstrative, routinely pick out tokens as their referents. Of course, it is possible to reply that quotations actually are demonstrations of a very special kind. Moreover, Recanati could add that, unlike some other proponents of referential homogeneity, he is fully aware of the possibility for a quotation to pick out a token located in space and time. This is no problem for his theory, he might say, as depicted targets can be tokens just as well as types (2001 : 642, 644). In other words, when a speaker uses a referential quotation to 'talk about' a specific token, the quotation produced depicts that token but simultaneously refers to a type.

Let us now examine a couple of examples where appearances suggest that the quotations are used for picking out tokens :

(4) The presidential candidate exclaimed, "There will be no new taxes".
(5) Sue replied, "I ain't EVER gonna tell ya".

In (4), the direct speech report, as it purportedly reproduces the very words (the locutionary act) uttered by the candidate on a given occasion, picks out an utterance-token. The same impression is gained from considering example (5). Moreover, the degree of mimicry displayed by (5) reinforces this impression : the capitals and the choice of the non-standard *ain't*, *gonna* and *ya* make it clear that what the quotation reproduces is Sue's particular instantiation of an utterance-type, with its special pronunciation and intonation, both of which are features of objects located in time and space, not of abstractions.

Some writers would infer from the above that the quotations in (4) and (5) refer to tokens. Such is the opinion of the French linguist Josette Rey-Debove, who regards all instances of direct speech as token-referential (1978 : 235-37), or of Leonard Linsky, who writes, "if I say, "He said 'the cat is on the mat' ", my words have as their reference the words of the person whose speech is reported" (Edwards 1967, vol. 7 : 95). This, I interpret as meaning that the quotation refers to the particular sequence uttered by the initial speaker on a particular occasion.

However, as I have indicated above, Recanati's framework allows him to maintain that the spatio-temporally located tokens are depicted (distal) targets, and that the referents are still types, as in all other instances of closed quotation.

I have tried several ways of settling this tricky issue. First, I have availed myself of the distinction between 'autonymous' and 'heteronymous' mention. Autonymous mention occurs when a sequence is, broadly speaking, used to 'mention itself', as is the case in all the examples so far. By contrast, heteronymous mention occurs when a description or a non-iconic name is used to mention a linguistic expression. Examples of such descriptions are easy to find, as when *Caesar's remark on crossing the Rubicon* is used to mention *Alea iacta est* (cf Carnap 1937 : 154). Heteronymously mentioning names, as Carnap remarks, are much rarer. Carnap offers *The Sermon on the Mount*, though he concedes that this could also be regarded as a description. I am not sure that such names actually occur in everyday use, but some philosophers, usually while making fun of the proper name theory of quotation, have come up with a few fancy ones : for instance, Searle (1969 : 74) made the tongue-in-cheek suggestion that one could use *John* as a name for the word *Socrates*. And Recanati (2000 : 137) uses *Wychnevetsky* as a name of the word *cat* in order to illustrate the notion of heteronymous mention.

Originally, I thought that the parallel with heteronymous mention would be grist to the mill of those who uphold reference to tokens. Indeed, hardly anyone denies that proper names (always) and definite descriptions (often) refer to individuals. Therefore, if *Wychnevetsky* or *The last headword on page 236 of the 1979 edition of the Collins Dictionary of the English Language* are logically equivalent to the autonym *'cat'*, then it would only be natural to acknowledge, at the very least, that an autonym can refer to an individual, i.e. a token. There is a problem, however, with this reasoning. If, for example, I say :

(6) Wychnevetsky is a three-letter word (Recanati 2000 : 137),

I do not wish to imply that *Wychnevetsky* refers to a particular instantiation of *cat*. Rather, I suppose everyone would agree that the name here refers to a type : it is as a type that *cat* has three letters. This situation is perhaps puzzling, given the existing consensus on the referents of names. Where does the paradox originate ? I am not sure I can answer that question, and will venture only a few remarks. It may be that one and the same object can be viewed either as an individual (token) or as an abstraction (type). Perhaps that is precisely what happens with words : the word *cat* can be regarded as a type, i.e. as an abstraction subsuming the

common features shared by all its occurrences. At the same time, however, the same word is also an individual if I consider it as being different from other elements of the set of English words (all of them 'tokens' in that sense). If I combine these two points of view, I believe it fair to suggest that *Wychnevetsky* refers to something that, although being a type, is also an individual separate from other 'individual types'.[6] I am forced to conclude that the distinction between autonymous and heteronymous mention does not help here.

