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The secret life of slurs from the perspective of reported speech

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Abstract   Research on reported speech is old, but scholars working in this field are inclined to see its roots in Davidson's (1968) paratactic account of indirect reports. Although Davidson aimed at a 'truth-conditional' theory of indirect reports which could challenge ideational, use, and psychological theories, his paratactic view – of which the backbone was the notion of 'samesaying' – motivated a good number of scholars to search for adequate accounts of indirect reports in truth-conditional semantics. Ever since then, research on reported speech gathered size and momentum, and resulted in a wealth of knowledge – which has, in turn, made it hard for people not versed in the field to fully appreciate it. This paper brings scholarly literature on reported speech to bear on slurs and reveals their secret life by dissecting them in the light of reported speech.

Keywords: reported speech, truth-conditional theories, pragmemes, language games, Slurs, paraphrasis-form principle, paraphrasis/quotation principle

0. Introduction

For a lay person with a limited knowledge of grammar, a structural account of reported speech would adequately describe how indirect reports could be derived from direct reports and vice versa; it would suffice to (a) adjust the plug (i.e., the 'verb' of reporting), (b) use 'that' to introduce indirect speech, and (b) adjust the context-sensitive structural items of indirect speech (e.g., grammatical person of pronouns, demonstrative elements, locative and temporal phrases, tense, and so on). Although such 'language-specific' modifications may suggest that a 'derivative' account of reported speech is adequate, researchers have shown that the picture is not that simple. Banfield (1973), for instance, drew on discussions by Jackobson (1960), Barthes (1966), Todorov (1966), Benveniste (1966), Kuroda (1973), Russell (1940) and Partee (1973a,b) *inter alia* to argue that «neither direct nor indirect speech can feasibly be derived from the other» (BANFIELD 1973: 8), and to suggest that derivative accounts of (in)direct reports are inadequate. Moreover, she repeated Partee's (1973b) argument that 'plugs' (i.e., verbs introducing indirect speech) take 'propositions', and not surface sentences, as their complements. She ruled out purely structural and/or semantic accounts of reported speech and argued in favor of the adequacy of 'pragmatic' ones. This position is also seen in Capone (2008a, 2010a, 2012, 2013a,b) on reported speech and especially in his Paraphrasis/Quotation

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Principle—a position also held by Kertész and Rákosi but challenged by Whittle who argues that it may be time for pragmatics to relinquish assumed ownership. These are just a handful of examples which expose the controversial nature of reported speech, and controversies of this nature will, by their very nature, create confusion. As such, a paper which attempts at summarizing the existing body of knowledge on reported speech would be undoubtedly very vital. This paper, therefore, aims at presenting an organized overview of reported speech—though it does not claim to be comprehensive and exhaustive—which it will then exploit to reveal the secret life of slurs.

1. Derivative accounts

Perhaps the earliest account of reported speech is to be found in traditional grammar books which provide a purely syntactic/structural description of how direct reports are derived from indirect ones, or vice versa, through the application of a set of syntactic transformations—an account that may be called the 'derivative account' of reported speech. Partee (1973a) used 'ambiguous' reports as counter-evidence to challenge the adequacy of such a 'derivative' theory of reported speech, and to suggest her own 'pragmatic' view of reporting. As she noticed, in ambiguous statements, there may be two or more readings. 'Oedipus said that his mother was beautiful', for example, can be seen as a statement by Oedipus about his own mother (i.e., the 'of the thing' reading of 'his') or about either Oedipus's mother or another male-third-party's mother (i.e., the 'of the word' reading of 'his'). In direct reports (or quotations), however, only 'of the thing' readings are computed and ambiguity resulting from indexicals is less probable (See also CAPONE 2013c, and FEIT and CAPONE 2013). Drawing on Partee's views of reported speech, Banfield (1973) noticed that the 'speaker-addressee paradigm' (referred to as 'discours' by Benveniste (1966), which claims that direct and indirect reports involve speakers/narrators, does not afford a complete picture. She suggests that there exists a third type of reported speech—referred to as 'histoire' by Benveniste (1966)—which involves no speaker/narrator. As such, reported speech falls into two main paradigms: (1) the speaker-addressee paradigm which includes direct speech or *Dirscours Direct* (*DD*) and indirect speech or *Dirscours Indirect* (*DI*), and (2) the literary paradigm which includes free indirect speech or *Dirscours Indirect Libre* (*DIL*).

2. Davidson's paratactic account

Earlier, in 1968 Davidson had suggested another pragmatic account of indirect reports which gained popularity as the 'paratactic account'.[1] Davidson's paratactic

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[1] Davidson's main concern was to establish a 'truth-conditional theory of meaning' which would serve as a rival to such earlier theories of meaning as logical positivists' verificationism, Gricean psychological theories, 'use' theories, ideational theories, and so forth. These are out of the scope of the current paper, but the interested reader is invited to read (LYCAN 2000).

