On violating intersubjectivity.
Notes on Rommetveit's pluralism.

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I Introduction

Rommetveit (1979a) asks "how can language create and transmit social representation ?" This paper asks the contrasting question:"What when language fails (by deliberation or not) to transmit social representations? What may some of the consequence then be?"

It is hoped that this will serve to further elucidate Rommetveit's position, and to show how his posititon may be strengthened by drawing in areas not previously considered, notably some examples from the works of Milton H. Erickson. These examples will be seen to buttress Rommetveit's position by further invalidating the premises of the position he casts in the role of the villain: "Negative rationalism".

Contrary to what Rommetveit (1979a, 17-18) seems to feel it is not necessary to go to schizophrenia and autism in order to study what happens when intersubjectivity fails. A more important point to be made is to try to draw attention to what is tentatively called "the bodily aspects of language". Various states of understanding/not understanding are not always simply "intellectual state", but may have profound bodily impact, G. A. Kelly's (1955) theory is here useful.

From one point of view this paper may seem to strengthen pluralism by calling attention to different ways of violating intersubjectivity; this adds to the complexity of the already forbidding 19,200 states of intersubjectivity (Rommetveit 1979a, 1979b). But can ardent defense fail to produce its antithesis? What started out as a defense of pluralism paradoxically turned into some critical questions on pluralism by drawing attention to some common features of the 19,200 states. These are not easily recognized unless - as here -contrast: states are discussed.
Deliberately violating intersubjectivity.
Two examples from Erickson.

A key assumption in Rommetveit's position is that "what is made known by what is said is always in part contingent upon what at that moment is tacitly taken for granted". (Rommetveit, 1978, p. 29 - 30) From this it follows that if a recipient of a message, p_q, can not tacitly take anything for granted, he or she may experience that nothing "is made known". Put otherwise: if an utterance is widely divergent with the context, highly atypical states may result: confusion: bordering on hypnotic trance, or in some milder cases, humour. An utterance which "ordinarily" will seem so straight forward as to defy inclusion in any list of ambiguities: "It's exactly 10 minutes of two") may if sufficiently divergent with the context produce utter confusion. Not only can context provide an utterance with meaning, it can also "completely" remove all meaning. And now for our main example which is of special interest since it inspired one of his most powerful hypnotic techniques, "the confusion technique" and will thus be quoted in full (Erickson 1967,p.13).

(1) The incident, one of spontaneous humour on my part, that led to its adaptation as a possible hypnotic technique was as follows. One windy day as I was on my way to attend the first formal seminar on hypnosis conducted in the U.S. by Clark L. Hull at the University of Wisconsin in 1923, where I reported on my experimental work and graduate psychology students discussed my findings, a man came rushing around the corner of a building and bumped hard against me as I stood bracing myself against the wind. Before he could recover his poise to speak to me, I glanced elaborately at my watch and courteously, as if he had inquired the time of the day. I stated, "It's exactly 10 minutes of two", though it was actually closer to 4:00 p.m. and I walked on. About half a block away, I turned and saw him still looking at me, undoubtedly still puzzled and bewildered by my remark.

There are basic communalities between this situation and Rommetveit's general account of dialogues. There is "an immediately shared here - and now" (Rommetveit 1978,p.27) or we could here say that Erickson and "a man" are precipitated into an encounter ("bumped").
Though there has been no explicit "invitation to engage in dialogue", the situation definitely calls for some verbalization and would tend to induce "the two participants [to] leave behind them whatever their preoccupations were at the moment" (Rommetveit 1979a, p.17)

