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■장소: 광주 전남대학교 진리관(경영대학과 인문대 1호관 사이)

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Quotative Inversion Construction: A Corpus-based Approach

Jin-Young Kim & Kyung-Sup Lim (Dongshin University)

1. Introduction

speech:

English employs the so-called reported speech¹⁾ as exemplified by the attested corpus examples in (1)

(1)

	He laid down his bundle and thought of his		
a. Quoted or direct	misfortune. "And just what pleasure have I found,		
reported speech:	since I came into this world?" he asked.		
b. Reported or indirect reported	He laid down his bundle and thought of his misfortune. He asked himself what pleasure he had found since he came into the world		

c. Free reported indirect speech:

He laid down his bundle and thought of his misfortune. And just what pleasure had he found, since he came into this world?

Direct or quoted speech is a sentence (or several sentences) that reports speech or thought in its original form, as phrased by the first speaker. It is usually enclosed in quotation marks. The cited speaker is either mentioned in the inquit (Latin "he says") or implied.

In grammar, indirect or reported speech (also indirect discourse; Latin ōratiō oblīqua) is a way of reporting a statement or question. A reported question is called an indirect question. Unlike

Some writers omit the 'reported' and talk simply of 'direct speech' and 'indirect speech', while others restrict the term 'reported speech' to the indirect speech; However, it is useful to have a term covering both. (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002)

direct speech, indirect speech does not phrase the statement or question the way the original speaker did; instead, certain grammatical categories are changed. In addition, indirect speech is not enclosed in quotation marks.

Free indirect speech is a style of third-person narration which uses some of the characteristics of third-person along with the essence of first-person direct speech. (It is also referred to as free indirect discourse, free indirect style, or discours indirect libre in French.) What distinguishes free indirect speech from normal indirect speech is the lack of an introductory expression such as "He said" or "he thought". It is as if the subordinate clause carrying the content of the indirect speech is taken out of the main clause which contains it, becoming the main clause itself. Using free indirect speech may convey the character's words more directly than in normal indirect, as devices such as interjections and exclamation marks can be used that cannot be normally used within a subordinate clause.

Quotatives or direct reported speech is usually signalled by being enclosed in quotation marks as demonstrated in (2) (Quirk et al. 1985)

(2) But you can't say "This is the first time I 've heard this ..."

<ICE-GB:W1B-007 #100:3>

Reporting clause may occur before, within, or after the direct speech. That is, quotatives can be placed in varying position(initial, medial, final) relative to quotation, as show in (3)

- (3) a. Initial: But you can't say "This is the first time I've heard this ..."
 - <ICE-GB:W1B-007 #100:3>
 - b. Medial: "Goodness", she said, "I completely forgot."
 - <ICE-GB:W2F-013 #156:1>
 - c. Final: "Turn right," said Stephen, on his knees, one hand grasping the seat in front. <ICE-GB:W2F-015 #028:1>

All these examples in (3) have potential for inversion such likes (3c): Quoting verb said precedes the Speaker Stephen. The sentence likes (3c) is called 'quotation inversion(QI)'

- (4) a. John said, 'The newspaper is late again.'
 - b. 'The newspaper is late again,' John said.
 - c. 'The newspaper is late again,' said John.

At least three different patterns are available as illustrated in (4): (4a) is a canonical word order sentence while (4b,c) is the quotatives. In (4b,c), the quotatives in (4b) is non-inverted while (4c) is inverted: In inverted quotatives, the quoting verbs precedes the Speaker.

English Quotation inversion constructions are not only hard for non-native speakers to learn but also difficult to teach because of their intriguing grammatical and discourse properties, some of which we have just described. This paper aims to chart the grammatical(distributional, syntatic, semantic, pragmatic) properties of the QI construction.

2. Grammatical Properties: Corpus Findings

To better understand the grammatical behavior of the QI, We did a corpus search which can guide us to authentic data, rather than to the data built from linguists' intuition. The corpus we used is the corpus ICE-GB (International Corpus of English, Great Britain). ICE-GB contains about 1 million words of spoken and written British English. As one of the strong merits of the corpus, all the text units in ICE-GB are syntatically parsed, allowing us to perform detailed syntatic searches. Of the total 88,357 text units (parsed trees or sentences), 60,894 are spoken text units wheras 27,463 are written text units.

In the ICE-GB corpus, we have first identified all the QI constructions and then sorted out.

