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Brandom, Wittgenstein and Intersubjectivity[1]

Abstract *The introductory part of the article deals with general features of Brandom's social pragmatic position. The central part considers Brandom's interpretation of Kripke's conception of social character of rules, as well as Habermas' critique of Brandom's conception of I-thou and I-we types of intersubjectivity. In the final part the author is surveying Brandom's interpretation of Wittgenstein's understanding of intersubjectivity, as well as of norms and rules in general. According to the author, Brandom treats intersubjectivity as immediate communication, while neglecting the role of socially and historically shared norms. Also, Brandom rejected justification of rules by past application, and, by emphasizing the key role of inferential and practical consequences of accepted rules, he considered pragmatic attitudes and commitments as oriented towards future validation of meaning and rules. The author also claims that, from Wittgensteinian perspective, communication and intersubjectivity involve more a profound re-adjustment of interlocutors' perspectives rather than doxatic interchange of perspectives, as Brandom suggested.*

Keywords: *Brandom, Habermas, Intersubjectivity, Kripke, Language, Normativity, Rules, Wittgenstein.*

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Brandom's Semantic Normativism as Social Pragmatism

Aside from the originality of his philosophical stance and almost idiosyncratic pragmatical vocabulary which distinguished him from other philosophers, Brandom, as he himself never hesitates to admit, is standing on the shoulders of more than one of the philosophical giants. Among them, and one of the most important, is Wittgenstein, from whom he embraced three main themes: the normative nature of language and intentionality, a pragmatic understanding of normativity (in the manner of their interpretation as immanent in practice, in contrast with norms as explicit rules external to practice), and emphasis on social character of normative practices. (Brandom 1994: 55) Brandom, at any rate, is not unique in integrating those themes to the very basis of philosophical conception: Kripke's and Habermas' claims (the authors whose philosophical stances will be treated as relevant in the

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intersubjectivity topic) are akin to Brandom's. The question of intersubjectivity is, however, one of the questions where many contests and disagreements among the mentioned philosophers persist, as well as partial or substantial overlapping in their stances. Perhaps most importantly, the standpoints in the debate can be treated as supplementary and as critiques that reopened possibilities of the new investigations concerning the topic of intersubjectivity and Wittgenstein's dealing with it.

Semantic normativism endorsed by Brandom considers concepts as inexorably interconnected with the rules, meaning they are normative substantially. (Brandom 2010: 297) Constructing the concepts means making them normative, namely dealing with them according to certain norms, which is, according to Brandom, the core of Kant's analytic. Kant considered norm-making spontaneity, not receptivity, as the basis of meaning, and in the same vein Brandom founded his analysis on the primacy of inferences over representations. "Antirepresentationalist" stance is derived from the primacy of judgement, which begs the further question: which sentences are justificatory in inference regarding content of a given assertion? The content of assertion is inferentially connected with other sentences in a way that those sentences are premises in inference regarding the content of given assertion, and this very assertion is functioning as one of the premises in inference for other sentences' content. Having in mind this type of interconnection, in order to understand content of a particular assertion which on an intuitive level ostensibly has its meaning as isolated (like the assertion of the subject's immediate sensations), we need to relate it with the other assertions, as well as to have specific practice of justification in order to consider the assertion as contentful.

The practice of investigation of the content which constitute meaning of assertion means derivation of inferential consequences, or survey the outcomes of acceptance of given assertions or meanings, as well as to distinguish consequential assertions from those which acceptance of given assertion is excluded as incompatible. When subject asserts p, he/she is taking commitments to reject assertion incompatible with p (e. g. "this flower is crimson" means not taking commitments for accepting assertion "this flower is yellow"), respectively to accept assertions which come from p as its consequences ("This flower is crimson" imply "this flower is red", "there are an objects which are flowers", "some flowers are blossoming in vivid colours", "the word 'crimson' denotes colour"). In other words, acknowledging commitments of meaning p

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subject become committed to inferences which are derived from p; consequently, undertaking this commitment, together with other inferential consequences which emerge from this commitment to p, the subject could not have entitlement for taking commitments incompatible with p. (cf. Brandom 2010: 297)

Acknowledging commitment and entitlement are two forms of normative status, which are constituted from subject's disposition for forming practical attitudes. Through those attitudes normative statuses become institutionalized. In first chapters of his seminal book *Making it Explicit* Brandom basically explains the way in which it is possible – through the subject's non-normative intentions and dispositions, respectively through the establishment of practical attitudes – to constitute normative statuses in intersubjective discursive exchange. At the initial stage this exchange proceeds as mere infringe injuries to the subject, the behaviour of which exceeds the behaviour of others, and as instigation of conformistic behaviour by incentives. In the next step sanctions are gaining more and more symbolic shape. Establishing norms through mediation and recognition by other subjects become non-unilateral, reciprocal process, and, finally, the mutual recognition of the statuses of the other subjects emerged.[2]

Language rules and the use of concepts, therefore, are possible only if there is a practice in which the subject acknowledges statuses and attitudes, as well as attributes statuses and attitudes to other persons. Attributing and acknowledging of commitments and attitudes implies a multidirectional communicative exchange, and this exchange is presented by Brandom in heuristically imagined "scorekeeping" game, in which every individual is keeping evidence about the validity of his and other's scores, and comparing them mutually. Thus the individual adjudicates the trustworthiness of other's assertions, as well as the reliability of his own assertions by comparing them with another's claims. Brandom's scorekeeping situations means that participants in communication coordinate their own acknowledged commitments, in the manner that every participant in interaction has a "score" in order to keep track about which commitments undertake and which entitlements do other

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2 Cf. Kiesselbach 2012: 105. This transition to normative-symbolic sanctions can be compared to changes of social sanctioning from physical punishment through dishonour within the class, caste or guild, towards withholding of rights in relation to other people with whom person shares demand to equal treatment in civil society. In the course of history the forms of sanctions become more abstract, sophisticated and mediated.

individuals have as scorekeepers, and which commitments and entitlements those subjects acknowledge.

