

# Conversations with Madness: Meaning, Context, and Incoherence



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## 1 Introduction

In this paper, I will discuss the view defended by Manuel Rebuschi, Maxime Amblard, and Michel Musiol in their 2013 paper entitled “Schizophrénie, logicité et perspective en première personne” (*Schizophrenia, Logic and First-Person Perspective*), in which they propose that schizophrenia is not entirely irrational but that the rationality of disordered discourse (specific to schizophrenia) can be accounted for from the first-person point of view—which, by their account, is not wholly introspective but is rather defined by a certain use of the charity principle, by contrast with what they call third-person approaches (such as neurophysiological or psychoanalytic accounts of schizophrenia). The overall objective of their work is to account for this rationality through the formalization of language.

As mentioned, these authors’ conception of a first-person account of the rationality of schizophrenic discourse is argued for on the basis of Willard Von Orman Quine’s (and Donald Davidson’s) “charity principle” (Quine 1960; Davidson 1974), and on the basis of Louis Sass’ account of schizophrenic solipsism, in his book, *The paradoxes of delusion* (1994). The general idea of the charity principle is that we take the most charitable stance toward the logic and/or rationality of other people’s behavior and discourse, i.e., we interpret a scenario in the most rational and/or logical way possible. Beginning from this perspective allows us to then reconstruct the rationality of statements or behavior that may appear disorganized and abnormal.

In what follows, I wish to argue in favor of a first-person perspective on schizophrenia by drawing partly on further insights from Louis Sass. I will, however, dispute what we may call “the charity-principle-view of a first-person account”. Indeed, Sass provides an account of the schizophrenic worldview, which is mostly but not wholly based on Schreber’s memoirs (see Freud 1958). Using Wittgenstein’s

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critical remarks and understanding of “solipsism” in philosophy (Wittgenstein 1965, 2009), Sass’ main point is that rather than suffering from “poor reality testing”, as the traditional view holds, the schizophrenic experience is more accurately characterized as a form of hyperreflexivity (Sass 1994: 96). In other words, it is not that the individual with schizophrenia is unable to distinguish his or her delusion from reality but rather that reality as she experiences it has an unreal character. Sass compares the schizophrenic condition to the modern (Cartesian and post-Cartesian) philosopher’s attitude, who questions the existence of the outer world and the existence of himself as a self, or who, like Kant, questions the very conditions of possibilities for knowledge. It is as if the schizophrenic was effectively trapped in a post-Cartesian, post-Kantian theatre:

Here, then, are the central paradoxes of schizophrenic existence; they suggest a profound kinship with the core dilemmas of the reflexive – and the modern – soul. (Sass 1994: 85)

In line with Rebuschi, Amblard, and Musiol, I find this view enlightening for at least two reasons, and I would like to suggest a way of accounting for the consequences of adapting such a view towards potentially furthering our understanding of the misunderstandings and awkwardness that can occur in schizophrenic discourse. These reasons are the following:

- (1) A shared form of life: by comparing the schizophrenic mind to the attitude of the reflexive or solipsist philosopher, Sass does *not* treat the schizophrenic thought process (although he agrees this may not apply to each and every case of what psychiatrists would label “schizophrenia”) as radically different from ordinary thinking and hence, in principle, not understandable (as Jaspers would argue—1963: 95–98), but rather as sharing something—if only language—with a more ordinary form of life.
- (2) The rationale of the schizophrenic point of view. The second reason is that, through this comparison, Sass also offers a way of understanding why communication with a schizophrenic patient may be altered, precisely because *they are not speaking from what Wittgenstein would have called an ordinary stance*, but from what phenomenologists have called an *epoche*. In other words, when a non-schizophrenic speaks to a schizophrenic, they are not necessarily speaking from the same world perspective, which in part may explain the awkward nature of the conversation.

I will begin by contrasting how the principle of charity is traditionally characterized with Sass’s interpretation of the schizophrenic delusion as solipsistic (and therefore essentially paradoxical). I will then argue, by exploring the paradoxical aspect of solipsism, in favor of the idea of continuity (or a shared “form of life”) between the two points of view: ordinary and schizophrenic. On the basis of this claim, I will propose a hypothesis for understanding what Rebuschi et al. call the “déficit interactionnel” (interactional deficiency) of schizophrenic conversations, as opposed to a “défaillance rationnelle” (rational dysfunction), and building on this

point of view, will make further exploratory suggestions of ways of understanding the so-called rationality of schizophrenic discourse, notably in relation to the complex notions of “context” and “meaning”.

