

Pragmatics of verbal hallucinations

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1. What are verbal hallucination?
2. Verbal hallucinations and psychiatric diagnosis
3. Distribution of Verbal hallucinations.
4. Verbal hallucinations – reality testing errors & inner speech.
5. Phonological, linguistic and pragmatic properties of verbal hallucinations.
6. Pragmatics for studying voices.
7. Empirical studies – phonetic, linguistic and pragmatic properties of VH (implicit constraints?); sources of meaning.
8. Can pragmatics be used to distinguish different populations of voice hearers?

Extract 1: PT&UN (from Leudar & Thomas, 2000)

1. PT: So when did the voices start in relation to the drinking did they start while you
2. were drinking or after you stopped drinking?=
3. UN: =Well no I've I'd been there about (0.63) five years and they started just like
4. that ((finger snap)) | just
5. PT: | Right
6. UN: (0.43) started like that, I was sat (0.20) behind the bar. (0.42) honest I can
7. remember it (0.55) as plain as day. | Yeah.
8. PT: | Just tell me ehm try (0.36) and recreate it for me | would you
9. UN: | Well I just sat there an' (0.36) somebody said '**What do you want? What do**
10. **you want?'** (0.84) and I thought 'well there's bloody no one there' 'who were
11. that?' you know=
12. PT: =Ri:ght. (0.53) Ri:ght
13. UN: It was like that.

Extract 2: JH&N (Leudar & Hayes, in preparation)

1. JH: could you tell me a little more about, when you might **hear your name**?
2. N: um. It happens randomly just like, if you're on the street, or something and you think that someone's called your name, it doesn't have to be anyone talking, you just, you randomly hear it, um, sometimes it is, other people are just talking and, you think that you've heard your name but it just sounds like your name but they're saying a different word.
3. (..)
4. JH: does the um, does it sound like somebody you know, when that happens?
5. (.)
6. N: it doesn't sound like someone I know, it sounds like they know me, (.) does that make sense?
7. JH: okay, so it's a familiar tone
8. N: yeah, the way they say it is like, the sound of it is like, they do actually know who I am, they're saying it enthusiastically or something like that
9. JH: yeah

John Austin on speech acts

Locution – 'phonetic', 'phatic', 'rhetic' acts

Illocution - He urged, advised, ordered me to shoot her.

Perlocution - He persuaded me to shoot her.

'Speaking generally, it is always necessary that the circumstances in which words are uttered should in some way, or ways, be appropriate, and it is very commonly necessary that either the speaker himself or other persons should also perform certain other actions.' (Austin, 1962:8; italics in the original).

Wittgenstein in intentions

Why do I want to tell him about an intention too, as well as telling him what I did. ... because I want to tell him

something about myself, which goes beyond what happened at the time. I reveal to him something of myself when I tell him what I was going to do.- not, however, on grounds of self-observation, but by the way of a response (it might be also called an intuition).’

(*Philosophical Investigations*, §659)

Elizabeth Anscombe on ‘actions under descriptions’

‘Are we to say that the man who (intentionally) moves his arm, operates the pump, replenishes water supply, poisons the inhabitants, is performing *four* actions?’ (Anscombe, 1957, §26)

‘... in the acts of pumping poisoned water nothing in particular is necessarily going on that might not equally well have been going on if the acts had been pumping non-poisonous water. Even if you imagine that pictures of inhabitants lying dead occur in the man’s head, and please him – such pictures could also occur in the head of a man who was *not* poisoning them, and *need* not occur in this man. The difference appears to be one of circumstances, not of anything that is going on *then*. (ibid, §24, the last emphasis ours)

‘For moving his arm up and down with his fingers round the pump handle *is*, in these circumstances, operating the pump; and, in these circumstances, it *is* replenishing the house water-supply; and in these circumstances, it *is* poisoning the household. (ibid, §26)

Leudar on ‘structured immediacy’

... every interaction takes place in a concrete environment but that environment can be understood under varied descriptions through being connected by participants to wider ranges of circumstances. Such circumstances range broadly and may include aspects of culture, institutions and personal histories of participants as well as the happenings that more immediately envelop activities. (Leudar et al, 2008)

We introduced ‘structured immediacy’ as a concept to orient analysts to how contexts removed from the here-and-now are made immediate in occasions by being actualized in and through participants’ actions. The concept was formulated in contradiction to the intellectualized view in which the immersion in the occasion is something primitive and to be overcome. It was also designed to move studies of social interaction beyond action-context dualism. We rejected the view that ‘here-and-now’ is a primitive sensory experience. Here-and-now is indexical and structured by a specific design, through participants’ activities both individually and collaboratively. (Leudar & Nekvapil, 2011, p. 80)