I had also thought that paraphrases or other substitutions might help strengthen the case for reference to tokens. Here is how I thought such a case could be built : an example like (3) can be rephrased as :

(3') […] he says <u>those words</u> to the passenger.

(3'') […] he says to the passenger … [the quotation is replaced by an act of pointing at words scribbled somewhere].

As I said earlier, demonstrations that are not quotations usually pick out individuals. But (i) that is not systematically the case : demonstratives and acts of pointing can actually serve to pick out abstractions ; (ii) given the inherent ambiguity of metalinguistic predicates between 'word-type' and 'word-token', any recourse to a demonstration of words is bound to remain unenlightening. So much for that 'solution'.

So far, I have not been able to decide which of the two relevant accounts is superior to the other. However, I have somehow put the burden of proof on those who argue against the possibility of reference to tokens. Would it not be fair, in the light of my first 'intuitive remark' above, to ask that the advocate of referential homogeneity should prove the usefulness of an account in terms of depicted targets rather than referents ?

So, is Recanati justified in maintaining a distinction between target and referent in cases like (3), (4) and (5) ? It would be easier to settle this issue if depiction and, especially, the much more common notion of reference could simply be equated with intuitive, 'commonsense' acts. Such, however, is not the case.[7]

Recanati characterises depiction — perhaps rather than he <u>defines</u> it. As far as I am aware, Recanati does not use the terms *target* and *depiction* in *Oratio Obliqua, Oratio Recta*, and elsewhere he does not provide a more precise description than that the target is "something

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[6] The nagging indeterminacy at the heart of the word *word* and other similar metalinguistic predicates extends further than that. I have not here considered the use of *word* to designate a material sequence of sound or letters. The best discussion of these issues that I know of can be found in John Lyons's *Linguistic Semantics* (1995).

[7] The situation is further complicated by the existence of additional terms for similar (the same ?) relations, e.g. *mentioning* as used by Washington and others (cf section 1), or *denoting* and *designating*.

which one attempts to depict through the demonstration" (2001 : 642), something which, as I have pointed out before, can be either a type or a token. Depiction is further characterised as subsuming mimicry, simulation, iconic representation. There is no doubt that depiction and reference are not the same thing : as we have seen in the case of open quotation, there are many metalinguistic demonstrations which depict without referring. Besides, when a closed quotation involves mimicry, the mimicked target is clearly different from the referent. The tricky cases remain those closed quotations that involve no mimicry, as in the second interpretation I offered for (3) above. I will return to those in a moment, but in the meantime, I would like to say a word about reference.

At bottom, reference remains a technical notion, however painstaking the attempts to root it in actual experience or tangible reality. Therefore, it is highly unlikely to lend itself to an intuitive grasp by language users, including specialists. This is a point that has been made by a variety of authors, notably Noam Chomsky (cf 2000 : 148-50, and *passim*). In other words, as long as I have not defined precisely what I mean by *reference*, I can make no definite claims about the referent of any given expression in an utterance. This may seem to go without saying, but it is none the less the case that quite a bit of scholarship in linguistics and some of the philosophical literature avails itself of the term *reference* rather loosely (i.e. as if the term captured an unproblematic, straightforward notion).[8]

How do philosophers define *reference* ? As far as I can see, there is wide agreement that referring is an act that is 'ancillary' to an utterance-act. In other words, there is no reference if there is no speaker doing the referring as part of a speech act. There is less of a consensus when it comes to the nature of referents. Some writers adopt the view that reference holds between linguistic expressions and <u>mental representations</u> of objects in the 'world', others that it captures a relation between linguistic expressions and <u>actual objects</u> in the 'world'. Although I do not feel competent to sort out this question one way or another, I will opt for the second conception, for the following two reasons. First, reference is widely understood to be a central means for language to 'connect' with the 'world'. Perhaps speakers are deluded when they imagine that they have access to external reality — though I am not even sure that this question can ultimately be settled. Still, I think it sensible to focus on the fact that, when referring, speakers often <u>intend</u> to speak about extralinguistic, extramental entities rather than

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[8] Witness this statement by Michael Devitt in the article on reference in Craig (1998, vol. 8 : 160) : "Many terms [..] — like adjectives, adverbs and verbs — are naturally taken to refer". My question is who 'naturally' takes adjectives and so on to refer. Personally, I do not know what to make of this claim to naturalness.

about concepts of these. For instance, when I say, *Samuel is getting married*, I mean to say something about a person named *Samuel*, not my concept of him. My second reason is much more practical : as I see it, Recanati understands reference to obtain between language and the world. It is therefore easier to discuss his positions on the reference of quotations within a shared framework. Otherwise, the discussion is in danger of boiling down to a definitional divergence, a situation which I wish to avoid.