However, in usual communication "the speaker monitors what he says in accordance with what he assumes to be the listener's position...to make his own private world comprehensible to the other" (p.18). By contrast Ericson, p₁₉ bars "a man", p₂₀ from acting out from his position (bumping into a stranger). This is accomplished by acting according to a position incompatible with that of p₂₀ (a question about time) and Erickson's "private world" (thoughts about Hull, exercising his sense of humor) is deliberately made inaccessible to p₂₀. Whereas ordinarily "p₁₉ attempts to make known his world by addressing p₂₀ on what he assumes to be p₂₀'s premises" (p.17) Erickson addresses p₂₀ on premises he knows are alien to p₂₀. The importance of "inbuilt circularity", "reciprocal role taking" or "taking intersubjectivity for granted" (p.17) is very clearly revealed when Erickson deliberately violates these premises, and imposes an "alien" definition on the situation for p₂₀ such that the victim is left gaping in confusion. The startled reaction of p₂₀ testifies to how deeply we are committed to taking "reciprocal role taking" for granted. Whereas usually communication may be described by offers of "drafts of contracts ... potentially shared strategies of categorization and cognitive-emotive perspectives on what is being talked about" (Rommetveit, 1978, p.29), Erickson in a sense offers a contract which cannot be accepted.

Hopefully the example shows that one can understand "failure of inbuilt circularity" from everyday life occurrences, it is not necessary to turn to schizophrenia and autism.

Violations of intersubjectivity may be described as varying in "strength". We consider an agent "violating" a victim. Some of the factors related to strength are:

(the list consists of highly overlapping factors which further are not exhaustive)
a) how readily the situation is construed in one specific way, and how implausible alternative constructions are. In Kelly's (1955) terms: how preemptive is the dominant construction?

b) How strongly does this construction tend to elicit/lead one to expect specific type of behaviours (e.g. in (1)
"I'm sorry" / "look where you are going" etc.)

c) How enmeshed, engulfed is "the victim" in the situation, vs. being "disengaged". In (1) Erickson - presumably unlike the victim - kept considerable "distance"; he was not "caught" by the situation.

d) How difficult it is for the victim to assimilate the construction imposed by the agent.

e) How "forcefully" the alternative construction is presented. Immediacy and exuded certainty and definiteness are here important factors. There is a pronounced difference between the way a lay person might say "it's exactly 10 minutes of two", and the way a hypnotist as Erickson would say it in (1).

With quite weak violations one would not expect more than a raised eyebrow, or a puzzled glance. The other end of this dimension, however, can be described as more like a hypnotic trance. We do not have information as to where on such a dimension Erickson left the victim in (1). The point is, however, that situations with structure similar to that of (1) in other instances can lead directly to trance as in the next example:

(2) There was a physician who "repeatedly manifested hostile aggressive behaviour...when introduced to the author he shook hands with a bone-crushing grip...and aggressively declared that he would like to "see any damn fool try to hypnotize me"...As the man stepped up on the platform, the author slowly arose from his chair as if to greet him with a handshake. As the volunteer stretched forth his hand, prepared to give the author another bone-crushing handshake, the author bent over and tied his shoe strings slowly, elaborately and left the man standing helplessly with the hand outstretched. Bewildered, confused, completely taken aback at the author's nonpertinent behaviour, at a total loss for something to do, the man was completely vulnerable to the first comprehensible communication fitting to the situation that was offered to him. As the second shoe string was being tied, the author said, "just take a deep breath, sit down in the chair, close your eyes, and go deeply into trance." Erickson (1967, p. 153)
This the subject did, and it will be seen that "tying shoe strings" served similar function as "it's exactly 10 minutes of two". Utterly "devastating" the physician's construction of the situation, the way was paved for trance induction.

III Violating intersubjectivity vs. "Failure to understand".

What we here have introduced as "violating intersubjectivity" should not be confused with ordinary cases of failure to understand. We give some examples of the latter.

(3) (in a serious discussion of scientific matters).
If I fail to understand the relevance of the previous remark to the topic under discussion.

The wording is intended to convey the unruffled speaker, not perturbed but rather strengthened in the belief of his or her "taken for granted" world. Asserting "irrelevance" implies knowing what is relevant.

(4) I did not quite get the question, would you please clarify it?

