It is common to say that names are arbitrary. This is not to say we do not have reasons for choosing the names we do. Personal names, for instance, tend to be short or at least admit of nicknames; we name people after other people; we tend to choose from a delimited cultural stock of names; we don’t tend to name boys Sue. Merriam-Webster’s definition (3a) for ‘arbitrary’ is: “based on or determined by individual preference or convenience rather than by necessity or the intrinsic nature of something.” Our reasons for choosing the names we do are personal: two people independently asked to choose a name for the same child would almost certainly pick different names. It is convenient to have short names, and names that others can easily recognize and spell. But nothing about the intrinsic nature of a child suggests one name over another.

There’s a well-known exception to the general principle that names are arbitrary: onomatopoeia. While there is nothing about the intrinsic nature of a child that suggests one or another name, there is something about the nature of a sound that does. It is natural to name a sound with a name that sounds like that sound. For example, the tick-tock of a clock or cluck of a chicken. If an animal produces a distinctive sound, it is natural to name that animal with a name that sounds like that sound. For example, a cuckoo or a whip-poor-will. Two people independently asked to name an as-yet un-named (in their language) sound would probably pick different names, but similar ones: they would sound alike. Call a non-arbitrarily chosen name a natural name. Onomatopoeia are natural, not arbitrary names.

But sounds are not the only objects whose intrinsic nature suggests a name. Consider various linguistic objects, like spellings, pronunciations, and senses. It would seem natural to name a pronunciation with a word that had that pronunciation, or to name a spelling with a word that had that spelling. My thesis in this paper is that the phenomenon that is often called pure quotation is an instance of natural naming: linguistic items that have a particular linguistic property, like a pronunciation or a spelling, are used to name that property. Thus the view is a

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1 If indeed it is a general principle! See Blasi, D., Wichmann, S., Hammarström, H., Stadler, P. & Christiansen, M. “Sound-Meaning Association Biases Evidence across Thousands of Languages,” Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America, cxiii, 39: 10818-23, for recent research challenging the generality of the arbitrary sign.

2 In talking about arbitrariness and naturalness, I may be mistaken for someone who wishes to engage with the Saussureans, but let me emphasize that I do not. The question of whether language is arbitrary goes back to ancient Greece, at least. By ‘arbitrary,’ I mean how Merriam-Webster (3a) defines that word. I am especially not disputing anyone’s “first principle of linguistics,” but am rather making the mundane observation that some words are not arbitrary in the sense stated here.
version of a view that is widely considered to be discredited: the name theory. Here I shall defend the name theory against the objections that have been held against it, and tout its advantages over competing theories.

I

Let me begin by briefly articulating a theory of onomatopoeia. Hearing is one of our primary senses. Our world is filled with sounds. Some of these sounds are important enough to us for us to want names of them. By ‘name’ I mean something broader than a grammatical category, I mean a syntactically and semantically simple expression we call a thing by. The nature of a sound suggests a name for it: a name that sounds like the sound to be named. So we may, but are not required to, name the sound with this type of name. Cases where we do are what Bredin calls direct onomatopoeia.

Importantly, there is no identity between a direct onomatopoeia and the thing it names. Onomatopoeia, in virtue of being names, have linguistic properties: a syntactic category, a spelling, and a meaning. The sound a cow makes does not have a spelling. ‘Moo’ does have a spelling. When I say the cow goes moo, I’m talking about the sound a cow makes. When a cow goes moo, it is not talking about anything. The syntactic category of an onomatopoeic name need not be a noun. The cow moos, the lion roars.

Importantly, onomatopoeia are not performances or demonstrations or pictures. You can, of course, put on a demonstration of the sound a cow makes while saying ‘moo.’ But you can do that for other words too. You could moo the entirety of Crime and Punishment if you wanted to, using hyper-realistic cow sounds. But the word ‘moo’ is a word, not a performance. It does not

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3 Saka points to its “generally acknowledged inadequacy” (Paul Saka, “Quotation and the Use-Mention Distinction,” Mind, New Series, civ 425 (1998): 113-35). Cappelen & Lepore say of the name theory, “It is now almost a tradition in the literature on quotation to include a brief dismissive discussion of the Proper Name Theory of Quotation… It no longer is defended by anyone” (Herman Cappelen and Ernie Lepore, “Quotation,” The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (2012)).