## 2 Charity Principle and Solipsism

The success of the project aimed at formalizing schizophrenic conversations rests on a specific and interesting interpretation of the charity principle (often attributed to Quine but largely developed by his student Donald Davidson). As mentioned in the introduction, broadly construed, the charity principle consists in adopting the most logically or rationally charitable attitude toward the actions and speech of another individual or group. As Rebuschi et al. remind us (2013: 129), there are several understandings (or interpretive approaches) of the principle of charity:

- (1) A stance of strong logicity: the interpreted discourse conforms to classical logic.
- (2) A stance of weak logicity: the interpreted discourse conforms to the non-contradiction principle (and cannot, therefore, admit P and non-P simultaneously).
- (3) A stance of rationality: the interpreted discourse is rational (whether or not it conforms to the non-contradiction principle).

Rebuschi et al. claim that, in the case of schizophrenic discourse, an interpretation that considers the first-person perspective, despite the presence of certain identifiable contradictions, allows us to maintain both a stance of rationality and one of strong logicity. In other words, schizophrenic discourse conforms to the same rules of logic and to the same rationality as non-schizophrenic discourse. According to these authors language dysfunction in schizophrenia is more closely dependent on pragmatics (the *rules of the use of language*), and rhetorical and linguistic conventions (Rebuschi et al. 2013: 134). Which means that it is not logic itself which is deficient in schizophrenic discourse, neither is it semantics, but rather, schizophrenic discourse lacks pragmatic conventions which, through the course of a conversation, would normally allow the speaker to move from one meaning or topic to another. Effectively, they observed that the gaps in schizophrenic discourse are more often than not based on ambiguous word uses or confusing morphological structures. In their paper, they consider, for instance, the switch that occurs in a conversation wherein the phrase *être mort* (being dead) is used in a metaphorical sense (i.e., the result of losing in a game) and taken for literally being dead.

The element of strangeness in these conversations essentially comes from this break in the dialogic interaction, which suggests that the interlocutor thought she knew what the conversation was about suddenly needs to readjust when she realizes she no longer does. As a consequence, accounting for these gaps is not just a matter of applying the charity principle—i.e., of finding the most charitable interpretation of what was said or meant—but of *filling in* the gaps with the appropriate conversational

or pragmatic links that appear to be missing or remain implicit. This suggests that it is the *use* of normal indicators of transition in conversation that is flawed.

Rebuschi et al.'s point is based on an argument in favor of *pragmatic* inconsistency rather than logical or rational dysfunction: the two interlocutors use certain dialogical processes differently. Schizophrenic discourse does not manifest a rational dysfunction but rather, what they call an "interactional deficiency".

This claim, that it is not the logic or rationality of discourse which is flawed but rather its *use*, is grounded, as I mentioned earlier, on Sass' account of schizophrenic delusion as analogous to what Wittgenstein calls solipsism. Solipsism, in Wittgenstein's view, corresponds to a kind of philosophical skepticism. It is the philosophical stance according to which we are, so to speak, stuck inside of ourselves where we remain focused on our own subjective experiences, reality (if there is such a thing) will remain elusive. It is the idea that "the world is my world" and perhaps there is nothing beyond that (Wittgenstein 2001). The solipsistic perspective would hold that we cannot be certain that the world we inhabit is real (or is, what philosophers call, "mind-independent"), nor can we know for certain that other people exist, or that they are conscious beings. They could be fake humans or mere products of my imagination or a deceptive perception. In other words, the solipsistic scenario takes a philosophical attitude (which we might liken to Descartes' method of hyperbolic doubt) for its literal meaning. It is a way of extending the possibility of delusion or doubt far beyond what would constitute actual or ordinary conditions of delusion or doubt. Note, by the way, that Descartes' philosophical attitude (or Kant's or Husserl's for that matter) is not something he would have endorsed outside the field of philosophical speculation. In this respect, what we may call the existential solipsist is someone who pushes philosophical speculation to the point that it infiltrates every aspect of daily life.