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view draws on the two idioms of 'said that' and 'said of . . . that' to focus on truth conditions in the logical form of indirect reports; the logical form of indirect reports, in Davidson's view, consists of two distinct sentences: (1) a 'report sentence' in the form of 'samesaid (x, that)', and (2) a 'content sentence' in the form of an utterance 'u'; a 'demonstrative' (i.e., a *d*-that) sits in between to link the two sentences. Needless to say, the notion of 'samesaying' lies at the heart of Davidson's paratactic account, and it is assumed that an indirect report is a proposition of the "samesaid (x, that). *u*" type in which the 'that' is a demonstrative (*d*-that) which counts as a denotation/demonstration of the reported utterance ('*u*'). In this connection, Segal and Speas noticed that Davidson's conception of 'samesaying' in reported speech was based on the truth-conditional assumption that «[…] 'A said that p' is true iff A said something which makes him, and the utterer of 'p', samesayers»(SEGAL & SPEAS 1986:189). They drew on Higginbotham's (1986) account of meaning which 'reads the semantics explicitly off the syntax' to check this assumption and concluded that the assumption was indeed part and parcel of Davidson's account of indirect reports. Davidson's paratactic view came under several attacks; one of the main criticisms leveled against his view was that it could not adequately explain ambiguous reports (e.g., Oedipus said that his mother was pretty). However, proponents of Davidson attempted to save his paratactic view; Kemp (2001), for instance, suggested a proposition-charged modification which was supposed to account for ambiguous utterances.[2] He suggested that Davidson's 'samesaid (x, that). *u*' be substituted with 'SAID (*speaker*, the proposition expressed by *u*). *u*.' Kemp's view appears to be based on Segal's (1989) 'interpretive truth theory' and Rumfitt's (1993) dovetailing of the 'theory of indirect speech' and the 'theory of understanding'—to which I will return below. Kemp's modification was called the 'prop-function analysis' of paratactic theory by Johnson (2009), who found it inadequate for accounting for a certain variation of the ambiguity problem; it could not adequately explain cases in which «*an ambiguous utterance is deliberately attributed* to a speaker» (JOHNSON 2009: 17). Nevertheless, he hailed Kemp for the 'prop-function analysis' of paratactic theory for it could adequately account for «classic cases in which someone reports ambiguously something that they intended to convey unambiguously» (*ibid*).Guttenplan (1979) leveled another attack against Davidson's paratactic view by calling his account of 'samesaying' into question. To this end, he focused on Davidson's 'said of . . . that' (i.e., 'saying of' idiom). He drew on cases in which different uses (or senses) of NPs are in the 'P therefore Q' (or inclusional) distribution—like 'earth' and 'something' in example 1:

Example 1
  a) Ralph said that earth moves.
  b) Ralph said that something moves.

He noticed that 1.b is an open sentence while 1.a is a closed one, and argued that in such cases, only the "relevant closed sentence samesays with the open one,«but not vice versa» (GUTTENPLAN 1979: 98). As such, unlike what Hornsby (1977) claimed, samesaying is not symmetrical—although the 'same' of 'samesays' may

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[2] Other aspects of Davidson's paratactic view came under attack too, but they will not be discussed here as they are outside of the scope of this paper.

suggest a symmetry. He concludes that, «If an utterance *x* of mine samesays with some utterance *y* of *A*'s *and conversely*, and with an utterance *z* of *B*'s *and conversely*, then *y* samesays with *z*» (GUTTENPLAN 1979: 97).

3. Cappelen and Lepore's MA principle[3]

Along the same lines, Cappelen and Lepore suggested the 'MA principle' to address the issue of samesaying. They argued that in

> simple but clumsy form the assumption is that *an adequate semantic theory T for a language L should assign p as the semantic content of an utterance u, by A, of a sentence S in L iff A said that p is a true report of u*. We'll call this assumption MA. So, since Galileo in uttering (1) makes (2) true, by MA, an adequate semantics for Italian must assign to (1) the semantic content that *the earth moves*.(CAPPELEN & LEPORE 1997:280)

> 1. La terra si muove.
> 2. Galileo said that the earth moves

They expressed doubts about 'semantic content' views of reported speech and clearly argued that:

> Our concern is whether any semanticist can sustain inflexible commitment to MA without ignoring our actual practice of indirect reporting. We shall argue MA fails in both its directions. Even superficial attention to our practice of reporting others reveals that, by anyone's estimates, some true reports have complement clauses differing in semantic content from the utterances they report and that some false reports have complement clauses matching in semantic content with utterances they report. (Ibidem)

Cappelen and Lepore took side with Kaplan's (1989a: 500) 'intensionalist perspective' that speaker intuitions about "what-was-said" must harbor semantic theories.
Along the same lines, Soames summarized Kaplan's views in what was called 'Soames' intensionalist framework':

> the fundamental task of a semantic theory is to tell us *what sentences say* in various contexts of utterance. On this view, the meaning of a *sentence* can be thought of as a function from contexts to what is said by the sentences in those contexts [italics mine].(SOAMES 1989:394)

Cappelen and Lepore (1997: 280) intermingled Kaplan's (1989a,b) and Soames' (1989) intensionalist frameworks and suggested a 'refined' form for MA:

> The content of (i.e., the proposition expressed by) an utterance u of a sentence S is p iff ⌐It was said that p⌐ is a true report of u."

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[3] Capone (2013d) argues in favor of relevance theory and challenges Cappelen and Lepore's semantic minimalism on several grounds.

