NATURAL NAME THEORY AND LINGUISTIC KINDS*

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Pure quotation cases are those in which we quote "not to report what another says, but simply to talk about linguistic expressions."[1] For example:

(1)   'Table' has five letters.

(2)   In the above, 'bank' is ambiguous.

The first word of (1) is being used to talk about the word 'table', and in (2), 'bank' is being used to refer to some previous utterance or expression of the word 'bank'. This is in contrast to other forms of quotation, such as in:

(3)   "But I have one hand tied behind my back due to government policies and inaction," he told the Guardian.[2]

(4)   The government's latest plan, produced in July, was condemned as "woefully inadequate" by city leaders and "inexcusable" by doctors.[3]

In both (3) and (4), the quoted material is reporting what another has said.

Michael Johnson has proposed the natural name theory in order to explain cases of pure quotation.[4] This view holds that in cases of pure quotation, the quoted term(s) "is a natural name of a linguistic object."[5]

[1] Herman Cappelen and Ernie Lepore, "Varieties of Quotation," *Mind*, CVI, 423 (July 1997): 429–50.

[2] Damien Carrington, "London reaches legal air pollution limit just one month into the new year," *The Guardian*, January 30, 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/jan/30/london-reaches-legal-air-pollution-limit-just-one-month-into-the-new-year.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] Michael Johnson, "Pure Quotation and Natural Naming," this JOURNAL, CXV, 10 (October 2018): 550–66. This claim is limited to pure quotation. For a defense of giving different theoretical explanations of different types of quotation, see *ibid.*, pp. 561–62. This outline of Johnson's discussion is far from exhaustive, and merely seeks to highlight the relevant features of the theory for my aims here.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 553. I will talk about linguistic *objects* even though I note that it is not clear that some of the entities named are objects in any standard sense of the term. Rather, spellings, pronunciations, and even meanings may be *properties* rather

Thus, in (1), the first word is the natural name for the word 'table'. The natural name theory holds that a name is natural in that "the nature of a word suggests a name for it: a name that sounds and is spelled like the word to be named,"[6] and that names are still conventional in that we have chosen to accept that suggestion. The use of quotation marks is thus our way of indicating that in (1), the word used is the natural name for the word 'table'.[7] The natural name theory then easily extends to other linguistic objects: the natural name for the spelling of table is 't-a-b-l-e', the natural name for the meaning of 'table' is 'TABLE', and so on.

After outlining the theory in more detail, in this paper I will raise a new problem for the natural name theory, namely that positing a resemblance relation between the name and the linguistic object it names does not allow us to rule out cases where the natural name fails to resemble the linguistic object it names. I will argue, though, that we can avoid this problem if we can combine the natural name theory with a type-realist metaphysics of language, thereby allowing us to hold that the name is natural because the name is an instance of the kind that it names. I will conclude by reflecting on the importance of the metaphysics of language for questions in the philosophy of language.

I

Johnson presents a range of evidence for the natural name theory, most centrally with respect to the multiplicity thesis: the thesis that pure quotations can refer to a number of different things. These include spellings, meanings, and words, and pure quotation can also be used to refer to graphemes, pronunciations, phonemes, and senses as in:[8]

> (5) 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".[9]

> (6) Xi: This is the same sound as "ch" in "Bach", which does not sound like "ch" in "chair".[10]

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than objects (see J. T. M. Miller, "Words, Substance, and Bundle Theory," unpublished manuscript). If some referents of pure quotations are linguistic properties and not objects, then some changes in the view defended here might be needed.

[6] Johnson, "Pure Quotation and Natural Naming," *op. cit.*, p. 553.

[7] As Johnson notes, this is an inessential tenet of the theory (*ibid.*, p. 554), but it is an important one as the use of quotation marks disambiguates between the natural name for a word, and the word itself. Presumably other ways of disambiguation are possible, such as the use of italics as in '*table* has five letters'.

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 563–65.