This may simply be one of the standard ploys to throw off an opponent and not any failure to understand. But if it is a genuine plea for clarification the wording suggests that there is a common topic, though the perspectives of the participants may differ.

(5) (Seeing someone perform a strange act).
Why do you behave so strangely, is anything the matter?

In extreme cases one may buttress belief in one's sanity by imputing "madness" to the actor one observes: In milder cases "neurotic" may serve.

Common, to these examples, and to most everyday example where "we do not understand", is the fact that our basic assumption of intersubjectivity is not touched. The fact that others (temporarily) may not deserve full and equal status as co-actors does not in the least shatter my belief that I live in a stable, predictable world. The other poor fellow may occasionally be unable to follow the rules (because
of "stupidity", "madness", "neuroticism" or whatever) but the rules are not questioned and there are other "reasonable people" who will see it my way.

Contrary to these examples the victims in the examples from Erickson may be said to be (temporarily) uprooted from their existence, their basic assumption of intersubjectivity being challenged. Erickson's behaviour may be described as a paradoxical injunction. It shares the central features of a double bind as described in the classical 1956 formulation (Bateson, 1973, p.178-179).

\[ a) \text{Erickson: asserts intersubjectivity by performing conventional actions in standardized ways (giving the time, tying shoelaces). In a double-bind there is a primary injunction.} \]

\[ b) \text{denies intersubjectivity by placing the behaviour in utterly inappropriate contexts. In a double-bind there is a secondary injunction conflicting with the first at a more abstract level.} \]

\[ c) \text{Prevents the victim from commenting upon or escaping the dilemma by his "forceful" behaviour, cf. e) p. 4. In a double-bind there is a tertiary injunction prohibiting the victim from escaping from the field.} \]

Erickson teaches us to see the importance of intersubjectivity by studying what happens when it is violated. The victim, \( p_2 \), is barred from acting from his or her premises since \( p_2 \) is confronted with an action completely incompatible with \( p_2 \)'s premises.

We now put the argument in terms of the formal apparatus developed by Rommetveit (1979a, 1979b). Discussing "the mystery case "What was Mr. Smith doing behind the lawn mower?" a variety of meanings of this behaviour is discussed in great detail (1979b, p.7).
Formally (p.23) there is a "publicly identifiable state of affairs, S" and with respect to this state there is "an individual state of beliefs".

S "may thus be the "trivial minimum' Mr. Smith's mowing of the lawn!"

Individual states of belief are labeled $R_j^1, R_k^1, R_l^1$ where the following are some of the concrete examples discussed:

$R_j^1$ = a manifestation of good conventional Scarsdale citizenship
$R_k^1$ = a preparation for a novel crop of long grass and clover blossom
$R_l^1$ = a wife-avoiding maneuver

Rommetveit's main concern is that the event S may be experienced from a variety of different perspectives, these may be symbolized as "S is $R_j^1$", "S is $R_k^1$" etc. These states of beliefs are assigned truth values in a "dialogical truth table" (p. 23), and conditions for arriving/not arriving at intersubjectivity under a variety of different states of belief and different interpersonal relations are discussed.

From our point of view, however, intersubjectivity is a feature of all the 19200 combinations in the dialogic truth table since all combinations share S, 'Mr. Smith's mowing of the lawn'. Erickson's examples depart from this intersubjectivity since they may be construed as implying two quite different answers to the basic question "what is going on" (Goffmann, 1974). In (1) $p_1$ acted as if the following, $S_1$, was a viable description of the situation: "a request for time". This is clearly different from "what is going on" for $p_2$ : "bumping into a stranger". In (2) we may describe $S_1$ as "tying shoelaces" and $S_2$ as "ritual/competitive greeting".

"Violating intersubjectivity" is thus seen to be different from Rommetveit's examples since the latter all share the feature $S_1 = S_2$. As will be further commented later, the actors, $p_1$ and $p_2$, (implicit) strengthen their joint assumption that they are confronted with 'Mr. Smith's mowing of the lawn'.
IV Comments on hypnosis: bodily impact of language.