Returning to this issue in their *Insensitive Semantics⁴* (CAPPELEN & LEPORE 2005), they focused on intercontextual indirect reports and proposed 'Radical Contextualism' which collapsed Moderate Contextualist positions. They then put their radical contextualism to three 'context sensitivity' tests:

1) context sensitivity blocks inter-contextual indirect reports;
2) context sensitivity blocks collective descriptions; and
3) context sensitivity passes an intercontextual disquotational test and admits of real context shifting arguments.

Their 'Radical Contextualist' position could not pass any of the tests, and this led them to argue against the moderate contextual positions (i.e., the back bones of their Radical Contextualist position); they also argued that there exists a tightly circumscribed Basic List of context-sensitive expressions which includes demonstratives and obvious indexicals).

4. Wieland's position

In reaction to Cappelen and Lepore's argumentation, Wieland (2010) drew on the color-predicate example (i.e., Anne said that the apple is red) to argue that they had failed to distinguish between 'semantic' and 'phonetic' indirect reports, and that this had failed them to realize why speakers can achieve semantic but not phonetic indirect reports. She further argued that Cappelen and Lepore's position should not be taken to undermine contextualist semantic theories. In her view, they were misguided in that they took 'semantically minimal reporting' for granted. In this connection, Wieland argued that, when it comes to intercontextual indirect reporting, semantically minimal reporting cannot be the default form of reporting. In her view, Cappelen and Lepore's radical semantics traded generously on reporting speakers' ability to 'phonetically reduplicate' reported speakers' utterances produced in other contexts.⁵A very important point in her discussion was that, in the context of intercontextual reports, communication breakdowns are highly frequent unless speakers come to realize that they need to invoke a relevant degree of the original context. In fact, speakers who engage in intercontextual reports intuitively build 'contextual bridges' (See also SALMANI 2014b).

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⁴ See also Capone (2008b).

⁵ Reporting speakers can come from among either the 'ratified participants' or the 'Non-ratified participants' in a conversational episode. According to Capone (2001: 103), "A conversational episode is a piece of linguistic and social interaction involving what might be called ratified participants, as well as some possible non-ratified participants (GOFFMAN (1976)). Ratified participants are those who have a right to take turns within the invisible boundaries that distinguish a piece of social interaction from another. Non-ratified participants are those persons who are in the vicinity of the place of the conversational episode and are in a position to overhear the episode."

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5. Soames' views

Another perspective on 'samesaying' came from Soames (1989) who challenged the common belief that «the semantic content of a sentence consists in its truth-conditions»(SOAMES 1989:394)such that «*S* is true with respect to a context *C* and circumstance *E*» (ibidem)—with 'context' being taken to stand for any possible situation where *S* can be uttered, and 'circumstance' for any 'logically' and 'metaphysically' 'possible worlds' where *S* might be evaluated as true or false. In other words, 'strict truth-conditional semantics' took 'context' to mean the semantic encodings of an utterance (i.e., its 'truth-conditional content'), and 'circumstance' to mean its 'truth-conditional characters' (i.e., its meaning). He clearly argued that strict truth-conditional semantics are inadequate because «truth-conditional content, *being an 'unstructured set'*, cannot be identified with semantic content» and cannot play «the role of that which is said by sentences, and asserted or believed by speakers» (1989: 395; italics mine). His views are based on Russell's ideas, which he revived and turned into his 'two-stage semantic theory':

> The first stage consists of a recursive assignment of structural propositions to sentences. The second stage is a recursive characterization of truth relative to a circumstance, for structured propositions (SOAMES 1989: 395).

This 'two-stage semantic theory' takes 'meaning' to be a 'function from context to propositions'; in this theory, 'contexts' and 'propositions' work in tandem to determine 'sets of truth-supporting circumstances', but they themselves are not determined by those circumstances. He then used his semantic theory to evaluate 'direct reference' and 'propositional attitudes' and concluded that 'truth-conditional content' is not tantamount to semantic content. Soames' semantic theory relaxes the requirements on state descriptions (such as requirements for 'consistency' and 'completeness')—making it possible for 'metaphysically possible worlds' to change into 'logically possible worlds' which will, in turn, change into '(logically) possible facts' which will, in their own turn, change into inconsistent facts.[6] As such, Soames' theory appears to take side with 'pragmatic' accounts of indirect reports (e.g., CAPONE 2010, 2012, 2013) which rely heavily on 'context' (both 'prior context' and 'actual situational context'), 'common ground', and 'salience'.

6. Rumfitt's argumentation

Along the same lines, Platts (1979) argued that

> indirect discourse requires that the reporter reproduce the meaning of the original utterance: the content sentence employed by the reporter should be a correct translation of the original speaker's utterance […] (1979: 126, cited in CAPPELEN & LEPORE 1997: 280).[7]

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[6] See also Barwise and Perry (1983) on abstract situations.

[7] See also Burge (1986), Larson and Ludlow (1993), and McDowell (1987).