In *Making it Explicit*, as well as in his numerous other works, Brandom's intention is to repudiate representation as a central explanatory concept in the theory of meaning, and replace it with a particular set of normative concepts, which have its origin in social practice. Representations are results, not the indubitable starting point of epistemological practice, and they presume the existence of specific linguistic practitioners, those "who can undertake and attribute conceptually articulated commitments and responsibilities, creatures who live, and move, and have their being in practical normative space of reasons." (Brandom 2010b: 302)

As it has been said, semantic content is expressed in form of assertions, which are mutually interconnected by inferential relations, so assertions, such as declarative sentences, are fundamental linguistic activities for expressing cognitive content. They are bearers of meaning in discourse. (Brandom 1983: 637) As a pragmatist, Brandom is concerned with what subjects are doing when they convey particular information or make assertion. By asserting, the subject affirms something, he/she is committed to something and this act occurs in particular linguistic community, in particular institutional circumstances. In a social framework, of decisive importance is the authority and entitlement which the speaker gains through attributions from the other linguistic practitioners when they treat him as competent and trustworthy. In asserting, the subject makes his/hers assertion accessible to the public sphere and he/she is undertaking commitments not only regarding justification of this assertion, but also – according to the key inferential assumption – regarding implications and consequences of this assertion, or regarding assertions that ensue or contradict of the first assertion respectively. (Brandom 1983: 642)

To refer to, to be directed at something, to be representations, sentences must be used in particular way, ultimately they have to be involved in particular social linguistic practice. The community recognize and accept particular assertions as justified or unjustified, or, saying differently and more accurately, linguistic practices form justificatory norms on which basis lies the correctness or incorrectness of the speech act. Representational function of discourse is enabled through "social differentiation of inferential perspectives"[3]

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3   Brandom 1994: 529. Cf. also Brandom 1983: 644: "Rather, justification is whatever the community treats as one – whatever its members will let assertors get away with."

According to Brandom, Wittgenstein claims that speech acts are justified if they were made in accord with accepted social practice, and they have been treated as approved or regular until deviation occurrs, until doubt of permissibility of those acts has appeared.[4] In other words, when a particular expression has been accepted as correct and its truth function approved, we involve ourselves, together with that expression, in the game of giving and asking for reasons in public sphere: „We are always already inside the game of giving and asking for reasons. We inhabit a normative space, and it is from within those implicitly normative practices that we (...) assess proprieties of the application of concepts." (Brandom 1994: 648) But the game of giving and asking for reasons is not just one of the language games among others: according to Brandom, language game of assertion, of making inferences and their justification is crucial for very possibility of language and thought. The sentence: "This is the door" entail, aside from the commitments carried by the very sentence as assertion, undertaking a set of other inferential commitments. By asserting, the subject has endorsed statements such as the one that it is not a window, the structure of that object is solid, you can pass through it into other rooms or the exterior, it is not a hallucination or illusion at stake etc.[5] The form of assertion occupies a central position in discourse, because it is exemplary speech act for which justification has been (or can be) ensured, and it is functioning as the indispensable part of justifications of other speech acts. Commitments and entitlements emerged from assertion can be transferred, so when I agree with assertions of another person, I acknowledge commitments and entitlements derived from those assertions. By virtue of acknowledging and attributing normative statuses, the subject becomes able to establish and review inferential relations between different commitments and entitlements, as well as to compare each other, and it is essentially important that assertions always have to be "in game".

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4   Brandom has in consideration Wittgenstein's stance that, depending on the context, doubting particular statements is at certain point superfluous, regarding that at a certain point the skeptic's radical doubt is senseless as long as the need for justification is lost, such as it is in the case of non-inferential reports about objects of immediate experience given in normal occasions. Claim to justification in those cases must be justified itself in order to be considered as a challenge to further assertions. Cf. Brandom 1983: 649.
5   About this example, cf. Bransen 2002: 378-379. Compare also Brandom 2010b: 303: "My claim is that every autonomous language game must include practices of giving and asking for reasons."

Rejecting reductionistic naturalism, Brandom claims that it is not pos-
sible to eliminate normative dimension of discourse. But he also rejects
varieties of skepticism and theoretical quietism as well, with which
some of authors identify very Wittgenstein's position and his treat-
ment of language rules as unjustifiable basic block where further analy-
sis cannot be pursued. Clarifying of meaning Brandom consider as ex-
plication of normative content enclosed in implicit norms in language
practice and this practice is conceived as social or intersubjective, in
contrast with reduction to non-normativity (behaviorism) and natu-
ral verbal reaction (semantic naturalism). Representation of states of
things, apprehension of objects and properties conceptually in the form
of facts emerges only as a product of implicit practical dispositions of
grasping linguistic norms. Our understanding of norms is always al-
ready particular and specified, and when we are using them they are
always already here, so Brandom is allowed to accept without addition-
al objection that his explanation presuppose regress of normativity. A
linguistic system is part of a practice which is normative "all the way
down".[6] This is Hegelian holistic and interactivistic model of constitut-
ing concept's content from process of applying concepts, in which the
application of rules and their constituting are conceived as the unitary
process of self-regulation. Constitution and application are in historical
dynamics, they are parts of historical process, so normativity should not
be treated as something without origins, emerging inexplicably, *ex ni-
hilo*. Undertaking responsibility and recognition of authority concern-
ing the question of which perspective is correct (for example, which
states of things are at stake) are parts of the social activity of assessment
and re-assessment, negotiation, critique and vindication of attitudes.
This means that it will be inconsiderate to regard commonly accept-
ed norms as homogenous and a consistent set of standards. As well as
norms whose explications they are, rules are always open, they depend
on multifarious cases of application, and they are also open to new sorts
of interpretations and reevaluations (for new, as well as for old cases to
which rules are applied) – they can be, therefore, modified, specified
and adapted to new cases.[7]

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6   Brandom 1994: 44. This is the reason why numerous authors speak about Bran-
dom's "semantic primitivism", in which norms are represented as constitutive units
of meaning which cannot be further analyzed. Cf. Rosen: 163.