Violating intersubjectivity undermines intentionality by blocking off anticipations. Right in his fundamental postulate Kelly (1955, p. 46) tells us that "A person's processes are psychologically channelized by the way in which he anticipates events". Blocking anticipations may thus be expected to have profound effects on "a person's processes". A vital point in Kelly's theory - unfortunately inadequately recognized - is that "processes" are not just "information processing" or some "cognitive aspect" of persons, but involves the person in his or her total existence. Bodily effects of violating intersubjectivity is best brought forth by considering hypnosis. Erickson's paradoxical injunctions (p. 6) may be seen to be similar to usual hypnotic induction techniques, see Haley (1963, Tschudi (1974) for a more detailed account. Corresponding to jointly asserting and denying intersubjectivity, the usual hypnotic induction procedures may be summarized by the paradoxical message "don't obey me". Preventing the victim from commenting corresponds to the relation between the hypnotist and hypnotized being extremely complementary.

A basic aspect of hypnosis is a split between action and intentionality, A hypnotized person may lift an arm but not assume any responsibility for the act ("the hand lifted itself"). Similarly one may argue (Tschudi, 1974) that pain experiences have an "intentional aspect", so that undermining intentionality may thus reduce pain. We will give some glimpses as to how Erickson by his confusion technique can alleviate cancer pains. This will also serve to give a more articulated conception of what can be implied by "violating intersubjectivity".

These examples of the confusion technique may be described by the double bind scheme on p. 6 as follows: (admittedly an oversimplification)
Asserts intersubjectivity Erickson (quotations from p. 151-153) may talk for as short as five minutes, but may continue for an hour or even longer. He will "speak slowly, with impressive utter intensity", in a "quietly emphatic way." The fact that this takes a place in a context of a doctor in a medically emergent situation further serves to emphasize the "I have an important message for you" aspect of his behaviour.

Denies intersubjectivity On the other hand the "meaningfulness" described above is "denied" by deliberately confusing the patient. A primary tool is word play. One example will illustrate "And no matter what you know, no pain would be better than what you know and of course what you want to know is no pain and that is what you are going to know, no pain". Imagine how confusing it must to be listen since of course 'no', 'know' sound exactly the same.

Prevents escape As already mentioned Erickson is not put off by having to go on for indefinite stretches of time. He also shows "seemingly total disregard of any interruption of cries of pain or admonitions of 'Shut up'".

Schematically we may conceive two aspects of being hypnotized, the patient is uprooted and then redirected. The paradoxical injunctions make it impossible for the patient to uphold the "ordinary" state and thus attention is diverted away from the pain. An arrest of the patient's attention, rigid fixation of his eyes, the development of physical immobility, even catalepsy and an intense desire to understand what the author so gravely and so earnestly is saying to them."

The special induced state paves the way for redirection: "there develops unwittingly in the patient a different state of inner orientation, highly conducive to hypnosis and receptive to any suggestion that meets his needs".

A major point is that Erickson's technique requires intimate knowledge of the patient. "I make a practice of getting
preliminary information of personality type, history, interests, education, and attitudes and then in longhand I write a general outline of the order and frequency with which these special items are worked into the endless flow of words delivered with such earnestness of manners. The complexity of the puns and wordplays are very carefully tailored to the educational level and the intelligence of the patient. Furthermore the uprooting should be described as a subtle interplay between asserting and denying intersubjectivity, and this interplay will be very finely tuned to the reactions of the patient. This is not directly brought forth by the quotations above but is amply documented elsewhere in his writings, see for instance the transcript of a trance induction with Jay Haley and John Weakland (p. 51-92). (The quotation under "prevents escape" may seem to violate "a finely tuned interplay", but note the seemingly "total disregard".)