Moreover, a similar albeit radical interpretation of Cappelen and Lepore's MA was suggested by Rumfitt in whose view Davidson's "($\exists u$)(Ugu & SSu,that): [The earth moves.]" must be taken to read as: "($\exists u$) (There is a theory, interpretative for *A* as he produces *u*, which canonically entails this: True(u) $\equiv p$)" (RUMFITT 1993: 439). Once this rule is applied to the classical example 'Galileo said that the earth moves', it would read as: '($\exists u$)(there is a truth theory *T* interpretative for Galileo as he produces *u*, which canonically entails: True(u) *iff* the earth moves)'. This, in essence, 'reinstates' the dovetailing of the 'theory of indirect speech' and the 'theory of understanding' and accounts for the famous Davidsonian perspective that »*what is said in the course of an utterance is nothing other than what somebody who understands the utterance understands to be said*» (RUMFITT 1993: 439—italics mine). Rumfitt's radical treatment of Davidson's Galileo said that the earth moves suggests an '*arboreal fission*' process which enables LF-structures to be taken from S-structures. Such an 'arboreal fission' process loosens the node in the tree diagram where the content sentence is linked to the report sentence.[8] His reformulation of Davison's stipulation—which in a sense resounds Segal's (1989) interpretive truth theory—can be taken to read as:

$[T]_s$.
$[A \text{ says that}]_s$
iff
$[T]_s$.
There's an utterance of A's to which that one R-relates.

This reformulation relies on R-relatedness and entails a theory of truth-predicates which, in Rumfitt's view, can resolve ambiguity through recording information about the contexts of utterances when several LFs can be picked out as the original speaker's utterance in reported speech. It also draws on how Rumfitt views propositions—which Quine (1969) called 'creatures of darkness'. Rumfitt himself suggested that "Galileo said that the earth moves" entails "among the things said by Galileo was that the earth moves,« and interpreted it to conclude that "among the things-that-there-are are things-that-are-said things traditionally called propositions» (RUMFITT 1993: 429). In Rumfitt's view which focuses on the semantic structure of reported speech, any theory of indirect reports should determine which propositions are expressed by which declarative utterances; this resounds views by other 'philosophically orthodox' scholars such as Stalnaker (1976), Russell (1940), and Frege (1919)—who focused on the 'nature' of the propositions that are said to exist in utterances. In much the same way, Segal (1989), Seymour (1994), and Capone (2010, 2012, 2013) accepted that subtle variations in the 'form' and 'flavor' of reported speech can be allowed ONLY IF 'interpretive truth theories' can easily detect them and can correctly compute original speakers' assertions. This position is highlighted in Capone's Paraphrasis/Form Principle (PFP):

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[8] For illustrations of this process, see Rumfitt (1993: 434).

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The that-clause embedded in the verb 'say' is a paraphrasis of what Y said, and meets the following constraints: should Y hear what X said he (Y) had said, he would not take issue with it, as to content, but would approve of it as a fair paraphrasis of his original utterance. Furthermore, he would not object to vocalizing the assertion made out of the words following the complementizer 'that' on account of its form/style. (CAPONE 2010: 377)

7. Bringing it all together: Capone's views of reported speech

Capone's extensive research on reported speech led him (a) to hypothesize a harmony between semantics and pragmatics, (b) to provide evidence supporting the application of Sperber and Wilson's (1986) Relevance Theory (RT) to discussions of reported speech, and to theorize his Paraphrasis/Form Principle. In his seminal article on the interplay of pragmatics and semantics in indirect reports, Capone (2010b) noted that the recursive rules of semantics (a) apply to a formal syntax, and (b) involve expressions at a level of 'logical form'; pragmatics, on the other hand, develops the semantically-generated logical forms into richer propositions; in doing so, pragmatics relies heavily on 'contextual' as well as 'social' clues and cues (in the sense described by Weizman and Dascal's (1991) to inject meaning from outside into logical forms. In this way, pragmatics can determine the prominence of certain computations for any given logical form (See CAPONE 2005, 2010a,b; MEY 2001; SALMANI NODOUSHAN 1995, 2006, 2008, 2013, 2014a, 2016; WOLFSON 1989). In other words, «semantics and pragmatics are part of a harmonious picture» (CAPONE 2010b: 377) work in tandem in that when a given surface sentence is liable to generate a wealth of logical forms, pragmatics orders them, makes some of them salient, and rules out the rest. To support his own views about the harmony between semantics and pragmatics, Capone challenged Kasher's (1991) claims about the modularity of the pragmatic processes involved in understanding speech acts. In doing so, Capone argued that "modular processes must be both mandatory and encapsulated" (CAPONE 2012: 601; see also CAPONE 2010c, 2011), and that explicatures are modular and are thus non-cancellable because they require 'modules on the fly' to search information (CAPONE 2009). As for conversational implicatures, he believes that the pragmatic processes involved can be either modular or non-modular; those that provide the 'propositional default inferences' are modular. However, they will be aborted and will give their place to non-modular propositions (e.g., certain inferences) if (access to) vast archives (encyclopedic knowledge) as well as contextual clues and cues render them invalid (See also CUMMINGS 2009). This argumentation relies heavily on Weizman and Dascal's (1991) account of 'clues' and 'cues'. For Weizman and Dascal, cues are contextual elements that can be used "for the detection of gaps and mismatch," and 'clues' are elements of context that can be used for the "determination of utterance meaning and speaker's meaning" (WEIZMAN & DASCAL 1991: 18). For Capone, "Dascal and Weizman, following a tradition going back to Searle (1979), notice that understanding a speech act is often a matter of filling the gaps left there by the speaker by using pieces of information available in the context (whether intended as the specific situation of utterance or background and cultural information having a