[9] Daven Hiskey, "Why Do the British Pronounce 'Z' as 'Zed'?," *Today I Found Out: Feed Your Brain*, October 31, 2012, http://www.todayifoundout.com/index.php/2012/10/why-do-the-british-pronounce-z-as-zed/.

[10] Jonathan Robie, "The Greek Alphabet," *Little Greek 101: Learning New Testament Greek*, https://www.ibiblio.org/koine/greek/lessons/alphabet.html.

(7)　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.[11]

I assume here, with Johnson, that this is good evidence that there is a multiplicity in the ability of pure quotation to refer to many linguistic types, or as I prefer, kinds,[12] and that the failure of other theories (most notably identity and demonstrative theories) to accommodate such evidence indicate that while they may be good explanations of other types of quotation, they fail to explain pure quotation.[13]

Within the natural name theory, which name is the natural name for a linguistic object is taken to be a result of the natural relation that exists between the name and the named object. Natural names refer to what they refer to because it is in the nature of names to refer to the things they name. Additionally, at least in the case of names of linguistic objects, although the reference is not *determined* by the resemblance, there is a resemblance between the name and the thing that it names: "the natural name theory easily explains how a pure quotation can name a spelling, for instance, by resembling that spelling."[14] Of course, this is not to say that *all* names resemble what they name. The name 'Jeremy Corbyn' does not resemble the person Jeremy Corbyn, and nor would we expect it to. But, in the case of natural names for linguistic objects, the natural name resembles the linguistic object it names.

Names for spellings, meanings, words, and other linguistic kinds are "natural" in that they are not arbitrary. In the case of Jeremy Corbyn, there is nothing intrinsic about Jeremy Corbyn that led to 'Jeremy Corbyn' being his name. Although it is of the nature of the name to refer to what it names, 'Jeremy Corbyn' could have referred to someone else. This is not the case for natural names for linguistic objects. Although natural names are *chosen*, they are not arbitrary as this natural resemblance relation is not arbitrary. This does not deny that the relation might be *conventional*, as in the case of the words chosen to name certain animal sounds. Natural names, though, are taken to (at least) possibly be natural and conventional.[15]

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[11] Mark Liberman, "Helpful Label," *Language Log* (blog), July 7, 2014, http://languagelog.ldc.upenn.edu/nll/?p=13327.

[12] I will talk about kinds on the assumption that we are talking about linguistic *objects* (see fn. 5), not properties. If some referents discussed are better thought of as properties, then for those cases, my talk about kinds should be replaced with talk about universal properties. The nature of the relationship between instances and kinds that I rely on later in this paper also holds between instances of universal properties and the universal property itself (though see fn. 23).

[13] See Herman Cappelen and Ernie Lepore, "Using, Mentioning and Quoting: A Reply to Saka," *Mind*, CVIII, 432 (October 1999): 741–50, for an in-depth discussion of the identity and demonstrative theories, including their explicit rejection of the data used to motivate the multiplicity thesis. See Paul Saka, "Quotation and the Use-Mention Distinction," *Mind*, CVII, 425 (January 1998): 113–35, for objections to the natural name theory, and Johnson, "Pure Quotation and Natural Naming," *op. cit.*, pp. 550–66, for responses to them.

[14] Johnson, "Pure Quotation and Natural Naming," *op. cit.*, p. 566.

[15] Note though: "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" (*ibid.*, p. 555). Thus, this connection can be broken, and indeed this particularly seems to be possible for cases of animal noises and other onomatopoeia. It is less clear that this connection can be broken in the case of linguistic objects as it is not obvious how anything other than 'table' will be a natural name for the word 'table'.