The phenomena conventionally studied under the label "hypnosis" are not the only ones which might be used to illustrate how one with psychologically means (especially language) profoundly can influence another person. In his most recent attempt to popularize Erickson's work Haley (1973) tries to use hypnosis as paradigmatic for all kinds of changes (including simple learning situations). Phenomena which may turn out to be more similar are "brainwashing", "faith healing" and religious conversions. This can not be further pursued here, our main point is to emphasize how one-sided study of language is if it is confined to situations which induce mainly "intellectual" states. In the hands of a Milton H. Erickson it may attain a force comparable to the most powerful tools in medicine. In other hands it may be compared to a dangerous weapon, I have heard use of language compared to karate; both the tongue and the hand may slay. The bodily aspect of language should not be ignored, language can touch the core of our existence.

An important similarity between Rommetveit's view of communication and Erickson's approach to hypnosis is thus to emphasize how the behaviour of one agent in a dyad (hypnotist, speaker)
must be carefully adjusted to, tuned into that of the other agent (subject, listener). It is interesting to note how Erickson contrasts his approach with that of Hull, from his first contact with Hull he was dubious

"concerning Hull's strong conviction that the operator, through what he said and did to the subject was much more important than any inner behavioural processes of the subject. This was a view Hull carried over into his work at Yale, one instance of which was his endeavour to establish a 'standardized technique' for induction. By this term he meant the same tone of voice, etc., which finally eventuated in an attempt to elicit comparable trance states by playing 'induction phonograph records' without regard for individual differences in subjects... Hull seemed thus to disregard the subject as a person, putting him on a par with inanimate laboratory apparatus..." (p. 131)

This is quoted in full because Hull's search for a "standardized technique" seems to spring from a similar attitude as the quest for formal answers to the problem of "meaning". All these forms - whether disguised as "public meaning", "literal meaning" or whatever - are mercilessly exposed as inadequate by Rommetveit (1978, 1979a, 1979b). He dubs them "negative rationalism" and Rommetveit's position seems to be that proponents of "negative rationalism" really forfeit their claim to contribute to psychology since they studiously avoid to study the arena where intersubjectivity is negotiated, or created. He elaborates Wittgenstein's thesis: "an utterance only makes sense in the stream of life", and sounds battle cries wherever he discerns attempts to retreat from "the stream of life" (e.g. dyadic interactions) into secluded ivory towers of "negative rationalism".

Rommetveit and Erickson may be seen to fight a similar battle. Unfortunately both seem to be in a minority position. Prestigious work on hypnosis still seems to be dominated by search for standardized techniques and abstract formal theories (see e.g. Hilgard, 1973).

V Types of violations of intersubjectivity.

In this section some steps in the way of classification will be made. As previously noted, Rommetveit's (1979 b) leading
example may be seen from the point of view of (partially) shared intersubjectivity since a "publicly identified state of affairs" is taken for granted. (p. 7)

1. Partially shared intersubjectivity

\[ S_2 \sim S_2 , \text{ angle } (S_1, S_2) \approx 0 \]

This is the case where both agents act from approximately the same perspective. It may be convenient to use the metaphor of "angle", \( p_1 \) and \( p_2 \) are then pretty well aligned, the angle between them is close to zero. In the present context serves as a general "contrast" case.

2. Intentional, strong violation of intersubjectivity.

\[ S_1 \sim S_2 , \text{ angle } (S_1, S_2) \approx 180 \]

This covers the examples in Section II. Note that it is not simply the case that \( p_1 \) acts from a position different from \( p_2 \). In some sense \( S_1 \) "recognizes" \( S_2 \), and intentionally \( S_1 \) appears completely incompatible with \( S_2 \). Formally this is expressed as a contrast ("negation"), or an opposite angle. In construct theory terms (Kelly) one might perhaps say that \( S_1 \) and \( S_2 \) are poles of a common construct (perhaps just "constructed" for a specific occasion) for \( p_1 \).