(5) Distribution of Quotatives in ICE-GB

Total ICE-GB	88,357 tokens		100.0%	
tokens	00,557 tokens			100.070
Quotatives	Inverted	48 tokens		
		(14.6%)	328 tokens	0.28%
	Non-inverted	280 tokens	(100.0%)	
		(85.4%)		

3. Quotation Inversion

Quotative inversion refers to linear word order in quotatives: In inverted quotatives, the quoting verb precedes the Speaker, and in non-inverted quotatives, the quoting verb follows the Speaker.

The non-inverted quotative is obviously the favored pattern. This observation leads to the basic assumption that non-inverted quotatives will contain different features than inverted quotations.

In most of quotation inversion construction, subject postposing is not permitted if the verb has an object as in (6).

- (6) a. *"I live alone" told Sue them
 - b. *"I live alone" told them Sue
- (7) a. "What do we do about this?" Tomaso had asked his wife. <ICE-GB:W2F-016 #039:1>
 - b. "My name's Jones," I told her. <ICE-GB:W2F-004 #031:1>

Another property of QI is that postposing of personal pronoun subjects is usually archaic. According to Quirk et al. (1982), inversion is most common when the verb is *said*, the subject is pronoun, and the reporting clause is medial.

3.1 Quotative Pattern

Quotatives can be placed in varying position(initial, medial, final) relative to quotation.

Presumably, quotatives in intial position will have different formal features from quotatives in medial and final position, and quotatives in medial and final position will have similar formal characteristics.

(8) **Initial:** As I took it out of my wallet, he continued, "To say you were over the speed limits is putting it midly."

Medial: "I know you're new here, Lola," purred Carla Santini, "and you don't understand how things work yet."

Final: "Oh, now, Chuck," mrs. Bass clucked.

3.2 Lexical Features

While many researchers observe that a various verbs can be used quoting verbs in quotation inversion (Quirk et al. 1985, Huddleston and Pullum 2002), few offer categorizations of possible types of quoting verbs. A sample of the large number of verbs that can be used to quotatives is given in:

Huddleston and Pullum (2002)	Quirk et al. (1982)	
	add, comment, object, say, admit,	
add, admit, advise, agree p , answer,	conclude, observe, shout(out),	
argue p , ask, beg, begin p-c , boast	announce, confess, order, state,	
${f p}$, call, comment, declare, demand ${f p}$,	answer, cry(out), promise, tell,	
explain, [%] go -c , grin p-c , inquire,	argue, declare, protest, think, assert,	
maintain p , mumble, observe, order,	exclaim, recall, urge, ask, explain,	
promise p , reason p , remark, reply,	remark, warn, beg, insist, repeat,	
say, smile p-c , state, suggest, tell p ,	whisper, boast, maintain, reply,	
think, warn, wonder p , write, yell	wonder, claim, note, report, write	

- a.. What types of verbs can be quoting verbs?
- b. How does quoting verb-type interact with position and inversion?
- c. How does the morphological expression of the Speaker interact with quotative position and

inversion?

d. Does quotative inversion interact with quoting verb selection?

3.3 Dicourse factors

3.3.1 Given Vs. New

The discourse status of the Speaker will affect quotative position and inversion. (Greogory and Michaelis 2002, Givon 1983)

According to Ward and Birner (2004, 1996), given constituents often occur before new constituents in a sentence. This given-new order can be applied to quotative position: Initial quotatives will contain discourse-old Speakers more frequently than medial or final quotatives; final quotatives will contain discourse-new Speakers more frequently than medial or initial quotatives.

The given-new order can be also applied to quotative inversion: Non-inverted quotatives will contain discourse-old Speakers more frequently than inverted quotatives, and inverted quotatives will contain discourse-new Speakers more frequently than non-inverted quotatives.

3.3.2 Heaviness

According to Arnold et al. (2000), the researches conclude that the heaviness of a constituent actually better predicts syntatic structure; They state that light items precede heavy items within an utterance. This often aligns with given and new information since new information is more likely to be coded with a heavy constituent. However, Arnold et al. found that when these two clash, speakers will choose to put the heavy constituent at the end of an utterance even if it means they will be putting new information before given information.

Heaviness of the quotative, then, could also play a role in quotative position and inversion. Does the heaviness of a quotative affect quotative inversion? The expectation based on Arnold et al. (2000) is that heavier quotatives will more frequently appear inverted than non-inverted.

4. Conclusion

발표자: 임경섭

소속기관: 동신대학교 영어학과

연락처: 010-9920-0320

e-mail: kslim@dsu.ac.kr/vielim@hanmail.net

발표자: 김진영 소속기관: 경희대 연락처: 010-6486-9009

e-mail: <kimjinyoung75@gmail.com>