UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

The Later Wittgenstein on Understanding and Thinking

by

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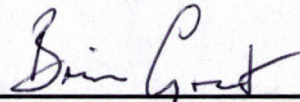MASTER OF ARTS

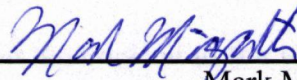DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

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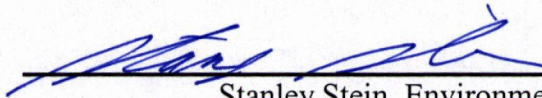UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled 'The Later Wittgenstein on Understanding and Thinking' submitted by Andrei Buleandra in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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Abstract

In this thesis I will present and evaluate the Later Wittgenstein's view of understanding and thinking. According to Wittgenstein, understanding is not a mental state and thinking is not a mental process. In his view, these two concepts are constituted by public criteria, by a corresponding form of behavior. Contrary to Wittgenstein, I will argue that there is a sense in which understanding is a mental state and thinking is a mental process. Also, I will argue that this view is consistent with his idea that understanding and thinking are conceptually, logically related to behavior. In addition, I will evaluate critically Wittgenstein's views of self-knowledge, introspection and other minds.

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Introduction

According to the later Wittgenstein[1], it is misleading, if not wrong, to claim that understanding, thinking, believing and so on are mental states, mental processes or experiences. Although he is not explicit about this in his writings, Wittgenstein is taken by his commentators to oppose the Cartesian picture of the mind. It is important to note, that the expression 'the Cartesian picture of the mind' or the word 'Cartesianism' does not refer only to Rene Descartes and, eventually, his followers. It refers to a particular picture of the mind which was presupposed by many philosophers in many traditions[2]. The picture is roughly the following: there is an important ontological difference between the mind and the body, the inner and the outer. One's mind is private, accessible only to oneself. One's body and behaviour are public, accessible to everyone. Mental concepts like understanding, thinking, sensation and so on refer to states and processes that occur in one's mind. These states and processes are similar to the states and processes that occur in the physical world, but, one important difference is that they are directly accessible only to the subject who understands, thinks or has a certain sensation. Other people cannot have a direct access to one's mental states or processes. They can only infer, based on what one says or does, that one has certain mental states.

We can also use other concepts in order to describe the Cartesian picture of the mind. In this view, mental states and mental processes are states of consciousness. It is of the essence of any mental item that it is given in consciousness. To put the point

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[1] This is a thesis about the later Wittgenstein's philosophy of mind. Then, when I will talk simply about Wittgenstein, in fact, I will refer to the later Wittgenstein unless I indicate that I am referring to the early Wittgenstein.

[2] According to P.M.S. Hacker the Cartesian picture is implicit in rationalism, empiricism and phenomenalism as well as in more contemporary theories in the philosophy of mind.

differently, mental states and processes are, in the Cartesian view, mental episodes or mental occurrences[3]. Something is a mental episode or a mental occurrence if it belongs to the stream of consciousness. In this thesis I will refer to Cartesianism as the view that all of the mental is episodic.

As I have noted, according to his commentators, the later Wittgenstein criticizes this view of the mind. In this thesis I will focus on his analysis of the concepts of understanding, meaning, believing and thinking. In the first chapter I will present and evaluate his view of understanding and meaning and, in the second chapter I will present and evaluate his view of thinking and believing.

Wittgenstein's goal is to show that understanding, meaning, thinking and believing are not mental states or mental processes. In other words, although Wittgenstein does not use the concepts, he wants to demonstrate that understanding, meaning, thinking and believing are not mental episodes or occurrences[4]. He shows this by highlighting the fact that there are external or public criteria we use in order to apply these concepts. These concepts are not about 'hidden' or 'inner' states and processes in the mind, but they are constituted by these 'outward' criteria we use in our transactions with these concepts. We claim that someone understands a word for example, if he is able to explain the word and to use it correctly. These are two important criteria we use to decide whether someone understands a word. So, what is important in understanding is someone's behaviour, what one is able to do, not what is going on through one's mind.

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[3] The concepts of mental episode and mental occurrence are used by Gilbert Ryle in his book *The Concept of Mind*. A mental episode or occurrence denote 'specific modifications in one's occult stream of consciousness' [Ryle, 1962, p.15]

[4] Wittgenstein has the same view in connection to other mental concepts as well. He makes similar remarks about knowledge, remembering, intending, the self, and so on.

In the first chapter of this thesis I will evaluate critically Wittgenstein's view of understanding and meaning. It is very important to note from the beginning that I do not oppose his view that 'outward' criteria are constitutive of concepts like understanding. I think Wittgenstein is right in holding this view. However, I think he is wrong in holding that what is present before the mind is not essential to understanding. In this thesis I do not defend the view that Cartesianism is right and Wittgenstein is wrong. Rather, I think that there is something true both in what Cartesians maintain and in what Wittgenstein maintains. The challenge is to find what is right in these views and to articulate it coherently.

I will formulate two different arguments in favour of the view that what goes on in one's mind is essential to understanding. The two arguments have the same conclusion: there is a criterial relation[5] between understanding and mental episodes or states of consciousness. What kind of mental episodes do I have in mind? I refer especially to two kinds of mental episodes: having all sorts of mental images passing through one's mind and talking to oneself in the imagination. My point is that there are also 'inward' criteria for understanding. This statement is not in conflict with the statement that there are 'outward' criteria of understanding. My general idea is that the concept of understanding is constituted by the 'inner' and the 'outer' criteria taken together.

Let us get back to the two arguments that I will formulate for the view that there are 'inner' criteria for understanding. These arguments correspond to two different though related senses of the term 'criterion'. In one sense of the term, X is a criterion for

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[5] The concepts of criterion and criterial relation are very important in later Wittgenstein's philosophy. A paradigmatic example of a criterial relation is that between groaning or holding one's cheek and having a toothache.

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Y if we know or decide that Y on the basis of X. This is the epistemological sense. There is also an ontological sense. X is a criterion for Y when being Y is constituted by being X. In other words, there is a conceptual, grammatical relation between X and Y[6]. It is important to emphasise the fact that the two sense of the term 'criterion' are closely connected. For instance, one may say that a criterial relation is a conceptual relation and there is an epistemological aspect of the conceptual relation and an ontological aspect of it.

Then, given these two aspects of a criterial relation, in the first chapter of this thesis I will argue that having certain mental images and talking to oneself may be the basis for knowing that one understands something. Furthermore, that these mental episodes are conceptually or grammatically related to understanding. I will make obvious the latter point by making explicit the conceptual connection between understanding and thinking. By highlighting the connection between understanding and thinking I show that there are mental episodes that constitute understanding. In this way I throw light on the ontological aspect of the criterial relation between understanding and the elements of the stream of consciousness.

In my view, thinking is a Cartesian concept; that is, a concept that is constituted by what is present in the stream of consciousness. Thinking is a mental episode or mental occurrence. One of my arguments for the view that there are inner criteria for understanding depends on the idea that there is a conceptual relation between

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[6] John Canfield draws the distinction in the following way: 'Sometimes Wittgensteinian criteria have been thought of as epistemic and sometimes as 'logical'. If they are epistemic, then my basis in a given case for making a judgement constitutes the criteria governing the judgement. If criteria are 'logical', however, they are the data that would, if seen or shown to obtain, justify the judgement conclusively.' [Canfield, 1986, p.7] I think that the fact that Canfield's way of drawing the distinction between the epistemological aspect of a criterial relation and the ontological aspect of it is not so clear or sharp, shows that the two aspects are interrelated.

understanding and thinking and that thinking is a mental or inner process. But, in his remarks on thinking, Wittgenstein attacks precisely the view that thinking is an inner process. He attacks the view that there is such a thing as episodic or occurent thinking. In his view, when one is interested in what someone else is thinking of one is not interested in what is going through someone else's mind. In the second chapter of the thesis I will present and evaluate Wittgenstein's arguments against the view that thinking is a mental process.

In the last chapter of the thesis I will present and evaluate Wittgenstein's views about self-knowledge, introspection and other minds. As opposed to the in depth conceptual analysis characteristic of the first two chapters, the discussion in the third chapter will be more general. A detailed analysis of Wittgenstein's views on self-knowledge, introspection and other minds could be the subject-matter of another independent thesis. The reason why I want to approach these matters in this thesis is because the conclusion of the arguments I will develop in the first two chapters can be used in assessing Wittgenstein's views about self-knowledge and introspection. For instance, given that in Wittgenstein's view concepts like understanding, thinking and so on are constituted by public criteria, it follows that what is given in introspection has no bearing on these concepts. But, the conclusion of the first two chapters of my thesis will be precisely that what is given in introspection is essential to understanding and thinking. Then, in chapter three I will evaluate critically Wittgenstein's view on introspection from this new perspective.

In addition, in the last chapter of the thesis I want to approach an important problem that may occur in connection to my criticism of Wittgenstein. In the following I

will describe the problem. The Cartesian view of the mind invites scepticism about other minds. By emphasising the criterial relation between mind and behaviour Wittgenstein resists such scepticism. Also, Wittgenstein's 'private language argument' shows that the Cartesian view of the mind has certain untenable consequences. But, the fact is that in this thesis, I will criticise some of Wittgenstein's views from a Cartesian perspective. Therefore, the problem is: does not the view I put forward in this thesis raise the problems Wittgenstein tried to solve in the first place?

In the last section of the third chapter I will sketch Wittgenstein's 'private language argument' and its relation to the problem of other minds. Also, I will argue that the view that I put forward in this thesis does not invite scepticism about other minds and the idea that there is a private language, because I think that Wittgenstein is right in holding that there is a criterial relation between mind and behaviour. Therefore, in my view, what is going on in other's people's minds is not 'hidden' or 'occult', as the Cartesian might claim. In addition, I do not maintain the view that the meaning of mental concepts is determined exclusively by what is present before the mind, in the stream of consciousness. This is why my view does not have the consequence that there is such a thing as a private language. I think that the meaning of mental concepts is determined *both* by what is present before the mind *and* by the corresponding behaviour.

Chapter 1 – Understanding.

1. Wittgenstein's view

In the following section I will sketch some of Wittgenstein's arguments for the view that understanding is not an experience, a mental state or a mental process[7]. First, let us consider the view that understanding is an experience. We are tempted to say that understanding is an experience when we suddenly understand something. Let us take a look at Wittgenstein's description of such an experience:

Let us imagine the following example: A writes series of numbers down; B watches him and tries to find a law for the sequence of numbers. If he succeeds he exclaims: 'Now I can go on!' – So this capacity, this understanding, is something that makes its appearance in a moment. So let us try and see what is that makes its appearance here. – A has written down the numbers 1, 5, 11, 19, 29; at this point B says he knows how to go on. What happened here? Various things may have happened; for example, while A was slowly putting one number after another, B was occupied with trying various algebraic formulae on the numbers which had been written down. After A had written the number 19, B tried the formula an = n2 + n − 1; and the next number confirmed his hypothesis.

Or again, B does not think of formulae. He watches A writing his numbers down with a certain feeling of tension, and all sorts of vague thoughts go trough his

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[7] I will follow the way in which Baker and Hacker present Wittgenstein's arguments [Baker and Hacker, 1980, p. 596-605].

head. Finally he asks himself: 'What is the series of differences?' He finds the series 4, 6, 8, 10 and says: Now I can go on.

Or he watches and says 'Yes, I know that series' – and continues it, just as he would have done if A had written down the series 1, 3, 5, 7, 9. – Or he says nothing at all and simply continues the series. Perhaps he had what may be called the sensation 'that's easy!' (Such a sensation is, for example, that of a light quick intake of breath, as when one is slightly startled) [Wittgenstein, 1958, §151, p. 59-60].

At §179 Wittgenstein says that we can imagine the case where nothing goes on in B's mind when he says 'Now I know how to go on!' Nevertheless, if B is able to continue the series correctly then we should recognize that he knew how to go on.

We can also imagine the case where nothing at all occurred in B's mind except that he suddenly said 'Now I know how to go on' – perhaps with a feeling of relief; and that he did in fact go on working out the series without using the formula. And in this case too we should say – in certain circumstances – that he did know how to go on [Wittgenstein, 1958, §179, p. 73].

It seems that Wittgenstein wants to persuade us that the concept of understanding is independent of what one experiences when one understands. We do not determine whether someone understands how he should continue a series of numbers for instance by asking him 'What exactly did you experience when you felt that you understood?' The criteria for understanding lie in his performances, in what he is able to do. It is not

necessary that someone has a certain experience when he says 'Now I understand'. Also, one may have various experiences but one may still not be able to expand the series correctly. So, having various experiences is not a sufficient condition for understanding. But it is not a necessary condition either. In conclusion, even if there are characteristic experiences of sudden understanding, those experiences do not constitute understanding.

Wittgenstein formulates similar arguments for the view that understanding is not a mental process. A process takes time. It has a beginning, middle and an end. A process can be interrupted and then resumed again. But, for instance, understanding the multiplication table is not a process with a beginning and an end, but a gradually acquired ability to operate a calculus. An interruption of understanding is equivalent to a failure to understand. But, most importantly, we do not determine whether someone understands a lecture for instance, by discovering what processes accompanied his listening. There are different criteria we apply in order to determine whether someone understands a lecture. Can he recount the lecture? Can he ask questions about it? Can he evaluate it intelligently? Therefore, the way a person behaves determines whether she understood something. These are the criteria we use in order to decide that. This is why mental processes are neither necessary nor sufficient for understanding. Wittgenstein writes:

> How should we counter someone who told us that with *him* understanding was an
>
> inner process? – How should we counter him if he said that with him knowing
>
> how to play chess was an inner process? – We should say that when we want to
>
> know if he can play chess we aren't interested in anything that goes on inside
>
> him. – And if he replies that this is in fact just what we are interested in, that is,
>
> we are interested in whether he can play chess – then we shall have to draw his

attention to the criteria which would demonstrate his capacity, and on the other hand to the criteria for the 'inner states'.

Even if someone had a particular capacity only when, and only as long as, he had a particular feeling, the feeling would not be the capacity. [Wittgenstein, 1958, p. 181]

Wittgenstein emphasises the fact that the criteria for determining what one's inner states are are different from the criteria for determining whether one has understood something. For instance, suppose that someone tells me that he understood an article. In order to determine whether this is true I ask him questions about the article, see if he can present in a clear way the arguments formulated in the article and so on. If I want to know what his inner states were when he read the article I would ask different questions. I would ask him how he felt when he was reading, if he remembered something, if something else crossed his mind and so on.

Is understanding a mental state? According to Wittgenstein, if we use the term 'state of mind' in the accepted way then it is misleading to say that understanding is a mental state. Psychological states like anxiety, depression or joy are mental states. They are characterized by having 'genuine duration'. As Norman Malcolm observes[8],'genuine duration' is a technical term used by Wittgenstein. Something has genuine duration when it can be observed continuously[9]. For instance, pain has genuine duration. One can

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[8] Armstrong and Malcolm, *Consciousness and Causality*, 1984, p. 79.

[9] Wittgenstein rises some problems in connection with the use of the word 'observe' in sentences like 'I observe that I am in pain' or 'I observe that I feel grief'. Wittgenstein suggests that the act of observing grief produces the feeling of grief that one observes. In other words, grief would not exist if it were not observed. But, Wittgenstein claims that 'observing' does not produce what is observed. Therefore, the use of the word 'observe' in this context may be illegitimate. The argument applies in a similar way to the case of pain [Wittgenstein, 1958. p. 187]. I will consider this problem in chapter three when I will asses Wittgenstein's view of self-knowledge and introspection.

observe when one is in pain, can observe when the pain is more or less intense and so on. But understanding something does not have genuine duration. The fact that I understand English does not mean that my understanding is the object of my observation. I cannot continuously observe my understanding of English. Wittgenstein writes:

Understanding a word': a state. But a *mental* state? − Depression, excitement, pain, are called mental states. Carry out a grammatical investigation as follows: we say

'He was depressed the whole day'

'He was in great excitement the whole day'

'He has been in continuous pain since yesterday'-

We also say 'Since yesterday I understood this word' 'Continuously', though? − To be sure, one can speak of an interruption of understanding. But in what cases? Compare: 'Where did your pains get less?' and 'When did you stop understanding that word? [Wittgenstein, 1958, p.59]

In *Zettel* Wittgenstein makes a similar point: 'Think of this language game: Determine how long an impression lasts by means of a stop-watch. The duration of knowledge, ability, understanding, could not be determined in this way' [Wittgenstein, 1967, §82, p.16]. It seems that the difference noticed by Wittgenstein between understanding and mental states like pain, depression, mental images and so on is that understanding is not present in the stream of consciousness[10], whereas mental states are. We can understand the order 'Pay attention to your pain and determine how long it lasts!'

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[10] Wittgenstein does not use the term 'stream of consciousness' (except, maybe, in a pejorative sense) but I will use it for the clarity of the exposition.

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Pain is present in one's stream of consciousness. But one does not know what to do when is given the order 'Pay attention to your understanding of the multiplication table and determine how long it lasts!' If one has acquired the ability of multiplying, his understanding of the multiplication table is not something in his stream of consciousness; it is something he can do practically. Understanding may have duration, but it does not have genuine duration, and this is why it is not a mental state.