For Wittgenstein, however, the solipsist is a philosophical character. Notably, because Wittgenstein strives to reject the very possibility of extending philosophical speculation beyond the boundaries of the ordinary: the idea is that a philosophical perspective should not be embraced if it is incompatible with our everyday life attitudes, or if it contradicts our normal ways of living, acting and thinking. A number of philosophers, however, are not afraid of pushing speculation to the point of contradicting what would be considered ordinary and assuming the possibility of a transcendental point of view or a "sideways on" perspective (McDowell 1994: 34). A worse scenario still would be if the character does not only endorse such philosophical speculations but incorporates them into his or her normal way of living, acting, and interacting with others. The individual who holds those philosophical views outside the context of philosophical speculation, would be (or at least sound) insane:

I am sitting with a philosopher in the garden; he says again and again "I know that that's a tree", pointing to a tree that is near us. Someone else arrives and hears this, and I tell him: "This fellow isn't insane. We are only doing philosophy." (Wittgenstein 1969: §467)

The person who might feel compelled to assert that they know that there is a tree in front of them, would act as if that was something that needed confirming and,

therefore, that this might be open to doubt. But in the situation described here, no ground for doubt has been raised, and therefore there is no ground for the need to dispel such a doubt. The need to do so would either be philosophical speculation (i.e., the result of a speculative far-fetched doubt) or disturbing.

What is interesting, in relation to Sass' understanding of schizophrenia, is that Wittgenstein would say that the one who takes such (modern) philosophical view seriously would sound insane. Indeed, according to Sass, the schizophrenic perspective can assign a strange texture to the world comparable to that which results from philosophical speculation (or philosophical doubt). It is not that the unreal *appears* real, as suggested by traditional accounts of schizophrenic perception, but rather that *everything takes on a certain unreal texture*, just like in the solipsistic philosophical stance. It is as if schizophrenics were constantly engaged in a philosophical questioning about the existence of the outer world. Instead of being deluded, the schizophrenic (at least in some cases of schizophrenia) would be in a state of hyper-intellectualization, of excessive reflexivity or "cerebralization" (Sass 1994: 171). Schizophrenia would be the existential incarnation of the problems of modern (post-cartesian) philosophy.

However, according to Sass, the difference between the schizophrenic patient and the philosopher is that, for the philosopher, the solipsistic stance is a mere parenthesis, a theoretical stance, which remains separate from his or her normal relationship to the world and his or her everyday way of living (1994: 172). The philosopher can argue in favor of solipsism while acting, in everyday life, exactly as if solipsism was wrong. On the contrary, the schizophrenic confronts the world from a solipsistic point of view and has a hard time switching from this reflexive stance to the ordinary stance where the existence of the world and of other minds is taken for granted and does not even come into question.

Drawing from Sass' analysis, Rebuschi et al.'s argument for interactional deficiency rests on the idea that we can account for the rationality of schizophrenic discourse from the first-person perspective by recognizing that its deficiencies originate from the peculiar nature of the schizophrenic experience of the world and meaning in the world rather than in merely faulty reasoning. In other words, they propose to combine the rationalist understanding of the principle of charity with Sass' phenomenological remark that schizophrenia is the living incarnation of the philosophical solipsist.

However, at least three related philosophical difficulties emerge from this perspective. The first difficulty directly challenges the principle of charity (regardless of which degree or understanding is applied) in that it appears to endorse a stance of methodological subjectivism according to which I can only access other people's mental life by *inference* from my own subjective experience or by *interpretation*. The second difficulty concerns the first-person perspective: what does it amount to if not literally be the person concerned? This leads directly to the third issue: since literally being the other person is materially impossible, how does this conception of a first-person perspective not become reduced to a mere transposition of "my" rationality or perhaps "our" rationality to the "other".

I have chosen not to explore each of these issues systematically, but instead will treat each as they relate to a core issue which is the understanding of Wittgenstein's conception of solipsism and privacy.