This resemblance relation between the name and the object named allows the natural name theory to satisfy the idea that there is a particularly close relationship between quotations and their semantic values. That is, the relationship between the natural name 'bank' and the word it names is closer than the relationship between the name 'Jeremy Corbyn' and Jeremy Corbyn. It thus avoids the charge Davidson puts against the theory (under the title of the proper name theory) that on this view, "there is no relation, beyond an accident of spelling, between an expression and the quotation-mark name of that expression."[16]

II

We have seen that the natural name theory holds that the names for things like spellings, meanings, and pronunciations are chosen because of their resemblance to what they name. This is crucial as a way to avoid the charge that the names are not natural and are instead arbitrary. Natural names are natural because they "suggest" themselves: "the nature of a sound suggests a name for it: a name that sounds like the sound to be named."[17]

This is a powerful explanation when it is applied to cases where what is being referred to by the quoted term is some further particular. Thus, in (2), the term 'bank' is taken to be a natural name for the particular word 'bank' written previously in that conversation. "bank" resembles 'bank',[18] and hence suggests itself as the natural name for that previously written (or otherwise expressed) particular word.[19]

I do not want to deny that there are cases of pure quotation where the referent is some *particular* term previously uttered or expressed. What I want to argue is that we need to extend the theory beyond just natural names for particular utterances of words. This is because the theory as outlined will struggle to explain certain facts associated with pure quotation cases of the sort in (1) and the sort of information we are seeking to express in cases such as (5–7).

To see this, we need to ask a further question as to which name is the natural name for a linguistic kind, not about the name for some particular instance or utterance. That is, why there is something distinctly wrong about:

(8)   "cats" refers to 'cat'.

[16] Donald Davidson, "Quotation," *Theory and Decision*, XI, 1 (March 1979): 27–40, at p. 30.

[17] Johnson, "Pure Quotation and Natural Naming," *op. cit.*, p. 551.

[18] Note that "bank" is being used here not as double quote marks, but two sets of single quote marks to indicate the name for a word – i.e. 'bank'. I will follow this same stylistic convention throughout.

[19] 'Particular' in the sense of an instance of a word expressed previously. There may be further cases where it is not obvious that "bank" refers to a particular word. This is because it might be unclear which word-type it is a token of (assuming we accept a type-token view of words; see Linda Wetzel, *Types and Tokens: An Essay on Abstract Objects* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2009), for a defense, and J. T. M. Miller, "On the Individuation of Words," *Inquiry* (January 2019) doi:10.1080/0020174X.2018.1562378, for objections), but I leave such cases to one side here.

"cats" is not just a bad name for the word 'cat'. It strikes us that "cats" is the *wrong* or even is an *impossible* name for the word 'cat'. "cats" even resembles the word 'cat', far more so than other possible names, such as "table". However, this resemblance is not enough to secure the *natural* naming relation between "cats" and the word 'cat'. This also explains why (9) strikes us as clearly false:

(9)   "cats" has three letters.

(9) is intuitively false even though, if we accepted (8), it would be true to say that the thing named in (8) has three letters.

In (8) we are seemingly not talking just about some particular utterance of the word 'cat'. We are trying to make a more general statement about all instances of the word. The same holds for (9). This is not about some particular expression of a word, but all expressions of that word. This is important as part of my interest concerns the ontology (or metaphysics) of language that is required in order to hold that the natural name theory is correct, but be able to reject (8), and thus hold that (9) is false—that is, to explain why it is that "cat" suggests itself as a natural name for 'cat', while "cats" cannot be the natural name for that word.

Johnson states, I think correctly, that "a natural name of a word is another word that is spelled 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."[20] In the case of onomatopoeia, the natural name suggests itself due to the resemblance that holds between the name and the object it names. Of course, this means only that the natural name is *chosen* due to the resemblance relation, and that this will sometimes be conventional as in the case of words that name animal sounds. However, while this is perhaps plausible in the case of animal sounds, it is far less satisfying in the case of natural names for linguistic objects. In the case of linguistic objects, it seems that the connection between the natural name and the thing it refers to is stronger than a merely conventional choice based on resemblance. This is why (8) and (9) strike us a strongly counterintuitive. Johnson says that there is a high-level convention "to use the word that is spelled and pronounced like a word type in order to name that word type."[21] However, a convention to so name linguistic objects is too weak. The intuitions around (8) are stronger than that. "cats" is not just a conventionally wrong name for the word 'cat'. It could *never* be the natural name for that word.