To sum up, there are three arguments we can find in the later Wittgenstein's writings to the effect that understanding is not a mental episode or occurrence. I use the terms mental episode or occurrence to include mental processes, states or experiences, as Wittgenstein uses these terms. Having a mental episode is nor necessary nor sufficient for understanding. We use 'external' criteria to determine whether one understands something. And, in addition, understanding does not have 'genuine duration'. If understanding were a mental episode, a state of consciousness, then it would have genuine duration. But it does not, so it is not a mental episode or a state of consciousness.

2. Criteria for understanding

Now, let us take a careful look at Wittgenstein's first two arguments. He argues that having the experience of sudden understanding is neither necessary nor sufficient for understanding. Similarly, mental processes that accompany understanding are neither necessary nor sufficient for understanding. Instead, the criteria we use for deciding whether someone understands lie in his performances, in what he is able to do practically.

The fair question to ask at this point is the following: is a particular performance necessary and sufficient for understanding? Let us take the example of extending a series of numbers. For instance, let us take the series of even numbers 2, 4, 6, and so on. What particular performance would be necessary for someone to be said to understand how to continue the series? One may say in reply 'Well, at least he should write down 8. If he is not even able to write down 8 then we have no reason to say that he understood' But this is not necessary. He might understand how to continue the series without writing down 8. Maybe he does not want to prove that he understood. One is not always in the mood for producing manifestations of one's understanding.

In addition, we should ask, is writing down 8 sufficient for understanding? Of course not, one may write down 8 and then 11. Fogelin makes this point too[11] but he fails to note the destructive consequences it has for Wittgenstein's arguments against the view that understanding is a mental state or process. Fogelin writes: 'a person can count correctly and still not understand counting, and people who understand counting sometimes miscount. We can imagine a person learning the first 637 numbers by rote. This would be a remarkable achievement, but still, the person would not know how to count. On the other side, a person who does know how to count can make a great many mistakes, especially in a distracting setting' [Fogelin, 1987, p. 145].

Why do I claim that these observations make Wittgenstein's first two arguments lose their force? Because they establish that criteria for understanding are not necessary or sufficient for understanding. In other words, it is not necessary or sufficient to behave in a certain way in order to understand something. Then, if the concept of understanding does not have 'fixed boundaries', why would we ask that the mental episodes

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[11] Fogelin, *Wittgenstein*, 1987.

characteristic of understanding be necessary and sufficient conditions for it? If we do not ask for necessary and sufficient conditions when it comes to behaviour why would we ask for them when it comes to the mind? But then, if we do not ask for necessary and sufficient conditions, why cannot the mental episodes characteristic of understanding be criteria for understanding? Wittgenstein should point to an important difference between behaviour and the mental and, based on that, he should argue that there cannot be mental or episodic criteria for understanding. My view is that both behavioural episodes and mental episodes are criteria of understanding and these criteria taken together constitute the concept of understanding.

Before defending the view I have put forward I want to make some clarifications. The concept of a criterion is an important concept in Wittgenstein's later philosophy. In his early philosophy articulated in the *Tractatus Logico Philosophicus,* Wittgenstein, influenced by Frege and Russell, thought that natural language has a logical structure and that we use language according to definite rules. These philosophers also shared the conviction that natural language would be more useful if its concepts had clear boundaries like the concepts of logics and mathematics. What does that mean? It means that in defining a concept we should indicate necessary and sufficient conditions for its application. For instance, take this definition of the isosceles triangle 'An isosceles triangle is a triangle with two equal sides'. This definition states necessary and sufficient conditions for something to be an isosceles triangle. A triangle cannot be isosceles without having two equal sides and the fact that a triangle has two equal sides makes it isosceles. Frege, Russell and Wittgenstein knew that not all the concepts in natural language have precise definitions like the concepts in mathematics and logics and they

thought that this makes natural language defective. Additionally, they tried to clarify the concepts we use in our day to day life, so that they resemble the concepts we use in an 'ideal' logical language.

This tendency has metaphysical origins[12]. Philosophers who are doing philosophy in this way think that there is a reason for using the same word for different things. For instance, there is a reason for calling all the games we know 'games'. There is an essence common to all the games, and this essence should be brought to light by philosophical analysis. It goes without saying that philosophers were interested in clarifying concepts like 'freedom', 'goodness', 'happiness' and so on. But, their ambition was to discover the essence of these concepts; to define these concepts in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions.

In his later philosophy, Wittgenstein changed his view. He thought that these kinds of philosophical projects are based on a false picture of the way we use natural language. We do not follow strict rules in using language. We do not call different things 'games' because they have something in common. In the *Blue Book* he writes:

> In practice we very rarely use language as such a calculus. For not only do we
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> not think of the rules of usage – of definitions, etc. – while using language, but
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> when we are asked to give such rules, in most cases we aren't able to do so. We
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> are unable clearly to circumscribe the concepts we use; not because we don't

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[12] In Wittgenstein's view, this way of thinking had a negative influence on the way philosophy has been done since Socrates and Plato. He writes: 'The idea that in order to get clear about the meaning of a general term one had to find the common element in all its applications has shackled philosophical investigation; for it has not only led to no result, but also made the philosopher dismiss as irrelevant the concrete cases, which alone could have helped him to understand the usage of the general term. When Socrates asks the question, 'what is knowledge?' he does not even regard it as a *preliminary* answer to enumerate cases of knowledge.' [Wittgenstein, 1969, p.20]

know their real definition, but because there is no real "definition" to them. To suppose that there *must* be would be like supposing that whenever children play with a ball they play a game according to strict rules. [Wittgenstein, 1969, p. 25]

In addition, Wittgenstein observes that there is no problem with the fact that we cannot formulate precise definitions of the concepts we use. These concepts do not need refinement as long as they serve our purposes. Natural language is fine as it is. Of course there are 'suburbs of our language' in which we strive for accuracy; for instance, the language of logics, mathematics, physics and so on. But when I say to someone 'Stand roughly here', I do not specify exactly where he should stay. However, this does not imply that what I say does not have meaning.

But what is the connection between this new way of looking at language and the notion of 'criterion'? Carl Ginet's sees the connection as follows: ,Wittgenstein's notion of a criterion is a *generalization* of the notion of a defining necessary and sufficient condition. The need for a more general notion of defining conditions, which does not require that they be blessed with necessity and sufficiency and yet distinguishes them from other sorts of grounds for applying terms to things, is part of the radical shift in Wittgenstein's view about the nature of all logical truth.' [Ginet, 1986, p. 55]

So, by introducing the notion of 'criterion' Wittgenstein tries to capture the diversity of the ways we use words. We can talk about criteria when we talk about a definition in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions but also, when we talk about a definition by examples or an 'incomplete' or 'imprecise' definition. In fact, Wittgenstein does not make the distinction between complete and incomplete definitions. All

definitions can be misunderstood. All definitions are good as long as they convey the meaning of the word to be explained.

In general, psychological notions like 'understanding', 'thinking', 'believing' and so on are used without strict criteria, necessary and sufficient conditions. This does not mean that we cannot, by certain conventions, make these concepts more precise. But, by doing that, we would change the meaning of the words. For instance, one might say that one understands how to continue the series of even integers if one is able to write 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10. This is a convention that may have its usefulness but it affects the meaning of the word 'understanding', the way we use this word.

Before arguing for the thesis that mental episodes like mental images and talking to oneself in the imagination may constitute criteria for understanding I want to make an important distinction. As I have shown in the first section of this chapter, Wittgenstein argues that understanding *is not* a mental state, a mental process or an experience. One of his arguments is that no mental episodes are necessary and sufficient for understanding. So, we can infer that Wittgenstein attacks the view that understanding is a state of mind in the sense that the occurrence of a state of mind is necessary and sufficient for understanding. What is this sense exactly? I think we can say that Wittgenstein argues against a reductionist view of understanding. Let us take another example in order to clarify this point. Consider the statement 'Water is identical to H2O'. This means that if something is H2O then it is water. It is not possible for something to be water without being H2O and the fact that something is H20 is sufficient to make it water. If these were not the case then the identity statement would have no scientific value. Why? Because the

identity statement is a reductionist statement. The value of the statement is in the fact that we can replace talk about water with talk about hydrogen and oxygen.

But statements of the form 'X is Y' may have other uses in our daily linguistic transactions. Let us consider the statement 'Games are amusing'. Being amusing is a criterion of games but is not a necessary and sufficient condition. Or, consider the statement 'Playing games is a rule-governed activity'. Not all rule-governed activities are games and not all games are governed by rules. But we can certainly use 'is' or 'is identical to' even when we talk about definitions that are not meant to state necessary and sufficient conditions. Someone might say 'For me, a genius is someone like Albert Einstein' and one may or may not go on to explain why one thinks that Einstein is a genius. But, in saying that a genius is *someone like* Albert Einstein one does not give a strict, formal definition of being a genius, one does not draw strict boundaries for the concept of genius. Instead, one points to a paradigmatic case. In order to decide whether someone is a genius we should compare him to Einstein. Of course, the results of the comparison will not always be very clear, and it will be up to the speakers to make decisions about how to apply the word. So, there are at least two different kinds of uses of the words 'is' or 'is identical to' in a definition.[13]

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[13] In my view, if we bear in mind the distinction between the two uses of 'is', it is easy to see why the sceptical problem extracted by Kripke from Wittgenstein's remarks on meaning and understanding is a false problem. The problem is the following: is there a fact about a speaker (about his mind or his behaviour) that determines what the speaker means by a certain word? In other words, can we reduce meaning to a fact about one's mind or behaviour? Kripke wants to show that there are no facts about meaning. But, the truth of the statement that there are no facts about meaning does not imply that we do not know what meaning is or that there is no such a thing as meaning. It only implies that we cannot reduce meaning to a fact but, this does not exclude the possibility of defining meaning by indicating relevant facts about the speaker's mind or behaviour. For instance, it is true that the fact that John means Napoleon I by 'Napoleon' cannot be reduced to the fact that John has a mental image of Napoleon I. But this does not mean that having the mental image of Napoleon I is not a criterion for meaning Napoleon I. So, to put the point simply, Kripke talks about necessary and sufficient conditions and reduction where he should talk about other kinds of criteria. He confuses the two uses of 'is' or 'is identical to' I have described in this section. [Kripke, 1982, p. 7-54]

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Now, given the above clarifications of the notion of 'criterion' let us turn to the main issue of this section. Are there 'inner' criteria for understanding? I should say that the notion of a criterion has two related senses. In the first sense, 'X is a criterion for Y' means that we can find out whether Y based on the occurrence of X. For instance, we know that one is in pain based on one's behaviour. This is the epistemological sense of the word 'criterion'. There is also an ontological sense. 'X is a criterion for Y' in the sense that X defines Y, or we can explain Y by reference to X. These two senses of the word 'criterion' are closely related. One may say that a criterion has an epistemological and an ontological aspect. In the following I will argue that there are 'inner' criteria for understanding both in the epistemological and in the ontological sense. First I will consider the epistemological issue.

In this section I have argued that the claim that X is a criterion for Y does not imply that X is a necessary and sufficient condition for Y. I have shown this by reference to Wittgenstein's view of language. But there is a long way from here to proving the thesis that there are 'inner' criteria for understanding. Wittgenstein may still argue that there is not a criterial relation between having certain mental episodes and understanding something because we do not decide whether someone understands something by checking what goes on in his mind. We have access only to his behaviour.

I will try to make the thesis that mental episodes are criteria for understanding persuasive by giving some examples. I am considering now the epistemological sense of the term 'criterion'. So, can we infer based on facts about one's mind whether one understands something or not? Suppose that someone has telepathic powers. He has access to what is going on in John's mind while John reads a philosophical article. Let us

also suppose that the telepath knows the article very well. The fact is that, while reading the article, John has mental images of himself drinking beer with his friends in a pub. Also, John is engaged in an imaginary discussion about soccer with one of his friends. Is not that enough for the telepath to conclude that John does not understand the article?

Similarly, think about John himself. If someone asked him 'Did you understand the article?', and if he would not want to lie, he would answer 'No!' Did he not apply certain criteria in order to answer in a certain way? He knows that he thought about something else while reading the article. Also, he knows that if he were to understand something then different things should have occurred in his mind. He would have asked questions in his imagination related to the ideas presented in the article, he would have thought about objections or different arguments for some thesis presented there, if something was not clear he would have said to himself 'This is not clear to me! I do not get it!' If these kinds of mental episodes occurred in his mind John would have answered differently. He would have said 'I understood some of the arguments presented in the article but not all of them' or something similar.

I think it is safe to infer, based on the case described above and similar ones, that sometimes, in certain circumstances, we use mental episodes like mental images and talking to oneself *in foro interno* as criteria for understanding. In my view, this is obvious in the case of understanding because there are cases in which we apply these criteria *even in our own case*, in order to decide whether we understand something or not. I will turn to this point later in this section.

I want to make another important remark in connection to the example I gave above. The concept of understanding is connected to the concept of episodic thinking, or

thinking of. To put the point simply, it is often the case that we understand something as a result of thinking of it. Episodic thinking is essentially involved in understanding. John understands the article because he is thinking of the problems formulated in the article and of the validity and soundness of the arguments presented there. These mental episodes constitute understanding in this case and similar cases.

Wittgenstein may formulate the following objection to the idea that mental episodes are criteria for understanding. He might say 'It is not scientifically proved that there is such a thing as telepathy. People, in general, do not have these kinds of powers; they do not have access to what is going on in other people's minds. So, what is going on in other people's minds is not a criterion we use in our daily linguistic practice.'

In answering this objection I want first to point to the fact that Wittgenstein says at a certain point in the *Philosophical Investigations* that a mental picture can be a criterion. At §141 Wittgenstein talks about the relation between the mental picture one · has of a cube and the way one applies the word 'cube'. His point is that the mental picture does not determine the use of the word cube. We can use the word in different ways although we have the same picture in mind. In other words, different people may use different methods of projection for the same picture. Wittgenstein considers the suggestion that maybe if someone has the picture of a cube in his mind and also the right method of projection for this picture then he may be able to use the word 'cube' correctly. He writes:

> Now clearly we accept two different kinds of criteria for this: on the one
>
> hand the picture (of whatever kind) that at some time or other comes

before his mind; on the other, the application which – in the course of

time- he makes of what he imagines.

Now, it is clear from this passage that Wittgenstein agrees with the view that

mental images can constitute criteria. But then, in parentheses, he asks the following

question:

And cannot it be clearly seen here that it is absolutely inessential for the

picture to exist in his imagination rather than as a drawing or model in

front of him; or again as something that he himself constructs as a

model? [Wittgenstein, 1958, p. 55] .

Wittgenstein's point is that there is no essential difference between having a

picture in the imagination and having it in your hands. By this remark Wittgenstein tries

to emphasise the idea that the picture of a cube does not determine the use of the word

'cube'. However, this does not rule out the possibility that the picture, mental or physical,

is a criterion for understanding the word cube. In fact, Wittgenstein's remark can be used

as a premise in a powerful argument for the conclusion that mental episodes can be

criteria for understanding. If one admits that there is no essential difference between

having all sorts of images in one's mind and having the same images in one's hands then

we can infer that mental episodes are criteria of understanding if their physical

counterparts are criteria of understanding. To put the point differently, if we demonstrate

that the pictures one has in his hands can be criteria of his understanding and we agree

that there is no essential difference between the pictures one has in his hands and the

pictures one has in his mind then we can infer that the mental pictures are also criteria for understanding.

It is quite easy to see how physical pictures can be criteria of understanding. Let us imagine this simple exercise. A boy's father wants to see if his son understands simple words like 'ball', 'house', 'dog', 'cat' and so on. In order to do that he draws some pictures representing a ball, a house and so on. He puts the pictures in front of his child and he asks him to say which one is a ball, a house and so on. If, when he hears the word 'ball', the child picks the picture representing a ball then it might be that he understands what the word means. As I already said, no piece of behaviour is necessary and sufficient for understanding. The child may pick the picture representing a house when he hears the word 'ball' for the third or fourth time. But this does not imply that choosing a picture is not a criterion for understanding.

In summary, so far I have argued for the thesis that there are 'inner' criteria of understanding, in the epistemological sense of the term criterion. In order to show that I imagined cases in which we use information about what goes through someone's mind in order to determine whether he understands something or not. So, we can know whether someone understands something based on facts about one's mental life as well as based on facts about one's behaviour. I imagined that, in answering these objections, Wittgenstein would point to the fact that we do not, at least normally, have direct access to events in other people's minds. However, I have good reason to think that Wittgenstein would not think much of this response. First of all, he claims at a certain point that a mental picture can be used as a criterion, though obviously we do not have direct access to what someone else imagines. Secondly, Wittgenstein himself claims that 'If God had

looked into our minds he would not have been able to see whom we were speaking of'
[Wittgenstein, 1958, p. 217]. In other words, we would not be able to determine what
someone means by a word even if we would have, as God has, total access to his mental
life[14]. The same point holds for understanding. Therefore, in my view, for Wittgenstein it
is not a problem of whether or not we have access to what other people think, but,
according to him, even if we have access we would not know whether they understand
something because there is only a contingent relation between mental episodes and
understanding.