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bearing on the utterance)" (CAPONE 2012: 603). In describing his position in connection to reported speech, Capone (2005a,b) expatiates upon Mey's (2001) theory of pragmemes, and proposes his Paraphrasis/Form Principle (PFP) which, in his view, governs (indirect) reports. He is cognizant of the fact that principles that govern language use "are tied to the function of utterances in discourse, and, thus, should be sensitive to the speaker's orientation to the communicative situation" (CAPONE 2010b: 378). With this in mind, he connects his PFP to Sperber and Wilson's (1984) Relevance Theory (RT), and describes how RT gives unity to his various considerations of reported speech. In 2010, he had put forward his view of indirect reports as 'pragmemes'. In 2005a, he had drawn on Mey's (2001) ideas to define a pragmeme as:

> a situated speech act in which the rules of language and of society combine in determining meaning, intended as a socially recognized object sensitive to social expectations about the situation in which the utterance to be interpreted is embedded (CAPONE, 2005a: 1355).

Capone's view of reported speech as 'pragmemes' intersected in a good number of ways with his own view of indirect reports as 'language games'—which he explored in a different article (CAPONE 2012). He reviews the existing literature and scholarly thought on reported speech and draws on the theory of pragmemes as well as Wittgenstein's notion of language games, and tries to reconcile semantics and pragmatics and to suggest a theory of reported speech as language games at the heart of which lies the notion of semantics and pragmatics working in tandem. In doing so, Capone (2010b) exploited Wittgenstein's (1953) notion of language games in order to expatiate upon his own claims about indirect reports (which he also referred to as 'micro narratives') as 'language mini-games' which, by their very nature, are sensitive to contextual factors and to the context of speech. He collapses Wittgenstein's assumptions, Mey's (2001) perspective on societal pragmatics, and Dascal's (2003) perspective on socio-pragmatics into a so-called unified theory of reported speech as language games and claims that "making an indirect report is a more specific language game than is making a report" (2010b, 380). He explains how indirect reports, which can be viewed as cooperative language games (framed inside other games), "are based on norms or principles" to be learnt in "environments where actors engage in the practice" and norms are "rigidly enforced" (2012: 593). It is of great importance to note that both Wittgenstein (1953) and Dascal, Hintikka, and Lorenz (1996) connect language games to 'action' the aim of which is 'creating social reality'. If this is the case, indirect reports must be linked to 'actions' to qualify as language games—i.e., (indirect) reporting needs to clearly show its bearing on 'action'. In other words, if indirect reporting aims at 'representing' reported speakers' intended meanings (i.e., they are "anchored to language's representative power" (CAPONE 2012: 597)), then what is the point in calling them language games? In an attempt at showing how indirect reports can and do relate to 'action', Capone (2012) argues that the language game of 'presenting multiple voices' (proposed by DASCAL et al. 1996) is in fact embedded inside 'indirect reports'. That is, 'actions' are embedded inside 'representation' in indirect reports.

Seen in this light, "reporting is a sort of action in that it transforms events in the light of the needs of hearers in the context of the reporting event" (CAPONE 2012: 597). Although this derivative justification tries to make reported speech qualify as language games, Capone himself is not satisfied, and he brings another argumentation to the scene to make his hypothesis of 'indirect reports as language games' ever more solid. He claims that indirect reports are 'micro-narrations' and then sees them in the larger scope of 'narration as action'. He suggests that indirect reports are actions in the sense that, on the one hand, they can transform reality, and, on the other hand, they can have a number of consequences. Indirect reports may be embedded in an argumentative structure the aim of which is to 'spur' people to act; hence, they can become 'a form of life'; they can create social reality (See also CARAPEZZA & BIANCINI 2013, TANNEN 1989, and WITTGENSTEIN 1953). Indirect reports—like Dascal et al.'s 'presenting multiple voices' as well as other language games—are 'cooperative' games in that they involve at least three actors: the reported speaker, the reporting speaker, and the hearer. These actors cooperate in the game, and, depending on whether the report is in written or spoken form, readership/listenership helps the reporter to determine which parts of the original speaker's speech needs transformations. If transformations are done at all, they are done to favor understanding on the part of the hearer—e.g., paraphrasis which is done in indirect reports. The reporter is expected to adapt to the listenership/ readership; his task is to make sure that the reported speaker's voice remains prevalent.As such, Capone (2010b, 2012) argues that indirect reports require:

(1) a reporter who aims at creating what Jaszczolt (2005) refers to as pragmatic equivalence and perhaps presenting multiple voices;
(2) a piece of language behaviour to report;
(3) a goal-oriented situation that motivates the reporting and constrains its form; and
(4) an asymmetry of knowledge between the reporter and the hearer (unless the reporter aims at creating special effects).

These four elements of reported speech can be summarized as X reports (R) Y's assertion (A)—X Rs Y's A—(where X is the reporter, Y is the reportee, R stands for X's report, and A signifies Y's assertion) (CAPONE & SALMANI NODOUSHAN 2014).

In a follow-up work published in 2013, he exploited his own pragmatic ideas on quotation (expressed in Capone 2013) to explore the idea of 'multiple voices' in indirect reports. He specifically addressed the questions:

(1) Is it possible to express multiple voices in the same indirect report?
(2) How can one attribute a certain segment of an indirect report to this or that speaker?