4 This is not intended to be definitional, but rather paradigmatic. ‘Princeton University’ is a name, but not simple. Paradigm will have to do here.

5 Wimsatt tells us, “it seems probable that any name of a sound we can think of in our own language will strike us with a degree of onomatopoic force.” This seems doubtful; here are a handful of examples that don’t strike me as onomatopoetic: 1. General names for sounds, like sound, noise, song. 2. Descriptive names for sounds, like birdcall, birdsong. A few others: yell, cry, peal (of bells), thunder. See William Wimsatt, “In Search of Verbal Mimesis,” Yale French Studies LII (1975): 229-48.


7 There is another category of words, ideophones, that resemble or otherwise iconically relate to their meanings. These represent not just sounds, but appearances, shapes, textures, and motions. Ideophones are grammatically marked in a way onomatopoeia are not: “they tend to occur at clause edges rather than deeply embedded within them; they tend to be averse to inflectional morphology; and they can be set off from the rest of the clause by a pause.” See Mark Dingemanse, “Advances in the Cross-Linguistic Study of Ideophones,” Language and Linguistics Compass, vi (2012): 654-72 at p. 656. Compare John cracked the nut. ‘Crack’ is not at the edge of a clause; has inflectional morphology; and would not typically be set apart by a pause. Ideophones more strongly suggest a pictorial treatment. See Robert Henderson, “A Demonstration-Based Account of Pluractional Ideophones,” Proceedings of SALT xxvi (2016): 664-83.
represent what it does because it resembles its target. It refers to the sound a cow makes because it is a name for that sound, and it is the nature of names to refer. Searle says, “an ornithologist might say, ‘The sound made by the California Jay is…’ And what completes the sentence is a sound, not a proper name of a sound.” The case is underspecified. If the ornithologist completes the sentence with “tweet tweet,” she is not just making non-linguistic sounds.

There is another category of onomatopoeia that name not sounds, but the producers of sounds. Birds frequently get this treatment: chickadee, curlew, chacalaca, grackle, and hoopoe, for example. Such names may be uncommon to us, but they are especially common among “peoples of non-literate traditions who must learn, retain, and actively employ rather sizable ethnobiological vocabularies,” due to their mnemonic features. Other types of animals named after the distinctive calls they produce include: katydid, cricket, dikdik, morepork, and macaque. Some artifacts are also named after their distinctive sound, like a whip, or like the tuk-tuk taxis of Thailand or the didgeridoo of Australian aboriginals. In these cases, the resemblance is not between the named object and the name, but rather the distinctive sound made by the named object and the name. Bredin calls these associative onomatopoeia.

On the natural name theory of pure quotation (henceforth ‘natural name theory’), a pure quotation is a natural name of a linguistic object. ‘Pure quotation’ is the designation given by philosophers to examples of type A, to be distinguished from the type of cases in B, C, and D:

A. Pure Quotation: Here, ‘face’ is an ambiguous word.
B. Direct Quotation: “Today is there no capital punishment in America? In Russia? In China? In countries around the world? Only in European Union countries is there no capital punishment,” he said.
C. Mixed Quotation: But speaking to his supporters on Tuesday morning, the president said Turkey was “a democratic state run by the rule of law”.
D. Scare Quotation: I hope no one out there is desperate enough to even consider this “opportunity”.

I shall say something later about the legitimacy of giving a theory just of cases of type A that is not intended to be extended to the other types of cases.

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10 I found these examples in comments to the post “Onomatopoetic Creatures” at wordorigins.org.
11 Bredin, “Onomatopoeia as a Figure and a Linguistic Principle,” *op. cit*.
14 Ibid.
15 “Writers, do you need work?” P.Z. Myers, freethoughtblogs.com/pharyngula.
The basic units of language are words. Words have, I will assume, several properties: a spelling, a pronunciation (a sound), a syntactic category, and a meaning—perhaps several senses, if they are polysemous. In some contexts, such as language instruction, linguistics, and philosophy, we desire to have names for words. The nature of a word suggests a name for it: a name that sounds and is spelled like the word to be named. So we may, but are not required to, name the word with this type of name. On the natural name theory, pure quotations are such names.