I have argued that Wittgenstein is wrong and that we can in fact determine
whether someone understands something based on facts about his mental life, the
modifications in his stream of consciousness. In the following I will formulate other
arguments for the view that there are 'inner' criteria for understanding, in the
epistemological sense of the term 'criterion'.

Earlier in this section I have made the point that mental episodes are criteria of
understanding even in the first person case[15]. In other words, one may realize whether
one understands something based on certain mental occurrences. For instance, one of the
criteria we use in order to decide if someone understands a word is whether he can
explain the word correctly. In this context, a correct explanation does not mean a

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[14] This is also the way Kripke understands Wittgenstein's view of meaning. According to Kripke, in the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein formulates and tries to solve a sceptical problem about meaning. The sceptic claims that there is no fact about a speaker that determines what he means by the word 'plus'. Kripke writes: 'So, whatever looking into my mind may be, the sceptic asserts that even if God were to do it, he still could not determine that I meant addition by 'plus'' [Kripke, 1982, p. 14]

[15] Rogers Albritton makes a similar point in connection to the concept of knowing. In connection to Wittgenstein's use of the term 'criterion' in conection to psychological concepts he observes: 'It is by no means always a kind of *behavior* that he calls a criterion in this connection. But he appears to think that there is in every case at leas one 'outward' criterion of an 'inner' event, state, process or whatever the thing 'grammatically is, thought there may be inner criteria of it as well. By silently reciting a poem to myself I might discover that I know it by heart'. [Albritton, 1986, p. 9]

dictionary explanation; it means an explanation that can give the interlocutor an idea about how the word should be used. Given that this is a criterion for understanding a word, one may decide whether one understands a word by actually trying to explain it to someone. But also, one may find out whether he understands the word by *imagining* whether he can explain it to someone else; by trying to explain it to someone else in his mind. After reflecting a bit one may say 'I do not think I know what this word means' or, on the contrary, one may say 'Yes, it is clear for me what this word means'.

Then, it might be said that one can infer that one does not understand the meaning of a word based on the occurrence of certain mental episodes. In this case, the connection between understanding and episodic thinking is also very clear. One thinks of whether one is able to do something and, based on this thinking, one determines whether he understands a word or not. There are lots of similar cases. For instance, consider the case in which one gives directions to someone else about how to get to a certain place. One may draw a map in one's mind as one hears the directions and think carefully about each step of the way. One may have more detailed or schematic mental images of different places. Based on these mental episodes one may infer that one understood the directions. Of course, one may be right or wrong about that. One may certainly say 'I thought that I understood but I did not.'

So far, I have defended the idea that there is a criterial relation between understanding and certain mental episodes like having mental images and talking to oneself in the imagination, in the epistemological sense of the term 'criterion'. In the following I will support the thesis that there is a criterial relation between understanding and certain mental occurrences, in the ontological sense of the term 'criterion'.

In the later Wittgenstein's philosophy a conceptual connection is also called a logical or grammatical connection. In Wittgenstein view, ontological questions about the nature of certain things in the world, should be seen as questions about the grammar of the corresponding words in the language. For instance, the question 'What is understanding?' should be answered by a description of the way we use the term 'understanding', indicating the grammar of the word. Wittgenstein claims '*Essence* is expressed in grammar' [Wittgenstein, 1958, §371, p. 116] In explaining the meaning of a word one indicates criteria for the use of that word. For instance, the explanation 'Understanding is an ability' makes explicit the fact that we attribute understanding to someone if he is able to do certain things practically. And this is an essential aspect of understanding, because it partially constitutes the concept of understanding.

Additionally, Wittgenstein draws a distinction between what is logical and what is psychological or empirical[16]. The realm of what is logical is the realm of the grammatical rules we follow, the rules for the use of words. These rules determine the meaning of the words we use. The meaning of the word 'understanding' is fixed by the way in which we use and explain the word in our linguistic practices. We say that someone understands something if he is able to do certain things. So, according to Wittgenstein, nothing mental enters into the concept of understanding. That is, there is no logical or conceptual connection between understanding and the mind. However, this does not rule out the possibility that there is a psychological, empirical, contingent relation between understanding and all kinds of mental episodes that accompany understanding. The

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[16] For instance, at §140 in the *Philosophical Investigations* Wittgenstein considers the suggestion that having the mental picture of a cube 'forces' us to use the word 'cube' in a certain way. He writes: we are at most under a psychological, not a logical compulsion'. Wittgenstein wants to emphasize the fact that there is no logical, or conceptual connection between mental pictures and the way we use words, and, implicitly, between mental pictures and meaning. I will discuss this point in the section about meaning.

mental episodes are a symptom of understanding not a criterion of understanding. In other words, the occurrence of mental episodes has no bearing on the concept of understanding, on the way we use the word.

Contrary to Wittgenstein, I think that the occurrence of certain mental episodes can affect our ascriptions of understanding. There are lots of examples that support this thesis. If we use the idea that there is no essential difference between physical pictures and mental pictures then it is clear that we determine whether someone understands different words by checking whether he is able to choose the picture corresponding to the meaning of each word. Similarly, we determine whether someone understands what 'ball' means by determining whether he is able to draw a picture of a ball.

In order to support my view I will construct a mental experiment. Suppose that someone reads a story and a friend of his has a device by which he sees and hears everything that passes trough his friend's mind; he can see what his friend understands from the story he reads. He does not have to ask him about it. In this case, the behavioural manifestation of understanding is redundant in determining whether someone understands.

Similarly, let us imagine the situation in which someone is in a coma. His friends and his family talk to him but no one knows whether he hears and understands them. In this case all the behavioural criteria are useless; they cannot be applied because the patient does not move, he cannot even blink. However, if there is a device that can make a correlation between states of his brain and different mental images he has then people may determine whether he understands something or not. For instance, if his wife reads

him a story with Indians and cowboys and he has mental images of Indians and cowboys then this is a sign or criterion of understanding.

Now, let us imagine a different case. Suppose that John has a device with which he has access to his friend's Mike thoughts. Mike is reading a book about chemistry but, while he reads it, he has thoughts about the trip he will make the next day to the mountains. John is certain that his friend did not understand anything from what he read. However, to his surprise, Mike claims that he understood. Moreover, Mike is able to explain clearly the stuff he read and also he is able to do exercises using the formulas he learned. What would John say in this situation? Certainly, he will have first the tendency to think that Mike already knew the material he just read. This is obviously the reasonable reaction. But, if Wittgenstein's view is right, why would John think about it in this way? The criteria essential to the concept of understanding are met. There is no reason for John to hesitate in applying the word 'understanding' in this case. So, the fact that John monitored Mike thoughts is an important element in John's decision. John's hesitation is explained by the fact that there is a logical connection between understanding and thinking.

Let us go further with this mental experiment and imagine that Mike did not know anything about the material. He read the chapter in the chemistry book while thinking of something else and then he is able to explain what he read and make the exercises at the end of the chapter and so on.

A Wittgensteinian will certainly say 'Well, it is clear that he understood if he is able to do all those things.' But we can imagine someone having a different reaction. He might say 'I do not what happened in this case but I would not say that it is

understanding. I do not want to apply the word to this case. Maybe it is something like innate knowledge or divine inspiration, but it is not understanding.' My point is that facts about someone's mind may affect ascriptions of understanding and, implicitly, the way we use the concept of understanding.

All the cases I have discussed so far are meant to show that there is a conceptual, logical connection between understanding and the occurrence of certain mental episodes. In order to do that I have described some extreme or abnormal situations, and this is why, so far, the reader may not be persuaded by my view. But there is a more direct and clear way of showing that there is a conceptual relation between two concepts. There is a 'test', described by Wittgenstein, to determine whether there is a grammatical relation between two terms. Wittgenstein writes:

> What does it mean when we say: 'I cannot imagine the opposite of this' or 'What would it be like, if it were otherwise?' − For example, when someone has said that my images are private, or that only I myself can know whether I am feeling pain, and similar things.
> Of course, here 'I cannot imagine the opposite' does not mean: my powers of imagination are unequal to the task. These words are a defence against something whose form makes it look like an empirical proposition, but which is really a grammatical one. [Wittgenstein, 1958, §251, p.90]

Wittgenstein takes the example of the sentence 'Every rod has a length'. This sentence has the form of an empirical proposition but it is, in fact, a grammatical

proposition. We can infer that from the fact that we cannot imagine a rod without a length.

Now, let us apply this test to my thesis that there is a grammatical relation between understanding and the occurrence of certain mental episodes. For the sake of clarity I will refer to these mental occurrences by using the term 'thoughts'. Then, what I want to establish is that there is a conceptual relation between understanding and having certain thoughts. This is the same as saying that there is a grammatical relation between understanding something and thinking of that thing. Then, given these clarifications, the test is simple: can we imagine that someone understands something without thinking for a moment of that thing? What would be one's reaction if someone came to him and said 'I understood what you said yesterday but I did not have any thoughts in connection to it.' Similarly, imagine a student saying to his colleagues after a lecture 'I understood everything the professor said, but I did not think of it for a moment; nothing went through my mind in connection to it'.

The difficulty we have in imagining these situations indicate the fact that there is a grammatical connection between understanding and having certain appropriate thoughts, between understanding and episodic thinking. This is why I think that it is appropriate to continue the discussion of Wittgenstein's view of understanding with a discussion of Wittgenstein's view of thinking. In my view, the concept of understanding is closely connected to the concept of episodic thinking, and in order to clarify the first concept one should also clarify the second one. In the second chapter of this thesis I will critically assess Wittgenstein's view of thinking. In the rest of this chapter, I will respond to Wittgenstein's argument from 'genuine duration' against the view that understanding

is a state of consciousness or a mental episode and then I formulate some remarks in connection to Wittgenstein's view of meaning.

3. Genuine Duration

Let us consider now Wittgenstein's objection from 'genuine duration' against the view that understanding is a mental episode. Wittgenstein observes that understanding is not an object of observation. One cannot continuously observe one's understanding as one observes one's pain or depression. One may be said to understand English even if one is asleep. But one cannot be said to feel depressed when one is asleep.

However, I do not think that Wittgenstein's observations imply that understanding is not a state of consciousness, and that it cannot be the object of observation through introspection. As I have said there is a sense of 'is' in which 'Understanding is a state of consciousness'. Understanding is defined by its criteria and conscious states like mental images and other elements of thinking are criteria of understanding. If understanding is in part a state of consciousness and states of consciousness are given in introspection then there is a sense in which understanding is given in introspection[17].

Nevertheless, I think that Wittgenstein is right in saying that there is a difference between the way we use words like 'pain' or 'depression' and the way we use 'understanding'. One cannot be in pain and be unconscious of being in pain. Pain and depression are essentially states of consciousness. But we can say that a speaker of

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[17] I will discuss this idea in more detail in the chapter three of this thesis when I will assess Wittgenstein's view of introspection.

English knows English even when he does not use the language; when he lays on the couch listening to Mozart or Bach.

However, I think that this difference is not as clear as Wittgenstein wants to persuade us. Compare, for instance, the question 'Are you still angry at him?' with the question 'Do you still believe that abortion is right?' One may answer both these questions after a process of introspection and reflection. Both one's anger and one's belief are, in a way, elements of one's stream of consciousness. Similarly, one may say 'I was convinced the whole time that abortion is right until I have seen these pictures' in the same way in which one utters 'I felt angry at him all the time until he apologised'. Then, there is no sharp difference between the way we use psychological concepts like pain, depression and anger and the way we use concepts like belief, understanding, knowing and so on. Mental states like pain and depression have a certain phenomenology, a qualitative character. But this holds also for states like belief and understanding. This is why it is not wrong to use the general term 'mental state' to refer to all these mental phenomena. Wittgenstein is right in pointing to the fact that we do not use all these concepts in the same way, but, as I have pointed out, there are also similarities in use. In my view, the differences made explicit by Wittgenstein are not enough to make us change the use of the term 'mental state'. In particular, he does not give us a strong reason why we should say that understanding is not a mental state.

4. Meaning

The concept of meaning is conceptually connected with the concept of understanding. One understands what something means. Wittgenstein and his commentators discuss meaning and understanding as if there are no important differences between the two concepts. However, in this thesis I wanted to focus on the concept of understanding. In my view, the concept of meaning is less clear than the concept of understanding. In addition, Wittgenstein's remarks about meaning are more puzzling and open to interpretation than his remarks on understanding. These are some of the reasons why the following discussion about meaning will not be as clear and complex as the preceding discussion of understanding.

As in the case of understanding, in his treatment of meaning Wittgenstein criticises the idea that meaning is a mental state or a state of consciousness. This idea comes in different forms. For instance, the empiricists suggested that meaning is a mental picture. In general, the arguments Wittgenstein makes against this thesis are similar to the ones he formulates against the idea that understanding is a state of consciousness. However, at one point he formulates a different kind of argument. I will present, explain and evaluate this argument later in the section.

As I have noted, Wittgenstein criticizes the view that the meaning of a word is identical to a mental picture. He maintains that there is a conceptual, logical connection between the meaning of a word and the way in which the word is used. At §43 he writes: 'For a *large* class of cases – though not for all- in which we employ the word "meaning"

it can be defined thus: the meaning of a word is its use in the language' [Wittgenstein, 1958, p. 20].

But then, if one claims that the meaning of a word is identical to a mental picture, one should point to the relation between the mental picture and the use of the word. To put the point differently, it is a fact that there is an internal relation between meaning and use and therefore, if one wants to identify meaning with mental pictures then, in order to make one's point persuasive, one should indicate the connection between mental pictures and use.

According to Wittgenstein there is no logical connection between the mental picture associated with a word and the way the word is used[18]. The connection is psychological. In other words, it is a contingent not a logical or grammatical connection.

Let us look at the matter differently. Why is there a grammatical connection between meaning and use? Because the way we use a certain word is a criterion for meaning. Use is not a necessary and sufficient condition for meaning. One can use a word correctly or in accord with the way it is normally used but one may mean something different by the word. Also, one may make a mistake and use a word wrongly but one may, nevertheless, know the meaning of the word.

But is not there also a criterial relation between mental images or mental episodes generally and meaning? Let us think about a simple example. Suppose that John has telepathic powers or that he has a device, a small TV on which he can see everything that occurs in his interlocutor's minds. He talks with one of his colleagues and at one point his interlocutor says 'Jack will come to the conference too.' John knows two people called

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[18] However, as I have noted in the section 'Criteria for Understanding', at §141 Wittgenstein comes close to admitting that a mental picture can be a criterion of use and meaning. But, in general, his remarks are directed against the idea that there is a criterial connection between mental pictures and meaning.

Jack and he does not know which one is the reference of 'Jack'. But he can see on his device or in his mind what his colleague is thinking. So, the mental pictures that cross one's mind may constitute a criterion as to what one means.

It is certainly possible that John's colleague did not mean by 'Jack' the person that he was imagining when he uttered the word 'Jack'. Maybe he meant the other person named 'Jack'. But, this does not imply that the mental image cannot function as a criterion. If X is a criterion for Y this does not mean that every time X occurs Y occurs. For instance, Wittgenstein points to the fact that there is a criterial relation between a certain kind of behaviour (crying, screaming and so on) and being in pain. But not every time one behaves in the way characteristic of being in pain one is actually in pain.

As I already mentioned, Wittgenstein makes the point that there is no logical or criterial relation between meaning and mental images, it is only a psychological relation. So, in other words, what goes on in someone's mind does not have any connection to what someone means. When we decide what someone means we are not interested in what goes on in his mind, we are only interested in the way he uses the words, in the way he explains the meaning of the words and so on. What goes on in one's mind does not affect an ascription of meaning. But is this true?

Let us consider the following case. John talks with one of his colleagues called Mike. As I said, John has a device on which he can see what crosses Mike's mind and also he can hear what Mike says to himself in the imagination. Mike talks about Jack. John thinks he knows the person Mike is talking about because he can see it on his monitor. Mike says 'Jack likes to play soccer. He came to play soccer with us once here in the Campus. Not only did he play well but he was also a good coordinator.' While

Mike tells his story John watches on his monitor what images are going through Mike's mind. Mike has images of Jack, the thin and tall guy, not of Jack, the fat and short guy. He had images of the tall Jack playing soccer, telling his team-mates what to do and so on. Because of that, John is convinced that Mike means by 'Jack' the tall and thin Jack. But, to his surprise, when he asks Mike whom he means by 'Jack', Mike claims that he means the fat and short Jack. This should be puzzling for John. He should ask 'But why were you thinking about the other guy called Jack. Are you sure you did not mean him?'

But, if Wittgenstein were right, and mental facts or episodes would not have any influence on our ascription of meaning then why should John be puzzled? I think that one way in which we can explain John's puzzlement is by highlighting, as in the case of understanding, the conceptual connection between meaning and having certain thoughts, that is, between meaning and episodic thinking.