### 3 The Rationality of Schizophrenic Discourse

Interacting with an individual diagnosed with schizophrenia involves accepting that certain things can no longer be taken for granted, in particular the fact that we share the same basic *certainities* (to borrow from the title of one of Wittgenstein's last work 1969). Our reference points, notably those on which we rely for assigning meaning, lose their stability. As a result, the schizophrenic's interlocutor may have the sensation that they have been drawn into a kind of solipsistic experience, where it may become uncertain whether their world or context of reference is the same as that of his or her (facing) interlocutor. Once again, drawing on a remark from Wittgenstein, it is not agreement in meaning or definitions which is defective, but "agreement in judgement"; it is not the method of measurement—the rules and grammar of language—which is not shared, but "a certain constancy in results of measurement" (PI, §242)—what words and sentences are about. I will elaborate further on this remark shortly.

For now, let us consider that if, as alleged by Rebuschi et al., a degree of rationality exists on both sides in such an interaction, we should also be able to reconstruct the worldview from which the other is speaking. Indeed, the paradox of solipsism is precisely that, in spite of being solipsistic, to be understood as a genuine stance it still needs a reference point wherefrom we can assign meaning and which would lead us to what Wittgenstein calls "agreement in judgement". In spite of its being solipsistic, we need to be able to represent this solipsistic world accurately, otherwise we would not be able to formulate solipsism, much less have a conversation with the schizophrenic patient.

But if this is indeed the case, the solipsistic world view will simultaneously lose its solipsistic dimension. As such, if schizophrenia is to be understood as an existential incarnation of solipsism, it cannot represent genuine solipsism. The reason being that solipsism has been shown by Wittgenstein to be a *logical impossibility*: solipsism is precisely a limit case, a position no one can genuinely adopt. And, therefore, the philosopher drawn toward solipsism is, necessarily, to some extent acting in bad faith. This is where Sass's descriptions become disturbing: he wishes to extend solipsism to a way of living,<sup>1</sup> but in doing so he annihilates the logical possibility of formulating solipsism. If solipsism is to be understood as irrational doubt or doubt beyond the limits of reasonable doubt, it has to rest on a conception of reasonable, rational doubt.

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<sup>1</sup>This is the reason why Sass (1994: 75) speaks of "quasi-solipsism", following Wittgenstein's idea that, although a logical impossibility, solipsism may remain a (philosophical) temptation. However, solipsism is not measured in terms of degree, it is an intrinsically paradoxical position for which formulation is logically impossible (see below).

Descartes could not have appealed to his reader's intuitions if his hyperbolic doubt did not rest on ordinary doubt—i.e., a doubt regulated by “normal” circumstances. In other words, solipsism, as the verge of a logical limit and as an abusive extension of features of ordinary doubt, is only understandable on the grounds of ordinary doubt.

When pushed to its limit, solipsism cannot be expressed and should lead to a private, unshareable, and untranslatable language, at least not what could by any means be considered to be a language at all. But this is paradoxical, given that to even be expressed, solipsism must use the very reference points that we use in the non-solipsistic stance. And, this would also have to be the case for the schizophrenic person as well, as he or she is only able to question the reality of his or her perceptions on the basis of what he or she perceives to be a stable concept of reality (and of a shared language). If everything is doubtful, nothing is; solipsism cancels itself out. According to Sass, this is the paradox in which the schizophrenic person feels trapped, but this is also the very condition that would allow us to understand his or her perspective, and likewise, to be understood ourselves.

The paradoxical character of solipsism is that which allows us to enter the solipsistic world despite the possibility that the world might be revealed to not be solipsistic at all. This concept directly echoes Stanley Cavell's understanding of skepticism, which combines both a fear of not being understood and the logical impossibility of a private language (Cavell 2002).

These remarks naturally lend themselves to the earlier mentioned idea of a shared form of life, an idea which has largely been defined in a negative way. Following is one of the more eloquent examples:

A dog believes his master is at the door. But can he also believe his master will come the day after tomorrow? – And what can he not do here? – How do I do it? – How am I supposed to answer this? Can only those hope who can talk? Only those who have mastered the use of a language. That is to say, the phenomena of hope are modes of this complicated form of life. (If a concept refers to a character of human handwriting, it has no application to beings that do not write.) (Wittgenstein 2009, II, i)