Johnson says that "sounds are not the only objects whose intrinsic nature suggests a name" and that linguistic objects also have their names due to the intrinsic nature of the named object.[22] However, the problem is that we have only invoked a resemblance relation between the natural name and the object it

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[20] Johnson, "Pure Quotation and Natural Naming," *op. cit.*, p. 565.

[21] *Ibid.*, p. 557.

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 550.

names. This provides us with no mechanism to rule out cases where resemblance fails to hold between the natural name and the linguistic object it names, and hence be able to reject (8) and (9). (8) and (9) are, I will assume, intuitively false, but we have no mechanism to account for this intuition if we can only appeal to a notion of resemblance.

To summarize, the natural name theory, I think correctly, highlights that it is something about the intrinsic nature of a linguistic object that suggests a name for that object. But mere resemblance or convention is insufficient to explain this connection. In the rest of the paper, I will argue that what is required is an ontological framework that posits genuinely existing linguistic kinds, allowing us to hold that the natural name is an instance of the kind it names, and thus the strong connection between the name and the linguistic object named is explained though the notion of kind-membership.

The mistake is to hold that the natural name is the word spelled and pronounced *like* a word type. I instead suggest that "cats" is not a natural name for the word type 'cat' not simply because it is not spelled or pronounced like 'cat', but because it is not an instance of the word type 'cat'. The solution I will give to the above problem will argue that it is not just that we use a word that is spelled and pronounced like a word type to name that word type, but that we use an instance of the type to refer to the type. That is, we can rule out (8) and (9), while maintaining the natural name theory, and explain the seeming non-arbitrariness of natural names for linguistic objects by positing genuine linguistic kinds, and holding that natural names for linguistic objects name (at least sometimes) not particulars, but linguistic kinds, and that the natural name will be an instance of the kind it names.

III

In the metaphysics of kinds, it is typically held that there is a strong relation that holds between a kind and the instances of that kind. For example, a tiger cannot be an instance of the kind HORSE because it is simply not what the particular tiger is an instance of. Perhaps, if substantial kind change is possible, a particular tiger could *become* an instance of the kind HORSE, but, leaving the issue of substantial change to one side, it is held that a particular tiger must be an instance of the kind TIGER and not the kind HORSE. It is also common to accept that kinds are abstract. This is the case independent of the debate about whether there can be uninstantiated kinds, as even kinds that are instantiated are not typically taken to be concrete entities.[23] What I assume here is only that there are kinds, at least some of which are linguistic kinds.

For my purposes, the important feature of particulars and kinds is that kind-membership explains why a particular is an instance of a kind that it is an instance of. The kind-membership relation is stronger than the mere resemblance discussed above and is widely taken to explain the resemblance between the

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[23] For more on this, see E. J. Lowe, *The Four-Category Ontology: A Metaphysical Foundation for Natural Science* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

instance and the kind. An instance of a kind cannot fail to resemble the kind it is an instance of as for it to be an instance of that kind it must share some properties or characteristics with the kind. A particular tiger is an instance of the kind TIGER as the particular possesses some feature(s) that it inherits from the kind and has because it is an instance of the kind. That the particular instantiates the kind it does ensures that the particular is sufficiently similar to the kind (and other instances of the kind).[24] As is well known, this does not deny the difficulty of providing an account of what it is that makes all instances instances of the same kind. However, it is reasonable to suppose here that any realist about kinds will hold that there is *some* feature that all instances of a kind share.[25]

Above we saw that (8) and (9) posed a problem for the natural name theory as we could not rule out in a principled way why "cats" cannot be the natural name for the word 'cat'. This was because the resemblance relation that was invoked to explain why a natural name for a linguistic object is that name was too weak, and itself in need of explanation. We can solve this problem if we invoke kinds along the lines I have just laid out.