On the natural name theory, there is no identity between the word named and the word that names it. Let’s consider an example. The word ‘walk’ has the following properties:

[spelling: w-a-l-k, pronunciation: /wə:k/, syntactic category: verb, meaning: WALK]

The quote name of the word ‘walk’, of which the 7th word in this sentence is an instance, has the following properties:

[spelling: w-a-l-k, pronunciation: /wə:k/, syntactic category: noun, meaning: ‘WALK’]

Both the syntactic category and the meaning of ‘‘walk’’ are distinct from those of ‘walk.’ Things with different properties are different things. This is not to say that the identity theory is incoherent, but to emphasize that the natural name theory is not a version of it. On the identity theory, there is a “special use” of an expression whereby it refers to itself. On the natural name theory, there is no special use. One expression is used to refer to a different expression that is naturally related to it.

It is an inessential tenet of the natural name theory, but one that I will assume here, that quotation marks are not part of the spelling of pure quotations. Since natural names of words may be confused with the words they name, quotation marks serve as punctuation to disambiguate. (This is, on the theory, lexical and not semantic ambiguity.) Frequently in informal writing, and more or less always in speaking, quote marks are omitted. But in formal writing they are usually included.

The natural name theory extends not just to names of words, but also names of spellings, pronunciations, meanings, and senses. That is, a natural name for the spelling of ‘walk’ is ‘walk.’ In onomatopoeia, when we want to name a sound, we pick a name that sounds like that sound. It stands to reason that when we want to name a spelling, we pick a name for that spelling that is spelled that way. It is not universally held among theorists of quotation that pure quotes

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16 I should say ‘morphemes,’ but I am trying to avoid unnecessary technicality.
17 Of interest in this context is the fact that frequently writers place quote-marks around onomatopoeia. So we have, for instance, “When you hear ‘DO-DO-DO’ please STOP” and “When you hear ‘DING-DONG’, please let passengers exit before boarding” (signs in Hong Kong subway stations) or “My iphone 4 started making a sound like ‘boing’” (post by kdougherty on Apple Discussions online forum). This is some evidence that speakers do not clearly distinguish these phenomena, perhaps because they are not clearly distinct.
have a multiplicity of semantic values. For example, Cappelen & Lepore18 call the “idea that users of quotation can refer to different sorts of entities” “Humpty Dumptyesque,” and maintain that pure quotations exclusively refer to word types. On the natural name theory, there is of course no reason for that to be true, and later I shall present empirical evidence that it is not true.

One final point is worth making before proceeding. On the natural name theory, pure quotations are not performances or pictures or demonstrations. One may of course demonstrate or perform while one uses a pure quotation, and perhaps this would even be helpful to disambiguate during speech. But, for example, an expression that has a pronunciation is not a picture of that pronunciation. Natural names refer because they are names like any other names and it is in the nature of names to refer to the things they name.

What facts exactly must obtain to make a name of a thing a name of that thing is a matter of some dispute. But it is not that they resemble the thing they name. ‘Jerry Seinfeld’ is the name of Jerry Seinfeld, but ‘Jerry Seinfeld’ does not resemble Jerry Seinfeld. ‘Bleat’ is the name of a sound that a sheep makes. It is an onomatopoeia, but it does not resemble the sound that a sheep makes. Once it did, but due to the Great Vowel Shift, now it does not. ‘Morepork’ is the name of a type of owl that makes a sound like more pork. If some as-yet-undiscovered animal were to be found to make a sound that even more closely resembled more pork, it would not turn out that we were talking about that animal all along. Natural names are chosen because they resemble the things that they name, but they do not name them for this reason. Should the natural relation between them and their referents be broken, or only imagined in the first place, they would not cease to have those referents. Natural names, like arbitrary names, refer because they are names and for no other reason; the resemblance between them and their referents is of no metasemantic consequence. This is what Tarski meant, I take it, when he said, “Every quotation-mark name is... a name of the same nature as the proper name of a man”19.

II

In this section, I will consider three objections to the natural name theory from Saka20. Saka is not the source of these objections, but his presentation accurately sums up the collective appraisal of the name theory by the community. The objections are posed to the name theory, but the natural name theory is the name theory, with the added observation that quote mark names are natural and not arbitrary names.