3. Intentional, weak violation of intersubjectivity.

\[ S_1 \sim S_2 , \text{ angle } (S_1, S_2) \approx 180 , \]

but \( S_2 \) can be transformed to \( S_2' \) so that \( S_1 \approx S_2' \)

"Strength" (previously has been briefly described (p. 4), but can also be seen from the point of view of how readily \( p_2 \) can transform \( S_2 \) so that intersubjectivity is attained. Humour is the obvious example. I like Sid Krassman in Southern's (1970) novel "Blue Movie" who
"stepping into a crowded elevator might intone with tremendous authority; 'I suppose you're all wondering why I've called you together' -

The victims will be likely to have the construction $S_2$, "a random meeting", of the situation. Krassman deliberately violates this construction by acting from the contrasting position; "a purposeful meeting", $S_1$. Since one is rarely deeply engulfed in lift going (cf. c) p. 4) it is not difficult temporarily to enjoy the construction "a purposeful meeting", it may provide a vastly more interesting trip.

Situations of type 3. may be seen as problem solving situations, is a transformation possible so that "the situation makes sense"? From this point of view the structure is similar to that of understanding metaphor, Ortney (1978).

The strings of intersubjectivity are not easily tampered with. Who of us would keep one's cool being bumped against in (1)? Or who would go on with confusing chatter in the face of agonized cries "shut up" (p. 9)? The reader is invited to imitate Sid Krassman, and may notice that it is not easy to "go against the grain". But perhaps the only way of really learning about intersubjectivity is by also studying the contrast. Perhaps this is the contribution by Milton H. Erickson. An extraordinary capacity to disengage from a conventional definition of a situation, a highly developed understanding of how the world is for other people coupled with penetrating curiosity and highly articulate sense of humour - these qualities have combined to produce some of the most valuable observations in psychology, a well which should be further tapped.

4. Non-intentional violation of intersubjectivity
(crazy behaviour)

$S_1 \neq S_2$, angle $(S_1, S_2) \approx 90$
Behaviour in this category are completely devoid of the marks of Ericksonian violations of intersubjectivity. This is captured by the symbolism, $S_1 \neq S_2$. $P_1$ acts without regard for the world of $P_2$, $P_1$ is "living in a separate world", metaphorical he or she is living in a world "at right angles" to $P_2$'s world. There is no way in which $S_1$ and $S_2$ can be construed as poles of the same construct.

In some quarters it has been fashionable to "debunk" the notion of "craziness" - and the implied concept of "mental illness". This position is usually called the "labeling perspective" or the "social reaction point of view". This position has recently been refuted by painstaking anthropological field-work, Murphy (1976), and it will be instructive to look further into parts of this very important work since it serves to highlight our key concept "intentionality", or "volition" in Murphy's terminology.

The most prominent expounder of the labeling perspective Scheff (1966, 1975) regards "the primary deviation" (what the person "offers" in the first place) $Q_S$ being of relatively small importance. Primary consideration is given to the social reaction, which - where various learning mechanisms are invoked - shapes the schizophrenic's "career". This is similar to the "relativistic" position in older anthropological theory, where an important variant is to see the behaviour of the shaman and the insane as similar, the difference resides in whether the behaviour is rewarded or not. But is a shaman really a psychotic rewarded for his or her behaviour?

Murphy answered this question with a resounding "no". We illustrate by quoting from her field work with Eskimos of northwest Alaska. The Eskimos have a word for "crazy" - nuthkavihak and they explain

"that something inside the person - the soul, the spirit, the mind is out of order" Descriptions of how nuthkavihak is manifested include such phenomena as talking to oneself, screaming at someone who does not exist, believing that a child or husband was murdered by witchcraft when nobody else believes it, believing oneself to be an animal, getting lost, hiding in strange places, refusing to talk, making strange grimaces... Eskimos translate nuthkavihak as 'being crazy'" Murphy (1976, p102)
We notice that this is remarkably similar to what in classical psychiatric theory is called "loss of reality orientation". When Goffmann (1962) emphasizes that the "perception of loosing one's mind is based on culturally derived stereotypes as to the significance of symptoms such as hearing voices, loosing temporal and spatial orientation" one is struck by the profound similarity between the symptoms he describes and behaviour of the nuthkavihak. Symptoms as hallucinations, delusions, and disorientations are not "cultural stereotypes", specific to our society, but universally identified as "crazy", Murphy strongly argues.