7   cf. Peregrin 2012: 93. Hence rules could not be treated as static, regulating behav-
ior once and for all, clearly and unambiguously determining correct and incorrect
use. Even normative attitudes, once they become explicit, are part of the game of
giving and asking for reasons. (cf. Peregrin 2012: 77)

Two Types of Intersubjectivity

As Brandom in *Making it Explicit* repeats on numerous occasions, language rules are founded on normative praxis of acknowledging and attributing statuses, as well as normative practice of their attributing to other subjects, treating other individuals as subjects undertaking commitments and having entitlements for their own utterances. Brandom incessantly emphasizes the social character of those norms implicit in practice and this interdependence can be regarded as a central insight of his pragmatic position. (cf. Weiss and Wanderer 2010: 4)

It is the I-thou type of intersubjective relation which is constituent of social practice and as such is emerging from more basic or "primitive" variety than I-we relation. (Brandom 1994: 62) Since the latter carries the risk of privileging one of the perspectives, and that means the accepted and supraindividual one, a scorekeeping relation founded on interaction of subject in I-thou mode enables the retention of difference between correct action and those which just appeared to be correct ones. (cf. Brandom 1994: 599) Social action therefore should be regarded not as relation of individual and collective, but as interaction of two or many perspectives, as a process in which acceptance of statuses, as well as acceptance of their modifications, emerges (and, in the same vein, their disavowal and refusal of modification). In a scorekeeping situation, individuals undertake their responsibilities as participants in rational discourse in which decisions are accepted when better reason and well-based argumentation prevail. In this kind of confrontation of reasons equal status of subject should be recognized, which could characterize I-thou relation only, considering the prevalence of domination, authority and unilateral recognition of statuses in I-we relation. In the latter type of intersubjectivity, the top down institution is at stake, which is characterized by non-reciprocity in recognition of statuses, since the community is the instance which determines and attributes statuses without feedback. In this relation practical attitudes would be constituted through already established normative statuses, which raises the question of validity, authority and legitimacy of those unilateral statuses. Instead, in the former type of intersubjectivity, statuses are instituted bottom up, through the subject's attitudes, his/her activity of edifying and modifying of normative attitudes.

Such I-we type of account can be found, according to Brandom, in certain interpretations of Wittgenstein, among which Kripke's and early

Crispin Wright's. Brandom illustrated this account choosing passages from their books randomly (as he used to say).[8] In the explanation of rules and meaning founded on the communal stance, collectivity has been personified, inasmuch as it is assumed that group can assess correctness or incorrectness and, accordingly, determine commitments and entitlements on the basis of criteria accepted by majoritarian or unanimous review. (Brandom 1994: 594) The next objection to I-we intersubjectivity is connected with regularism, which is, according to Brandom, an outcome of communal account. The community view, or conformity with widely accepted norms, will be the peremptory instance in deciding whether particular behaviour is genuine following rule action, which leads to the conclusion that normativity should be treated as factual group behaviour.[9] However, contrary to Brandom, defenders of Kripke can point to those parts of Kripke's text in which the personification of collectivity, as well as collective dispositional account and regularism, is decidedly rejected. It can be also said that reduction of rules to any non-normative foundation is at odds with Kripke's general standpoint that the normativity of the rule-following cannot be extrapolated from any fact, therefore cannot be derived from multiple repeated patterns of behaviour of the group. Collective regularism, according to Kripke, is susceptible to the same sceptical objection as individual regularism.[10]

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8 Cf. Brandom 1994: 38. Brandom is quoting Kripke's widely discussed book *Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language* (WRPL), as well as Wright's *Wittgenstein on the Foundations of Mathematics*. For purposes of this text we will focus on the critique of Kripke's book, because of a more emphasized elaboration and defence of communal character of semantic normativity in Kripke's interpretation, as well as due to the fact that there is no evidence that Kripke has revised his own position, which is not the case in Wright's interpretation of Wittgenstein.

9   Regulism according to Brandom asserts that the problem of rules and their validity which transcends an actual behaviour and which has got deontic modality, is solved by extrapolating rules from patterns of dispositions or repeated ways of subject's behaviour, and which can be described by naturalistic factual non-normative language. In this way transcendence of rules will be avoided, as well as regressus in which norms are explained by recalling the other, more fundamental norms. The trouble with regulism is that more than one rule can accord with pattern of behaviour, and this explanation cannot avoid the paradox expressed in Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* §201, according to which "no course of action could be determined by a rule, because every course of action can be made to accord with the rule." Non-normative ascription of authority to group is no less justifiable than ascription of authority to person whose own habits, as well as successfulness in former use, are key guarantee of correctness, or regularity of use in future cases. It will be impossible to tell reasonably which action of community is regular or rule-following, and which is not, as every pattern of behaviour should be treated as correct because of the very fact that it is accepted by consensus.