The first charge against the name theory is that it introduces infinitely many primitive expressions, and it is suggested that their meanings would be unlearnable. Here what Saka calls the “forward productivity problem”:

Of course the Name Theory is an utter failure, since the quote mark is a systematically productive device that can be applied to expressions we have never heard before. This argument is so obvious that one wonders whether Tarski and Quine could have seriously meant that quotations in natural language function just like proper names.\footnote{Ibid. p. 114.}

But one need not learn the meaning of a natural name. One cannot have infinitely many \textit{arbitrary} semantic primitives, this is true. It is not, however, true that one cannot have infinitely many \textit{natural} semantic primitives. This is a well-known fact, but it regularly goes unremarked in the tradition of beating up on the name theory.

First, consider the case of nonce naming. ‘Onomatopoeia’ literally means \textit{word-making}, or coining a new term not in the language. Sometimes we lack a name for someone to whom we would like to refer, and make one up on the spot. If I want to call your attention to the man across the room who is cutting it up on the dance floor, I might turn to you and say, “Look at Captain Boogie, cutting it up on the dance floor!” Sometimes nonce names are comedic. If I put my son to sleep after he finishes a huge lunch of four cans of pork and beans, I might tell my wife, “Bean Boy is sleeping.” Names with descriptors as elements (like ‘bean’ and ‘boy’) are natural names for things those descriptors describe\footnote{If one takes Socrates seriously (and not, as some have urged, as a parody) in \textit{Cratylus}, then his (that is, Plato’s) view seems to be that all words are natural names with descriptor components, like ‘Bean Boy.’}. That’s why nonce naming is possible.

In addition to words like ‘buzz’ and ‘hum’, which are lexical items one will find in any dictionary of sufficient length, many onomatopoeia are nonce names. The last time I visited my mechanic for instance, I described to him the problem with my automobile:

When I try to turn it on, there’s a loud ga-dunk-a-crink, followed by a series of bomp-bomp-bomps. After it starts, it roo-roo-ros constantly and eventually the bapp-a-lapper under the hood starts to overheat.

I should really buy American. Anyway, there are a number of \textit{words} in my speech that you will not find in any dictionary. I say \textit{words} and not just \textit{sounds}. Notice that ‘ga-dunk-a-crink’ has a part of speech (it is a noun) and is modified by an adjective, ‘loud’. ‘Bomp-bomp-bomp’ appears in the plural, and the verb ‘to roo-roo-roo’ is inflected for third person singular present tense. But although you’ve (likely) never heard these words before, you know perfectly well what these words refer to. A ga-dunk-a-crink is a sound that sounds like the sound a native English speaker makes when she reads ‘ga-dunk-a-crink’ aloud. To roo-roo-roo is to produce a sound like the one she produces when she reads ‘roo-roo-roo.’ A bapp-a-lapper is that part of a car that produces a sound like the one she produces when she reads ‘bapp-a-lapp’.

Am I asserting that pure quotations are nonce names? Partially. They do not appear in any dictionary, so in that way they are like ‘roo-roo-roo’. But it is also true that the practice is so
widespread and well-marked that unlike many nonce names (like ‘Bean Boy’) that require a lot of context to introduce, pure quotations require almost none. Typically, they occur in a nominal position and are surrounded by quote marks. One might mistake ‘roo-roo-roo’ for a word one doesn’t know rather than a nonce onomatopoeia, but it is hard to mistake ‘“run”’ in the sentence:

3. ‘Run’ has three letters

for anything other than a pure quotation. The difference between names for animal sounds, for instance, and pure quotations is the level of precision available to us. Humans have difficulty precisely mimicking the sounds of (non-human) animals, so any standardized term for such a sound must have its own specific conventional form. This is why in English the cow goes moo, but in Dutch it goes boe, and in Bengali it goes hamba. There cannot be a convention in general to use the human sound that sounds like the sound an animal makes to name that sound, because there is not exactly one such sound. Much the same can be said for onomatopoetic names of other sounds. As Bredin\textsuperscript{23} observes, the reason different languages use distinct words for the same nonverbal sounds ultimately results from

the phonemic restrictions imposed by languages upon their speakers. Seventy percent of languages have between 20 and 37 phonemic segments… Thus there are serious limits, imposed by the availability of suitable phonemes, on the capacity of language to reproduce nonverbal sounds like hisses and whizzes and bangs.

Different languages cannot follow the rule to use the human sound that best corresponds to a sound, because not all languages have the same sounds.