This means that I suggest that we should hold that the natural name theory is correct in that pure quotations can name a multiplicity of linguistic objects, (possibly) including but not limited to words, expressions, spellings, meanings, pronunciations, phonemes, graphemes, and senses. However, this should be interpreted as meaning that what the natural names refer to (at least sometimes) are kinds (or types) of words, expressions, spellings, pronunciations, phonemes, graphemes, and senses, not particular words, expressions, spellings, pronunciations, phonemes, graphemes, and senses. That is, I argue that we should pair the natural name theory with an ontology of language that accepts linguistic kinds. Under this view then, natural names do not only name particulars; they (at least sometimes) name universal entities or linguistic kinds.

This means that we should hold that, following the above discussed cases:

(10)   Words: "cat" refers to the word-kind 'CAT'

(11)   Pronunciations: "zed" refers to the pronunciation-kind 'ZED'

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[24] Note that the same characteristic is present in the relationship between universal properties and instances of those properties. For realists about universal properties it is not mere resemblance that makes some instance of a property an instance of that universal property; see D. M. Armstrong, *Universals: An Opinionated Introduction* (London: Westview Press, 1989). Thus, if some of the linguistic entities I discuss are properties rather than objects then my claims will still hold once the talk of kinds is replaced with universals or universal properties (see fns. 5 and 12; see also J. T. M. Miller, "Words, Substance, and Bundle Theory," unpublished manuscript).

[25] Indeed, it is recognized within the metaphysics of words literature that saying what all instances of a word-kind have in common is very hard to do. However, the existing literature has focused solely on words and not other linguistic kinds, and this difficulty has not stopped the dominant position within this literature being type-realism about words. For arguments in favor of positing word-kinds (or types) despite the difficulty, and further debates about the nature of the kinds posited, see Jerold J. Katz, *Language and Other Abstract Objects* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield, 1981); Wetzel, *Types and Tokens: An Essay on Abstract Objects, op. cit.*; and John Hawthorne and Ernest Lepore, "On Words," this JOURNAL, CVIII, 9 (September 2011): 447–85; see Miller, "On the Individuation of Words," *op. cit.*, for objections to the proposed ways to individuate words.

(12)   Phonemes: "ch" refers to the phoneme-kind 'CH'

(13)   Graphemes: "r" refers to the grapheme-kind 'r'

(14)   Meaning: "table" refers to the meaning-kind 'TABLE'

In each case, we see that the natural name for the linguistic kind is an instance of that kind. This should be unsurprising. If I am unsure about the nature of the kind TIGER, one option you have is to bring me a particular tiger. Instances of a kind are good examples of that kind simply in virtue of being instances of the kind, and one way to point to a kind is to point to an instance of that kind as a stand-in for the kind itself. The same is happening in the case of natural names and the linguistic kinds they name. An instance of the kind is used as a name for the kind it is itself an instance of in order to refer to a linguistic kind (or type).

This natural naming of linguistic kinds in (10–14) allows us to express many truths about those kinds that are independent of the particular instances of the kinds. To say something about a linguistic kind, as we do in cases of pure quotation such as in (1), we invoke a particular of the kind as the natural name for that kind. We can reject (8) precisely because in (8) we are attempting to use an instance of the kind to refer to a kind, but we have not uttered a real instance of that kind. The instantiation relation does not hold between "cats" as it appears in (8) and the word-kind 'cat'. Once we can reject (8), we can conclude that (9) is false.

The natural name theory is correct that pure quotations can pick out many different things, but such quotations can pick out, in addition to particular linguistic objects, many different linguistic *kinds* of things. The names themselves are particulars, but in some cases what the name refers to is a universal, and just like all particulars and universals, the particular bears an instantiation relation to the universal. It is not a mere resemblance relation that makes a natural name for a linguistic object the natural name for that object. It is rather that when we want to refer to a linguistic kind, we use a particular of that kind to refer to the kind, and an instance will resemble the kind it is an instance of, for if it did not share some features with the kind (and hence explain the resemblance) then we would rightly conclude that it was not really an instance of that kind.

Note that this strengthens even further the response available to the natural name theory to the concern from Davidson that the view implies that there is no relation "beyond an accident of spelling" between the name and what it names.[26] If the name is an instance of the kind that it names, then there is a clear and strong relation between the name and what it names. It is no "accident of spelling" that the natural name names the linguistic object it names.