Let us think about the following kind of language-game. Someone reads a poem and then has the chance to talk to the author of the poem and asks him 'What did you mean by this verse?' or something similar. In answering this question the author should report the thoughts and ideas that lead to a certain poetic expression. In general, when one expressed an idea one has and someone else asks him 'What do you mean by that?', this question has the same use as the question 'Can you make more explicit what you think?'. That is, the question about what one means is, in fact, a question about what one thinks.

In the following I will consider a different argument formulated by Wittgenstein in defence of the idea that meaning and understanding are not mental states or processes. In Part II of the *Philosophical Investigations* Wittgenstein writes: 'Meaning is not a

process which accompanies a word. For no process could have the consequences of meaning' [Wittgenstein, 1958, p. 218].

Hans-Johann Glock interprets Wittgenstein's claim in the following way. He considers the utterance 'Napoleon was impetuous'. He observes: 'That I mean Napoleon I has the consequence that my utterance counts as one about Napoleon I. It commits me to a certain claim, which in turn licenses subsequent moves in the language-game. Such normative consequences cannot follow from a description of my mind, brain or behaviour' [Glock, 1996, p. 181]

What does the expression 'normative consequence' mean? I think that Glock has in mind something like this. When one claims 'Napoleon was impetuous' and means Napoleon I by 'Napoleon', then one maintains that Napoleon I was impetuous. Then, other people may ask him why does he think that, or what does he mean by that. The fact is that one *should* be able to answer such questions. This is why these 'subsequent moves in the language-game' are normative consequences. That is, if one expresses a belief one should be able to give reasons for it and explain it. In general, if one is not able to do that then one did not express any belief. One did not succeed in having a belief[19]. Having a belief partly means being able to articulate reasons for it. I will consider in more detail the case of belief in chapter two. Glock observes that, in some cases, the explanation of the meaning of a word has the same 'normative consequences' as the expression of

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[19] This is not a general point. For instance, one may be puzzled when asked 'Why do you think that you are in pain?' or 'Why do you think that this is your hand?' or something similar. Also, one may not be able to explain what it means to be in pain. However, if one says 'Napoleon I was impetuous' and it turn out that one has no idea who Napoleon I is and what 'impetuous' means then one did succeed in expressing a belief. Similarly, if one does not have any reasons for claiming 'Napoleon I was impetuous' then we have no reason to think that one really believes that.

belief. When one explains what one means by the term 'Napoleon' in the sentence 'Napoleon was impetuous' one, in fact, makes a claim about Napoleon I.

Contrary to Wittgenstein, I think it might be argued that when one explains the meaning of the term 'Napoleon' by saying 'I meant 'Napoleon I' one refers to a state of mind one has. For instance, when one utters 'Napoleon was impetuous' may have a mental picture of Napoleon I. Later, when one wants to clarify what one meant by 'Napoleon' one refers to the mental picture one had.

But then, Wittgenstein might respond, 'I meant Napoleon I' and 'I had a mental picture of Napoleon I when I uttered the sentence' would have the same use in the language-game. That is, if someone asks one 'Did you mean Napoleon I?' one might answer 'I had a mental picture of Napoleon I when I uttered 'Napoleon was impetuous'. But this is not enough, Wittgenstein might say. Someone might still ask 'Did you mean Napoleon I or did it just happen that you had a picture of Napoleon I when you uttered the sentence?' Also, it might happen that one has a mental picture of Napoleon III when one utters the sentence 'Napoleon I was impetuous' or one may imagine something that does not have anything to do with the conversation or one may not imagine anything. Therefore, Wittgenstein would conclude, this does not imply that one did not mean Napoleon I by the term 'Napoleon'.

Let us evaluate Wittgenstein's argument. I have formulated strong arguments in this chapter for the view that mental images are criteria for understanding and meaning. This does not imply that the occurrence of a mental image is necessary and sufficient for understanding and meaning. There are cases in which the mental images that cross our minds when we talk do not have any connection to the meaning of the words we use. But

this does not imply that mental images are not criteria of meaning. Similarly, there are cases in which one's behaviour does not have anything to do with the behaviour of someone who is in great pain, one is laughing, telling jokes and so on. But this does not mean that there is not a criterial relation between a certain kind of behaviour and being in pain.

If there is a criterial relation between the occurrence of a certain mental image and meaning then the occurrence of that image may have the normative consequences of meaning. For instance, if John says 'Napoleon was impetuous' and his friend is able to determine that an image of Napoleon I occurred in John's mind when he uttered the sentence then, this fact makes his sentence count as a claim about Napoleon I. The fact that a certain image occurred in John's mind has normative consequences in the language game.

Chapter 2 – Thinking

1. General strategy.

One of the arguments I have formulated in the first chapter of this thesis for the idea that there is a criterial relation between understanding, meaning and mental episodes or occurrences is that the concepts of meaning and understanding are conceptually, grammatically related to the concept of thinking. Furthermore, I have assumed it is clear that there is a constitutive, logical relation between thinking and mental episodes like talking to oneself in the imagination.

But Wittgenstein criticizes the idea that thinking is constituted by what 'comes before the mind'. He analyses the concept of thinking in the same way in which he analyses the concepts of understanding and meaning. He is trying to show that what 'occurs before the mind' does not constitute thinking, but is a mere accompaniment of thinking, and that the concept of thinking is determined by outward criteria. For instance, we are tempted to say that thinking is a mental occurrence which makes the difference between talking thoughtfully and talking without thinking. Wittgenstein responds: 'There are important accompanying phenomena of talking which are often missing when one talks without thinking, and this is characteristic of talking without thinking. But they are not the thinking' [Wittgenstein, 1958, p. 218].

In this chapter, I will defend the view that thinking is an inner or mental process. First, I will clarify this view and then I will present and evaluate arguments attributed to

Wittgenstein by his commentators[20] that are supposed to undermine this view. As will become clear Wittgenstein's commentators have good reasons to attribute him those arguments[21].

As Anthony Kenny notices 'thinking is much more like a process than understanding is' [Kenny, 1973, p. 149]. Thinking takes time, as any kind of process does. One may think out a problem of logic or physics for several minutes or even an hour. One's thinking may be interrupted and resumed again. In this chapter I will defend the thesis that thinking is a mental process[22]. This thesis is not a precise or formal definition of thinking, a definition in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions. As Wittgenstein himself notices, 'thinking' is a widely ramified concept. There is not something common to all the things we call thinking. This is why the criteria for thinking are not necessary and sufficient conditions for the application of the concept.

What does it mean to say that 'thinking is a mental process'? What mental process exactly? There are some obvious candidates for this role. For instance, the process of

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[20] I refer especially to Hacker, Glock and Budd. It is important to note that, in general, Wittgenstein's comentators try to defend his view of thinking although Wittgenstein attacks some common-sense ideas about what is thinking. For instance, he criticizes the idea that thinking is a process in the mind.

[21] I follow this strategy for the clarity of the exposition. Wittgenstein's style of writing philosophy, his brief and often unclear remarks, make it hard to distinguish and reformulate the arguments that he is formulating. For instance, there is still a debate in the literature as to where exactly can we find 'the private language argument' in the text of the *Philosophical Investigations*. This is why I will consider Wittgenstein's arguments as they are re-formulated by his commentators. It is my belief that Wittgenstein's most important commentators succeed in capturing his essential arguments and views.

[22] In this chapter I will also defend the claim that there is a criterial relation between mental occurences and thinking. However, this idea might be puzzeling. Is it not the case that thinking is just a mental episode, a mental process? The idea that there is only a criterial relation between the two seems to be in conflict with our intuition that thinking is identical to a mental episode. This becomes clear if we look at other criterial relations. For instance, the relation between pain and pain-behaviour. Pain-behaviour is not identical to being in pain. So then, when one claims that there is a criterial relation between thinking and mental episodes he is denying that thinking is just a mental episode.

In my view, one of the presuppositions of the problem described above is that there is something common to all criterial relations. But this is not true. There are all sorts of differences between criterial relations. For instance, one cannot be a bachelor unless one is a man but one can be in pain even if one does not behave in ways characteristic of being in pain. Therefore, the fact that the relation between thinking and characteristic mental occurences is not similar to the relation between being in pain and the characteristic behaviour does not imply that the first relation is not a criterial relation.

talking to oneself *in foro interno* and of having mental images crossing our minds may be identified with thinking. Usually, in thinking, the talking and the images are mixed together[23]. Then, by saying that 'thinking is a mental process' one indicates this strong connection between the concept of thinking and the mental episodes I have mentioned. One can rightly say that 'Thinking is identical to these mental episodes'. But we should take this claim as we take the claim that understanding is a mental state. As I have shown in the first chapter, understanding is *partially* constituted by mental episodes like having mental images and talking to oneself. But, the 'outward' criteria of understanding, what one is able to do, are also constitutive of understanding. Therefore, in a sense, understanding is a mental state, but it is not reducible to a mental state. A mental state is not all there is to understanding, as we use the term. For instance, if one has mental occurrences characteristic of understanding a lecture but he is not able to explain any views or arguments that were presented in the lecture then we could not say that one understood the lecture. Similarly, in the case of thinking, the occurrence of a certain process in one's consciousness is not all there is to thinking. The process may occur but one may still be unable to speak thoughtfully or to do something thoughtfully. The 'outward' criteria for thinking and understanding are essential to thinking and understanding.

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[23] There is a problem in introspective psychology if there are other categories of thinking besides language and images. According to some psychologists there is a third category of thinking; there are thoughts that do not occur in language or images, the so-called 'naked thought'. I think that this problem is interesting and important but it is not my purpose to discuss it in this thesis. What I want to highlight is that if one holds that thinking is a mental process or mental episode then one should emphasize the essential role of language and images in the process of thinking.

2. The argument from descriptions

What are Wittgenstein's arguments against the idea that thinking is an 'inner' or mental process? One of the arguments Hacker attributes to Wittgenstein goes like this. When we are interested in what someone is thinking we are not interested in what processes are going on inside him. Hacker writes:

> 'Thinking' is not the name of an introspectible inner process; but to insist on that is not to deny that people think, nor is it to *equate* thinking with saying or doing. Wittgenstein does not deny that when one is thinking a variety of things may cross one's mind – words, phrases, mental images, and the rest. But a description of *this* 'stream of consciousness' would *not* be a report of what one was thinking or of the reasoning underlying the conclusion reached [Hacker, 1990, p. 164]

Hacker observes that one expresses what one thinks by specifying a proposition (I am thinking that such and such), not by describing an inner process. Hacker has good reasons for attributing this view to Wittgenstein. At §579 in *Remarks in the Philosophy of Psychology* Wittgenstein writes:

> 'I would like to know what he is thinking of.' But now ask yourself this – apparently irrelevant – question "What does what is going on in him, in his mind, interest me at all, supposing that something is going on?" (The devil takes what is going on inside him!)

Also:

It is very noteworthy that *what goes on* in thinking practically never interests us.

It is noteworthy, but not queer.

Is it not the same here as with a calculating prodigy? – He has calculated right if

he has got the answer right. Perhaps he himself cannot say what went on in him.

And if we were to hear it, it would perhaps seem like a queer caricature of

calculation [Wittgenstein, 1967, p. 17 e, §88-89].

Before evaluating this argument I should make a clarification. 'Thinking' is sometimes used as an equivalent of 'believing'. But, in general, when someone says what he is *thinking of* he does not express what he believes about something, he just reports what thoughts went through his head. For instance, 'I am thinking of my grandmother who is in the hospital' does not express what I think or believe about something. On the other hand, 'I think that we should go to Vancouver' expresses a belief or opinion. In their remarks Wittgenstein and Hacker do not distinguish between these two uses of 'thinking'.

Wittgenstein thinks, as it is obvious from his remarks, that in the case in which we are interested in one's opinions as well as in the case in which we are interested in what he is thinking of, we are not usually interested in what went on in his mind. This is closely connected to the view that 'I think that p' and 'I am thinking of X' are not descriptions of mental processes.

In my view, both 'I think that p' and 'I am thinking of X' can be used as descriptions, reports of observation. However, I think that the case of belief is different

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from the case of thinking of, or episodic thinking, and should be considered separately. In the next section, called 'Describing what we think' I will assess the view that statements of the form 'I think that *p*' are not descriptions. Then, in the section called 'Describing what we are thinking of' I will evaluate the idea that utterances like 'I am thinking of X' are not descriptions of inner processes. In the rest of the sections of this chapter, called 'Speaking Thoughtfully' and 'Thinking in Language', I will discuss only episodic thinking, or simply 'thinking'. That is, in the other sections of this chapter, when I use the word 'thinking' I refer to thinking as a mental or 'inner' process, to thinking as a mental episode.

I think that there is an important difference between 'thinking as believing' and episodic thinking. For instance, we can say that someone, even if he is asleep, thinks or believes that the Calgary Flames is the best team in the NHL. But, we do not normally say that someone who is sound asleep is thinking of the Calgary Flames. Therefore, one's beliefs are not always in one's stream of consciousness. One has certain beliefs even if they are not present in one's stream of consciousness. But one cannot think of the Calgary Flames if one does not have occurent thoughts about the Calgary Flames. Therefore, the notion of thinking of is more related to the stream of consciousness, the episodic part of the mind, then the notion of 'thinking as believing'. But, it is very important to note, that this does not mean that the concept of belief is not at all connected to the stream of consciousness. One cannot have beliefs about something if one does not have the disposition to have occurent thoughts about that thing. And, in my view, one's utterance 'I think that *p*' may be used as a description of the thoughts one has. In the next

section I will evaluate Wittgenstein's arguments against the view that 'I think that *p*' may be used as description.

2.1. Describing what we think

In order to determine whether the sentence 'I think that *p*' is a description or not, one should clarify first the concept of description. Not all cases of describing have something in common. Hacker notices, following Wittgenstein, that 'there are many different language-games that constitute describing, and they are less alike than one may think' [Hacker, 1993, p. 83]. However, he concentrates on a paradigm of describing: describing the room in which one is sitting, and then he highlights some important grammatical differences between describing a room and the way we use first person present-tense psychological propositions like 'I think that *p*.'

Firstly, he notes that when someone describes his room his utterances are grounded in perception. If someone asks him 'How do you know that your computer is on the desk?' he might say 'I see it'. On the other hand, Hacker notes, we cannot say that we perceive our own thoughts or beliefs.

Secondly, because the description of a room is based on observation it makes sense to talk about conditions of observation and perceptual competence. For instance, one may turn on the light to improve visibility and, similarly, if one has poor eyesight one may put on spectacles. But one cannot improve the conditions of visibility in order to see his thoughts more clearly. And it does not make sense to say 'My inner perception is very poor so I cannot see what I think.' In addition, Hacker notes that there are no organs for perceiving our thoughts.

Thirdly, in the language-game of describing a room it makes sense to talk about the identification or misidentification of a piece of furniture for instance. But one cannot misidentify his own thoughts.

Fourthly, in giving a description of one's room one may consult authorities in order to give a more detailed description of the paintings one has, for instance. But it does not make sense to look up authorities to find out whether you really have a certain thought.

Fifthly, because one's utterance 'I think that p' does not rest on evidence; it does not make sense to ask 'How do you know that you believe that p?' or 'Why do you think that you think that p?' Therefore, Hacker concludes, knowledge and ignorance, certainty and doubt, have no place in this language game. But, in his view, we can talk about indecision in connection to what we think about something. When one says 'I do not know what to think', it is not because one is ignorant in connection with what one thinks but because one has not decided what to think yet [Hacker, 1985, p. 86-87].

To sum up, Hacker points to five important differences between the language-game of describing one's room (a paradigm of description) and the language-game we play with utterances like 'I think that p'. Let us now evaluate his remarks.

First of all, Hacker observes that the utterances of the form 'I think that p' are not grounded in perception like descriptions of the sort 'There is a picture on the wall' or 'The book is on the bed'. We do not play the following language-game in our usual linguistic transactions: 'How do you know that you think that p?' 'I see it!' I think that Hacker's remark is correct. Usually, in our daily linguistic transactions we do not ask 'How do you know that you believe that p?' But this kind of argument is ineffective

against a philosophical view. There are philosophers like John Locke, David Armstrong and William Lycan who argue that introspection is a sense or, at least, similar to a sense. One cannot criticize their view by saying 'Well, you know, we do not usually talk like this.' Their view is not a view about the way we usually talk and it cannot be rejected on this basis. They may easily reply to Hacker's observation by saying 'People talk like that because they are ignorant. They should talk differently.'

Therefore, contrary to what Hacker maintains, I think that we can talk about observing our beliefs; we observe them by introspection. But what do we observe by introspection when we observe what we believe about something? We observe our thoughts in connection with that thing or our feeling of conviction to the effect that a statement should be true. The concept of belief, although it is not so closely related to the stream of consciousness as episodic thinking, is, nevertheless, essentially related to the episodic part of the mind. Belief is a mental episode in the sense in which understanding and meaning are mental episodes. They cannot be reduced to mental episodes or occurrences, but those occurrences are partially constitutive of the belief. We can understand this very clearly if we realize the fact that understanding, meaning and belief are closely connected to episodic thinking. For instance, one cannot say 'I believe that p but have never thought about it'. Of course, there is a use of this sentence that makes sense; when one is saying that one did not think *in the past* whether or not p is the case. But, what I want to emphasise is that one cannot say 'I believe that p but I did not have any thoughts about whether or not p is true *in the past or right now*'. And this statement is senseless precisely because having a belief to the effect that p means or implies having thoughts in your mind to the effect that p. Therefore, someone saying 'I believe that p but

I do not have thoughts in connection to the proposition *p*' is actually saying 'I have thoughts regarding whether or not *p* is the case and I do not have thoughts about whether or not *p*'.

