CHAPTER III

THE AFTERMATH OF VERIFICATIONISM

Post 1932 a fresh and renovated Wittgenstein emerges who channelized his philosophical thinking into new avenues. The primary literature that is available, including the lecture notes is no longer aphoristic but rather discursive. Some commentators consider *The Big Typescript* as marking the end of the transitional phase, since it contains his mature views.\(^1\) On the same grounds, the *BT* may be said to herald the beginning\(^2\) of what was to subsequently appear in the pen-ultimate work, the *Philosophical Investigations*. It is the only work that represents a book format with contents and headings. The lecture notes taken by Wittgenstein’s students from 1932 onwards, the *Blue Book*, dictated by Wittgenstein himself to five of his students during 1933-34 and the *Brown Book* dictated during 1934-35 to two of his students, Skinner and Ambrose, the *Philosophische Grammatik* composed during 1932-34 are all run-ups to the final accomplishment, the *Investigations*. Of course none of these works were planned for publication by the author and it is questionable whether he would have allowed them to be done so. Nevertheless they are an important source of first hand data about his thoughts on paper and show the follow-up and preparation of the ground for the jewel in the crown, the magnum opus, the *Philosophical Investigations*. On the personal side, apart from teaching at Cambridge, Wittgenstein visited Norway during


\(^2\) The *BT* shows a considerable change in Wittgenstein’s thinking. More than 200 remarks of the *PI* occur in the *BT*. 

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1936-37. It was here that he started to write the *Eine Philosophische Betrachtung*, a German version of the *Brown Book*, which was later shelved aside as worthless. It was also in Norway that he began to write Part-I of the *PI*. Between 1934 and 1936, he wrote about private experience and sense – data which were delivered in lectures in 1936. In February 1939, Wittgenstein was elected to the Chair of Philosophy at Cambridge, succeeding Moore. He later joined Guy’s Hospital, London as a hospital porter for voluntary war-service and followed it as a laboratory technician at New Castle in 1941. He returned to teaching in 1944. Wittgenstein delivered his last lectures in the Easter Term of 1947 after which he resigned for personal reasons.

Wittgenstein’s fresh ideas were circulated in Cambridge and the rest of the world by his students, who started thinking anew. Philosophy, for Wittgenstein now consisted in the dissolution of philosophical problems. Philosophical problems are due to grammatically alike expressions which have different uses and the error lies in considering them to be similar. Wittgenstein pointed out that the mistake made by philosophers, including the author of the *Tractatus* is looking at language as a form of words rather than the use of the form of words. In the early transitional phase, Wittgenstein had stressed on verificationism and ‘phenomenological’ language, which describes the immediately given and had replaced the logical atomism with language as a ‘calculus’. The *Blue Book* introduces the concepts of language games, family resemblance and repudiates that language is a calculus of clearly defined rules. After 1932, Wittgenstein moved over to ordinary language, and considered the meaning of a sentence to be determined by the rules of its use.

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3 *BT* p.421.
4 *LCA* p.2.
paradigm shift is exclusive at this stage. Wittgenstein is no more speaking of 'the language' but rather of the multifarious uses of language. He attempts to drive the point that philosophical problems are due to a misinterpretation of our forms of language. And it is ordinary language itself which is so much a part of our life and about which Wittgenstein is now concerned.

This chapter will focus on the concepts of thought (Gedanke) and thinking self (Seele) prior to what appears in the PI and attempts to show if any connection can be traced to the Tractarian days. It is divided into three broad sections dealing with meaning and understanding, thinking and speaking and the self.

SECTION I: MEANING AND UNDERSTANDING

The early transitional Wittgenstein had espoused the principle of verification, as has already been seen. During that phase, a proposition for him recorded a sense experience where the meaning of a proposition coincided with its truth. So the meaning of a proposition depended on an empirical condition. This approach is now replaced with meaning as use. Wittgenstein's forsaking of verificationism is not very sharply asserted. In the Lectures of 1932-33, Wittgenstein says the question "How can one know a sentence?" can be translated as "What is its verification?" and goes on to say how a sentence can be verified shows its sense. Elsewhere, Wittgenstein refers to the rules of grammar in the context of a sentence.

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5 During 1932-33, Wittgenstein said it is more or less arbitrary what we call a proposition. He further said that he could not provide a general definition of 'proposition' any more than that of 'game'. The most that he can give is only examples [WL 1930-33 p.261]. Towards the end of 1932-33, Wittgenstein said he thought it useful to say that "A proposition is a picture or something like one" [Ibid, p.263].