10 Cf., among other passages, Kripke 1982: 111. The critique of Brandom's interpretation of Kripke as advocating a "mythological conception of community" and "collective regularism" can be found in Kusch: 2006, in which author convincingly —

Also, if the community interpretation is a peremptory instance which can determine which model of activity should be considered as correct and "according to rule", contrary to non-regular behaviour, we are facing the problematic situation of a private language speaker, to whom everything that seems to him as a correct at the same time will be correct – in this case, it is the collective to which there is no possibility to be incorrect.

According to Kripke, by reviewing language use or any other activity of the individual which manifests some pattern, the community decides if given behavior can be treated as normed behavior, that is, as the practice which implies grasping of rules. Nevertheless, the community can be interpreted as an assemblage of non-identical persons or as a particular and non-homogenous group of individuals which shares common norms, and neither Wittgenstein, nor Kripke's interpretation implies that correctness or incorrectness depends on mere collective decision, nor that rules can be reduced to accordance of actions which can be described through non-normative terms. Hence, it would be wrong to interpret the community view as homogenous set of beliefs and criteria which exceed individual assessments, that is, to conceive of community as a personified entity. Also, the common understanding in Wittgenstein's late philosophy can be interpreted as medium and background of linguistic activity, and if some interpreters derive from his conception the conclusion that correctness is inevitably connected with its social background (statement which can be easily attributed to Brandom as well), it does not mean that the community's reviews are criteria of correctness. To follow a rule rests on normativity of actions. These rules are not the product of the isolated individual; instead, this normativity is social – beside of this, the possibility of multiplicity and incongruence of norms is not denied, nor that an account of normativity itself is impossible.

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presented textual evidence from Kripke's book which opposed Brandom's view. (Cf. Kusch 2006: 195-201). He points to the inconsistency in Brandom's critique, since Brandom quoted only those parts which are in line with his interpretation, ignoring parts from WRPL in which the role of community (or "we") is described in a more nuanced way. Kusch quoted parts from WRPL in which justification has been treated as strictly interpersonal, whereas other subjects, not impersonal collective, is determining if individual's behaviour is or it is not rule-following action. Kripke is writing in particular passages about judgement by "others", which would again not be identified with judgements of collective as a subject. (Kusch 2006: 198-199)

The Essentially Social Character
of Discourse and Future Use

To emphasize the consensual view of rules, Brandom gives an example of a tribe which performs a particular ritual. In case of everyone's agreement about a certain way in which a ritual should be proceeded, is there any sense to reckon that the tribe members might be collectively wrong regarding the correctness of this proceeding, or would somebody from "outside" object to members performing the given ritual wrongly? This example illustrates the case in which everything presented by collective as proper use is at the same time the correct use. But conceptual norms should not be conceived in the same vein with rituals: "It is fundamental feature of our understanding of our concepts that they incorporate objective commitments." (Brandom 1994: 53) Only in the case of objective commitments can conceptual misunderstandings be resolved by referring to incompatibilities or inferential consequences which ensue insofar as the concepts are used in two opposite or different ways. Appropriately conceived, the conception of social practices retains the notion of objectivity of conceptual norms and reveals the origin of binding as a consequence of accepting the norms. This normative binding has got its compulsory validity for individual and collective equally, and does not stem from individual or collective attitudes, but "depends of social articulation of inferential practice of giving and asking for reasons." (Brandom 1994: 54) Through this specific normative language game in the shared domain of justification, the "essentially *social* character" (Brandom 1994: 55) of language practices is saved from the threat of falling into communal relativism and comprehensive skepticism.

As we can see, the standpoint of "essentially social character" of language is here preserved, along with non-factualism of discursive practice. This feature of argumentation is common to the more radical interpretations of Wittgenstein, such as Kripke's and early Wright's. The understanding of rules as "essentially social" implies the critique of the weaker thesis according to which a person can be solitary rule-follower, as long as rules are public – this interpretation claims that Wittgenstein's argument against sense-language demonstrate impossibility of the person's ability to invent concepts which can refer to sensations available only to himself/herself, and on this basis to invent a private language conceivable only to himself/herself. This weak interpretation assumes sociability of individual who has invented a language, that means he/she has the ability for demarcation of correct from incorrect

use attained in a linguistic community. The past usage is involved in correctness and a person practicing linguistic competence can apply concepts in case of his/her isolation, and he/she can also establish and apply completely new rules. Robinson can draw marks in meaning of small arrows in the sand, which he can use as signposts. Misinterpretation and wrong usage of marks on the sand is possible because of misremembering previously attributed meanings, which can be demonstrated in the case when following signpost leads a person in an unwanted direction. Proponents of solitary rule-following could accept the idea that in private sense-language it would not be possible to formulate public rules in accordance with which linguistic expressions would be used, but could claim that Robinson's use of marks is "public" potentially, which means that their apprehension is available to every person reasonable enough to follow rules. Robinson, who is drawing signposts on a desert island can declare: "I formulate rules which could be binding for other persons"; in the case of private language speaker the exclamation will be: "I formulate rules which are binding only to myself."

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But what would be the purpose of the first formulation? Why would a person on a desert island intend to formulate rules in the form valid for other persons? If Robinson would not have in mind the use of signs by other persons, his misleading interpretation, which is taking him to unwanted direction, would not be different from unfulfilled expectation. However, inasmuch he would be obliged to "adjust" his rules to standards conceivable to others (that means to introduce criteria of comprehensibility), then standards will not be the criteria of individual use only. Hence it can be said that a wrong direction taken according to signposts means unfulfilled expectations, since the incorrect use of linguistic expression means a breakdown of communication. Saying, in a Brandomian way, that only incorrect use of rule implies non-compliance of commitment and can be conceived as incorrectness in proper sense.