But there can be a convention in general to use the word that is spelt and pronounced like a word type in order to name that word type. So quote mark names are unique in being both conventional and natural (like ‘moo’) but also in being able to be understood though never produced before (like ‘ga-dunk-a-crink’).\textsuperscript{24} It might be thought that natural signs stand in contradistinction to conventional ones. As I understand ‘natural,’ however, it is in opposition to ‘arbitrary’—a distinction about the reasons for which the name was chosen, having to do with the intrinsic nature of the thing named versus having to do with personal or convenient use on the namer’s end. Some natural signs are conventional, like ‘moo’ and ‘hamba’. Others, like ‘ga-dunk-a-crink’, are not. There may be high-level conventions at work as well. Perhaps it is conventional to name sounds with natural names of those sounds (though see fn. 5). In the case of pure quotation, I think that there is such a high-level convention: to name words, spellings,

\textsuperscript{23} Bredin, “Onomatopoeia as a Figure and a Linguistic Principle,” \textit{op. cit.}, at p. 599.

\textsuperscript{24} The view here, that quote names are partly conventional and partly natural is related to the view Saka articulates, though his notion of ‘natural’ is not the one here. See Paul Saka, “The Act of Quotation,” in Elke Brendel, Jörg Meibauer, and Markus Steinbach, eds., \textit{Understanding Quotation} (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2011): 303-22 at pp. 310-14.
pronunciations, and the like with words that are similar, and to punctuate those names, when written, with quotation marks. Thus, pure quotations are conventional and natural signs.

Saka’s second problem for the name theory is Reach’s puzzle, which was the subject of the 10th Analysis competition. Here is Anscombe’s formulation of the puzzle:

It is impossible to be told anyone’s name. For if I am told ‘That man’s name is “Smith”’, his name is mentioned, not used, and I hear the name of his name but not his name.25

On my view, the answer to Reach’s puzzle can best be seen by considering Bessie’s puzzle:

It is impossible to be told what sound a cow makes. For if I am told that a cow moos, the sound it makes is mentioned, not used, and I hear the name of the sound and not the sound.

The sound a cow makes sounds like the name of the sound a cow makes. Similarly, the name of a person sounds like the name of his name. Indeed, this is so because a person’s arbitrary name is a natural name of his name. Tarski actually won that Analysis competition26. His solution was: “we have the (tacit) convention that a name and its name are denoted by the same word, and so the name of a name ‘tells’ us that name”27. I think Tarski was partially right. When he says that the name and its name are “denoted by the same word,” I take it that he means this in the sense that I and the Olympic runner Michael Johnson have the same name, that is, though our names differ semantically, they are otherwise the same. But he makes it seem as though the convention is like any other convention we might have to call two related things by the same name. For example, we might have a convention to call vehicles and their method of propulsion by the same name, like ‘jet.’ So instead of ‘car’ we’d say ‘internal combustion engine’ and instead of ‘dogsled’ we’d say ‘team of huskies’. Here, the reason the names of the vehicles and the names of their method of propulsion are the same is merely a result of the convention. What Tarski misses is that pure quotations are not like that. It is not by convention that the name of a name resembles the name it names. It is a natural relation between the two.

One worry Saka doesn’t present for the name theory, though he brings it up in the context of arguing against the demonstrative and identity theories, is the case of iterated quotations. Consider several facts:

1. ‘Cat’ refers to cats.
2. ‘Cat’ refers to ‘cat.’
3. ‘“Cat”’ refers to ‘“cat.”’

26 Under the pseudonym “A. Titelbaum.”
(As you can imagine, there are many more similar facts.) Are facts like (2) and (3) explicable on the current proposal? I think so. On my view, quote marks are just punctuation for disambiguation’s sake. So the three words, “cat”, “‘cat’”, and “‘‘cat’’”, are all spelt the same. They are obviously all pronounced the same. If we individuate words by spelling and pronunciation, rather than meaning, then they’re all the same word. Each would be a good natural name for the others. It is like having three different species that all say “more pork.” Any, or indeed all of them, might be reasonably called morepork. Of course, naming all of them morepork would be bothersome, for on every occasion one would have to disambiguate: the morepork that flies, the morepork that eats ants, the morepork that is an ant, or whatever. George Foreman presumably has this problem with his five sons, George, George, George, George, and George. But sometimes we are lucky and disambiguation is not particularly difficult. George III and George IV are easy enough to write and say. “‘Cat’” and “‘cat’” are a bit tougher, but luckily only philosophers who write about quotation ever use them, and philosophers are not especially otherwise overburdened. The number of quote marks, say, in “‘cat’”, indicate to our readers that we wish to talk about the natural name of the arbitrary name of cats, rather than the arbitrary name of cats, say, or the natural name of the natural name of the arbitrary name of cats.

