

From: Ryo Chonabayashi

Professor Nakata's paper: Page 8-9:

I would like to hear more on the discussion on Moore's paradox. I am not sure how uttering (or, more precisely, asserting) "It was either raining or pretending to rain or not raining at all, yet still appearing to rain in a sense" can be the Nabokovian paraphrase of Moore's paradox. Just an appearance does not entail truth, so I find it is perfectly intelligible to assert the Nabokovian paraphrase (well, it is not very clear what it means by saying "pretending to rain". On the other hand, I do find there is something wrong in asserting "it is raining but I don't believe it is raining". So, it seems to me the Nabokovian paraphrase is not really a version of Moorean sentences. Or, the idea here is that according to Nabokovians, uttering a Moorean sentence can be understood as making a joke, not asserting the two propositions expressed by the sentence?

From: Akiko Nakata

Thank you very much for the good question. It is not easy for me to explain my intention clearly, but I will try.

The sentence, "it is raining but I don't believe it is raining," an example of Moore's paradox, consists of two clauses. Alone, both clauses are completely intelligible and natural, but when they are united in a sentence asserted by the first person in the present tense, the sentence becomes illogical. Nabokov's sentence in question does not fulfill the conditions.

So, how can I relate the sentence from TT to Moore's paradox? As the two clauses cannot be together in a sentence in the case of Moore's paradox, I assume that they do not belong to the same dimension or the same world—from now on, we leave logic for narrative. Looking back at "It was either raining or pretending to rain or not raining at all, yet still appearing to rain in a sense . . .," we are aware of "pretending to rain" and "in a sense" that sound unnatural, unlike the rest of the clause, which would be totally natural in an everyday conversation. "Pretending to rain" is the personification of rain, and "in a sense" is an unnecessary adverbial phrase. These phrases puzzle us, as we cannot be sure why they are put in the clause together with the other, very ordinary

expressions.

Moreover, the latter part of the sentence is also confusing and mysterious. “. . . in a sense that only certain old Northern dialects can either express verbally or not express, but *versionize*, as it were, through the ghost of a sound produced by a drizzle in a haze of grateful rose shrubs.” We sometimes observe that it appears to rain and do not need any special dialects (and which dialects are meant here?) to express the phenomenon. But the narrator goes further or slides in another direction. We could summarize it as “it appears to rain, and that is expressed by a sound of drizzle in a rose shrubs,” but in the sentence, the sound is doubly faded; it is not the sound but the ghost of it, and the drizzle falls not on the shrub but in the haze of it. By *versionizing*, the appearing raining loses its substance and fades into the sphere of ghosts.

One of the purposes of this complicated sentence is to attract the readers’ attention to the beings behind the world of the living characters. Moreover, the sentence represents the world with two, essentially incompatible, dimensions; in this way, it is similar to the sentence that exemplifies Moore’s paradox.

I think this explanation does not completely clarify this topic, but I hope it would be some help.