Given these clarifications let us get back to the differences Hacker indicates between describing one's own room and the use of the utterance 'I think that *p*'. He infers from the claim that it does not make sense to talk about observing our own thoughts or beliefs the idea that it does not make sense to talk about conditions of observation and about our perceptual competence in observing what we think or believe. In order to support this view he points to the fact that when we describe our own room we use primarily our sense of vision; we describe what we see with our eyes. But there is no organ with which we perceive our own thoughts.

In response to Hacker's objection one should indicate the fact that there are forms of perception that do not involve a sense-organ. David Armstrong points to this fact in his discussion of inner-sense. For instance, we can perceive our bodily-temperature, the general position of our limbs and so on, but there are no sense-organs involved in this kind of perception. However, if Hacker were to reply by saying 'Science will certainly discover in the future the organs responsible for this kind of perception' one might respond by saying that science may discover the organs responsible for our introspective knowledge. So, the onus would be on Hacker to show that it is not possible in principle for science to discover an organ of perception by which we know the contents of our own minds.

Can we talk about 'conditions of observation' or 'perceptual competence' in connection with our knowledge of what we believe? I think that it makes sense to use

these terms in certain circumstances. Let us say that John is at a party, he already had a few beers and he feels very tired because he worked all day to fix his truck. Somebody asks him 'Tell me what you really think about euthanasia! Is it right to kill small children if they are in great pain?' The fact is that John has never thought about this issue. After a few moments of reflection John answers 'Killing small children? Are you crazy? How can I agree to something like that?' Let us say that after a few days John reconsiders the question. He says to himself 'Why should we let these children live if they are in great pain and there is no chance for them to get better? It would be a crime to do that. But these children are created by God and God said that it is wrong to kill...' Suppose that John reflects in this way for a couple of hours. His conclusion is that euthanasia is the right thing to do in certain cases. So, now he has a different view of the matter from the time when he considered it for the first time. I think we can say that *what he really thinks* is that euthanasia is right in certain cases, the result of his deeper and longer reflection. Cannot we say that, in the first case, he did not see what he believes because he did not think about the matter carefully enough? Is not this case similar to the one in which one cannot see clearly all the furniture in a room because of the poor conditions of observation? I should add that the cases should not be *very similar* in order to entitle us to talk about conditions of observation in both cases, but they should have a 'family resemblance' that would entitle us to use the same expression in both cases; and I think there is a 'family resemblance' between the cases.

Let us take another example. It is a fact that the capacity to concentrate on your thoughts is a necessary condition of reflection. It is also a fact that some people cannot concentrate in stressful circumstances. For instance, when one is too nervous one cannot

concentrate or when there is too much noise around one one cannot focus anymore. We can certainly talk in these cases of poor conditions of observation of one's own thoughts. Let us imagine a professor trying to teach when some workers are trying to fix a door nearby using hammers and drills. If a student asks him a question about what he is teaching he may not be able to answer it even if, in other circumstances, he would have come up with an answer. He certainly has thoughts about what the student asked because he is an expert in the area but he cannot have a good access to them. He cannot even think about the question.

In this context I think we can also talk about 'perceptual competence' in connection with one's own thoughts and beliefs. Let us say that someone has a great capacity to concentrate. He can read books and write even when bombs are exploding around his house. We can certainly say that he has a capacity to perceive his own thoughts better then many of us. Or, let us think about someone who is cool and relaxed in very dangerous situations; in situations in which many of us would panic and be unable to think clearly, to focus. Then, contrary to what Hacker argues, I think we can talk about observing what we believe about something, about the 'conditions of observation' of out beliefs, and about one's 'capacity' for observing what he believes.

The third difference noted by Hacker between describing a room and reporting beliefs is that, in the first case, one may misidentify an object in one's room, but, in the second case, one cannot misidentify a belief for another belief. Sidney Shoemaker makes a similar point in his lecture *Self-Knowledge and Inner Sense: The Object Perception Model*:

I am aware that I believe that Boris Yeltsin is President of Russia. It seems clear that it would be utterly wrong to characterize this awareness by saying that at some point I become aware of an entity and identified it, that entity, as a belief that Boris Yeltsin holds that office. To say that would suggest that it ought to be possible for someone to become aware of a belief and misidentify it as something other than a belief, or as a belief with a content other than the one it has; or that it ought to be possible for someone to become aware of something that is not a belief, say a wish that Adlai Stevenson has been elected President of the United States, and misidentify it as a belief that Boris Yeltsin is President of Russia on the basis of the intrinsic features one observes it to have. And while mistakes about one's propositional attitudes are no doubt possible, these kinds of mistakes seem clearly not to be [Shoemaker, 1994, p. 256].

Hacker and Shoemaker formulate a similar objection to the view that we can misidentify our own beliefs in the same way in which we misidentify certain objects in the external world.

Let us imagine the following conversation. Somebody asks a philosopher 'Do you think that God exists?' and the philosopher answers immediately 'No, I do not think so' and then, after a moment of reflection he adds 'No, I did not express correctly what I think. I think that talking about God is useless. We do not have to talk about God anymore.'

In connection with this example we can say the following. In fact the philosopher had the same thought all the time, but he expressed it differently. First, he thought that the content of the thought is that God does not exist, but then he realised that the content of the thought is that it is not useful to talk about God. We can also describe the

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difference by saying that he described his thought more carefully the second time. First he described it in a hurry and then more patiently.

I think that it makes sense to say 'I have a thought about that but I cannot express it right now.' or 'I am not sure yet what I think about this.' Therefore, I think that there is room for identification and misidentification of our own thoughts. Shoemaker is certainly right in saying that we cannot have a certain thought and then realize that it is an intention and vice-versa but I think we can misidentify a thought with another thought. Similarly, in the case of external perception, we do not misidentify a bed with a table, or a picture with a fridge.

If one wants to describe one's room in an accurate way one may consult authorities. For instance, one may not know what kind of computer one has and, in order to give a detailed and accurate description of one's computer one may talk to an IT specialist. But, Hacker observes, if 'I think that p' were a description then it would make sense to ask authorities what you think. We can certainly imagine cases in which it does make sense to look up authorities in order to find out what you think. Also, one may talk to people that have a certain specialization in order to get a clear statement of what they think and also to have a sense of the implications and consequences of their beliefs. This last case is similar to the one in which someone has a computer but he does not know much about it. One may have a certain belief but one may be unable to articulate it clearly and to indicate its implications and consequences.

Let us first consider the case in which someone does not know what he believes. Suppose that John writes political articles but, lately, John experienced some memory problems. John employed Mike to read all the stuff he ever wrote and to tell him very

quickly what he thinks about different issues. For instance, John might ask Mike 'What do I think about the war in Iraq?' or "What do I think about Tony Blair?'

As I have said, there are cases in which one does not know what one thinks in the sense that one cannot articulate it clearly. Someone may go to a philosophical counsellor in order to find out exactly what she thinks and what the solutions to her problems are. A philosophical counsellor might say 'You say that you are not happy because your son married Peggy. But you also say that you are happy as long as your son is happy, and your son is happy with Peggy. So, you do not actually believe that you are happy as long as your son is happy or you do not actually believe that you are unhappy. You cannot have the two beliefs in the same time. If you say that you are not happy because your son married Peggy and your son is happy because he married Peggy then it follows that your son's happiness does not have anything to do with your happiness. You can be happy when he is not happy and you can be unhappy if he is happy. Therefore, you have to choose between caring about your son and searching for your happiness.'

In sum, I think that there is not such a big difference, as Hacker wants to show, between statements like 'There is a computer in my room' and 'I think that abortion is wrong.' In other words, describing our own beliefs is similar to describing the room in which we live. I did not argue for the thesis that the two cases are exactly similar but for the thesis that there are enough similarities between them to entitle us to use the term 'describing' in the case of reporting our own beliefs.

To sum up, in this section I have considered the case of 'thinking as believing'. Wittgenstein's view is that sentences of the form 'I think that p' or 'I believe that p' are not descriptions of 'inner' or mental states. I this section I have argued that these kinds of

sentences may be used as descriptions, or reports of observation. What do they describe? They describe our thoughts and feelings of conviction to the effect that something is the case. In the following section I will consider the case of 'thinking of' or episodic thinking.

2.2. Describing what we are thinking of

In Wittgenstein's view, sentences of the form 'I am thinking of X' are not descriptions of the 'words, phrases, mental images and the rest' that went on in one's stream of consciousness. Before assessing this view, we should bear in mind that there are different ways in which we can describe something. We can describe it in more detail or in more general terms, depending on what we want to do with the description. For instance, a writer may describe in great detail one of his vacations in his journal, let us say, but he may well tell a friend of his 'It was a nice vacation!' Both the stuff he wrote in the journal and the claim 'It was a nice vacation!' are descriptions of his vacation but they are formulated for different purposes.

I think that the point applies also to the way we describe the phenomena that constitute our stream of consciousness. For instance, let us say that I am thinking about a philosophical paper I want to write. If a friend of mine who is not interested in philosophy were to ask me what I have done all morning I would say to him 'I have been thinking about a paper I have to write'. This is a very general description of what went on inside my head. I have no reason to tell my friend about the arguments I have formulated

for a certain philosophical thesis or about the mental images that crossed my mind while I was thinking of a philosophical issue.

On the other hand, if another friend of mine who is interested in philosophy asks me 'What have you done all morning?' I may offer him a more detailed description of what went on in my mind. I might tell him 'I was thinking whether abortion is wrong or not and it occurred to me that it is not wrong because the fetus is not a person, so, if you kill a fetus you do not kill a person, but then I thought, that it is wrong anyway because it is like killing an animal'. Now, this is a more detailed description of what went on in my mind. Moreover, contrary to what Hacker claims, this is also a report of the reasoning underlying the conclusion I have reached. It is true that when one reports what one thought one has the tendency to present his thought in a more organized and systematic way. But this does not mean that this is not still a description of phenomena that occurred in one's stream of consciousness. Also, it happens especially in the minds of people with logical training that their thoughts occur in their minds directly in a logical order and they do not have to organize anything. In conclusion, I do not think that a description of the stream of consciousness phenomena cannot be a report of thinking.

To sum up, I think Wittgenstein's view that 'I think that p' and 'I am thinking of X' are not descriptions is wrong. Wittgenstein claims that when we are interested in what someone is thinking of we are not interested in what is going on through his mind. That is, the report 'I am thinking if my family', for instance, is not a description of mental occurrences. But, as I have shown, this is wrong. 'I am thinking of my family' is a description of one's occurent thoughts. If one did not have any thoughts about one's family then one is lying when one is saying that one is thinking of his family. Similarly,

in the case of 'thinking as believing', sentences like 'I think that p' may be used as descriptions of one's thoughts and/or one's feeling of conviction to the effect that p is true.

As I have noted at the beginning of this section, I have discussed separately the case of 'thinking as believing' and of 'thinking of' or episodic thinking. In the following two sections I will refer only to episodic thinking. So far, in this chapter I have responded to one of Wittgenstein's arguments for the view that thinking, in both uses of the concept, is not a mental process or a mental state. In the following two sections I will discuss other arguments formulated by Wittgenstein in support of the thesis that episodic thinking, 'thinking of', is not a mental or 'inner' process.

3. Speaking Thoughtfully.

Another argument formulated by Wittgenstein against the view that thinking or reflecting about something is an inner process goes like this. It is a fact that thinking is what distinguishes speaking thoughtfully from talking without thinking. So, one may infer that thinking is a process that accompanies speaking and can go on by itself. This is the thesis that Wittgenstein attacks in some of his remarks about thinking. At §330 he writes:

> Is thinking a kind of speaking? One would like to say it is what distinguishes
> speech with thought from talking without thinking. – And so it seems to be an
> accompaniment of speech. A process, which may accompany something else, or
> can go on by itself.

Say: 'Yes, this pen is blunt. Oh, well, it will do.' First, thinking it; then without thought; then just think the thought without the words.

Well, while doing some writing I might test the point of my pen, make a face- and then go on with a gesture of resignation. – I might also act in such a way while taking various measurements that an onlooker would say I had, without words – thought: If two magnitudes are equal to a third, they are equal to one another. – But what constitutes thought here is not some process which has to accompany the words if they are not to be spoken without thought [Wittgenstein, 1958, §330, p. 107].

In Part II of the *Investigations* Wittgenstein makes his position clear: 'There are important accompanying phenomena of talking which are often missing when one talks without thinking, and this is characteristic of talking without thinking. But *they* are not thinking' [Wittgenstein, 1958, p. 218]

In order to persuade us that thinking is not what accompanies speaking thoughtfully Wittgenstein invites us to make the following experiment: say something thoughtfully, then say it without thinking and then just think the thought without the words. He takes as an example the utterance 'Yes, this pen is blunt. Oh, well, it will do'. What mental phenomena can accompany speaking in this case? Let us say that something like this happened. I observed that my pen is blunt but, given that I just wanted to make a short note, I thought that the pen is good enough for that. It is possible that all these observations crossed my mind when I uttered 'Yes, this pen is blunt. Oh, well, it will do.'

In spite of what Wittgenstein suggests I can utter the two sentences without thinking anything and I can think the thoughts that accompanied the utterance without

saying anything outwardly. I can say mechanically 'Yes, this pen is blunt. Oh, well, it will do'. Also, I can look at the pen and repeat the mental conversation I had with myself, think the same thoughts, without saying anything.

I think that there are also cases in which, as Wittgenstein suggests, the phenomena that accompany speaking thoughtfully are not what we call thinking. There is a difference between what constitutes thinking in the case in which one reflects 'privately' on a certain problem and the phenomena that accompany speaking thoughtfully. I am not committed to the view that the process of thinking is the same in the two cases. But the fact that there is a difference does not imply that thinking is not a mental process or that thinking is not what makes the difference between talking without thinking and talking thoughtfully.

As in the case of understanding and meaning, in the case of thinking Wittgenstein emphasises the idea that there are external, behavioural criteria for speaking thoughtfully. The criteria we use in order to decide whether someone is speaking thoughtfully consist in what he is able to do, not in what goes on in his mind when he speaks. Is he able to explain what he said? Is he able to respond to criticism? Hacker puts the point in the following way:

> Saying something and 'not thinking it' is not cutting out one activity or process. Saying something 'with thought', as opposed to saying it unthinkingly (in one or other of the *different* senses in which a remark may be thoughtless, mechanical, unthinking, unthoughtful), typically involves a *commitment*. One might compare it with playing a card in a game of cards. One must be prepared to defend what one says, to explain it, act on it in appropriate circumstances, take credit or incur

debit for it, stand by it and so on. One might say that to express one's thoughts, to say what one thinks, cannot be a description, report or communication of an inner process or activity, because no such description of an inner process or activity could have the consequences in the language-game of the expression of thought. [Hacker, 1985, p. 170][24]

This criticism is similar to Wittgenstein's criticism of the idea that meaning is a mental process. Wittgenstein maintained that meaning is not a mental process because no mental process can have the consequences of meaning. Glock tried to clarify Wittgenstein' point by saying that meaning involves commitment. Meaning Napoleon I when one utters a sentence about Napoleon commits one to a certain claim. Similarly, when one says something thoughtfully one is committed to what he is saying; one should defend what he is saying, explain it, stand by it and so on.

Hacker observes that a description of a mental process cannot involve such a commitment. This constitutes another argument against the view that 'I think that p' is a description of an inner-process. I think Wittgenstein, Hacker and Glock are wrong about this. Let us say that someone thinks of the philosophical problem: can there be morality without God? The conclusion that he reaches after a long process of careful reflection is that there cannot be morality without God. When he expresses, in a philosophical discussion with his friends, his conviction that there is no morality without God he just describes the outcome of his thinking about the matter. What other relation can there be

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[24] Again, in this passage Hacker does not distinguish between episodic thinking or reflecting and 'thinking as believing'. My point, in assessing Hacker's argument, is that one speaks thoughtfully in saying 'I think that p' only if one reflected or thought of whether p is the case (in the past or at the moment of speaking). So, again, contrary to what Wittgenstein claims, episodic thinking makes the difference between talking with and without thinking.

between what he is saying and the internal process of reflection if not a relation of representation? And it is precisely because the utterance 'There is no morality without God' is a representation or description of one's thoughts about this issue, that one is *committed* to what he is saying. How can one be committed to something if he did not think about it and he does not have strong feelings about it. In other words, talking about commitment *makes sense only if* an utterance is a report of thinking.