6 WL 1932-35 p.19 Elsewhere in the Lectures Wittgenstein says that verification determines the meaning, i.e., determines its use or grammar [Ibid, p.29].
making sense. In the same lecture he points out that an explanation of the sense of a symbol involves showing the use given to the symbol and how it can be operated with. Here we notice a subtle transition from verificationism to rules of grammar. Since rules of grammar refer to the use of a word, we may deduce that Wittgenstein is replacing verificationism with the use of a word. This represents the paradigm shift. In another lecture, Wittgenstein categorically says that the verification of a proposition determines the meaning, i.e., its use or grammar. Therefore verificationism is transiting to use and grammar. And the point noteworthy is that the word ‘verification’ is no longer used frequently but rather ‘use’ in the context of meaning. And Wittgenstein says that the major mistake committed by philosophers (including Moore) is to

7 Ibid. p.20.
8 Ibid. p.3.
9 Ibid. p.29.
10 Earlier Moore’s lecture notes record Wittgenstein as saying “The meaning of a word is its ‘place’ in a grammatical system” (WL 1930-33 p.257). Hallett is of the opinion that “place in a grammatical system” may be interpreted as “use in the language” [Hallett Garth, S.J. 1967. Wittgenstein’s Definition of Meaning as Use. Fordham University Press. New York. p.77]. In the PG Wittgenstein writes: “I want to say the place of a word in grammar is its meaning”. He continues, “The explanation of the meaning explains the use of the word. The use of a word in the language is its meaning.” [PG pp.39-60]. In the BT, he writes: ‘I could call “meaning” the location of a word in grammar.’ [BT p 26e]. At the Cambridge Moral Sciences Club, Wittgenstein openly exhorted: “Don’t ask for the meaning, ask for the use”.

Grammar describes the use of words in language (PG p.60).

In his lectures, Wittgenstein says:

If you want to know the meaning of a sentence, ask for its verification. To know the meaning of a symbol is to know its use [Ibid].

Moore records Wittgenstein as saying “Verification determines the meaning of a proposition only where it gives the grammar of the proposition in question” [WL 1930-33 p 266].

Wittgenstein had also said that the arrangement by colours in the colour Octahedron is a part of grammar and not of psychology; that when we say there is a colour “greenish blue” it is ‘grammar’ and Euclidean Geometry is also ‘a part of grammar’. Wittgenstein on being pointed out by Moore (in a paper) that he could not understand how the expression “rule of grammar” was being used, answered that he was using the expression in its ordinary sense. But during the academic year 1932-33, Wittgenstein said “grammar” was “any explanation of the use of language” and if we explain the meaning of “flowers” by pointing at a river, that naturally should not be called a rule of grammar. Moore is of the opinion, that this is suggestive that by this time Wittgenstein was using “rule of grammar” in its ordinary sense. Yet Moore personally felt that the expression was not being used by Wittgenstein in the ordinary sense and Moore was not really able to have any clear idea how he was using it [WL 1930-33 p.276].
consider language as a form of words instead of the use made of the form of words.\footnote{ICA p.2}

Wittgenstein begins his lectures of 1932-33 with the concept of use.\footnote{WL 1932-35} He says the grammar of a word refers to the use of a word and "knowing how to use a word is like knowing how to move a chess piece", where knowing how to move a chess piece is not a particular state of mind occurring along with the game. Similarly, the meaning of a word can never be the feelings attached to a particular word. Moreover an ostensive definition gives only one rule for the use of a word. If we explain the word 'red' by pointing to something, we are giving only one rule for its use and if one cannot point to something, rules of a different kind are given. There are various rules and together they constitute the meaning of a word. Two words can have the same meaning only if they have the same rules for their use.\footnote{Ibid, p.3; 45.}

Against the ostensive definition of meaning, Wittgenstein says it is not really a definition at all. Ostensive definition gives only one rule for the use of a word, and one rule is not enough to give the meaning. Moreover, the phrase "meaning of a name" is not the same as "bearer of a name"; the latter expression may be replaced by "Watson" unlike the former.\footnote{Ibid. pp.44-45; 46; BB p.18; PG pp.63-64.} The \textit{Blue Book} begins with an attack on the ostensive definition of meaning. Words like 'one', 'number', 'not', etc. do not have ostensive

