Schizophrenic Speech
Making Sense of Bathroots and Ponds that Fall in Doorways

This book reviews our knowledge of the incoherent speech which is not uncommonly seen as a symptom of schizophrenia, and is one of the most researched symptoms in the disorder. The content covers clinical presentation, differential diagnosis and the theories proposed to account for the symptom of ‘thought disorder’, ranging from the psychoanalytic to there being a form of aphasia involved. The book is unique in its ability to apply linguistic and neuropsychological approaches, and is the first to cover comprehensively the range of clinical studies that followed the introduction of Andreasen’s rating scale for thought, language and communication disorders. This book is essential reading for all those working in the field of schizophrenia and also for those interested in language and disorders of speech.

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The authors are indebted to two psychologists, Alan Baddeley and Rosaleen McCarthy, who over a considerable period of time influenced the writing of this book in many direct and indirect ways.
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Preface

If ever there were a preface that ought to start with the words 'Why another book on . . .', this is probably it. Thought disorder is the most studied symptom of a much-studied disorder, schizophrenia, and there has been a long tradition of punctuating the steady stream of publications on the subject with books. There may be some justification for continuing this tradition, in that the last single-author book on the topic was written in 1990, and, while there have been one or two multi-author volumes since then, it is fair to say that neither of these caught the tide of two major developments in the field. One of these was the wave of clinical studies that followed the introduction of Andreasen's ratingscale for what she called thought, language and communication disorders; the second has been the rise of the neuropsychological approach to schizophrenia.

Naturally, neither of these developments was the reason for writing this particular book, which had more maculate origins. It grew out of our attemptsto get a paper based on the research in a Ph.D. published. After engaging in the usual titanic struggle with the reviewers, one of us said to the other in a flash of exasperation that the only way we would ever get the damn thing into print was by writing a book on thought disorder and putting the paper in it somewhere. Immediately we both saw the possibilities for a book, and were quickly able to persuade ourselves that there was a pressing need for one, along the lines laid out in the preceding paragraph.

The phenomenon that forms the topic of this book has gone by many names over the years. Some of these have been picturesque and fanciful, such as word salad and knight’s move thinking. Quite a few have come with their own theoretical baggage, either neurological, for example schizophrenia, or psychological, as in the widely used American term, loosening of associations. Eventually, psychiatry settled on one of the most opaque terms ever used, formal thought disorder— the ‘formal’ denoting a disorder in the form of the thought processes as opposed to the disorder of content of thought exhibited by patients with delusions. As we wrote this book we grew more and more irritated by the clumsiness of this term,
and its unintentional pretentiousness, and so we have substituted the simpler term thought disorder throughout. It may be more confusable with schizophrenic symptoms other than formal thought disorder, and purists may object that it excludes abnormalities of language (and communication), but it at least has the virtue of being less of a mouthful.

A number of people helped in the writing of this book in a number of ways. In addition to her general influence on our way of thinking, Roz McCarthy’s knowledge of neuropsychology and aphasia was invaluable. We also owe her a debt of gratitude for patiently but determinedly persuading us that executive function might be relevant to some of the linguistic abnormalities of thought disorder, especially as one of us fought long and hard against accepting this. German Berrios informed the historical aspects of this book through his published work, many conversations and one journalistic interview; beyond this he also provided a great deal of deep background. The authors know a lot more about specific language impairment in children than they did before, after one of them spent an afternoon with Dorothy Bishop in Oxford. Statistically, Steve Graham and Raymond Salvador gave us a crash course in factor analysis, and Keith Law taught us everything we know about meta-analysis. Paula McKay arranged a trip to Ireland in order to tap his extensive knowledge about James Joyce and his daughter, Lucia, and we would like to thank both of them for this. We are grateful to Cambridge University Press and Richard Marley for overlooking many missed deadlines. We would also like to thank Shirley Easton for battling to transcribe a number of indistinct recordings of often nearly unintelligible speech. Our families were incredibly tolerant with us, especially in the last few weeks before completion; we hope they know that their support was invaluable in the writing of this book.