Additionally, the language-game of asking for reasons and explanations can be played because one did some thinking before one said something. One asks someone else 'Why do you think that *p*?' precisely because one assumes that his interlocutor did some thinking before talking. So, the existence of external criteria for speaking thoughtfully does not show that thinking is not a process that accompanies speaking but, on the contrary, *presupposes* and *makes sense only if* thinking is a process that accompanies speaking. In order to see that clearly let us think about the following case. Someone says 'I think that there is no morality without God' but I never thought about this in my life. In this case, his interlocutor has no reason to ask 'Why do you think that there is no morality without God?' Also, we should infer from the utterance that 'I think that *p* but I never thought about it' that the speaker does not know what it means to think something or to believe something.

In summary, I think that Hacker is wrong in saying that if 'I think that *p*' is a description then it cannot be a commitment. It is precisely because 'I think that *p*' is a description of an inner process of reflection that asserting *p* involves making a commitment. It is because one thought about whether *p* is the case or not that one is able to commit himself to the fact that *p*.

In my view, Wittgenstein is right in emphasising the external or 'outward' criteria of speaking thoughtfully, but the fact that there are such criteria does not mean that, in general, the process of thinking is not what makes the difference between speaking thoughtfully and talking without thinking. That is, the observation that we use 'outward' criteria in order to determine whether someone said something with thinking is not in conflict with the idea that thinking is an inner process.

4. Thinking in Language.

In this chapter I defend the view that thinking of or reflecting on something is a mental or inner process. What mental process exactly? Talking to oneself in the imagination is one process that may constitute thinking. Another one is having all sorts of mental images crossing one's own mind. Usually, the talking and the images are mixed together when we think of something. One of the main ideas of this thesis is that the claim 'Thinking is a mental process' does not commit one to the idea that mental processes are necessary and sufficient for episodic thinking. There is a criterial or grammatical relation between thinking and mental processes like the ones I have mentioned above but it is not the particular kind of criterial relation in which we give necessary and sufficient conditions for something. But a defender of the view that thinking is a mental process is committed to the view that there are vehicles of thinking; that thinking is *in* language or *in* images and so on.

In his essays on thinking, Hacker maintains that it is misleading to say that one thinks in language or in images. Certainly, he attributes this view to Wittgenstein. In my

view, at this point Hacker's Wittgenstein does not look much like the historical Wittgenstein. For instance, at §329 in the *Philosophical Investigations* Wittgenstein writes: 'When I think in language there are not 'meanings' going through my mind in addition to the verbal expressions: the language is itself the vehicle of thought' [Wittgenstein, 1958, p. 107]. In this paragraph, Wittgenstein agrees with the view that we sometimes think in language or that 'language is itself the vehicle of thought'. He wants to persuade us that we should not look behind the language we use in order to get the essence of thinking.

I will leave aside the question whether Hacker's Wittgenstein's views are consistent with the historical Wittgenstein's views and I will present Hacker's arguments for the thesis that it is misleading to say that one thinks in anything[25]. One of the arguments he formulates is that talking inwardly is not sufficient for thinking. We can for instance, repeat a poem to see if we know it by heart or count sheep to induce sleep and so on. Wittgenstein makes a similar point: 'One cannot say that thinking is: speaking in one's imagination. This can also be done without thinking' [Wittgenstein, 1980, p. 37]

We can answer this objection by saying that the fact that speaking in one's imagination is not sufficient for thinking does not show that there is no criterial or grammatical relation between thinking and talking inwardly. In other words, it does not falsify the claim that thinking is talking to oneself.

Another argument formulated by Hacker against the view that we think in language goes as follows:

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[25] This is also one of Ryle's points in his essays on thinking. Unfortunately I cannot present and evaluate Ryle's views in this thesis because of the limited space. Ryle's conception of thinking may be the subject matter of a different thesis.

Although it is in general true that the capacity for thought is bound up with the capacity to manipulate symbols, this is not because unexpressed thoughts must be *in* a language, but rather because the expression of thoughts in speech must be. It is highly misleading to suggest that one thinks *in* anything, although it is both true and important that whatever one thinks must be expressible in words, images or whatever [Hacker, 1990, p. 172].

So, Hacker defends the view that we do not think in language but using language is a way in which we express our thoughts. Let us analyse this view carefully. Hacker claims that our thoughts are not identical to the linguistic form in which they occur; the linguistic form is just the expression of our thoughts. Similarly, screaming, crying, and uttering 'I am in pain' are not identical to the sensation of pain but are ways in which we express pain. But then, the fair question to ask is: what is a thought? If the linguistic form a thought takes both in our own minds or when we talk outwardly is just *the expression* of a thought then what is the thought? Hacker has to give an account of thought and thinking which does not include the 'vehicles' of thought and thinking because those vehicles are just ways of *expressing* what we think.

Hacker might reply by saying that thoughts are 'pure'; they do not have any form. But then, how do we know when we have one?

Let us imagine the following case. Somebody is saying 'I have been thinking all night about what you were saying but I did not say anything in my mind or outwardly in connection to it and I did not have any mental images related to it.' Or imagine a psychologist giving the following order to his subjects in an experiment: 'Think of the vacation you had last summer but think only the 'pure' thoughts; do not try to express

your thoughts in language or in images.' It is safe to say that the subjects will have no idea what to do.

Hacker articulates a 'deeper objection' to the idea that thinking is inward speaking. If thinking were inward speaking, the objection goes, then a report of thinking could not mention what or whom was meant. Before explaining what this means I should note that Wittgenstein makes this point. He writes:

> Plato says that thinking is a conversation. If it really were a conversation, then one could only report the words of the conversation and the external circumstances under which it was carried on, but not also the meaning that these words then had for the speaker. If someone said to himself (or out loud) 'I hope to see N soon', it would make no sense to ask: 'And which person of that name did you mean then?' For all that he did was say these words. [Wittgenstein, 1980, vol. I, p.37]

Let us look at the way Hacker explains this argument. Hacker notes that it is an essential feature of the linguistic expression of thought that the user of the linguistic sign can say whom he meant. But, if thinking were inner speaking then one cannot explain what one meant by a linguistic expression; one can only 'adduce further signs'. Hacker says that this is absurd 'for there is no difference here between thinking that p and meaning that p. One can say of an expression one has used that 'By 'N' I mean this', but one cannot say of a 'thought-constituent' 'By 'N' I meant this.'

Let us take an example. I say to someone 'I hope to see N soon'. He ask me 'Who is N?' or 'What do you mean by N?' Now, I may answer to this 'N is a friend of from

high school' Is that not a legitimate explanation of what I meant by N? Of course, what I did was 'adducing further signs' but any linguistic explanation of the meaning of a word is an explanation of a sign by other signs. Is it the case that I cannot give the explanation above because I think in language? It is not clear why.

Hacker points to another difficulty created by the assumption that we think in language. If thinking were in language then it would make sense to talk about the interpretation of our own thoughts. We can interpret what we think in the same way in which we interpret o piece of language. But then it would also make sense to say 'I do not understand what I think' or 'I think that I interpreted wrongly what I think' and so on. But this is absurd, Hacker concludes.

Suppose that one hears a strange voice in his mind and he does not understand what the voice is saying. Why would anyone say that he is thinking or that he has thoughts? Certainly, he would not say that he is reflecting when the voice keeps talking and talking in his mind. In other words, the problem of understanding one's own thoughts does not occur. If one does not understand something that goes through his mind then those are not his thoughts. But this observation is not in conflict with the idea that, in general, out thoughts occur in a linguistic form.

To sum up, in this chapter I have defended the idea that thinking is a mental process. In the first chapter I have emphasised the connection between understanding and thinking. In general, we understand something only if we think about it. By making explicit the connection between understanding and thinking and the fact that thinking is a mental episode I have provided the premises for an argument in support of the idea that understanding is a mental episode. These two chapters constitute a reply from a Cartesian

perspective to Wittgenstein's views of understanding and thinking. However, the Cartesian position I defend is different from the traditional Cartesianism in the fact that it incorporates Wittgenstein's view that there is a conceptual, ontological connection between mind and behaviour. In the next and final chapter I will explore the implications of my view for the problems of self-knowledge and introspection. I will do that in the context of evaluating Wittgenstein's views on these matters.

Chapter 3 – Self-Knowledge and Other Minds

1. Wittgenstein and Ryle on Self-Knowledge.

In the first two chapters of this thesis I have evaluated critically Wittgenstein's arguments for the view that meaning, understanding, believing and thinking are not states of consciousness, mental episodes. I have focused on these four cases but he formulates similar arguments in the case of intention, remembering, knowing and other mental concepts. In *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology* and *Zettel* Wittgenstein draws a general distinction between states of consciousness and dispositions. He writes:

> The general differentiation of all states of consciousness from dispositions seems
>
> to me to be that one cannot ascertain by spot-check whether they are still going
>
> on.

For instance:

> I can attend to the course of my pains, but not in the same way to that of my
>
> belief, or my translation, or my knowledge.

By entering the concepts of belief, understanding, knowing and so on into the category of 'dispositions' Wittgenstein makes a similar move to the one advocated by Ryle in *The Concept of Mind*. However, Ryle's project was more ambitious; he wanted to reduce all mental states to dispositions to behave. In other words, there are no states of

consciousness or mental episodes, there are just dispositions to behave[26]. Both Wittgenstein and Ryle's views are animated by the repudiation of the traditional Cartesian picture of the mind. According to the Cartesian picture of the mind, the mind is a private world accessible only to its owner. The physical world, on the other hand, is accessible to everyone. The private objects or experiences that 'inhabit' one's mind are accessible only to one; one has a privileged access to the contents of one's mind. Only he can know for certain what he feels, thinks, intends and so on. According to this view, all mental states are states of consciousness.

The Cartesian view of the mind has as a consequence the occurrence of the problem of other minds. If I have access only to the contents of my mind then how do I know what is going on in other people's minds and, more importantly, how do I know that other people have minds given that I have access only to their behaviour? Maybe what seems to me to be other human beings are just automatons.

Ryle's project of reducing mental states to dispositions to behave and Wittgenstein's insistence on public criteria for mental states are critical reactions to the Cartesian view of the mind and its corollary, the problem of other minds. In the *Philosophical Investigations* Wittgenstein did not use the term 'disposition' to mark the difference between being in pain or feeling depressed and knowing, believing, understanding and so on. As I have said, he used this term in *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology* and *Zettel*. Instead, in the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein highlighted the fact that we use 'outward' or 'external' criteria in order to decide whether someone understands, knows or believes something. The notion of criteria is very useful

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[26] Ryle was conscious though that concepts like sensation, feeling and mental image denote mental occurrences; that they are 'episodic concepts'. However, in his book *The Concept of Mind* he is trying to minimize the importance of these mental states.

because we can talk also about the criteria of being in pain and feeling depressed. All mental processes and mental states, according to Wittgenstein, are in need of outward criteria. It is important to note that Wittgenstein's project, as opposed to Ryle's, was not a reductionist project. Wittgenstein did not want to reduce mental states or mental episodes to dispositions to behave. However, he highlighted the fact that there are essential conceptual connections between the 'inner' and the 'outer'. Mental states or experiences are not something accessible *only* to their owner, they are partly defined by reference to behaviour and behaviour is public, so *by definition*, mental states are accessible to others too.

Similarly, Ryle's idea that mental states are dispositions to behave has an important consequence for the epistemological problem of other minds. We can know what someone else believes, intends, thinks and so on by observing the way he behaves in certain circumstances. For instance, one intends to go to the movies if one has a certain disposition. What it means to have a certain dispositions is explained by Ryle in terms of what someone would do in certain circumstances. Having the disposition to go to the movies means going to the movies if one has the chance to do so, or saying 'I want to go to the movies' if someone asks you 'What do you want to do?' and so on.

But what are the consequences of this view for self-knowledge? Do we know what we believe in the same way in which we know what other people believe? Do we apply criteria in order to find out what we believe? Wittgenstein and Ryle are opposed to the Cartesian view of the mind, but their criticism of this view takes different forms. As I have said, according to the Cartesian view of the mind, we have a privileged access to our own mental states. The mind is a private realm of private objects (sensations, desires,

thoughts and so on) accessible directly to its owner. On the other hand, the physical world is public, accessible to everyone. It seems natural, if one has this view, to say that sentences like 'I am in pain' or 'I want to go to a movie' describe how things are in my inner world as 'The book is on the table' describes how things are in the external, public world.

Wittgenstein and Ryle criticize this Cartesian view of the mind and formulate different answers to the problem of self-knowledge. According to Ryle, we do not have any privileged access to a private world of mental states because there is no such a world. There are no mental episodes but only dispositions to behave. Therefore, we know our own mental states by observing what dispositions to behave we have. In other words, we find out what we think and feel in the same way in which we find out what others think and feel. Sometimes we find out what we think faster then other people because we can observe our actions better, but sometimes other people know better than us what we think and feel because we are always prone to deceive ourselves. To put the point simply, Ryle claims that 'John Doe's ways of finding out about John Doe are the same as John Doe's ways of finding out about Richard Roe' [Ryle, 1949, p. 156]. If we apply Ryle's general point to the specific case of beliefs then we get the following view: one finds out what one believes in the same way in which one finds out what someone else believes. How is that? By observing the way one behaves, what one says and so on.

Wittgenstein does not agree with this view. In the *Philosophical Investigations* he writes:

Believing is a kind of disposition of the believing person. This is shown me in the case of someone else by his behavior; and by his words. And under this head, by

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the expression 'I believe...' as well as by the simple assertion. – What about my own case: how do I myself recognize my own disposition? – Here it will have been necessary for me to take notice of myself as others do, to listen to myself talking, to be able to draw a conclusion from what I say!

My own relation to my words is wholly different from other people's.

But what is the difference exactly between my relation to the words 'I believe that p' and other's people relation to these words? Wittgenstein's commentators attribute him the so-called 'avowal theory'. This 'theory' is meant to elucidate one's relation to one's utterances of the sort 'I believe that p' or 'I am in pain' as opposed to other's people relation to these utterances. In this section I will present and evaluate this 'theory' in more detail.

It is noteworthy that, in Wittgenstein's view, statements like 'I know I am in pain' or 'I know I want to go to the movies' do not have an epistemological sense. One cannot say 'I know that I am in pain' in the sense in which one says 'I know that Ottawa is the capital of Canada'. One of the reasons for which Wittgenstein claims that is because 'I am in pain' or 'I want to go to the movies' are not descriptions; they are avowals[27]. And we can know only what can be described. Therefore, for Wittgenstein, the philosophical problem of self-knowledge does not make sense.

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[27] It is important to note that 'the avowal theory' is more a 'theory' attributed to Wittgenstein than a 'theory' formulated and defended by Wittgenstein. For instance, in some of the remarks in the Part II of the *Philosophical Investigations* Wittgenstein leaves open the possibility for other uses of the sentence 'I am in pain' and similar ones. He writes: 'We surely do not always say someone is *complaining* because he says he is in pain. So the words 'I am in pain' may be a cry of complaint or may be something else' [Wittgenstein, 1958, p. 189] There may be a description or report of one's state of mind. One may go to a doctor and describe to the doctor in a cool and relaxed way what kind of pain he feels, where he feels it, how intense it is and so on. This use of language is more similar to describing a state of affairs than to crying and screaming because one is in pain.

This is an important difference between Wittgenstein and Ryle. For Ryle, the problem of self-knowledge does make sense; we know our own mental states, but we know them in the same way in which we know the mental states of others, because mental states are dispositions to behave. For Wittgenstein, it does not make sense to say that we know our own mental states; that we know when we are in pain or feel depressed or that we know what we think, know and so on. In the following I will concentrate on Wittgenstein's 'avowal theory' and I will indicate other reasons why Wittgenstein claims that the problem of self-knowledge is senseless.

The most clear and general formulation of the 'avowal theory' occurs in *Zettel*. Wittgenstein writes:

Plan for the treatment of psychological concepts.

Psychological concepts characterized by the fact that the third person of the present is to be verified by observation, the first person not.

Sentences in the third person present: information. In the first person: expression.

((Not quite right.))

The first person of the present akin to an expression [Wittgenstein, 1967, p. 84]

Wittgenstein develops this view first of all in connection with the language for sensations. For instance, the utterance 'I am in pain' is 'akin to an expression' like 'Ouch!' whereas 'He is in pain' is a piece of information. The fact that 'I am in pain' is 'akin to an expression' is one of the reasons why Wittgenstein claims that 'I know that I am in pain' does not have sense, or, as Hacker puts it, does not have 'epistemological sense'. In other words, we can use that sentence in language, but in a non-epistemic way.

Wittgenstein writes: 'It cannot be said of me at all (except perhaps as a joke) that I *know* I am in pain. What is it supposed to mean – except perhaps that I *am* in pain?' [Wittgenstein, 1958, §246, p. 89]

But in what way is the utterance 'I am in pain' similar to the exclamation 'Ouch'? In order to make his view more intuitive Wittgenstein imagines a way in which we learn how to use the words for sensation:

> Words are connected with the primitive, the natural expressions of sensation and used in their place. A child has hurt himself and he cries; and then adults talk to him and teach him exclamations and, later, sentences. They teach the child new pain-behaviour.
>
> 'So you are saying that the word 'pain' really means crying?' – On the contrary: the verbal expression of pain replaces crying and does not describe it [Wittgenstein, 1958, §243, p. 89].