Brandom's thesis on an "essentially social" character of discursive practice would lead to critique of the conception according to which the formulation of a rule followed by solitary person could be possible in the case of person's former socialization. According to Sellar's dictum, the meaning of linguistic expression belongs to the domain of giving and asking for reasons and mere fulfilling of expectation is not sufficient as criteria for assessment of normativity. For normativity, responses "correct" or "incorrect" are essential within network of discursive

assessments. Semantic normativity means that expressions contain "orientation to future", thereby they are concerned with potential justification by linguistic community. Rules binding for a person go beyond a given dispositions of a person – this assumption is common both to Kripke and Brandom.[11] Justification of the future use by past usage (or by description of past behavior) cannot be sustained, for the reason that this description of the past is eliminating normativity. Brandom's emphasis of future projective inferences in the discursive domain means that persons, by applying a rule, are undertaking a commitment that future justifications – or inferences which could follow their binding statements – will be reasonable and valid.

Habermas on Brandom's Understanding of Communication

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Brandom objected to Kripke that by affirming I-we type of intersubjectivity he gives no adequate relevance to the second person. Habermas' objection to Brandom is that he is doing the same, because – although he doesn't ascribe epistemic authority to the collective – he nevertheless could not make account of the role of the second person. (Habermas 2000: 344) In Brandom's philosophy discursive practice is acknowledged as relevant only from the perspective of the third person, as neutral in discordance of multiple perspectives. According to Habermas, this is discernible in Brandom's example of court proceedings when a prosecutor introduces pathological liar as reliable witness. Through cross-examination and interrogation about reasons of actions, comparing *de re* and *de dicto* statements, lawyers attempt to create in the minds of a judge and jury a reliable image of event. But in this case direct communication between partakers in examination is missing: they don't endeavor to bring around the opponent, nor adjust opinions in light of a better argument, nor change their standpoints or revise their beliefs and convictions regarding the case. Mere ascription of validity claims cannot be propounded as an exemplary model of communication conceiving as two-directional interaction of speakers. This is the case of simple epistemic relation reducible to informing about opinions or beliefs of interlocutors, the ultimate aim of which is to reveal omissions and falsehoods of beliefs of one or other's side in discussion. In this way communicative interaction is essentially impoverished, because social

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11   Brandom is quoting Kripke, who wrote: "The relation of meaning and intention to future action is *normative*, not *descriptive*." (Kripke 1982: 37; Brandom 1994: 656)

integration as one of the aims of linguistic action has been neglected. In Brandom's analysis of I-thou relation validity claims of the first person is confronted with validity claims of the third, so there is no attitude of the first person towards the second. Instead, the second person will be a recipient in the linguistic interaction, proper reaction from whom has been expected, as well as realization of understanding. The recipient in the example is the forum which makes an impartial assessment, independently of participants in debate. Also, Brandom's second example, dance – in the course of which dancers co-ordinate their movements according to each other, while their movements are not identical – is the case of actions and reactions, mutual strategic adjustment, although not the case in which "the participants can converge in their intersubjective recognition of the same validity claim" achieving "a consensual co-operation that can satisfy the requirements of social integration." (Habermas 2000: 347)

According to Habermas, Brandom's inferentialistic semantics implies that the objectivity of discoursive practice exists as a result of a fixed conceptual structure of the world. This conception is neglecting the achieved consensus as a result of cooperative action in which persons gain competences for argumentative discussion and mutual recognition. Such type of objectivistic stance lacks the essential component of discoursive practice, that is "the intersubjective relation to second persons, towards whose recognition validity claims have an in-built orientation (...)." (Habermas 2000: 347) Although the intention of Brandom's pragmatic approach to language was to explain the concepts through "practice of giving and asking for reasons" in intersubjective interaction, in an attempt to explain the objectivity of validity of expression, he abolished the difference between intersubjective life-world and objective world. (Habermas 2003: 8)

Brandom responded to Habermas' critique by relativizing the controversy, elucidating prevailing common points of both philosophical positions. Habermas' validity claim is, according to Brandom, affiliated to his own highlighting of the role of reasonableness. Also, Brandom cannot accept Habermas' remark that in his conception the role of knowledge is limited to the receptive process of acceptance of epistemic content. (Brandom 2000: 359-360) Alleged "semantic passivity" is not the outcome of objectivity of concepts, and it is not in line with his assumption that we are the creators of our concepts. Mutual understanding, on which Habermas insisted, is integral to the common

project in scorekeeping communication. Besides getting an insight into factual content through understanding of accepted interlocutors' commitments, participants in communication should have the ability to change perspective, that means to conceive conceptual content in the way other persons understand it. Interchange of conceptual content through insights from different perspectives in a scorekeeping situation of acknowledgments of statuses and attitudes explains how concepts can be specified in different ways, and nevertheless at the same time interlocutors can understand the same – or approximately the same – content. But at the same time it is not implied that understanding can be achieved through identical reactions or parallelism in behavior – this coordination can be illustrated in the example of dance, because dancers are making utterly different moves, but other than that, their dance is synchronized. Explicit content of "sharing" mutual understanding can be revealed only through understanding of different perspectives, as it is the product of "discursive coordination".[12] But while Habermas considers the aim of communication as achieving mutual understanding, Brandom is claiming that linguistic acting doesn't have any (external) goal. Consequently, this goal cannot be achieving mutual understanding, as it cannot be any other instrumental goal, such as familiarizing with thoughts or better evolutionary adaptation (Brandom 2000: 363-364) – this aim, therefore, cannot be social integration, nor cooperation as a product of "fusion of perspectives".