All in all, my definition of reference is close to that given by Searle in *Speech Acts* (1969 : 28). Reference is the relation that holds between a linguistic expression and the object a speaker intends to pick out by using it, namely the referent. When this referent is combined with a predicate within a statement, the statement can be judged to be true or false. Many other definitions (e.g. in textbooks and encyclopaedic articles) adopt this Fregean picture and emphasise the contribution of referents to the truth-condition of an assertion, and I too shall regard it as a central feature of referents.

Let me now return to examples (3), (4) and (5). What does it take for an utterance of one of these to be a true assertion ? Consider (4) : for an utterance of (4) to be true, it must be the case that the presidential candidate actually exclaimed the very words *There will be no new taxes*. Because of the inherent ambiguity of the word *word*, the question must be rephrased as "What does it take for an act of exclaiming to take place, other than an agent ?". In other words, what is the product of an exclamation, is it a type or a token ?

A type being an abstract object, it seems difficult to assume that it could ever be produced by an exclamation. Yet, I must acknowledge the possibility of mounting a defence along the following lines : there are uses of verbs of saying for which it seems fair to assume that they take a <u>type</u> as their second argument ; such is arguably the case when such a verb selects an indirect speech report as its complement. It is theoretically possible to extend this analysis to cases where the complement is a direct speech report. One might then claim that *say + direct speech* is close to *say + indirect speech*. In the former construction, the verb could be defined as meaning « to utter tokens of (the following type) », and in the second as « to utter tokens which mean the same as (the following sentence-type) ». In other words, the verb could, in both cases, be defined as taking an abstract object as its second argument.

Since definitions are not naturally given to speakers — they are constructions — it is impossible to state positively which definition is more correct than the other. In other words, it is impossible to decide whether a predicate denoting an act of saying (exclaiming, replying)

requires a second argument that is an actual token or one that is an abstract type. As a result, we are still none the wiser as to what is the better account.

Before losing heart completely, I wish to take another look at example (3) (and perhaps at (4) too, if *exclaimed* was turned into *said*). Near the end of section 2, I suggested that, on one interpretation, (3) could be taken to involve a case of flat mention.[9] In other words, (3) could have been uttered without mimicry, and the quotation would then be devoid of a distal target (Recanati 2001 : 644-45 makes these two notions interdependent). Now consider the following problem. If *You can't smoke in this compartment, Sir* is an instance of flat mention, then it has no other target than its demonstrated property (namely the class of tokens relevantly similar to the displayed token), and this demonstrated property is also the referent of the quotation. Still, even in the absence of mimicry, I would still wish to say that the reporting speaker intended to talk about (depict) the unique token uttered by <u>that</u> guard on <u>that</u> train on <u>that</u> day. Unfortunately, this intention can no longer be accounted for in terms of a distal target, since there is no distal target left. I see only one way out of Recanati's quandary, but it is a dubious move : it consists in renouncing the second interpretation (flat mention) and conclude that any depiction of a token involves mimicry. Then there is room again for a distal target distinct from the demonstrated property. But, as I said, this move does not strike me as very convincing.

A related difficulty for the internal consistency of Recanati's account is the following : granting again that the two readings offered for (3) are acceptable, this would mean that each reading determines a different referent (because each selects a different demonstratum) : a special pronunciation (when there is mimicry), and the utterance-type of which the guard's utterance is a token (in the absence of mimicry). This oddity is not addressed anywhere in Recanati (2000) or (2001), as far as I am aware.

4. A theoretical argument

Although I believe that section (3) may have strenghtened the case for referential diversity somewhat, I am aware that I have not been able to demonstrate the <u>necessity</u> of recognising a quotation's ability to refer to tokens. That is why I further wish to bring up a theoretical argument that may go some way towards buttressing my claim. This argument depends on

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[9] Although I already provided one such reading in section 2, I admit that the present claim is not uncontroversial. In particular, I do not know if François Recanati would accept it. Still, I do not see why it should be impossible to simply report someone's words without the slightest amount of mimicry.