Saka’s third objection to the name theory is what he calls the simultaneity problem. This is the claim that in mixed quotation, “expressions can be simultaneously used and mentioned”28. The particular example Saka gives is:

5. Quine says that quotation “… is weird.”

And here’s what he says about it:

As Davidson (1984) observes, and Cappelen and Lepore (1997) emphasize, the material inside the quote marks (minus the ellipsis, to be strict) is mentioned in so far as I am attributing exact words to Quine. At the same time, the words are being used in so far as they form a predicate rather than a noun phrase, singular term, or name.

The challenge, as I interpret it, has less to do with the specific claim that expressions are simultaneously used and mentioned in these contexts, which I would dispute. After all, attributing exact words to someone isn’t obviously the same thing as mentioning those words. In indirect speech reports we inexactly attribute words to people, and don’t mention them. Does the limit of exactitude force mentioning upon us? I think the case is unclear. Regardless, the real challenge is to take one’s theory of quotation and use it to somehow explain what is going on in the mixed quotation cases. Whether that involves simultaneous use and mention is something of a side issue.

I will not meet this challenge. The natural name theory cannot explain mixed quotation, or direct quotation, and it is not intended to: it is a theory of pure quotation. In my opinion pure quotation and direct/ mixed quotation are separate phenomena deserving of separate treatments. This is an opinion in respectable company. Here, I will say something about why I hold it and something about my dialectical right to hold it.

First, natural characterizations of the phenomena treat of them separately. In pure quotation, we put quote marks around an expression when we want to indicate it is being used to refer to itself, its spelling, its pronunciation, its meaning, or the like. In direct and mixed quotation, we put quote marks around that portion of a speech report that repeats the speaker’s words verbatim. Those are different things that one does for different reasons. Now, this is of course only a weak reason to hold my opinion and there are reasons you could adduce on behalf of its opposite. For example, Cappelen & Lepore note that, for example, pure quotation and direct/ mixed quotation are logically related. From “Quine said quotation ‘has a certain anomalous feature’” it follows that “A token of ‘has a certain anomalous feature’ was uttered.” Pure quotation and direct/ mixed quotation share features, and this could lead one to believe that they are instances of the same general phenomenon.

Both opinions are respectable opinions, and ultimately theory decides. If we wind up with two simple and elegant theories that separately explain pure quotation on the one hand and direct/ mixed quotation on the other, then we should recognize that they are separate things deserving separate treatments. If, instead, one unified theory is shown to simply and elegantly explain both phenomena treated as one, then we should treat them as one. It would be a mistake, I think, to foreclose the first possibility by demanding only unified treatments, as the simultaneity problem suggests, since it is only a problem if a unified treatment is demanded. This paper is intended as a move toward establishing the first possibility, because of my opinion that at the end of the day, that is how things will play out. If my opinion is misguided, that is fine, but we should wait till the end of the day at least to decide on that.

I am not the only one who would benefit by distinct theories of pure and direct/ mixed quotation. Consider the demonstration theory of quotation. Following Clark & Gerrig, Recanati develops a theory on which not only is a quoted expression presented, but additionally it stands in a depicting relation to a “target.” “The speaker,” Recanati says, “displays a token, demonstrates certain properties of that token (a type), and thereby depicts the target.” When the quoted expression is displayed, the speaker demonstrates certain aspects of it that are intended to depict the target. Depiction is achieved through the resemblance between the demonstrated aspects of the presented item and the target.

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33 Ibid. p. 642.
The demonstration theory works well as an account of direct quotation, and this is, for instance, how Clark & Gerrig deploy it. For in direct quotation, there is a clear target—the reported speaker’s utterance—and a distinct thing to play the role of the demonstration, namely, the reporting speaker’s utterance. What’s more, speakers using direct quotation in telling a story, for instance, may put on a performance, mimicking various speech features of the reported speaker, like accent, volume, facial expressions, hand gestures, and verbal tics and mannerisms. Whatever one’s theory of such performances, they seem to involve something broadly pictorial, and one might think that subsuming all direct quotation into a demonstration theory was the right way to go.