It should also be stressed that this is not to hold that there cannot be some instance(s) of a linguistic kind that do not exactly resemble the kind. The claim rather is that it is reasonable for the realist about kinds, a position assumed in this paper, to hold that instances of any real kind share some feature. For example, if TIGER is a real kind then there may be particular tigers that are four-legged with stripes and others that are

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[26] Davidson, "Quotation," *op. cit.*, p. 30.

non-striped and three-legged, but (assuming that both are correctly taken to be instances of the kind TIGER) there will be some shared intrinsic property or characteristic between those particular tigers.

Applying this to the case of linguistic objects and kinds, let us stipulate that (15) is an instance of the grapheme-kind 'r':

(15) ℓ

Assuming that (15) is an instance of that kind, then it is clearly one that resembles the kind less than some other instances of the kind. However, we can accommodate (15) in the same way that we might accommodate a non-striped, three-legged, non-feline instance of a tiger, as a presumably non-exactly resembling instance of the grapheme-kind 'r'. The same will then apply, mutatis mutandis for other linguistic kinds and their instances. Of course, and as already noted, providing the necessary conditions for any kind is a difficult task, and it is likely to be no easier in the case of linguistic kinds. This means that it will be a difficult task for me to explain why (15) is an instance of the grapheme-kind 'r' beyond mere assertion. All I require is that a realist about kinds will hold that there will be some feature that makes some particulars instances of that kind—quite what those features are is a further matter.

This discussion of non-standard instances of a kind also suggests a response to a possible concern about whether there can be non-natural names for linguistic kinds.[27] To provide an answer to whether non-natural names are possible, we need to highlight that within the natural name theory, natural names are both *chosen* and *natural*. Within the ontology I have suggested, this means that we choose, out of the instances that bear a natural relation—the relation that I have argued is instantiation—to the kind, which is the name for that kind. This means that non-natural names would be a particular linguistic entity that does not bear this natural relation to the kind. That is, they are not instances of the kind that we are taking them to name. Such naming practices are, of course, possible. The natural name theorist need not *rule out* such naming practices. Rather, they need only have a principled way to distinguish between natural and non-natural names, and this can be done through considering whether the instance bears an instantiation relation to the kind that it is taken to name. Given that the existence of this instantiation relation is not arbitrary for the realist about kinds, this allows us to maintain that natural names could be natural and conventional in the sense described above.

To give a more concrete example, consider again (15). Assuming this time, as I believe most would, that (15) is not an instance of the grapheme-kind 'r', then (15) could be taken to be a name for that kind, but it would not be a natural name as (15) is not a genuine instance of the grapheme-kind 'r'. The fact that (15) is not an instance of the grapheme-kind 'r' also explains why we did not choose that name for the kind. It would lead to confusions of the sort seen in (8) to use a non-natural name when a natural name could be used

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[27] I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for this JOURNAL for raising this issue.

instead. The natural name theory need not deny that there are non-natural names for linguistic objects and kinds. It need only hold that there are natural names and that it is those natural names that are within the quoted material in cases of pure quotation.

There may also be some situations in which the kind that we attempt to refer to is not a real kind. As in the case of ordinary objects and properties, answering the question of which linguistic-kind terms refer to genuine kinds is going to require detailed input and consideration of the empirical data.[28] In the case of words, are the particular words 'run' and 'ran' both instances of the same kind, perhaps analyzed through the linguistic root 'RUN'?[29] Perhaps phonology will develop such that we wish to reject the existence of the phoneme 'ch' (or more precisely put, '/tʃ/') in (12), or that the written forms of language will change such that certain grapheme-kinds cease to exist, or new ones come into existence. It could be that on examination of the linguistic data all of the linguistic kinds that I have discussed in this paper turn out not to exist, just as we might ultimately reject the existence of the kind TIGER in favor of other kinds within natural science.