It is an exaggeration to say that Brandom's position is inclined towards conceptual realism, as Habermas suggested, and that abolishment of objectivity on the one side, and intersubjective interaction on the other, is an outcome of Brandomian argumentative discourse. Brandom's aim is to show that an assumed normativity is at the same time always already constituted intersubjectively through a process of exchange of acknowledgments and attributions of statuses and practical attitudes. This interchange is open and dynamic, it depends on "better reasons" the participants of which are prepared to provide in interaction. However, the

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12   Cf, Brandom 2000: 363. A position of this sort, as opposed to Habermas' critique, is defended by Scharp, who states that criteria for interlocutors' understanding something on the same way is not the identity of inferences, but achieving a communicative goal through coordination of actions, which demands selection of "standards for communicative success that are relative to each action context". (Scharp 2003: 58.) Independently from this debate, implicitly undertaking Brandomian position Kiesselbach advocates a thesis on normative speech as essentially calibrational, in which linguistic dispositions are coordinated through check-and-balance actions, forming meaningful discourse through this balance. (Kiesselbach 2012: 123)

relation between I-thou type of intersubjectivity (in which norms are instituonalized through mutual recognition of statuses and attitudes) and social character of norms which includes, after all, a more generalized, encompassing I-we intersubjectivity, remains ambiguous. That means norms are already established in a particular social environment and context of practice – let us call it lebeswelt or lebensform. Regardless of cogency and meticulousness in explaining deontic force emerging from interplay of attributions and acknowledgments in the interaction, there is the impression that Brandom described the cases of immediate or tête-à-tête interactions, only occasionally acknowledging historically inherited and socially imposed shared norms.[13]

Regarding Brandom's objection to cooperation, that is, integration as an external aim of language, cooperation in the course of discursive interaction in Habermas's sense is an indispensable part of understanding, so the difference between undertaking of semantic content from another person's assertion (through taking other's commitments in *de re* ascriptions, as Brandom would say) and incorporation of point of view or perspective (through taking other's commitments in *de dicto* ascriptions) should be relativized.[14] Cooperation means more radical re-adjustment of interlocutors' perspectives than coordination in acknowledging of perspective could allow. Brandom "analyses the attribution of validity claims, and they evaluation, without taking account of the complex entanglement of the perspectives of the first, second and third person."(Habermas 2000: 344-345). Following Habermas, it could be said that there *is* entanglement of perspectives, but only at the level of assertion.[15] This understanding of perspectives is recuperated in Brandom's interpretation of Wittgenstein.

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13 Some authors think that there is no clear discrimination between I-thou and I-we in Brandom's conception, and that shared norms which govern our practice of acknowledgements of correctness or incorrectness are not considered in his position. Shared norms are accepted as "a matter of fact", they are reflected only later. (cf. Fultner 2001; Macbeth 2010)

14 Brandom mentioned, more emphatically, seeing the world from other's perspective. (Brandom 2000: 362) However, it might be said in Wittgenstein's manner, that the change of perspective can be confined to much more austere scope as well, such as change of aspect of seeing, illustrated in the well-known example of seeing the duck-rabbit figure.

15 In favour of Brandom it can be said that, if the role of reasonableness or assertoric component of speech acts is neglected, social integration can be established for wrong reasons (tribal mythical projection, spurious history of the nation, and racial ideology are potential candidates for accomplishment of this distorted social integration). Of course, Habermas himself embraces this rational component as indispensable in meaningful discourse.

Brandom's and Wittgenstein's Understanding of Language, Normativity and Rules

According to Brandom, in Wittgenstein's view language is contingent and unsystematic, it consist of suburbs which are intertwined, its structure depends on the nonlinguistic configuration of the world, and as such it doesn't have a downtown. In such an image of language as a city there is no main street which could interconnect all its parts. (cf. Brandom, 2010b: 300) Contrary to this, Brandom assumes that practice of giving and asking for reasons, and, accordingly, forming the assertions which stand in need of justification and which are also justifications for other claims, is not just one of the language games among others, but it is crucially important for linguistic interaction. The language game of giving and asking for reasons, asking the questions and answering is the downtown of linguistic activity, and of a very human practice as well. Everything that can be called language must contain declarative sentences, and certain statements in every particular language must express propositional content – it is necessary for it to contain assertions. To utter statements means undertaking commitments in a chain of inferences and to give better arguments (such as referring to factual relations) imply for the subject commitments to consequences which follow from acceptance of better argument.

Wittgenstein, in Brandom's interpretation, treats every linguistic interaction which is meaningful (that means intentional and articulated intersubjective communication) also as a language game. Contrary to this conception, Brandom excludes from the category of meaningful language games those linguistic practices which do not contain assertions and inferences, and among which is automatic or mechanical reaction to linguistic expressions. Assertions are privileged in relation to other language games because the other games are logically dependent on assertions. "Shut the door", besides being imperative, also contains a description of action that should be brought about, so if the person, does not understand the statement "the door is closed", then he/she could not understand meaning of expression "shut the door" either. To shut the door is not an automatic response to given sounds, or it at least it should not be inasmuch this is an action in line with norms. In the same sense, a "language game" which does not contain assertions, will not be linguistic, but mere vocal practice, such as a ritual or music. Even poetry and myth include the propositional content and represent particular states of things: we cannot understand them if we cannot understand

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concepts inherent to the discourse of facticity, in contrast with pure expressions in music and rituals. (cf. Brandom 2010b: 301)