Furthermore nuthkavihak is never confused with being a shaman.

"one Eskimo summarized the distinction this way: 'When the shaman is healing, he is out of his mind, but he is not crazy' This suggests that seeing, hearing, and believing things that are not seen, heard and believed by all members of the group are sometimes linked to insanity and sometimes not. The distinction appears to be the degree to which they are controlled and utilized for a specific social situation. The inability to control these processes is what is meant by a mind out of order, when a mind is out of order it will not only fail to control sensory perception but will also fail to control behaviour... Volition is implicated, hearing voices can be voluntary or involuntary, and it is mainly the involuntary forms that are associated with nuthkavihak (underlined here, p. 1022).

We see that volition turns out to be the central feature distinguishing the shaman from the nuthkavihak. It appears that it is no more difficult for the eskimos to make this distinction than for us to distinguish between the behaviour of Erickson and a "chronic schizophrenic" inmate.

Crazy behaviour may be described as essentially "blind to the context". We may ask whether this perhaps should temper the current enthusiasm for learning about communication processes by studying schizophrenics. According to the present analysis, there can scarcely be any interchange if one person lacks "reality orientation" or "lives in a separate world" as here stated, and it seems appropriate to save the trouble of finding "meaning" if none can be found.

It may be perfectly reasonable to ward off strange behaviour by labeling it "crazy", this is a practice observed all over the world.
The present argument seriously suggests introducing the lay notion "crazy" into scientific discourse. This may seem to deny several attempts of a "communication" approach to schizophrenia. Researchers who trace their lineage to Bateson and Erickson have provided a wealth of case material suggesting that "schizophrenics" are deviously clever and that their behaviour (in its own peculiar way) is finely tuned to the environment. Examples of this position is found for instance in Haley (1963, 1969), Watzlawick et al. (1974), see also Tschudi (1975). I am, however, not convinced that the clients they discuss are "truly crazy". However, that may be it may be fruitful to introduce the notion of "quasi-intentional violation of intersubjectivity" which will capture their observations.

5. Quasi-intentional violation of intersubjectivity

\[ S_1 \not\equiv S_2, \quad 0 \angle \text{angle (} S_1, S_2 \text{)} \angle 90 \]

The underlying idea is to suggest that the two worlds are more or less out of tune with each other. This is where the "angle" metaphor may turn out to be useful, it immediately suggests a scale of variation. If we choose to consider \( p_2 \) as the norm, we might say that the behaviour of \( p_1 \) varies in obliqueness with respect to \( p_2 \). (Of course both \( p_1 \) and \( p_2 \) may be considered from a third point of view, \( p_3 \), but that will not be considered here.) Obliqueness here implies that \( p_1 \) "is stuck" with a devious approach to interpersonal situations, this concept has been elaborated in some detail in Tschudi (1977). It is also possible to think of a child"being caught" in negativism and "not being able" to get out of this state. Adults, of course, may be more permanently fixed in grooves only partly aligned to interpersonal situations.

VI

Rooting, uprooting and pluralism.

Where does all this leave us with respect to the issue of pluralism? From one point of view we have added to the complexity of Rommetveit's analysis by suggesting two new facets,"strength of violation"and"skewness of intentionality." If we just considered two or three values for each of these facets, could we then get more than 100,000 dyadic relations?
The first point to be made is that it is not appropriate "automatically" to think that all values of each facet (dimension) can be crossed with all values of the other facets. Some dimensions may be "local", that is only defined for specific values of other dimensions, or in Kelly's terminology, have restricted "range of convenience". These problems are discussed in Tschudi, 1972, ch. 6, especially 212-213, 222-223) where it is pointed out that formal models tend to ignore the possibility of "local" dimensions. It might be added that it may well be part of "negative rationalism" to construct models which (implicitly?) take for granted that all possible combinations can be realized (An idealized Cartesian world).