Capone's answer to the first question is positive. To answer the second question, he draws on Weizman and Dascal's (1991)[9] description of 'clues' and 'cues', and claims that the sophisticated pragmatic know-how of speakers and hearers allows them to attribute different segments of speech to different voices. Central to his views of polyphony in indirect reports is the idea that, unless clues militate in the opposite direction, the default inference in connection with an indirect report is that the reported speaker's voice (or the original speaker's voice) is prevalent (CAPONE 2010d; CAPONE & SALMANI NODOUSHAN 2014). In this connection, Capone suggests that at least two voices can be heard in an indirect report: the voice of X and that of Y. Polyphony, however, can happen because 'recursiveness' allows more than two voices in indirect reports (e.g., X said that Y said that Z had said that A). His account of polyphony in reported speech is based on Bakhtin's (1984, 1986) ideas, and Capone emphasizes that «unless there are clues which can lead the hearer to recognizing separate voices, the reporter should do his best to represent (without interpolations) the reported speaker's voice» (2012: 594). Nevertheless, reporters often proffer reported speakers' voices as if they are their own; to use the Davidsonian (1968) term, they 'samesay' reported speakers' assertions: as such, "Galileo said that the earth moves" can be taken to mean "Galileo uttered a sentence that meant in his mouth what 'The earth moves' means now in mine." This clearly shows the existence of two voices (that of X and that of Y)—with its overt references to two mouths; hence, the assumption of 'samesaying'. Capone argues that X and Y's samesaying is manifested in the equivalence between the two utterances in terms of 'intended' meaning—but not simply in terms of 'sentential' meaning. That is, X should (re)produce a relevantly-synonymous R, albeit fine-tuned and adjusted to the situation of use and presented to the hearer (H) in the appropriate mode of presentation—but without taking responsibility for R (unless R is acceptable). Connecting samesaying to his view of indirect reports as language games, Capone suggests that, as a 'fair play' rule in the game, X is expected not to attribute Y offenses, impoliteness, rudeness, obscenity, and the like (CAPONE 2012, 2013a); altering A's phonological properties will definitely make R infelicitous. For R to be true, «the voice of the reporter must allow hearers to 'reconstruct' the voice of the reported speaker» (CAPONE 2012: 593). To guarantee this, X may not and should not alter Y's statements, intentions, and acts in any drastic way. Needless to say, «contextual clues and large chunks of world knowledge» (CAPONE 2010b: 378) make it possible for hearers to separate reporting and reported voices – and hearers often use what Oller (1975, 1978) calls 'grammars of expectancy' to achieve this. It seems as if reporters include cues and clues in their reports to help their addressees «to recognize different voices», «to separate voices attributing them to the original source, the current speaker […] or some other person involved in context», and «to recognize supportive and annotative aspects» (CAPONE 2013a: 154) – where depictive aspects relate to actually proffered words, annotative aspects refer to those that are noted, and supportive aspects allow speakers to make the indirect report. Capone refers to this as the "Decoupling Principle." Needless to say, samesaying does not involve a verbatim reproduction of Y's assertions (CAPONE & SALMANI

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[9] See also Dascal and Weizman (1987).

NODOUSHAN 2014). Omissions, summaries, additions, and other forms of modification are allowed provided that they do not alter Y's assertions in any drastic way. However, something can be added in a way of comment—provided that the rules of fair play are observed so that the hearer would be able to detect the added comments. For instance, as Capone and Salmani Nodoushan (2014) noted, the famous rendering of 'ARBEIT MACHT FREI' with a vertically-flipped 'B' over the Auschwitz main gate by a captive blacksmith produced an implicature that can comment on Y's assertion. The blacksmith's rendering of the slogan, with his own intention injected into letter 'B' in 'ARBEIT', compromised Nazi's intended message. People who saw the blacksmith's rendering of the slogan could separate his voice from that of the Nazis, and this can exemplify view that the reporter's task is to make sure that the reported speaker's voice remains prevalent.

8. The interplay of reported speech and slurs

Reporting slurs is a somewhat different story. Scholarly thought on reported speech can shed light on slurs and can reveal the diachronic evolution of slurs. There are controversies as to whether the voice of the reporting speaker or that of the reported speaker is prevalent when slurs are reported. For one thing, Lepore and Anderson (2013) argue that the reporting speaker's voice seems to be prevalent when slurs are reported. To account for this, they resort to a 'rule of use' which holds people (both the reporting and the reported speakers) ethically obliged to avoid slurs. This rule of use seems to them to be based on the assumption that not only conventional implicatures but also presuppositions fail to explain the embarrassment which follows any reporting of slurs. Capone (2012) hails Lepore and Anderson's (2013) account and it as evidence which testifies to the nature of reported speech as language use—due to its being bound by rules of use. However, he prefers a weaker version of Lepore and Anderson's account, and argues that in cases where slurs are reported, both the reported and the reporting speakers are to be held responsible for the embarrassment and offense caused. He further suggests that such rules of use are societal in that "using (or not using a word) is ultimately a matter of knowing societal, rather than linguistic uses" (CAPONE 2012: 600); the job of the reporting speaker is to dissociate himself from the slurring, and if he fails to do so, complicity is perceived even though cases of slurring, are to be attributed to the reported speaker's voice.In their discussion of the reason why reporting slurs is attributed to both the reported and the reporting speakers, Capone and Salmani Nodoushan draw on deontological and teleological ethics to suggest their views of slurring terms as deontologically-charged terms:

> deontological ethics judges the morality of an action (e.g., using foul language) based on the action's adherence to, and observation of, ethical rules, sometimes described as 'obligation', or 'duty'; in other words, there are rules that bind you to your duty. Teleological ethics, on the other hand, judge the morality of an action by its consequences (CAPONE & NODOUSHAN 2014: 37)

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It was stated above that, since indirect reports are rule-governed language games, hearers are able to find cues and clues in X's R which enables them to separate X's voice from that of Y's (CAPONE 2010a). However, Capone and Salmani Nodoushan (2014) noticed that in cases where slurs are reported, even if cues and clues strongly suggest that Y is to be held responsible, hearers hold both X and Y (or only X) responsible for the propositional content of the utterances. They argue that when bad language (e.g., dirty words, taboos, etc.) is part of a report, even when hearers know that it was part of the original speaker's assertion, they attribute it to X (Lepore and Anderson 2013) if X fails to avoid complicity. This is not because hearers are not able to perceive cues in the report (say, X's 'framing' of Y's bad language in quotation marks)[10] but because a form of 'cue-dominance' which challenges basic rationality principles is most probably at work. In this connection, I would like to suggest that there are 'recess contextual cues' in the report that assign the bad language to the original speaker, but at the same time there are also 'dominant archetypal cues' (i.e., the bad language itself) that assign it to the reporting speaker so strongly that recess contextual cues fail to operate; like in genetics where dominant genes do not allow recess genes to manifest themselves, in language use, too, dominant archetypal cues do not allow recess contextual cues to manifest themselves. In other words, it seems that bad language has encoded its own history of use, so it has mutated into a deontologically charged form of speech. It seems as if taboos, obscenity, vulgarity, defamatory expressions and other libelous linguistic forms have a deontologically-impolite content; their essence is dirty. It can be hypothesized that this impolite content was injected into them from outside in the first place when they were teleological in essence, but that they transformed, via diachronic reinforcement in a social-constructivist process of cognition modification, into deontologically conventional facts or cognitive archetypes—resulting in the collective speakers' modified cognitive structure.[11] In other words, through centuries of use, they have encoded their history of use, and they are dirty in essence even in isolation.[12] This deontological content signals that they should be avoided at any cost. In other words, there is a kind of archetypal social and popular phobia binding on all language users that 'deontologically-impolite language' should be avoided.[13] Slangs, obscenity, vulgarity, and the like «arouse strong negative reactions in many people and are used by only a portion of the population» (FALK 1978: 69).

9. The secret life of slurs

As such, I would like to suggest that it seems that slurs have had a secret evolution through which they underwent a kind of diachronic metamorphosis. In their early

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[10] For a full discussion of framing, see Goffman (1974).

[11] See Feuerstein (1990) and Vygotsky (1978).

[12] This has been expanded in another article by Salmani Nodoushan (forthcoming).

[13] More on this in a future monograph on "the secret life of slurs"

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stages of development, they were accidental gaps (potential words with no meanings injected into them) which were conventionally/accidentally associated with a form of dirty meaning. At this stage they were teleologically dirty, and their being judged as dirty was context-dependent. Their dirtiness was institutional, but not brute or fundamental. They were not innately dirty in isolation, but they were judged as contextually-dirty words when they were used to serve certain ill intentions (e.g., cursing, swearing, defaming, etc.). At that time, whether they could or should be used was a function of their consequences. They then gained popularity among those who did not show any respect for speaking hygiene, and as such, people began to react to them negatively, and their frequent re-use resulted in their metamorphosis into deontologically-absolute dirty language; they gradually encoded the history of their use, and became context-free essentially dirty forms of language; their dirtiness has become a brute or fundamental fact (see ANSCOMBE 1958). Today, we see them as terms that contain within themselves specific features which determine that their use is not right—their essence is dirty. Nevertheless, listeners may intentionally choose to ignore their dirtiness within their own in-groups if they love the speaker enough to ignore his/her vulgarity, but choosing to ignore them does not reduce from their being essentially dirty; for instance, it is quite frequent to observe intimate friends who use swearwords for socialization purposes (where they do no harm but rather signal intimacy). In other words, their innate features define the extent to which they conform with language users' moral duties—which derive from many different sources, including biology, psychology, religion, metaphysics, culture, language, etc.[14] If, for instance, we agree that a deontologically-absolute and right moral duty (in the Kantian sense) in any human society is 'above all do no harm', then we can suggest that slurs are to be avoided because they 'do hurt'. As such, the proposed secret evolution of slurs can be schematically represented in the following figure:
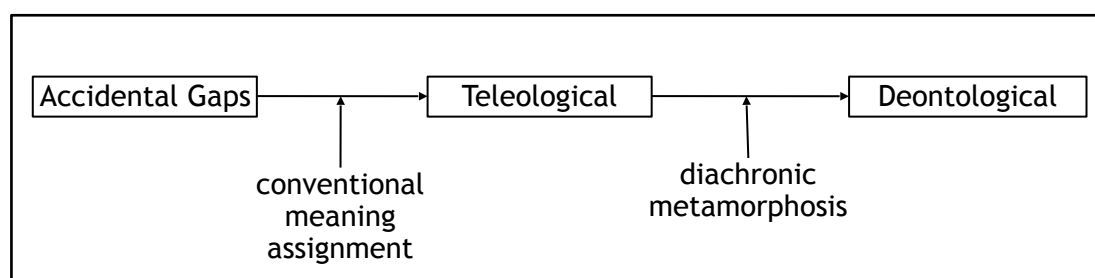

Figure 1. The secret metamorphosis of slurs.