According to this account (see also Wittgenstein 2009, §§19, 23, 241) a form of life is that which is shared by beings to whom we wish to apply a certain concept which is dependent on that form of life. However vague or general this notion might be, it has the advantage of grasping the idea that a schizophrenic human being and a non-schizophrenic human being share something in common (even if it is a barely perceptible level or one difficult to describe). It is precisely this “common” or “shared” character that Sass and Rebuschi et al. have focused on understanding. Stated more plainly, madness does not lead us away from the human (or a specific human's) form of life. It would be too easy to say that what we do not understand in another person's attitudes or behavior will definitively remain outside the boundaries of understanding. The *shared form of life* claim leads to the possibility of an anthropological approach to understanding human “madness”—although, as I shall argue, it does not necessarily lead to the idea of a shared “rationality” (the problem with this word being that it is almost as obscure as the phrase “form of life”). For instance,

to understand the sense in which schizophrenic solipsism cannot simply lead to the mere impossibility of communication, i.e., to a private language, we might do well considering the *contrasting* view of conversations involving a schizophrenic person with the following well-known quote by Wittgenstein:

If a lion could talk, we could not understand him (Wittgenstein 2009, II, xi)

This is precisely not the case for schizophrenic discourse, namely because schizophrenic communication is based on human language. The difficulties that present themselves to us are not extra-human but arise within the anthropological context (similar to when the anthropologist meets a new tribe).<sup>2</sup> The language spoken by the schizophrenic is the very same language as the one we have learned, it is grounded on the same reference points, including the fact that we inhabit the same “world” and have similar social and natural needs. We also share a form of life in the most basic sense: the sense in which we do not share this form of life with the lion. This is where the paradox of solipsism offers more accuracy: we have to share the same “form of life” (perhaps the same needs, worries, etc.), in order to not only communicate with language but more simply to be able to empathize with our schizophrenic interlocutor and to understand the misunderstandings.

The viewpoint that exclusively considers irrationality might point us toward the notion that schizophrenia represents limits in the context of humanity, but clinical analyses and studies of human interaction tell a very different story. It is possible to have a conversation with a schizophrenic person in a way that would not be possible when communicating with a lion. Importantly, at issue here are not the limits of humanity; we are still firmly focused on an exchange that takes place in a human world. However, the ordinary points of reference can be blurred or categorically questionable.

If we are not touching the limits of humanity (or even of human rationality) then we need another explanation for what might be termed interactional deficiency. The question becomes: what do we have in common (what is the common ground between us that allows us to converse and analyze discourses) and likewise, what do we not have in common?

First and foremost, a simple truth about interactions involving schizophrenia is that certain questions may arise that would not in the course of normal conversations. These questions largely have to do with speakers’ intended *meaning*, with meaning signifying *vouloir dire* (wanting to say). Normally, in a conversation where there is no room for ambiguity, we do not have to spell out or *interpret* what is said.<sup>3</sup> There

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<sup>2</sup>Note that the point here is not to discuss the other important question of the extent to which the “shared” or the “common” could be extended outside sphere of the anthropological. But this surely is another question insofar as this extension could not be strictly based on a shared language and conventions (as it could not perhaps with certain highly handicapped or very young human beings).

<sup>3</sup>This is one of the reasons why I think we should take issue with a general application of the “charity principle” beyond genuine cases of misunderstanding, i.e., beyond exceptional situations. But one could argue this criticism is, to some extent, misplaced here, since the examined conversations are “abnormal”; they are conversations where something unusual is happening, where the norms of normal interaction are impaired.

is a spontaneous understanding of what the other speaker means. When this is not the case, we share common means for addressing any ambiguities by way of asking the speaker questions.

If we consider Sass's reading of schizophrenic rationality, these issues are more likely to arise in a conversation as a result of *defect* of agreement in terms of *meaning* in *context* while using the same words, phrases, or sentences. And this defect of what is *meant* would come from the fact that the *context* of reference might not be the same for the schizophrenic individual despite the fact that they would be sharing the same context of interaction as his or her interlocutor and in spite of sharing a language and a form of life. What Wittgenstein calls "agreement in judgement" may be missing precisely because, to some extent, the schizophrenic may refer or attend to her solipsistic view of the world while the interlocutor cannot have direct access to this world, which may then work as another context.