For the present two facets I am not sure that they can be considered to be independent dimensions at all, but perhaps just different types. Furthermore there are clearly combination among the 19200 that do not make sense at all. Finally it may not be an easy task to distinguish between the here proposed "skewness of intentionality" and Rommetveit's cases of "egocentrism".

But how much complexity one may end up with is not the main point. From the point of view of all types of violations of intersubjectivity, the primary feature of Rommetveit's situation may be seen to be support intersubjectivity, this we have implied by the present terminology \( S_1 = S_2 \). In Rommetveit's analysis the fact that the participants agree that they witness "Mr. Smith mowing the lawn" is only a "trivial" minimum. From the broader point of view here introduced, this does not at all appear "trivial", but rather a fact of paramount import. Consider possible contrasts to "Mr. Smith mowing the lawn": \( p_2 \) is not confronted with someone acting from the premise of say, a seething Metropolitan scene, a NASA probe on a Martian desert, or a pleasant family party. This would, to say the least prove unsettling, and we have suggested that it may be appropriate to shield oneself from impact of such behaviour by the label "crazy". And the contrast to the abyss or alienation resulting from \( S_1 \) and \( S_2 \) being entirely different can be described as a mutual reassurance that we hold on to reality. It may well be that the fear of loosing that contact may be one of the deepest fears one may experience, and thus "reality orientation" can be seen
as a major accomplishment. This is something to be deeply cherished if we have experienced that the hold may seem to slip, the fragility of our existence. Violations of intersubjectivity may uproot us (if we can't protect ourselves by labels like "crazy" or "neurotic") conversely we suggest that affirmations serve to root us. Bateson (1951, p. 213) has

a view of everyday conversations which fits the present point of view:

When A communicates with B, the mere act of communicating can carry the implicit statement 'we are communicating'. In fact this may be the most important message that is sent and received. The wisecracks of American adolescents and the smoother but no less stylized conversation of adults are only occasionally concerned with the giving and receiving of objective information; mostly the conversations of leisure hours exist because people need to know that they are in touch with other. They may ask questions which superficially seem to be about matters of impersonal fact - 'Will it rain? What is in today's war news but the speaker's interest is focused on the fact of communicating with another human being.

According to this view the important fact about conversations on Mr. Smith's lawn mowing may not at all be to zero in on "wife avoidance", or the impeccability of "Mr. Smith's Scarsdale citizenship" but to satisfy the need to know that they are in touch with other. We would suggest that this need may be satisfied both in cases where they end up agreeing and disagreeing.

A typical expression of Rommetveit's position is "a multi-facet pluralistic, only fragmentarily known and only partially shared "Babenswelt" (Rommetveit, 1978, p.22) This overlooks the massive communality involved in all his concrete examples and may be compared with emphasizing the complexity of a test battery on the basis of several independent factors, but having performe the analysis such that the g-factor carrying 90% of the variance is lost from view.

The argument may be put yet another way by drawing on Tversky's (1977) brilliant analysis of similarity. It was previously almost without disclaimers thought that similarity could be treated
without considering context, that one could analyze similarity between pairs of objects as something "inherent" in the objects themselves. If now the context of the pair "horse/butterfly" consists of cats and cows I may fail to see any similarity at all. This, however, changes completely if the context is extended to include "mermaids", and ""centaurs". In the latter context the feature "real" is made salient and tremendously adds to the similarity between "horse" and "butterfly". Similarly we suggest that by introducing the concept "violation of intersubjectivity" the similarity between all the dyadic states Rommetvet discusses becomes of overriding salience. We have tried to emphasize that this is not just an arbitrary choice of perspective but serves to focus on how language is crucial both in rooting and uprooting us.
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