The problem is, the demonstration theory is a terrible theory of pure quotation. When you say ‘Cat’ has three letters, there is no event you are depicting, and it ipso facto has no aspects for you to demonstrate. Recanati says “there is no mimicry unless there is a distal target which the quotation presents itself as echoing,” and that in pure quotation, there is no distal target: the target of the quotation is always some type the quotation instantiates. He still maintains that pure quotations are ‘iconic’ in the sense that they “resemble what they mean,” but of course, this doesn’t make them demonstrations any more than hiccup is a demonstration of how to hiccup.

Perhaps both the natural name theory and the demonstration theory are true, but in different domains. Maybe indeed this is why everyone conflates pure quotation with direct and mixed quotation and tries to find accounts that treat them together. If the natural name theory is true of pure quotation and the demonstration theory is true of direct and mixed quotation, then we can see what’s the same about the phenomena (they both essentially involve resemblance) while seeing what’s different: in pure quotation, the resemblance is in why the expression was chosen, and in direct and mixed quotation, it’s in how the expression refers.

III

The multiplicity thesis is the thesis that pure quotations can refer to a number of different things, like expression types, spellings, pronunciations, meanings, and so on. The multiplicity thesis is not a strict logical entailment of the natural name theory, but it is strongly suggested by it. For the natural name theory says that a word type naturally suggests a name of that word type, namely, a word that is spelled and pronounced like it. If we accept this, it seems difficult to resist the claim, for example, that a spelling naturally suggests a name of that spelling, namely a word that is spelled like it. Mutatis mutandis for pronunciations and meanings.

The multiplicity thesis is also of evidential significance for the natural name theory in another way. Most other theories of pure quotation cannot easily accommodate the multiplicity thesis. For example, if you are a demonstrative theorist who thinks “‘Cat’ has three letters” is shorthand for “Cat. The expression a token of which is here has three letters,” then it is an entailment of your view that quoted expressions name expressions, and not, say, spellings. Or if

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34 Ibid. p. 645.
you are an identity theorist, and you think there is a special use of a word whereby it refers to itself, then you might want to resist the idea that there is also a special use of an expression whereby it refers to its spelling and a special use that refers to its pronunciation, and so on. Positing too many special uses seems ad hoc. For this reason, a number of theorists have forcefully denied the multiplicity thesis. Cappelen & Lepore call it “Humpty-Dumptyesque,” as though quote-marked expressions having a multiplicity of referents was a species of anything goes. But such claims are false. In this section, I will present evidence for the multiplicity thesis.

Alphabetic writing systems contain graphemes, which are their smallest units. In (7), quote mark names name both graphemes and pronunciations of the names of those graphemes in different English speaking communities.

7. It’s not just the British that pronounce “z” as “zed”. The vast majority of the English speaking world does this. The primary exception, of course, is in the United States where “z” is pronounced “zee”.

A reasonable theory of spellings is that they are just sequences of graphemes. The correct spelling of a word is just the conventional sequence of graphemes used to articulate it. This is a nice theory because it makes sense of what’s going on in cases of naming misspellings, as in (8) where the expression “‘dilemna’” names a sequence of graphemes (a spelling), in particular, the sequence of graphemes used to write the expression “‘dilemma’”.

8. The proper spelling of the word is and always has been “dilemma,” not “dilemna.”

In addition to word types, graphemes, and sequences of graphemes, one salient aspect of linguistic items we have cause to talk about are the sounds of language. In (9), I assume that “‘ch’” names a sound, because only sounds can be “the same sound as” anything else.