Linguistic and pragmatic properties of voice talk

Extract 3: PT&NJ

5. PT: right (0.55) and (0.36) how (1.28) what I’d like to know now is is what the sort of how you identify the voices (0.41) erm is it a male voice?=
6. NJ: =a male voice | yeah

7. PT: |a male voice, young or old?

8. NJ: older (0.39)

9. PT: right and does it is it a person that you know?

10. NJ: yes it is=

11. PT: right right and (0.40) erm (0.67) wd’ye would you mind me asking | who it is?

12. NJ: | It’s my husband who died (0.39) suddenly he’s (0.23) five and a half years ago.

13. PT: ri:ght. | right right

14. NJ: | mhm

15. PT: (0.25) right (0.37) a:nd (0.45) does th (0.34) is the voice just exactly like his voice?

16. NJ: exactly=

17. PT: =yeh | yeh OK right

...

26. NJ: (cough) because it’s his (1.38) I I’d 11 interpret well whenever ye he’s talking or if he’s talking to me (0.90) it’s his mannerisms it’s it’s his speech, it’s the way he raises his voice at the end (0.24) even the anger in his voice sometimes.

...

56. I’ve got to think of an instance (0.40) uhm I can remember (0.26) there was quite some occasion I wasn’t sleeping very well (0.46) and I would start (0.25) *missing*

him and thinking of him (0.56) and (0.52) remembering occasions where we were happy together (0.30) looking for comfort from him (0.38). But he would come and he would say 'you're being stupid, it never was like that' (0.53) 'you're being' erm (0.33) 'you're not being a proper mother' (0.28) 'you're neglecting things' (0.94) erm 'you're a mess'. It would be *very* derogatory to me.

Extract 4: D.P. Schreber, Memoirs, p. 46 (see Leudar & Thomas, 2000, ch. 3)

'Apart from the normal human language there is also a kind of nerve-language of which, as a rule, the healthy human being is not aware. In my opinion this is best understood when one thinks of the processes by which a person tries to imprint certain words in his memory in a definite order, as for instance a child learning a poem by heart which he is going to recite at school, or a priest a sermon he is going to deliver in Church. **The words are repeated silently (as in a silent prayer to which the congregation is called from the pulpit)**, that is to say a human being causes his nerves to vibrate in the way which corresponds to the use of the words concerned, but the real organs of speech (lips, tongue, teeth, etc.) are either not set in motion at all or only coincidentally.'

Extract 5: PT and NC

5. PT: First of all if you could just tell me how many voices you hear?
6. NC: So far I have heard two, and
7. PT: Right
8. NC: And that is not counting the whispering
9. PT: And whispers
10. NC: Yeah
11. PT: Now is that the same voice as the whispers or is it different voices you hear whisper
12. NC: I can't tell, it's it's, um the whispering, it just sounds like a group of people, you can hear the whispering the talking but you can't grasp at what it is, it's not loud enough to know what's been said
13. PT: You can't make out what's being said?
14. NC: No
15. PT: You can't hear words
16. NC: No, but it's a group of people, quite a lot of people, whispering,

Extract 6: PT&UN

- T: (0.54) and em could you tell a little bit about what the voice sounds like to
1. you. Is it er=
 2. UN: =Well I couldn't tell you whether it's male or female.
 3. PT: R:ight (0.46) | you you couldn't (0.31)
 4. UN: | eh No=
 5. PT: =make a distinction | ((unclear))
 6. UN: | No it's definitely in my mind you know what I mean it's (0.41) I'm not
 7. 'earing it with me ears, you know what I mean =
 8. PT: ri:ght
 9. UN: it's it's definitely | in in my head
 10. PT: | It's definitely in your head. You don't hear hear it.
 11. UN: Oh yeah.

