

Deictic relational responding in beliefs attribution: people with high social anhedonia are impaired in reversing the frame of I-YOU.

A Relational Frame account of beliefs attribution has been proposed in terms of deictic relational responding. According to this view, attributing beliefs to another involves a higher relational complexity than self-attributing because it requires reversing the deictic frame of I-YOU (i.e., taking the perspective of another). Social anhedonia has been shown to lack social interactions and to present deficits in attribution of mental states and in complex deictic relational responding involving the frame of I-YOU. The current study investigated the ability to respond in accordance with deictic frames in a task consisting of reporting true- and false-beliefs to another and to the self in 30 participants with a high level of social anhedonia. We predicted that these participants would perform weaker than controls on tasks involving attributing beliefs to another. Consistent with this prediction, participants with high social anhedonia were less accurate than controls when reporting the beliefs of another, but not of the self, thus indicating difficulties in reversing the deictic frame of I-YOU in this population. Implications for the understanding of deficits in beliefs attribution in populations characterized by a high level of social anhedonia (e.g. people with schizophrenia) are discussed.

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