9. Xi (χ): This is the same sound as “ch” in “Bach”, which does not sound like “ch” in “chair”.

36 I should be clear that while the original formulations of the demonstrative and identity theories fall afoul of the multiplicity thesis, more sophisticated versions are designed to handle it, for example, in Manuel Garcia-Carpintero, “Ostensive Signs: Against the Identity Theory of Quotation,” this JOURNAL XCI (2004): 253–64 (demonstrative theory) and Paul Saka, “Quotational Constructions,” Belgian Journal of Linguistics, XVII (2003): 187–212 (identity theory). My point is not that the multiplicity thesis rules out all other theories, but that the name theory is one of a limited class of theories that is consistent with it.
39 “No, it’s not spelled d-i-l-e-m-n-a,” The Grammarphobia Blog.
Naming pronunciations, especially of foreign words and names, can often result in quite bizarre spellings. While quote mark names of words tend to be spelt exactly like those words, nothing but the name ‘yahl-lahr-hawrn’ is spelt ‘yahl-lahr-hawrn’. (10) is taken from a video game forum and regards the pronunciation of the name of an item in a video game, the item being named ‘gjallerhorn’. This spelling is chosen because in standard (non-loanword) English writing, the grapheme ‘y’ (word initial, before ‘a’) articulates /j/, the desired pronunciation.

10. It's “yahl-lahr-hawrn.”

Language involves more than words and the graphemes and phonemes that articulate them in writing and speech, respectively. Language has meaning, and we often have cause to talk of the meanings of expressions. Language learning is one such context, and (11) is taken from ESL materials teaching foreign language students the meaning of the idiom ‘to check [something] out.’

11. When Gio mentions that his sister has a blog, he suggests that David check it out. This expression means “to look at, listen to, or visit something or someplace in order to form one’s own opinion.”

Finally, in addition to meanings, there are senses, and these too can be named by pure quotations, as shown in this example by UPenn linguist Mark Liberman:

12. As X notes in the comments, it's not fake as in “created by photoshop”, but it IS fake in the sense of being added as an ironic joke by a company known for such things.

In this example, Liberman wants to distinguish two senses of the word ‘fake’ when applied to a photo. One of the senses is named by a definite description: ‘the sense of being added as an ironic joke’; the other sense is named by a quoted expression that has that sense. I give sense its own category, as opposed to meaning, because I don’t think “created by photoshop” is a meaning of ‘fake’, rather it is just something someone is likely to infer about a photo described as ‘fake’.

Although it is common for philosophers writing about quotation to insist that pure quotations always refer exclusively to expression types, this is hard to maintain in the face of the evidence. There is a generalization here. People who want to refer to word types of various sorts, graphemes, sequences of graphemes, phonemes, sequences of phonemes, meanings, senses—linguistic items—use expressions that have natural similarities with those items. Anyone who wants a special theory that only applies to

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41 “PSA: It’s not pronounced “Gallerhorn.” Stop saying that guys” gamefaqs.com by user MasterSword546, regarding an object called “gjallerhorn”
42 Touchstone level 3 video teaching notes, Episode 1 A Day at the Park, CUP.
expressions with quote marks around them that are being used to refer to expression types is missing the relevant generalization.

The natural name theory predicts the uses in (7)-(12), and explains how readers know what the author is referring to. A natural name of a word is another word that is spelt and pronounced the same. A natural name of a spelling is a word that has that spelling. A natural name of a meaning is an expression that ordinarily has that meaning. Thus the spelling of a naturally named spelling, for example, can be recovered from the name of it.

IV

The name theory of pure quotation was one of the earliest theories philosophers proposed on the subject. But the original sin of the name theorists was to assume that quote names were like other arbitrary, conventional names, and not to recognize that they were instead natural names. This led to the name theory being completely discarded in the literature. My defense of the name theory rests on the (obvious, in retrospect) observation that quote mark names resemble what they name, and thus are natural names. This helps explain how there can be infinitely many of them, each with a distinct semantic value, that can nevertheless be understood by any speaker of the language—as with nonce onomatopoeia.

But the natural name theory does not just reveal why the earlier objections to the name theory were misguided, it outdoes its competitors in accounting for the data. For so long, philosophers have simply assumed the multiplicity thesis was false. Most work on quotation involves data sentences that are completely made up by the author or another philosopher writing on quotation. This data naturally recapitulates the very views held by those philosophers: nobody will quote mark an expression in a sentence to name a spelling, if they don’t think that is possible. But when we look at how people normally write, rather than how they write when wedded to a philosophical theory telling them when to use quote marks and what to use quotations to refer to, we find that ordinary people regularly use pure quotations as names for graphemes, sequences of graphemes, phonemes, sequences of phonemes, meanings, and senses in addition to expression types (of varying sorts). Few alternatives to the natural name theory easily accommodate the multiplicity thesis, while the natural name theory easily explains how a pure quotation can name a spelling, for instance, by resembling that spelling.

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