What would this mean for the natural name theory as applied to linguistic kinds? It would mean that we should hold that what we thought was a kind turned out not to be a real kind. The kind term 'CH' would be similar to the supposed kind term 'phlogiston'. Neither would pick out a real kind. What these terms do pick out or refer to, if anything, would depend on what we think non-referring terms pick out, or how we wish to handle cases of apparent reference to non-existent objects, but such discussions are beyond the scope of this paper.

These is one last important concern to consider for the proposed view: that quoted words, like those I rely on, do not function like other expressions that refer to kinds. To see this, consider:

(16a)   The tiger is a big feline.

(16b)   A tiger is a big feline.

(16c)   Tigers are big felines.

(17a)   *The 'cat' has three letters.

(17b)   *A 'cat' has three letters.

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[28] See J. T. M. Miller, "Sameness of Word," unpublished manuscript, for a longer discussion of this point.

[29] Note that this is a root in the technical linguistic sense of the term as discussed by, inter alia, Paolo Acquaviva, "The Roots of Nominality, The Nominality of Roots," in Artemis Alexiadou, Hagit Borer, and Florian Schäfer, eds., *The Roots of Syntax, the Syntax of Roots* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 33–56; Paolo Acquaviva, "Roots, Concepts, and Word Structure: On the Atoms of Lexical Semantics," in Franz Rainer et al., eds., *Morphology and Meaning* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2014), pp. 49–70; Cedric Boeckx, *Bare Syntax* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Hagit Borer, "The Category of Roots," in Alexiadou, Borer, and Schäfer, eds., *The Roots of Syntax, the Syntax of Roots*, *op. cit.*, pp. 112–48; Guglielmo Cinque, *Functional Structure in DP and IP: The Cartography of Syntactic Structures*, vol. 1, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Heidi Harley, "How Do Verbs Get Their Names? Denominal Verbs, Manner Incorporation and the Ontology of Verb Roots in English," in Nomi Erteschik-Shir and Tova Rapoport, eds., *The Syntax of Aspect* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 42–64; and Heidi Harley, "On the Identity of Roots," *Theoretical Linguistics*, XL, 3–4 (October 2014): 225–76.

(17c)   *'cat's has three letters.

A comparison of (16) and (17) would seem to show that you cannot use indefinite, definite, or plural forms to refer to linguistic kinds, contra ordinary nouns. If we take items such as 'cat' to be names for kinds, then this inability requires some explanation.

First, it is worth noting that this issue only seems to arise for some linguistic kinds. For example:

(18a)   The 'r' is a consonant.

(18b)   A(n) 'r' is a consonant.

(18c)   'r's are consonants.

While the examples in (18) might be unusual, they are interpretable, and any difficulty of interpretation I suggest stems not from some hidden infelicity of (18), but rather from a general semantic pressure that when we use linguistic entities to refer to linguistic kinds that we make that explicit, as the general convention is to interpret linguistic entities as referring to non-linguistic kinds. For example, the content of (18a) is most likely to be expressed by a native speaker as:

(18d)   The letter-'r' is a letter.[30]

The tendency toward expressions such as (18d) over (18a) arises partly from the fact that it is very unusual for speakers to use the indefinite to refer to letters, rather than through a definite form such as in 'That 'r' is a consonant'. In rare cases where we would use the indefinite, then even though (18d) may be the usual way that a person would speak, (18a) would be awkward but felicitous.

However, even if (18a) is difficult to interpret, (18b) and (18c) are acceptable as they are, indicating that quoted material taken as names for some linguistic kinds can function in the some of the same ways as names for other more "ordinary" kinds.

Though certainly not a full analysis, I suggest that the supporter of the natural name theory could extend this to other cases, such that this inability arises not out of the failure of 'cat' to be a name, but rather due to the semantic pressure to interpret words as referring to "ordinary" objects rather than words or other linguistic kinds. That is, the semantic pressure is to take 'cat' not to refer to *linguistic* objects. If we stipulate, at least in the case of pure quotation, that the quotation marks are an indication that we should take the quoted material to be referring to linguistic entities, then we arrive at the view that (17a–c) can be more explicitly expressed as (19a–c):

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[30] Here we can see the convention that when talking about linguistic kinds, we must be explicit through the use of the hyphenated 'letter-'r'' to indicate that we are talking about the linguistic kind.