It is due to this deontological nature of slurs that their use creates troubles for both the reported speaker and the reporting speaker. Seen in this light, slurs fall on the interface between pragmatics and social politeness (or relational face works), and it is not surprising to see cases in which slurs are used without causing any bad feelings. To exemplify this, let's take a look at an anecdote which I personally observed in the late 1980s. In a session of a class I had with a university professor at

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[14] Moral duties may be of any of the three types: (a) absolute (which accept no exceptions), (b) prima facie (which can only be overridden by a more important duty), or (c) conditional (which only hold under specified circumstances).

Shiraz University, he addressed a female student taking too long to respond to his question by uttering the proverb:

Persian: *bejonb, taa band e qabaa baaz koni sobh damide.*

Trans: hurry up, it will be morning before you take your pants off

After the class, a student reported this to every other student in the department, but no one held either the reporting student or the professor responsible for the bad language. Both the reporting student and the professor were loved by everyone, and this shows that people may sometimes subjectively choose to ignore the 'dirty essence' of slurs on emotional grounds. However, when the professor failed some of the students in the final exam, the flunkees started to recount the story and to blame the professor (but not the reporting student) for the insult. This shows that attributing responsibility for bad language in reports is determined by the assumptions the hearers have of the reporting and the reported speakers. This lends support to the claim that interpersonal relations affect hearers' judgments. Maybe this can be better explained in the light of Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory. If we can imagine that sociopragmatics and pragmalinguistics are in an overlapping distribution, then bad language will certainly fall on the interface between the two. A similar example was mentioned in an interview when Parkinson addressed Princess Anne saying:

> Do you ever regret what you say to them I mean there was a report that went round the world that you told one reporter to naff off I think it was […] do you wish to retract your choice of words or […] (PONTON 2014: 68)

Parkinson's instantaneous use of the word 'retract' lends support to Capone's (2010b) views on the non-cancelability of explicatures, though they can be retracted. Although it cannot be denied that explicatures must be part of indirect reports (CAPONE 2012), as a general rule, Iranians expect Xs to be careful when Y's A contains sensitive explicatures; if offensive explicatures are depicted in (indirect) reports, they cannot be cancelled. Since 'samesaying' is at work in reporting, both Y and X are responsible for any offense therein. As such, when dirty words in Y's A hold X between a 'rock and a hard place', X should remember that there is always a trade-off between 'fidelity' and 'opacity' in reporting. As such, a more opaque and less transparent report is to be preferred to a depictive but offensive report. This is in line with Lepore and Anderson's (2013) rule of use. It also supports Capone's stance that:

> Since using depictive elements involves taking the shortest route in the description process, when there is an alternative route which by embarking on a transformation involves greater processing efforts (and production efforts), it is clear that the avoidance of greater processing costs is taken as a sign of complicity, while the more costly transformation is taken (or would be taken) as a way of signalling that one is distancing oneself from the offensive segment of talk. We could consider 'complicity' a language game, in which two voices blend in case they share the same point of view. While in the normal case in which two speakers have different points of view, they tend to differentiate their voices, in

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the case of complicity two voices are presented as undifferentiated. Indirect reports are prototypical cases in which an utterance gives expression to two voices, the original speaker and the reporter. Thus, it goes without saying that an indirect report should present two slots in case the original speaker's voice and the reporter's voice are differentiated and only one slot in case the two voices blend (being undifferentiated). The presence of just one slot, instead of two slots clearly exhibits the complicity between the two voices. (2013a: 181)

10. Conclusion

In this paper, I adopted a historical perspective on reported speech. I began with a review of the traditional and purely structural derivative account of reported speech. Then I moved on to a description of Davidson's paratactic view of indirect reports. I then reviewed the main trends which can be found in the literature on reported speech and specifically focused on the discussions presented by such major figures as Cappelen and Lepore, Dascal and Weizman, Higginbotham, Kaplan, Rumfitt, Segal and Speas, Soames, Sperber and Wilson, Stalnaker, Wieland, and Wittgenstein *inter alia*. I reviewed the most important literature to be able to ground Capone's views within the right framework. Then I reviewed what Capone has done on reported speech.I then exploited the review to suggest that indirect reports can reveal the secret life of slurs. I suggested that the dirtiness of slurs, in the very first instances of their use in their early days of life, was dependent on the context in which they were used (they were teleologically dirty), but that their re-use through time led them to encode their history of use, so they are fundamentally and deontologically dirty now. As such, it would not be surprising if both the reporters and the reported parties who use slurs are held responsible for the offense today, but it would not surprise me if only the reported parties were held responsible for the offense in the early days when the dirtiness of slurs was context-dependent. All in all, the argumentation presented in this paper suggests that interpreting indirect reports on purely semantic grounds is doomed, and that a true interpretation of the truth-conditional nature of indirect reports will have to be based on an interplay between semantics and pragmatics.

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