As it is well-known, according to Wittgenstein, specific language games of reasoning, of questioning and giving answers, as well as any other game, at any rate is not privileged, in the similar sense as competitiveness is not a necessary feature of all games, although a vast number of them are based on competition – there are non-competitive games, such as throwing a ball in the air and catching it. According to Wittgenstein, inferences, justifications, claims and norms of correctness lay not in intrinsic features of asserting and practice of justification, but on basic certainty in language use. In case of a game of giving and asking for reasons, for to play this game it needs a lot of things to be already provided in language. Since assertions as building blocks in Brandom's sense are utterances in which possibility of error is presupposed (they comply with conditions of falibility), in Wittgenstein's so-called hinge statements which are "bedrocks" of language-games, it is superfluous to ask for justification, having in mind their role in discourse. In those statements, uttered in normal conditions, doubt is unjustified as the question of their justification is non-epistemic, depending on practical reliability of their use, and asking for their falsification is losing its sense or purpose in particular non-problematic situations.

Validity of norms and rules is not atemporal and acontextual, so their historical origin can be considered *instrumentally* on the basis of evolutive advances of introducing, constructing, pursuing and obeying of those norms, as well as *socially* through their function in social domain. From a conceptual-philosophical standpoint it will be necessary to demonstrate the way of acquiring objectivity of assessment of norms – this acquiring is explained by Brandom through gradual interactive emergence of normative statuses from normative attitudes. As crucial, there is a question whether all language norms have objective status, as well as if this status is identical for all linguistic norms. Objectivity includes the existence of correctness which transcends attitudes – not only attitude of a subject, but all members of linguistic community as well. There must be a possibility of unequivocal agreement of all members on correctness of particular action along with a possibility of this action to be incorrect. The case of conventions such as abovementioned ritual performed by particular tribe, is an example of non-transcendent practice, that is, practices of the sort that depend on the subject's attitude, and there is no sense to talk about error or acting incorrectly. (cf.

Brandom 1994: 53) All of which means achieving objectivity is not the aim of the tribe.

Application of linguistic expression, however, is different from ritual practice described above. Common normative attitudes institutionalize norms, but those norms as such transcend given attitudes. It goes without any question that there is need for the fallibilistic assumption which should clearly indicate which inferences are not correct. In articulated linguistic communication we start with inferential consequences and doxatic statuses; further, the experience corrects us or contravenes and we are committed to eliminate inferences which prove to be inadequate.[16] In this process, conceptual norms acquire stability and robustness, so norms and conceptual contents aren't just convention, but they are corroborated as they are dependent on the state of things which constrain doxatic and practical undertakings of commitments.

However, the question of status of discursive norms which define the game of giving and asking for reasons should be asked. Inferential incompatibility cannot influence the justification of the framework linguistic norms, since the very commitment to elimination of incompatibility should be justified by norms. What is the source and status of commitments to justification of inferential consequences? On the one side, and in contrast to commitments built on material inferences, what these commitments have in common with conventions is their dependence on common acceptance. On the other side, although commitment to justification of inferential consequences is constructed by undertaking and acknowledging these commitments by others, Brandom, however, does not think that these framework norms are attitude-dependent, that is, that they are based on conventions, in the way rituals are, because the pure conventionality can imply voluntarism or arbitrariness. Although framework norms are not reflective of features of the world, they are still obligatory for persons participating in linguistic practice as they are constitutive for playing the game of giving and asking for reasons.[17]

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16   Cf. the example of inferences based on taste and litmus paper in Brandom 1994: 332. If by taste in our tongue we consider something as acid, while litmus paper indicated alkaline ph reaction, we must clarify this inconsistency in order to have further entitlement to our undertaking of commitments concerning our ongoing chemical practice. We are committed to incessant investigation of material inferences as inconsistencies in our assertions emerge.

17   Brandom 2008: 176. Brandom can here recall Kant, who stated that the difference between the spheres of the practical and theoretical reason is already practical,

But if framework norms are not depicting characteristics of world, how is it possible to talk about their objective statuses? As Brandom repeated, they are not conventions or the result of explicit agreement about their content and implied obligations because of their prerequisite role in our game of giving and asking for reasons. Thus acceptance of the norms is the condition for participating in linguistic interaction. Consequently, this acceptance is the condition of rationality of participants in communication, so that conventions and social constitutionality imply objective commitment of participants to follow particular standards and to accept certain actions which regulate confinement. (cf. Brandom 2008: 176) In this sense, the collective can reject, revise or modify language game of giving and asking for reasons, which is, according to Brandom, the basis of propositional talk, and which is, again, the basis of linguistic communication. If this game is replaced by some different game, it can be assumed that propositional discourse, "aboutness" and *de re* talk is also replaced by something else. Because of inevitability of this game, in this sense conventionality is at odds with arbitrariness.

So, framework norms are attitude-transcendent and social-conventional at the same time, and their objectivity differ essentially from norms of material inference. But there is no doxatic necessity for starting and playing a game of justification, of inquiring inferential consequences, scorekeeping and giving and asking for reasons. In the same sense Nietzsche asks questions regarding the legitimacy of grammar itself, truthfulness and discourse connected with truth, while Sellars claims that somebody could withdraw from linguistic communication, and thus exclude themselves from any normative commitment. But in those cases, as Brandom notices, a person cannot express his/hers thoughts since there is no other way to do it. (Ramsey's "We cannot whistle it either", which he stated concerning the famous paragraph from the Tractatus that we must be silent on those items about which we cannot speak meaningfully). "You do not have to be in the community", writes Brandom and continues: "But to be /discursive being/ one is to be subject to those norms" (Brandom 2008: 176), which can be conditionally expressed in the statement that if somebody wants to be a rational being, he must participate in the game of reasoning. There is nothing "in the world" which would commit somebody to succumb to norms, and

that means practical-normative (this is Kant's insight in the primacy of practical over pure reason.)

in this sense norms are arbitrary, although not in the sense that there is no natural necessity for participating in communication.