(19a)   The word-'cat' has three letters.

(19b)   A word-'cat' has three letters.

(19c)   Words-'cat' have three letters.

The examples in (19) may be strange to most speakers, but they are interpretable in the way that (17) is not, and shows that if we make clearer what the reference of 'cat' is, then the term begins to behave as the term 'tiger' does in (17).[31]

It is important to stress, though, that this does not make this version of the natural name theory a repackaging of the demonstration theory. This is for at least two reasons. First, we still hold that pure quotation is not a case of demonstration as it is still the case that the referent of pure quotation need not be some previously uttered expression. That is, in cases of pure quotation there is often no target to demonstrate, and the extended natural name theory proposed here is consistent with this.

Second, and as seen in (18), we still hold that the multiplicity thesis is correct, contra the explicit denial of the thesis by supporters of the demonstrative view such as Cappelen and Lepore, who describe the multiplicity thesis as "the Humpty Dumptyesque idea that uses of quotation can refer to different sorts of entities (be it tokens, types, syntactic structures, or concepts) simply by intending to refer to them is unsubstantiated by the data."[32] Indeed, if I am right, we can hold that pure quotations can refer to both particular linguistic objects and linguistic kinds. As kinds are distinct from the instances of the kinds, we thus hold that pure quotation cases can refer to even more different objects than even Johnson claimed.

IV

In this paper, I have outlined Johnson's natural name theory for cases of pure quotation and argued that the theory is stronger if combined with an ontology of language that accepts the existence of linguistic kinds. Once these views are combined, a natural name for a linguistic object (at least sometimes) refers to the kind of linguistic object that that object is an instance of. This explains why "cats" cannot be the natural name for 'cat'. This cannot happen as the natural name for a linguistic kind is required to be itself an instance of that kind.. Thus, I argue that the natural name theorist should accept an ontology of language that posits kinds.

More broadly, this paper shows that when theorizing about language our ontological commitments can significantly affect the plausibility of a variety of claims about language. The impact of the ontology or

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[31] See also Jürgen Pafel, "Two Dogmas on Quotation," in Elke Brendel, Jörg Meibauer, and Markus Steinbach, eds., *Understanding Quotation* (Berlin: de Gruyter Mouton, 2011), pp. 249–76, for more direct discussion of the linguistic evidence that pure quotations are nouns, not noun phrases.

[32] Cappelen and Lepore, "Using, Mentioning and Quoting: A Reply to Saka," *op. cit.*, p. 746.

metaphysics of language on theories or debates traditionally taken to be part of the philosophy of language has not often been discussed, but the arguments here suggest that there is a close connection between the two. This should hardly be surprising. Just as we recognize that our theories of mind need to acknowledge what ontological commitments they require, so should our theories of language.

The addition of a kind- or type-realist ontological framework, in the case outlined here, strengthens the natural name theory. The positing of linguistic kinds as the referent of quoted terms as in sentences such as (1) could be taken to be an argument in favor of the existence of linguistic kinds. That is, the strength of the natural name theory, especially given the linguistic evidence in favor of the multiplicity thesis, might motivate us to retain it by embracing genuinely existing linguistic kinds. Or, if we accept the arguments (not considered here) against the positing of linguistic kinds in our metaphysics of language, as nominalists we may use this connection between positing kinds and the natural name theory as a reason to reject the natural name theory.

My intention is not to decide between these options here. Instead, my intention has been to show the (otherwise largely overlooked) importance of sustained ontological and metaphysical work focused on the nature of language and linguistic entities in order to assess how different ontological commitments may cohere (or not) with existing theories within the literature on traditional topics within the philosophy of language. I have only looked at the case of pure quotation here. It remains to consider in future work whether certain ontological and metaphysical commitments within the metaphysics of language cohere (or not) with theories within the philosophy of language, and to assess what that means for both.

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