A similar situation might arise in a normal conversation when someone thinks the other is thinking about the same thing but in fact is not: this may lead to a simple misunderstanding or even a *quid pro quo*. Or again, the situation may remind us some of Wittgenstein's anthropological thought experiments:

I might therefore interrogate someone who said that the earth did not exist before his birth, in order to find out which of my convictions he was at odds with. And then it might be that he was contradicting my fundamental attitudes that were how it was, and if so I should have to put up with it. (Wittgenstein 1969: §238)

In certain human interactions, there is a point at which, Wittgenstein argues, all we can do is "put up with it", i.e., with the limited possibilities of discussion and persuasion.

Isn't this altogether like the way one can instruct a child to believe in God, or that none exists, and he will accordingly be able to produce apparently telling grounds for the one or the other? (Wittgenstein 1969: §107)

Although this analogy may have its limits, interestingly it points to the range of limits involved in human mutual understanding without rejecting altogether the possibility of understanding. I can figure out, to some extent, the other's point of view, but I may find myself in a situation where there are limits to this understanding. And these limits need not confront the rational to the irrational but rather different "certainties" or viewpoints, which are not incommensurable but surely incompatible.

Here, the question turns to whether these anthropological variations may or should be understood in terms of a charity principle that relies on a certain concept of rationality, and whether we may maintain the idea of a "first personal perspective" (with or without the charity principle). In what follows, I will argue that we may endorse a certain conception of subjectivity (or first-person point of view) without the need of a charity principle.

#### 4 Understanding “Interactional Deficiency” (Le “Deficit Interactionnel”—Rebuschi et al. 2013)

With this prospect in view, my last point will consist in elaborating on the idea that, if we refer back to Sass, the deficiency in schizophrenic conversations cannot merely be interactional, but has to do with the individuals’ *understanding of the context*, and that such an understanding may provide an insight (which, at this stage can only be programmatic) into a way of understanding the first-person perspective without necessarily transposing the listener’s rationality on the speaker’s (as the charity principle view would support), but rather to account for both viewpoints in the context of a two-sided interaction (and a shared form of life).

If this is the case, it might be appropriate to question whether it is enough to explain the conversational breaks as mere defects in the *use* of dialogical processes. Surely this concept of “use” would require further specifications. If the defect of use actually has to do with a defect vis-a-vis some points of reference, which are not themselves strictly *internal* to language, then “use” cannot simply be understood as the ability to apply certain pre-existing logical rules. As suggested by Sass’s analysis, we would to some extent need to account for elements that are external to language, including a *Weltbild* or *Weltanschauung* (see Wittgenstein 1969: §94). It is not something that we may fully describe or account for, but neither does it have to be private, inexpressible, or ineffable.

We may agree that schizophrenic discourse is not paraconsistent; i.e., the apparent contradictions are not genuine contradictions. Now what we are missing is a world-view, which means *contextual* and not merely semantic or even pragmatic elements. This notion of *context* needs to be specified.

Another way of making this point would be to say that what is essentially lacking is what the individuals *mean* by what they say. Where meaning is not a mere matter of translating from a foreign language to a spoken language, granted we would be speaking the same natural language. But rather where meaning is a matter of a “referential” world or context. In other words, words do not acquire a new meaning in schizophrenic discourse, but we are missing the *context* necessary to understanding what they mean, including where the speaker is speaking from.

If we follow the idea of a *Weltanschauung*, the interactional situation may be compared to the theatrical situation of a *quid pro quo* (misunderstanding). For the sake of comparison, however, the misunderstanding cannot merely rest on semantic confusion about the understanding of an ambiguous word; it has to rest, for instance, on mistaken identity. One person in the conversation thinks they are talking about A or to A, when they are talking about B or to B. They are not thinking of the same person or the same thing.

This point has to do with what Charles Travis (2008) calls “occasion-sensitivity” and with Wittgenstein’s following remark (Wittgenstein 2009, §242):

If language is to be a means of communication there must be agreement not only in definitions but also (queer as this may sound) in judgments. This seems to abolish logic, but does not do so. — It is one thing to describe methods of measurement, and another to obtain and

state results of measurement. But what we call “measuring” is partly determined by a certain constancy in results of measurement.