Extract 7: DM & TK

1. DM: Oh. Do, um, do the voices ever, um, order you to do something?
2. TK: Sometimes, yeah.
3. DM: Do they, what what what might they say to you?
4. TK: 'Have a shower', 'have a bath', or (1.32) they don't really bother me that
5. much, though, I don't tend to get ordering voices, I just tend tend to get voices (0.
6. that whisper to me, you know what I mean (0.59) er, not always whisper

Extract 8: PT and RZ

1. PT: Yeah. Could you give me an example?

2. RZ: Well em (...) as as it was telling me to, like I say it was telling me to put a
3. knife through me (...) you mean summat (...) summat like that, like er puttin' a
4. knife
5. PT: Yeah
6. RZ: through me stomach. Going across the main road and actually jumping off(...)
7. er (..) er (..)John Street car park. And it it (...) as, I'm pretty sure now that the
8. voices were actually telling me to jump off this cliff.
9. PT: Right. How long
10. RZ: which I did do and that was t two years ago.
11. PT: Two years ago. Right.
12. RZ: And er (..) when I (..) when I was in here it was actually telling me to (..) to try
13. and get some wires from the ceiling to electrocute myself. It were also telling me
14. to climb up on the roof of this building to find to find the highest point to jump off
15. of it and stuff like this, you see in ge in general. Even when I were here I thought
16. I'm not even safe here it were like hiding trying to cope with it from me mind and
17. telling it to just go away and leave me alone.
18. PT: Right.

Extract 9: RS and KL

1. RS: OK, can you give me an example of when this might have happened when you,
2. can sort of tell me what the voice actually said to you?
3. KL: Err, There was one time when err (..) somebody had said something to me and
4. which was not, somebody had made a comment about my arms and things like
5. that, and
6. RS: Ah ha
7. KL: About the scars and that on them and I sort of ruded and that and the voice was
8. saying 'hit her, hit her'
9. RS: Right
10. KL: And that's what it kept saying 'hit her' and then eventually I did hit her,
11. RS: And when you did hit her did the voice then stop?
12. KL: No,
13. RS: What did the voice say then?
14. KL: Just said, 'hit anybody'.

Extract 10: AG and TL

1. AG: And do you have a name for him?
2. TL: Yeah, it's my father.
3. AG: OK. Are there particular circumstances in which the voice will start?
4. TL: Uh, yeah. When I feel (...) if I feel I can't do something I hear it then. If I feel
5. I can do something with ease, I hear it then.
6. AG: And what sort of things would he say?
7. TL: He would (...) if I thought I couldn't do it he would convince me that I
8. couldn't and if I feel I can do something very easily then he says it's kind of a waste
9. of time or something similar to that.
10. AG: Um (...) does the voice ever tell you to do things?
11. TL: Yeah, not as specific actions but perhaps if I'm doing something he'll either tell
12. me to give up and not carry on if that's what I really want to do.

Extract 11: JH & Victoria (Making voice meaningless)

1. JH: could you tell me a little more about, when you might hear your name?
2. N: um. It happens randomly just like, if you're on the street, or something and you think that someone's called your name, it doesn't have to be anyone talking, you just, you randomly hear it, um, sometimes it is, other people are just talking and, you think that you've heard your name but it just sounds like your name but they're saying a different word.
3. (..)
4.

5. N: um, usually, it's mainly like say if you hear someone say your name or something like that, or, um like, random sounds
6. JH: yeah
7. N: like, sometimes I hear music and there's not music on or just (.) sometimes, it sounds like people are walking past? and they're not actually there. and things (.) yeah (.)
8. It's never, it's never really for a long period of time, it's usually quite a short period of time it's not, not anything like
9. (..)

Using pragmatics to contrast voice talk in different populations

Extract 12: JH & Samuel, from Hayes & Leudar, 2013 (bereaved as a practical historian)

1. Samuel: the waste disposal in the house wasn't working, my grandpa was like
2. getting quite stressed about it because, erm, (.) he couldn't, that's what (I'm
3. on about), he really sort of like caved in a bit and tiny little things like the
4. waste disposal not working the television maybe like going, on the blink
5. for like a second, .hh or, like half a day or something, really really like ()
6. would stress him, and I sort=of=like bent down to
7. (1.0)
8. look for the waste disposal, and I heard my grandma say, "it's at the back,
9. it's at the back". And, just, I just heard her say those words, and as I looked
10. towards the back I could see there was like a, thing that needed, needed to
11. be turned, so it was as though like, she sort of guided me to fixing that thing

Extract 13: JH & Violet (participant with mental health problems managing trauma voice talk)

1. **Violet:** And I hear seven voices, I hear the management, at the factory, I hear my Auntie, and
2. I hear three friends that I went to school with,
3. **JH:** oh:: okay
4. **Violet:** and I find it quite disturbing you see
5. **JH:** right
6. **Violet:** and my voices come, my voices talk to me, (.) not every night, but every other night
7. basically. They come back and they are present with me (.) in my surroundings (.) and I find it
8. quite disturbing

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