This participation, as it happens, sets constraints on a person regarding following fundamental norms, making conclusions and conducting inferential commitments. When scholastic refuses to look through the telescope, he is undertaking different commitments than the Galilean who accepts standard procedures or actions, similarly to the case of a person who is counting "quus" (1000+2=1004) instead of "plus" (1000+2=1002). The implications of their acts, their conclusions and inferences will be different than "commonly correct" ones, but they will still be under bounds stemming from those implications, conclusions and inferences.

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So, the person who is adding in quus is somebody who does not participate in our game. According to Kripke's view, he/she will not be judged from our community's standpoint as rule-follower and will be excluded from numerous communal activities as incompetent. However, subjects can survey inferential consequences of apparently senseless, illogical and unreasonable statements of such a person, and this leads to refutation of epistemic and normative exclusivism, which allegedly comes from the understanding of normative commitments as decisions. Quus-like addition and non-compliance to looking through the telescope can be counted as decisions, but they bring particular undertaking commitments and making consequences – examining of this can be available to outsiders, in the same vein as a non-believer can ask the question about sense of holy trinity and its theological, logical or practical consequences. At the same moment when he/she start to use language in a particular way, the person grasps a normativity specific for that use. Wittgenstein himself, as it were, uses this strategy through fictional dialogue with the persons who are using linguistic expressions in odd, non-usual ways.

Exclusivism and relativism, however, are often regarded as a feature of Wittgenstein's philosophy, a consequence of pluralism and incommensurability of language games, and their connexion to specific lebenswelt. "I, L. W. was visit moon in 1951.", "An astronomer shouldn't look through the telescope", and "1000+2=1004" would be viewed as statements about which radical relativist could claim that they cannot be falsified by our reasons, insofar as the person accepted those statements as a framework norms (which can be exemplary hinge statements). He/

she, for example, might claim that he/she went to the moon not being aware how (Wittgenstein 1969: 108) or maybe in the way that he/she was kidnapped by aliens. He/she would also claim that his/hers conviction is sufficient, just like he/she does not need justification for the claim that he/she has intestines, even though nobody ever saw them, nor explained to him/her reasons why he/she have them. However, we wouldn't accept this assumption: proposed defense of statement: "I, L. W. visited moon in 1951." is senseless because "Nothing would follow from it, nothing be explained by it. It would not tie in with anything in my life." (Wittgenstein 1969: 117.) Concerning philosophical and skeptical talk, we are asking if a particular way of speaking is making a difference in the practice of the language (cf. Wittgenstein 1969: 524). This view is quite compatible with Brandom's insistence on surveying undertaken commitments, moreover, it can be said that he demands this surveying. "I went to the moon", "Adding quus is appropriate" and "It shouldn't be looked at through the telescope" are statements which carry different types of commitments, imply different standards of justification, and to apprehend their meaning and function in discourse, as well as to understand their meaningfulness, we must ask for those consequences, standards of justification and types of commitments.

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Determining the consequences, however, does not lead to convergence of perspectives, but to acknowledgment of new and different conceptual system, to a re-visited worldview, which is similar to the understanding of new style of art rather than to acceptance of better reason – the latter should be the result of Brandom's interchange of perspectives. According to Wittgensein, instead of asking for reasons, in certain cases we should ask which difference this conviction is making in our life (or practice, our practical way of getting around in the world), what this difference indicates, what is explicated or explained, with which "worldview" is affiliate, what are its consequences. Like Habermas, but opposite to Brandom, Wittgenstein claims that taking over the standards of rationality in linguistic interaction is inevitably conditioned by the transformation of the very participants in an interaction and by constituting of a new domain of communication, which is biased itself. In contrast to both of them, Wittgenstein argued that argumentation as such often cannot give us assurance and that transformation means a new way seeing of things, similar to seeing a different aspect of a picture.

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Michal Sládeček

Brandom, Vitgenštajn i intersubjektivnost

Sažetak

U uvodnom delu teksta analizirane su osnovne crte Brandomovog socijalnog pragmatizma. Središnji deo razmatra Brandomovu interpretaciju Kripkeovog shvatanja socijalnog karaktera pravila, kao i Habermasovu kritiku Brandomove koncepcije ja-ti i ja-mi intersubjektivnosti. U poslednjem delu teksta ispituje se Brandomova interpretacija Vitgenštajnovog razumevanja intersubjektivnosti, kao i njegovog shvatanja normi i pravila. Prema autoru, Brandom odbacuje opravdanje pravila putem prošle primene, i, naglašavajući ključnu ulogu inferencijalnih i praktičkih posledica prihvatanja određenih pravila, razmatra odnose prema nečemu (attitudes) i obavezivanja (commitments) kao aktivnosti orijetisane prema budućem utvrđivanju značenja i proveri valjanosti pravila. U tekstu se iznosi primedba da Brandom razmatra intersubjektivnost kao neposrednu komunikaciju, zanemarujući ulogu zajedničkih društvenih i istorijski preuzetih normi. Autor takođe smatra da, iz vitgenštajnovske pozicije, komunikacija i intersubjektivnost podrazumevaju temeljnije uzajamno prilagođavanje perspektiva učesnika u komunikaciji, nego što to povlači Brandomovo shvatanje komunikacije kao doksatičke razmene perspektiva.

Ključne reči: Brandom, Habermas, intersubjektivnost, Kripke, jezik, normativnost, pravila, Vitgenštajn.

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