Let us try to clarify Wittgenstein's view. In the following I will present the way in which Malcolm Budd[28] reconstructs Wittgenstein's argument. Wittgenstein claims that one does not identify one's sensation by criteria. From this we can infer that we do not have a justification in saying 'I am in pain'. In other words, if one does not apply criteria in order to determine if something is the case then it does not make sense to ask one for a justification. For instance, if someone says of his friend John 'John is in great pain' then it makes sense to ask him 'How do you know that?' or 'What is your justification for uttering that?' It makes sense to ask for a justification because one applies criteria in

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[28] Malcolm Budd, *Wittgenstein's Philosophy of Psychology*, Rutledge, 1989.

order to determine if someone else is in pain. To use Crispin Wright's terminology, one infers that someone else is in pain from someone else's behaviour and this is why it does make sense to ask for justification, because it is inferential knowledge. But, when one says 'I am in pain' one does not apply any criteria to determine that, and, therefore, asking for a justification is senseless.

But why does it not make sense to talk about criteria in the first person case? This is connected, rightly I think, in Budd reconstruction of Wittgenstein's argument to Wittgenstein's claim that it does not make sense to utter 'I doubt that I am in pain'. According to Wittgenstein, it does not make sense to say 'I know what 'pain' means, but I do not know whether *this*, that I have now, is pain'. To put the point differently, the application of criteria is connected to the possibility of being mistaken or uncertain but we cannot be mistaken or uncertain in connection to whether we feel pain or not, so it does not make sense to talk about criteria in this case.

What is the connection, it might be asked, between the fact that we do not use criteria in order to determine whether we feel pain or not and the idea that 'I am in pain' is not a piece of information but an expression, or akin to an expression? Budd makes the connection in the following way:

> There is no intermediate step available to someone who understands the word 'pain' – a step such that if he takes it he is then in a position to assert that he is in pain – that would provide him with a reason for his self-ascription of pain and without which he would not know what to say: his apprehension of when he can truly say that he is in pain is unmediated. Without the employment of any method of discovery, he finds himself able sincerely to say 'I am in pain', as he can find

himself groaning with pain. In this way his self-ascription of pain is akin to an expression of pain. [Budd, 1989, p. 52]

Wittgenstein makes the same point when he claims that the verbal expression of a sensation is not the report of or the result of observation. This claim is connected to the idea that 'I am in pain' is not a description. But, one may rightly ask, is not the claim 'I am in pain' about something in the same way in which a description is about something? Hacker clarifies this point by saying:

The grammar of 'about' in the context of an expression is unlike the grammar of 'about' in the context of a description – it signifies what the expression is an expression of. Such an avowal is not uttered on the grounds of my observations of my behaviour, and I do not *know it to be true* on the same grounds as others, since I cannot be said to know or to be ignorant·of its truth. It is *groundlessly* uttered, and it is not verified by reference to behaviour or *anything else*! [...] The logic of expression is not the logic of correlation of distinct domains, and the grammar of psychological words used in verbal manifestations of the mental is not the grammar of names of objects [Hacker, 1990, p. 117]

Both Hacker and Budd emphasize the point that 'I am in pain' is not a report of observation, it is not uttered based on what one observes; it is *groundlessly* uttered. As it is senseless to ask one to justify his exclamation 'Ouch!' it is also senseless to ask one to justify his utterance 'I am in pain'. When one is stabbed in the back one does not apply criteria in order to decide whether one should scream or not. Screaming is an instinctive reaction. 'I am in pain' is, according to Wittgenstein, similar to a scream of pain.

Wittgenstein tries to generalize this point to all psychological concepts. As we talk about the expression of pain, we talk also about the expression of understanding, belief, intention, thoughts and so on. For instance, the utterance 'Now I understand!' or 'Now I know how to go on!' is not a description of a mental state but a signal or an exclamation that corresponds to an instinctive sound or a 'glad start' [Wittgenstein, 1958, §180, p. 73; §323, p.105]. Wittgenstein calls the words with which one expresses one's memory 'a memory reaction' [Wittgenstein, 1958, §343, p. 110], and the expression of expectation is a verbal reaction [Wittgenstein, 1967, §53, p. 12]. The bottom line is that Wittgenstein wants to persuade us that utterances like 'I am in pain', 'I want to go to the movies' and so on are kinds of instinctive behaviour, or a complex expression of a primitive sort of behaviour. For instance, there is a primitive expression or natural expression of intention: a cat when it stalks a bird or a beast when it wants to escape. Wittgenstein notes in parenthesis: 'Connection with propositions about sensations'. There is a primitive, natural behaviour that expresses being in pain, wanting something, maybe even believing something. Language is just a more evolved way in which we can behave when we suffer an injury, want something and so on.

Let us now evaluate Wittgenstein's arguments. In the second chapter of this thesis I have argued for the idea that we can also talk about describing what we believe, not only about expressing our beliefs. I think that this also holds for sensations. I mean that 'I am in pain' may be used as an expression, but also as a description or report of observation. In the following I will make some arguments to support this claim.

One of Wittgenstein's points was that it makes sense to talk about justifying a claim only if we establish the truth of that claim by using criteria. But I do not think that

this is true. For instance, if, as a result of observation, I say 'There is a book on my desk' someone may ask me to justify my claim. 'Why do you think that?' one may ask. I may answer by saying 'Well, I see it.' Similarly, if asked 'How do you know that you are in pain?', one may answer 'I observe it by introspection'.

In reply to this argument, Wittgenstein may say that when one utters 'There is a book on my desk' one applies criteria for what is a desk and what is a book. On the other hand, we do not apply criteria for determining whether something is a pain or not. Why? Because if we were to apply criteria for being in pain then it would make sense to be mistaken or ignorant about whether we are in pain or not, as it makes sense to be mistaken or ignorant about something being a desk or not. This is also connected to Wittgenstein's view that 'I know I am in pain' does not make sense. According to Wittgenstein, it makes sense to talk about knowing p, only when it also makes sense to talk about being ignorant whether or not p, being in doubt whether p and so on. And, one cannot be ignorant or in doubt whether one is in pain. So, talking about knowledge is senseless in this case.

In my view, Wittgenstein is wrong in making this point. I have two responses to his argument. Even if it were true that we could not talk about not knowing whether we are in pain or not, this does not mean that we cannot talk about knowing it. It just means that our knowledge of it is very certain, beyond doubt, settled. Or, to put the point differently, it means that the knowledge we got by introspection is incorrigible, as Descartes would say.

Secondly, I think that there are circumstances in which it does make sense to say 'I doubt that I feel pain'. In his book *Matter and Consciousness*, Paul Churchland describes such a case:

Consider the occurrence of something rather similar to pain – a sudden sensation of extreme cold, for example – in a situation where one strongly expects to feel pain. Suppose you are a captured spy, being interrogated at length with the repeated help of a hot iron pressed briefly to your back. If, on the twentieth trial, an ice cube is covertly pressed against your back, your immediate reaction will differ little or none from your first nineteen reactions. You almost certainly think, for a brief moment, that you were feeling pain [Churchland, 1984, p. 77].

Certainly, Wittgenstein might insist that if the subject thinks he feels pain then he feels pain. Churchland considers this possible objection and he replies by saying:

This interpretation sits poorly with the fact that one can recover from the kinds of misidentification just explored. One's initial screech of horror gives way to 'Wait...wait...that is not the same feeling as before. What is going on back there?' If sensation number twenty really was a pain, why does one's judgment reverse itself a few seconds later.' We can imagine that the subject can also say something like 'I am not sure whether I felt pain that last time' or 'I doubt that I felt pain a moment ago' [Churchland, 1984, p.77].

I think that Churchland's example and similar ones shows us that we apply criteria for being in pain in the same (or similar) way in which we apply criteria for

deciding whether something is a book or not. Pain has a certain phenomenology that differentiates it from other sensations in the same way in which a book has certain properties that differentiates it from other external objects.

To sum up, we can talk about observing a pain by introspection in the same (or similar) way in which we talk about observing a book with the external senses. There are certain characteristics of being in pain on the basis of which we can infer whether we felt pain or not as there are certain properties a book has on the basis of which we decide whether something is a book or not. Therefore, the sentence 'I am in pain' may be used as a report of observation in the same (or at least similar) way in which 'There is a book on the table' is a report of observation. For instance, if one is going to a doctor and the doctor asks one to say what is wrong with one then one may describe in a cool and objective way what sort of pain one feels, where does one feel it, if it is a continuous or intermittent pain and so on. In all this time the doctor takes notes and thinks about the causes of pain. Is it not clear that in this case the patient informs the doctor about himself, about the way he feels? Similarly, if a mother observes that her child looks pale and depressed and asks him 'Do you feel pain?' and the child answers 'Yes, I am in pain', is not this a piece of information?

Therefore, in conclusion, I think that 'I am in pain' may very well be used as a piece of information, a report of observation. Wittgenstein pointed out rightly that the utterance 'I am in pain' may be used also as an expression of pain but this does not mean that it cannot be used otherwise. In consequence, contrary to Wittgenstein's view, it does make sense to say 'I know that I am in pain' meaning that I am in the possession of

information I got from introspection, in the same way in which 'There is a car in front of my house' is information I got from my visual sense.

2. Introspection

Given that in Wittgenstein's view statements like 'I am in pain' or 'I want to go to the movies' are not reports of observation but expressions or avowals we can infer that introspection does not play a role in his view of the mind. Introspection is a concept used by philosophers of mind from Descartes and Locke to David Armstrong and David Rosenthal to explain the way we know or observe our own mental states. But, in Wittgenstein's view talking about 'knowing' and 'observing' our own mental states is wrong or misleading. So, there is no place for introspection in his conception.

The remarks we can find on introspection in the *Philosophical Investigations* and other writings in which he articulated his later philosophical views, are meant to show that what is given in introspection has no bearing on the meaning of concepts like understanding, meaning, thinking and so on. This is because, as I have shown in chapters one and two, in his view, these concepts are not concepts of experience and do not represent inner states or processes. But, in the first two chapters, I also criticized Wittgenstein's views of meaning, understanding, believing and thinking. I have demonstrated that there is a conceptual, constitutive connection between elements of the stream of consciousness and meaning, understanding and believing. If what I have maintained is true then, contrary to Wittgenstein's claims, introspection has an important role in the way we use these concepts. In this section I will present Wittgenstein's view of introspection and then, using the conclusions I have reached in the first two chapters, I

will show that what is given in introspection is *essential* when it comes to concepts like understanding, meaning and thinking.

In Wittgenstein's view, we cannot determine the meaning of words like 'thinking', 'meaning', 'understanding', 'intending' and so on by introspection; by observing what is going on in our minds while we think, understand, mean or intend something.

At §316 in *Philosophical Investigations* he writes:

In order to get clear about the meaning of the word 'think' we watch ourselves while we think; what we observe will be what the word means! – But this concept is not used like that. (It would be as if without knowing how to play chess, I were to try and make out what the word 'mate' meant by close observation of the last move of some game of chess.) [Wittgenstein, 1958, p. 104]

There are at least two different ways in which we can approach a question such as 'What is thinking?' One way is to focus on what is going on in our minds when we think. In this way we will find out what thinking is. This way of approaching such problems was advocated by the defenders of introspective psychology, such as William James. Wittgenstein defends another way of answering such questions. For him, the meaning of a word is constituted by the way in which the word is used in language. So, when we want to know what the word 'thinking' means we should observe the way people use the word in different language-games, not what is going on in our minds when the concept applies to us.

There is indeed a problem with the idea that in order to understand what 'thinking' means we should watch ourselves while we think. If we know when to watch ourselves then we know what 'thinking' means; when the concept applies to us. If we do not know what 'thinking' means then we do not know when to watch what is going on in our minds. So, watching what is going on in our minds is either redundant or useless.

In *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology* Wittgenstein formulates in a more general way his view of introspection:

> Introspection can never lead to a definition. It can only lead to a psychological statement about the introspector. If, e.g., someone says: 'I believe that when I hear a word that I understand I always feel something that I do not feel when I do not understand the word' – that is a statement about his particular experiences. Someone else perhaps feels something quite different; and if both of them *make correct use of* the word 'understand' the essence of understanding lies in this use, and not in what they say about what they experience [Wittgenstein, 1980, vol. I, §212, p. 43].

Wittgenstein draws a distinction between what is essential to understanding and what is inessential to understanding. The essence of understanding lies in the correct use of the word 'understanding'. This is connected to Wittgenstein's remark that, in most cases, the meaning of a word is determined by the correct use of the word. Then, in the case of understanding, what is essential, constitutive of the concept of understanding is the correct use of the word 'understanding'. Furthermore, the argument goes, the correct use of the word 'understanding' is *independent* of what the speaker feels or experiences,

or, more generally, is *independent* of what is going on in the subject's mind. Therefore, what is given in introspection 'can never lead to a definition' because the correct use of 'understanding' has nothing to do with what is given in introspection. In other words, what is given in introspection may be an accompaniment of understanding, not a criterion of understanding.

The argument works in the same way when it comes to the concepts of thinking, meaning, intending, believing and so on.

In other words, Wittgenstein's point is that if one uses the word 'understanding' correctly it does not matter what is going on in one's mind. One may say, 'I understood this poem' and go on to explain what he understood. It does not matter what went on in his mind as long as he is able to use the word 'understanding' correctly.

In the first chapter of this thesis I criticized Wittgenstein's idea that what is given in introspection when one understands is inessential to understanding. In my view, there is no sharp, clear-cut distinction between what is given in introspection and the way we use a word in language. Wittgenstein's inference from the thesis that the meaning of the word 'understanding' is determined by the way we use the word to the idea that what is given in introspection has no influence on the word's meaning is wrong. I think that the fact that understanding is partially constituted by mental episodes is implicit in the way we use the word 'understanding'. One way to show that is by highlighting the conceptual relation between understanding and episodic thinking. This connection becomes obvious when we reflect at the fact that it is nonsense to say 'I understood the concepts explained in this article but I have never thought about the article' or 'I understood the lecturer's ideas but nothing occurred in my mind in connection to them'. The fact that we cannot

imagine someone understanding a lecture without also thinking about it is a sign of the fact that there is a grammatical relation between understanding and episodic thinking. Similarly, the reality that we cannot imagine a rod without length is a sign of the fact that being a rod and having a length are conceptually, logically connected. Understanding has to do precisely with thinking about something and ideas or thoughts occurring in one's mind. This is how we *use* the word. These grammatical connections are implicit in the way we use language.

We can formulate similar arguments in connection with the concepts of thinking and believing. The fact that thinking is constituted by what occurs in one's mind, by the elements of one's stream of consciousness is implicit in the way we use the word 'thinking'. For instance, in some of his remarks on thinking, Wittgenstein comes close to accepting the idea that thinking is talking to oneself in the imagination. As he puts the point, this is one way in which we use the word 'thinking'. Certainly, there are other ways in which we use the word, but the fact that there is a connection between the *use* of the word thinking and what we *imagine*, what is given in *introspection* is sufficient to show that there is a conceptual connection between thinking and mental episodes.

The clearest way in which we can make explicit the grammatical connection between thinking and what comes before the mind is by appealing again, as in the case of understanding, to the test for grammatical or necessary truths. Can we imagine someone thinking of something without anything crossing his mind in connection to that thing? Let us imagine someone saying 'I was thinking all night of what you said yesterday but nothing crossed my mind in connection to it'. The difficulty we have in imagining such a situation shows that we are dealing with a grammatical connection.

3. Other Minds and Private Language

In this chapter of the thesis I have discussed critically Wittgenstein's views on self-knowledge and introspection. I have defended a view similar to Cartesianism: that utterances like 'I am in pain' can be used as descriptions or reports of observation, that what is given in introspection is essential to understanding, thinking, believing and so on. Someone might have the following critical reaction to the views I have defended in this chapter, and in this thesis in general. Wittgenstein, one might say, held the views you are criticizing in order to avoid a certain kind of skepticism about other minds. Do you not, by criticizing Wittgenstein, open the way to the same kind of skepticism?

In this section I will sketch the way Wittgenstein attempts to solve the philosophical problem of other minds and the relation between this attempt and the private language argument. Then, I will show that my criticism of Wittgenstein does not give rise to the problems that he was trying to solve or to dissolve in the first place.

As I already noted, Cartesiansim in the philosophy of mind gives rise to the problem of other minds. According to Cartesiansim, we have a direct access only to our own states of mind, we can only infer that other people are in certain states of mind based on what they do and what they say. Additionally, states of mind are defined as states of consciousness; it is of the essence of mental states that they are given in consciousness. Therefore, there is no conceptual or criterial connection between mental states and behavior. According to Descartes, the mind is a different substance from the body and their interaction is causal or contingent. The mind can exist separated from the body. But

then, the legitimate question to ask a Cartesian is: how do you know that other people have the same mental states as you are? Or how do you know that they have mental states at all? How do you know that what you call 'pain' is the same thing as what someone else calls 'pain'?