what I regard as another useful feature of (some) closed quotations, namely <u>recursiveness</u>. This is a property whose validity is widely debated in scholarship on mention, quotation, etc., with opposing views being championed by e.g. Paul Saka (1998 : 119-20) in the 'pro' camp and Cappelen & Lepore (1997 : 439-40) in the 'contra' camp. As far as I can see, one of the reasons behind the controversy is the failure to separate out various forms of recursiveness. In my view, one should distinguish between <u>'typographical'</u> recursiveness (the mechanical iteration of markers of quotation, esp. quote marks, as in *' ' ' Boston ' ' ' is a meta-quotation*), <u>'compositional'</u> recursiveness, where a quoted sequence embedded within a wider quotation retains its ability to mean something (to have compositional meaning, as in *Then the Lord said unto Moses : "Go in unto Pharaoh, and tell him : 'Thus saith the Lord, the God of the Hebrews : "Let my people go, that they may serve me."'"* ; Nunberg 1990 : 46), and <u>'referential recursiveness'</u>, namely the ability for a quotation to refer to another quotation which itself refers. I shall focus on this last form of recursiveness, because it is the one that provides, I believe, strong evidence in favour of the referential diversity of closed quotations.

To begin with, I take it that referential recursiveness has an analogue in non-linguistic 'semiotic' situations. Let us assume that Bart and Homer are hiking through the woods. The hike is signposted with arrows, but Homer has lost track of them and thinks he and his son are lost. "How do you know we're going in the right direction ?", he whines. To which Bart responds by pointing at an arrow fifty yards ahead that itself points forward.

In this case, I believe that the first demonstration (Bart's act of pointing) goes together with a second one (the arrow that is found to be pointing forward). In other words, the object pointed at by Bart is a 'sign' that does not cease to function demonstratively. As a matter of fact, its ability to signify is reactivated by Bart's pointing. The arrow lay inert as long as no one was there to point at it and thereby, so to speak, turn it into a token involved in a particular ostensive act.

There exist other such cases of demonstrated signs that are in turn made to demonstrate something else. Let us picture two oral examiners waiting for their next student. One of them asks who the following 'casualty' will be. The other responds by pointing at a student number on their list. This number stands for Jane Brown, the student in question, the one who was 'intended' by the initial question. Clearly, in this case too the demonstrated object does not cease to indexically signify something beyond itself.

This, I take it, establishes the iterability of acts of pointing. But, given that I wish to reserve the property of reference for linguistic expressions, proving the existence of

referential recursiveness proper requires finding examples of recursiveness that are quotational. Here is one that should do the trick :

(7) In each utterance of the previous sentence *('Boston' is a six-letter word)*, " 'Boston' " refers to an orthographic form.

I assume that any instantiation of (7) can be regarded as a true assertion, because I doubt that anyone would be ready to deny that the subject of *'Boston' is a six-letter word* refers to an orthographic form ?[10] If I am correct on this, then the subject of (7) — a name plus two pairs of quote marks — has reference (to a given instantiation of *Boston* enclosed in a single pair of quote marks). Moreover, since the property validly predicated of the subject's referent is that of <u>referring</u> to a further entity, we have a situation in which the subject of (7) refers to a quotation which itself refers to an orthographic form. In other words, we have a case of iterated reference.

How this point relates to the issue of referential diversity is as follows : as I explained earlier, I regard reference as a discourse phenomenon, and hold that it can only be accomplished as part of a specific utterance-act. Each utterance-act produces an utterance-token made up of smaller tokens. For the subject of *'Boston' is a six-letter word* to be able to refer to an orthographic form, it must be a token. Therefore, if an utterance of (7) is true, its own subject (*" 'Boston' "*) refers to an entity that has reference, namely a token. This I take to be a demonstration that not all closed quotations should be understood to refer to abstract objects (types, classes of tokens) : some must be held to refer to specific tokens.

5. Tentative conclusion

Having reached the end of this paper, I believe that I have been able to build a case for the possibility of a quotation's referring to a token. If the idea of referential recursiveness is correct, it is difficult to maintain that quotations cannot refer to tokens (but I am aware that my argument rests on a made-up example). Besides, the postulate of referential homogeneity raises issues concerning the internal consistency of Recanati's scheme, and — less significantly, perhaps — it clashes with some speakers' intuitions (but what are intuitions worth in the face of technical, theoretical, questions ?).

Some of the inconclusiveness of my results is perhaps inherent in the kind of investigation undertaken in this paper : appeal to linguistic proof is not something straightforward. We

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[10] I am perfectly ready to grant that an orthographic form is a type-like entity.

have seen that the elusiveness of such notions as reference and depiction got in the way of positive theoretical decisions. We have also seen that the way predicates (e.g. verbs of saying) are defined affects our perception of the truth-condition of a sentence. And I have even been led to suggest that objects that are types from one point of view can perhaps be regarded as tokens from another. These definitional and ontological issues may seem a bit worrying, but I suggest that linguists and philosophers take some solace from the Searle quotation that I put in as an epigraph to this paper.

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