“Agreement in judgment” requires that we may agree not only about the internal logic of language but also about what we *mean* on a given occasion by what we say. We need to share not only “the methods of measurement” but also “a certain constancy in results of measurement”. And this can only be achieved through what Travis calls “the parochial”, i.e., some kind of shared understanding of the situation and of what we are talking about. There must be a context that we share for us to talk together meaningfully. We need a common ground, even to disagree.

Building on this perspective might explain the breaks that commonly occur in schizophrenic discourse by a defect of “a sense of the parochial”, or an altered sense of what the speaker and the listener commonly have in mind over the course of their conversation. What Travis calls “occasion-sensitivity” has to do with the ability of words, phrases, and sentences to change their meaning depending on the indefinite variety of occasions in which they are used. And the sense of the parochial is then the ability of speakers to *mean* what they want to say on a given occasion. If the conversation-breaks can be understood as defects of a sense of the parochial, the interactional deficiency can be understood as a defect of “agreement in judgment”. It is as if suddenly and incomprehensibly the interlocutors were not talking about the same thing anymore, as if there had been a sudden “invisible” shift of the context. (Just like when someone, in a conversation, follows her own thought and says something out of the blue, without explicating the thought.)

The difficulty raised by this analysis comes from the fact that in spite of all this we share the same language; we have learned the same language (with the exception of local specificities). The schizophrenic does not attach new (or personal) meanings to words. We just have a hard time understanding what he or she means or is talking about sometimes. This echoes the paradoxical character of solipsism as both supposedly inaccessible but expressed on the ground of a shared language and form of life.

To my mind, the interesting idea which comes from this way of putting things is that if we earnestly apply stances of logic and rationality to cases that genuinely interest us, if there is a deficiency, it would by consequence be a *two-ways* and not a one-way deficiency (like in the *quid pro quo*): we are (to a certain extent) misunderstanding *each other* (just like the believer and the non-believer are). This is why it is interesting to speak of distinct referential viewpoints, which entails not only the possibility of not understanding but also the possibility of not being understood by the other. It is necessarily a two-sided deficiency. It is as if the speakers were not sharing some basic certainties, but, at the same time, shared enough to continue the conversation.

In terms of future directions, this perspective could potentially lead us to consider how more elements might be accounted for in the logic of the conversation, as a general suggestion. The underlying idea being that these conversations are traditionally analyzed in what might be termed a thin context (they are isolated conversations), and are considered through the lens of possible formalization, which is for the most

part internal to language and to the interactional situation. Applying Sass's hypothesis would necessitate a broader scope to include (and the list is not—and cannot be—exhaustive) the location, participant availability, the roles of the speakers (and how they are initially presented to each other), the reasons or appeal of participating in the interview, the medical context, and so on. In fact, Sass's views would prompt us to avoid thinking of rationality as an exclusively internal function of discourse and would provide more room to consider context (including solipsistic—which may imply understanding the schizophrenic world in a more accurate way, not solely restricted to language as an isolated element).

Lastly, and as a consequence of the notion that interactional deficiency must be two-sided, we might next question how the pathological may shed important light on the non-pathological, notably what we might learn about the mechanism that leads something so highly familiar (language, our language) to be transformed into something so disordered and utterly strange. How might identifying what is missing in pathological interactions lead us to understanding the largely unseen aspects of the “ordinary” on which interactions are based?

There are at least two ways in which the logical analysis and modeling of schizophrenic discourse may help to shed light on our understanding of the logic of non-pathological conversations. Indeed, based on the work by Rebuschi, Amblard, and Musiol, there are gaps to be filled in the logic of schizophrenic conversations that are not usually at issue when considering the logic of normal conversation. (1) The first way analyzing pathological conversations may inform the logic of normal conversation is simply by pointing to missing implicit elements that would need to be accounted for in logic. (2) Second, a stronger view would be to say that the consequences of the analysis of pathological discourse—understood as rational—might point to the limits of the logical understanding of language and to the fact that there are key elements in conversations which cannot be accounted for by formal logic. Of course, this does not disqualify formal logic as a whole, but it raises an epistemological question regarding its theoretical scope. What remains to be accounted for are the defects of “agreement in judgement” and of a “sense of the parochial”.

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