In the *Philosophical Investigations* Wittgenstein criticizes first of all, a way of looking at natural language, a picture of natural language. This criticism is intimately connected to his criticism of Cartesianism and with the private language argument. Why? Because the Augustinian picture of language is a presupposition of Cartesianism. What is this picture of language? In this view, the only function of language is to describe reality. Sentences in language represent reality. The terms that compose the sentences represent simple objects and sentences, as a whole, describe configurations of objects, states of affairs. The meaning of names is identical to the objects that are the reference of names. The meaning of sentences is the state of affairs described.

There is also a certain picture of communication that goes hand in hand with the Augustinian picture of language. According to this picture, the only purpose of communication is to 'convey thoughts' about one's states of mind or about objects and states of affairs in the world.

If we make explicit the Augustinian picture of language that was presupposed by Cartesianism and then re-describe the Cartesian view of the mind we get the following picture. The meaning of words like 'intention', 'belief', 'thought', 'sensation' and so on is identical to mental objects or 'private objects'. Utterances like 'I am in pain' or 'I think that *p*' are descriptions of states of affairs; of the relation between one's self and a certain private, mental object, one's pain.

But this is exactly the kind of language that Wittgenstein wants to show that is impossible; a private language. At §243 he writes:

But could we also imagine a language in which a person could write down or give vocal expression to his inner experiences – his feelings, moods, and the rest – for his private use? – Well, cannot we do so in our ordinary language? – But this is not what I mean. The individual words of this language are to refer to what can only be known to the person speaking; to his immediate private sensations. So another person cannot understand the language [Wittgenstein, 1958, p. 88]

What is the connection between Cartesianism and the possibility of a private language? As I have noted, in the Cartesian view of the mind, the meaning of the word 'pain' is identical to a 'private object' in one's mind. But then, someone else cannot understand what one means by 'pain' given that one does not have access to the object denoted by the word, which determines the meaning of the word. So then, philosophers in the Cartesian tradition are committed, implicitly, to the view that there can be a private language, and that, our ordinary language about sensations and other mental concepts is a kind of private language.

Wittgenstein takes into consideration another version of the Augustinian picture of language. According to this view, it is not the case that the meaning of a term is *identical* to the object it refers to, but the meaning of a term is given by ostensive definition. One problem with this suggestion is: how can one point in one's mind to one's sensation of pain? One cannot teach a child what 'pain' means by pointing to the private sensation the child has in his mind, because one does not have access to that sensation.

However, it is possible that a child shows himself what 'pain' means by pointing 'inwardly' to his sensation of pain. But then, only he will know what the word 'pain' means. So, the sensation language the child uses is a private language, in the sense that no one else but him can understand it.

In sections §243-315 of the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein's target is to show that such a language is impossible, or, to put it differently, the existence of this kind of language is unintelligible. It is important to note that in a private language, the words for sensation refer only to the 'private objects' in one's mind and are not 'tied up with my natural expression of sensation' [Wittgenstein, 1958, §256, p. 91]. In other words, there is no conceptual connection between pain and pain-behaviour. The concept of pain is the concept of a private object in one's mind.

Wittgenstein formulates different objections that are meant to show that the idea of a private language is unintelligible. At §258 he writes:

> Let us imagine the following case. I want to keep a diary about the recurrence of a certain sensation. To this end I associate it with the sign 'S' and write the sign in a calendar for every day on which I have the sensation. – I will remark first of all that a definition of the sign cannot be formulated. – But still I can give myself a kind of ostensive definition. – How? Can I point to the sensation? Not in the ordinary sense. But I speak, or write the sign down, and, at the same time I concentrate my attention on the sensation – and so, as it were, point to it inwardly. – But what is this ceremony for? For that is all it seems to be! A definition surely serves to establish the meaning of a sign. – Well, that is done precisely by the concentration of attention; for in this way I impress on myself

the connection between the sign and the sensation. – But 'I impress it on myself' can only mean: this process brings it about that I remember the connexion *right* in the future. But in the present case I have no criterion of correctness. One would like to say: whatever is going to seem right to me is right. And that only means that here we cannot talk about right [Wittgenstein, 1958, p.92].

This is one of the most important objections Wittgenstein formulates against the possibility of a private language. Different commentators understand the objection in different ways; connecting §258 with some other discussions in the *Philosophical Investigations* and other writings of the later Wittgenstein. Many commentators have connected the remark I quoted above with Wittgenstein's earlier discussion of following a rule. For instance, Kripke argued that Wittgenstein established already at §202 that there cannot be such a thing as a private language. In the discussion following §243, according to Kripke, Wittgenstein applies his general conclusion to a particular language, sensation language. In Kripke's view, the purpose of the rule-following considerations is to show that it makes sense to talk about someone's following a rule only in the context of a community. One cannot follow a rule if one is considered in isolation, because then what would seem right to him would be right, and this only means that we cannot talk about right. This does not mean that someone like Robinson Crusoe cannot follow rules, but when we talk about him as following the rules of the English language for instance we are implicitly comparing his performances with the practice of the community of English speakers. Talking about right and wrong involves the comparison with the practice of a certain community. If there is no community talking about right and wrong is senseless.

According to Kripke, in the discussion following §243 Wittgenstein applies this general result to sensation language. When one defines privately by ostension the word 'pain' one formulates a rule, a standard for the correct use of the word 'pain'. But one cannot follow a rule privately. There is no practice of using the word 'pain' with which we can compare his use and determine whether it is correct or incorrect. Why is there not a practice? Do we not use the word 'pain'? Yes, it will be said, but we do not know whether this word has the same meaning for everyone. Everybody may mean something else by it. We know only what we mean by it. But this is ultimately unintelligible because we cannot determine whether we use the word rightly or wrongly and, therefore, the word has no meaning.

Other commentators, like Hacker and Baker, share with Kripke the view that Wittgenstein's remarks on following a rule are important in elucidating the private language argument, but they do not accept 'the community view'. According to Hacker, it makes sense to say that someone in isolation follows rules; the existence of a community, of a shared practice is not necessary for following a rule. One can participate in a practice that one created. But, according to Hacker and Backer, the meaning of the rule- following considerations is to show that one can participate in a practice only is one has certain abilities. For instance, we can say that the last Mohican speaks a language that no one else speaks but we can say that only if he is able to explain the language to others, to differentiate correct uses of the language from incorrect uses and so on. In other words, one can participate in a practice in isolation only if one is able to share that practice with others. As Hacker puts it, a language is not necessarily shared with others, but it is

something that can be shared. We have no reason to say that someone is using a language if we cannot understand it no matter how hard we try.

It is not my purpose in this section to discuss in detail Wittgenstein's private language argument and to evaluate it. My goal is to show how Wittgenstein's view that there is no such thing as a private language is connected to the problem of other minds. According to most of his commentators, the connection is as follows. The premise that leads to the conclusion that there may be such a thing as a private language is that the meanings of words like 'pain', 'red' and so on is determined by private objects present in one's mind. Wittgenstein is attacking this view. He wants to persuade us that the fact that pain, for instance, is connected to pain-behaviour is *essential* to what pain is. Cartesians over-looked the fact that words for sensation are tied up with the natural expression of sensation. This is why we can talk about pain in our public language, because the meaning of the word 'pain' is connected to pain-behaviour. Pain-behaviour is a criterion for being in pain.

Contrary to what Cartesians thought, one can know for certain that someone else is in pain. The fact that there is such a strong connection between pain and pain-behaviour makes one's pain more transparent to others. One's pain is not some kind of private object to which only its 'owner' has access, but, according to Wittgenstein, it is not an object at all; it is not a *something* but it is not a *nothing* either.

Let us stop for a moment and try to clarify this remark. At §293 Wittgenstein writes: 'If we construe the grammar of the expression of sensation on the model of 'object and designation' the object drops out of consideration as irrelevant'. So, Wittgenstein is fighting against the Augustinian picture of language. According to this

picture names in language stand for objects in the world and sentences stand for states of affairs. Then, the word 'pain' should mean something; there must be an object in the world that is the reference of the word 'pain'. But, according to Wittgenstein, we have the tendency to look for such an object because we share this simplistic and primitive picture of language. Not all words in the language are names of objects. The word 'pain' for instance is connected to pain-behaviour, which is not an object. Wittgenstein's strategy is to define a concept in terms of the criteria that constitute that concept. This is a very different way of looking at language. This is why Wittgenstein says that a sensation is not a something, an object, but it is not a nothing either. At §304 he adds:

> The conclusion was only that a nothing would serve just as well as a something about which nothing could be said. We have only rejected the grammar which tries to force itself on us here.
>
> The paradox disappears only if we make a radical break with the idea that language always functions in one way, always serves the same purpose; to convey thoughts – which may be about houses, pains, good and evil, or anything else you please [Wittgenstein, 1958, p. 102]

This remark is also directed against the Augustinian picture of language. In the Augustinian view, the only function of language is describing how things are. Communication consists exclusively of descriptions: describing how things are in the world, in one's mind and so on. The only purpose of language is to 'convey thoughts'. Wittgenstein observes that this is not the only way we use language. This remark is intimately connected with his view that first-person psychological utterances are not

descriptions but expressions. Expressing is a different thing we can do with language then describing.

Let us get back to the problem of other minds. It is important to note that there are different kinds of scepticism regarding other minds. There is, for instance, the sceptical view according to which other people are just pretending that they are in pain without actually being in pain. There is also the sceptic who claims that other people are just automatons or zombies, and that only he has a mind. It is important to note that it is not very clear and obvious how Wittgenstein's view that there is a criterial relation between mind and behaviour would solve or dissolve these sceptical problems. For instance, the sceptic who claims that other people are just pretending to be in pain does not deny that there is a criterial relation between being in pain and a certain kind of behaviour. On the contrary, one can deceive someone else into thinking that one is in pain by displaying pain behaviour so that the other may think, based on the way one behaves, that one is in pain.

Also, we may wrongly think that someone is a person because one displays the criteria for being a person, but it is possible that one is just an automaton or a zombie. There may be no mental life, no consciousness behind that behaviour.

According to Hacker, we can find in Wittgenstein's writings suggestions of how we should approach these sceptical problems. Following his method of doing philosophy, Wittgenstein tries to show that these sceptical worries arise from a misunderstanding of the way in which language works. For instance, the automaton scepticism makes sense only if we presuppose the Cartesian picture of mind; we think that the mind is separated from the body. Or, to put the point differently, the sceptical problem occurs if we think

that consciousness is a private experience that takes place 'behind' one's body. As Hacker puts it, 'Cartesianism pictured the soul's relation to the body rather like that of an immaterial hand within a visible glove; in the case of others one can see only a glove and its movements, and one infers the existence of an invisible hand by analogy' [Hacker, 1990, p.120]. But, according to Wittgenstein, this picture is wrong. He remarks 'The human body is the best picture of the human soul' [Wittgenstein, 1958, p. 178]. The soul is not something distinct from the body, something hidden behind the body.

In addition, Wittgenstein criticizes the Cartesian view that consciousness is a private experience. We use public criteria to determine whether someone is conscious or not. As in the case of the mind and the soul, consciousness is not something 'hidden' behind one's body. We can certainly determine, by using the criteria that define consciousness, whether someone is conscious or not.

It is not my purpose in this section to determine whether Wittgenstein solved or dissolved the problem of other minds. I rather wanted to sketch the way the private language argument connects to his approach to the problem of other minds. Basically, the thesis that there is such a thing as a private language was a consequence of the idea that there is a contingent relation between mind and behaviour; that the mentalistic concepts of our language represent private objects in our minds and have no conceptual connection to behaviour. Wittgenstein shows that there is a strong conceptual connection between mind and behaviour and the fact that there is such a connection allows him to question the legitimacy of the sceptical worries about other minds. However, whether he succeeds or not may be the subject of a whole new thesis.

There is another issue that I want to approach in this section of the thesis. In the first section of this chapter I defended the view that the utterance 'I am in pain' may be used as a description or a piece of information. Also, in chapter two I maintained that 'I think that *p*' may function as an observation report or as an expression. In the light of Wittgenstein's private language argument, one may formulate the following objection against my views. Does not the fact that 'I am in pain' is a description imply that 'pain' means or refers to a private object in one's mind, and, implicitly, that there is such a thing as a private language?

In answering this objection I will try to formulate a view according to which 'I am in pain' may be a description or report of observation but, at the same time, the meaning of the word 'pain' is not determined by a 'private object' in one's mind. We can observe that when one says that 'I am in pain' is a description one does not specify what kind of things the description represents. One may say the word 'pain' in the sentence 'I am in pain' refers to one's sensation of pain. This is a grammatical proposition, a definition of the word 'pain': 'pain is a sensation'. Articulating this definition does not commit one to any ontological view about what a sensation is. Implicitly, one is not committed to the view that a sensation is a 'private object' in one's mind. This is why, in my view there is no conflict or tension between the claim that 'I am in pain' is a report of observation or description and the view that pain is not a private object. One may say that one's utterance 'I am in pain' is about a sensation one has while leaving open the question whether the sensation is a private object or not.

So, one may ask, if a sensation is not a private object then what is it? This is a question about the meaning of the word 'sensation'. Following Wittgenstein's suggestion

that meaning is use, we can answer this question by describing the way we use the word 'sensation'. Certainly, in describing this use we should mention the criteria we use for ascribing a sensation to someone. Therefore, if we reject the Augustinian view of meaning and accept Wittgenstein's view then we are not tempted anymore to claim that a sensation is a 'private object'.

But still, one may insist, if 'I am in pain' is a description should not 'pain' be some kind of an object? After all, in the first section of this chapter I maintained that 'I am in pain' is similar to 'There is a book on the table'. Books and tables are certainly objects. Additionally, we can talk about the characteristics of being in pain, of the specific phenomenology of this sensation and also about the location of pain. All these point to the fact that pain is an object, or at least similar to an object.

In order to answer this objection I will make an analogy. Let us consider the sentence 'John is playing a game'. This sentence is an observation report. But does this imply that 'game' is the name of an object? There are all kinds of things we call games and they do not have something in common. We can certainly talk about the properties of a certain game; it may be fun, boring, complicated, tiring and so on. However, this fact does not imply that the word 'game' refers to *something*. In order to understand the word 'game' one should observe the use of the word, and the different criteria people apply for determining whether something is a game.

Another way of getting around the difficulty I mentioned is to claim that pain is indeed an object, but it is not a private object. Others may know very well whether someone is in pain. So, one's pain is a 'public object' in the sense that others may have

access to it. However, if pain is not a private object then one is not forced to infer that there is such a thing as a private language.

To sum up, in this final chapter of the thesis I assessed Wittgenstein's views of self-knowledge and introspection using the results of the first two chapters. Wittgenstein tries to dissolve the problem of self-knowledge. In his view, this problem does not make sense. One of the reasons he has for claiming that is that utterances like 'I am in pain' or 'I think that p' are not descriptions, reports or pieces of information and we can know only what can be described. In chapter two I have argued that statements like 'I think that p' can be used as descriptions or reports of observation and in this chapter I supported the thesis that 'I am in pain' may be a description also. Therefore, my conclusion is that this argument formulated by Wittgenstein is not sufficient for making us stop considering the problem of self-knowledge.

If it makes sense to talk about knowing our own mental states then the natural question to ask is 'How do we know our own mental states?' One answer that comes to mind is 'By introspection.' Talking about introspection is inevitable in the context of considering the problem of self-knowledge. Introspection does not play any role in Wittgenstein's view of the mind. There are at least two reasons for that. First of all, given that for Wittgenstein the problem of self-knowledge does not make sense, he has no use of the notion of introspection. Second of all, in Wittgenstein's view, mental concepts are not constituted by what is given in introspection. They are determined by external, outward criteria. In chapters one and two I have argued that Wittgenstein does not tell the whole story when it comes to mental concepts. In my view, these concepts are also constituted by elements of the stream of consciousness, by mental episodes. In addition,

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Wittgenstein does not give a complete description of the way we use sentences like first-person psychological utterances. Therefore, contrary to Wittgenstein, in my view, we can talk meaningfully about knowing our own mental states and we can attain this knowledge by introspection.

Wittgenstein's emphasis of the idea that mental states are constituted by external criteria is in important contribution to solving the problem of other minds. I agree with this view of Wittgenstein's although I do not think that it answers all the sceptical problems in connection with other minds. It is a true that in this thesis I have criticised Wittgenstein's views of understanding and thinking from a Cartesian perspective. But the fact that I agree with Wittgenstein when it comes to the that there is a conceptual, logical relation between mental concepts and external criteria makes the Cartesian view that I am defending very different from traditional Cartesianism.

The same is true when it comes to the problem of a private language. I think that Wittgenstein is right in holding that the idea that there is such a thing as a private language is a consequence of traditional Cartesianism. However, this is so only because according to the traditional Cartesianism there is only a contingent connection between mind and behaviour. Mental concepts are constituted only by what is present before the mind. But, according to the Cartesian view supported by me, mental concept are constituted *both* by what is present before the mind *and* by behaviour. Therefore, my view does not have as a consequence the idea that there is such a thing as a private language.

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