\footnote{But we cannot say that the meaning of a word is the list of rules for its use. Nor is meaning something to which one can point to [WL 1932-35 p.30]. In the PG, he points out that the meaning of a name is not the bearer of the name—The expressions "the bearer of the name 'N'" is synonymous with the name "N". The expression can be used in place of the name. "The bearer of the name 'N' is sick" means "N is sick". We don’t say: The meaning of "N" is sick. The name cannot lose its meaning even after the destruction of its bearer [PG p.64].}
definitions. It is not necessary to look for an object which is to be regarded as the meaning of a word. This is evident if we consider the grammar of the expression "explanation of meaning" which will inform us about the grammar of the word "meaning".\textsuperscript{15} Wittgenstein says the use of words is analogous to the use of money. Words and their meanings are not like money and the things bought with money but rather like money and its different uses. Money is not always used to buy things which can be pointed to, e.g., when it buys the permission to sit in a theatre, so also is the case with words.\textsuperscript{16} In the \textit{BB}, Wittgenstein writes:

...when something seems queer about the grammar of our words, it is because we are alternately tempted to use a word in several different ways. And it is particularly difficult to discover that an assertion which the metaphysician makes expresses discontentment with our grammar when the words of this assertion can also be used to state a fact of experience.\textsuperscript{17}

And so understanding a word means knowing its use and its applications where the use of a word is defined by the rules.\textsuperscript{18} In his other lectures, Wittgenstein compares language to a tool chest containing a variety of

\textsuperscript{15} \textit{BB} p.1.

The pointing and uttering of words work only as part of a system containing other linguistic behavior [\textit{PG} p.71].

\textsuperscript{16} \textit{WL} 1932-35 p.30; 46; \textit{PG} p.63.

\textsuperscript{17} \textit{BB} p.56.

From this it appears that confusion stems not only from the fact that we use different words in consistently similar ways, but also from our tendency to use similar words in different ways. [Engel, S. Morris. 1975. \textit{Wittgenstein's Doctrine of the Tyranny of Language. A Historical and Critical Examination of his Blue Book}. Martinus Nijhoff. The Hague. p.35].

\textsuperscript{18} \textit{WL} 1932-35 p.48.
tools like hammer, chisel, matches, nails, etc. each having a unique use.\textsuperscript{19}
Wittgenstein goes on to say that words are used in a ‘family of ways’. And words like ‘beautiful’, ‘fine’ are learnt normally as interjections by a child. Or the word ‘good’ is normally applied first to food together with expressions of approval. The form of words is not important but the game in which the words appear\textsuperscript{20}. Wittgenstein in the \textit{Blue Book} says:

... And the same, of course, would be said of any proposition: Without a sense, or without the thought, a proposition would be an utterly dead and trivial thing. And further it seems clear that no adding of inorganic signs can make the proposition live. And the conclusion which one draws from this is that what must be added to the dead signs in order to make a live proposition is something immaterial, with properties different from all mere signs.

But if we had to name anything which is the life of the sign, we should have to say that it was its use.\textsuperscript{21}

Therefore Wittgenstein is naming ‘use’ as the ‘life’ of the sign. It implies that the sign derives its meaning and importance from the use it displays. We tend to suppose that some mysterious entity gives a sign its life, which is its meaning. Wittgenstein asks us to remember that words can have only

\textsuperscript{19} LCA p.2; WL 1932-35 p.46; PG p.67.
In the \textit{BT}, he speaks of a toolbox of language where the tools are taken out as required and asks is not the toolbox, grammar with its rules [\textit{BT} p.18e]. In the \textit{PG}, Wittgenstein writes that just as the handles in the cabin of a locomotive have different functions, so is the case with the words of language. The words are like handles, which though look alike operate in myriad ways, as a valve, switch, etc. [PG p.58]. In the \textit{BB}, he says words are like instruments characterized by their use, their meanings are open like the tools of a tool box used in different ways in different circumstances. So he repudiates the view that words already have a meaning independent of the way of human life. In the \textit{Blue Book} Wittgenstein says the meaning of a phrase is characterized by the use we make of it [\textit{BB} p.65]. And in the \textit{Brown Book}, he says meaning of words is not anything which they have in themselves or which is fastened onto them independent of their use [\textit{Ibid.} p.170].
\textsuperscript{20} LCA p.2.
\textsuperscript{21} BB p.4.
the meanings which are ascribed to them by us and "we give them meanings by explanations".\textsuperscript{22} He also points out that not all words can have a strict meaning, which of course is not a defect. "To think it is would be like saying that the light of my reading lamp is no real light at all because it has no sharp boundary."\textsuperscript{23} The meaning of words is not given to them by any independent power, independent of us. Rather the meaning of a word is something that we give it. So meaning is not something ethereal or super-human but something which is determined by human ascriptions and usage, something which lies at the heart of our way of life. Wittgenstein says: "There are words with several clearly defined meanings. It is easy to tabulate these meanings. And there are words of which one might say: They are used in a thousand different ways which gradually merge into one another. No wonder that we can't tabulate strict rules for their use".\textsuperscript{24} So it appears that a word may have meanings depending on the way it is used and one usage may be enormously deviated from another one. There are no strict rules of meaning as there are none about usage either. It ultimately is a part of the web human life and its intricate practices and conventions. In the \textit{Blue Book} Wittgenstein speaks of the use of words in the context of language games. He says: "Language games are the forms of language with which a child begins to make use of words."\textsuperscript{25} He goes on to say that some words have clearly defined meanings, while others are used in numerous ways which gradually merge into one another. Therefore, we cannot give any strict rules for their use.\textsuperscript{26} In the \textit{Big Typescript}, Wittgenstein writes:

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid, p.27
\textsuperscript{23} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{24} Ibid, p.28
\textsuperscript{25} Ibid, p.17.
\textsuperscript{26} Ibid, p.28.
Knowing how a word is used = being able to use it.\textsuperscript{27}

Therefore we see that the all important point for Wittgenstein is usage. A.C. Grayling is of the opinion that the talk of ‘use’ is unspecific because the concept of ‘use’ is itself a various one. And ‘use’ may be a part of meaning but is not exhaustive.\textsuperscript{28}

Elsewhere in the lectures, Rush Rhees questions Wittgenstein whether there are any rules in use when we speak of a particular method as the correct way. Wittgenstein takes up the question of reading poetry correctly. In case of blank verse, he says, the correct way would be to stress it correctly, to discuss the rhythm. Or else, it can be read out and told that this is how it should be read. In case of the word ‘correct’ the rules are first to be learnt. For example, a cutter learns how long a coat is to be, how wide its sleeves should be etc. These rules are learnt by him; they are drilled into him, just as harmony is drilled in music. But now suppose, someone says that the coat is too short. And the tailor denies it because it is according to the rules. Or the tailor may develop a feeling for the rules and say that it is not right because it is not according to the rules. This second judgement is an aesthetic judgement about the coat, according to the rules in the former case. But if the rules were not known, the aesthetic judgement could not be made. Learning the rules helps to make a more refined judgement; it actually changes your judgement. The rules laid down for the measurement of a coat are an expression of what certain people desire. People have diverse opinions, some would want it broad,
some narrow, etc.\textsuperscript{29} In aesthetic judgements we distinguish between people who know what they are talking and people who do not. Like for a person to admire English poetry, English must be known to him. A Russian, for example, who does not know English, cannot admire an English sonnet; and even if he does, we would say he does not know what is in it at all.\textsuperscript{30}

While describing meaning as use, Wittgenstein also points out what meaning is not. As early as in the lectures of 1932-33, Wittgenstein clearly says that the meaning of a word can never be the feelings attached to a particular word.\textsuperscript{31} Wittgenstein is flatly denying that any mental process occurs when we use a word. In the \textit{BT}, he writes that it is a mistaken idea that the meaning of a word is a mental image that accompanies the word.\textsuperscript{32} Elsewhere, he says meaning, interpretation, appear to be processes accompanying the pointing to an object and providing it with a soul, without which they would appear to be dead. Actually understanding as a process is not our concern.\textsuperscript{33} And we are generally inclined to call understanding a mental process or a state of mind.\textsuperscript{34}

A paradigm shift is exclusive at this stage. Wittgenstein is no more speaking of 'the language' but rather of the uses of language. He foregoes his former belief in the essence of language, the limits of language and replaces it with the multifarious uses of language and attempts to drive the point that philosophical problems are due to a misinterpretation of our forms of language. And it is ordinary language itself which is so much a

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{29} LCA pp.4-6.\\textsuperscript{30} \textit{Ibid.} pp.6-7.\\textsuperscript{31} \textit{WL} 1933-35 p.3.\\textsuperscript{32} \textit{In the Brown Book}, Wittgenstein says that meaning is not a state of mind [\textit{BB} p.78].\\textsuperscript{33} \textit{BT} p.118e.\\textsuperscript{34} \textit{Ibid.} pp.126e-127e.\\textsuperscript{35} \textit{PG} p.82.}
part of our lives and about which Wittgenstein is now concerned. In the
*Big Typescript*, he writes:

> For when I speak about language – word, sentence, etc. – I have to
> speak in everyday language – But is there any other?35

Wittgenstein in his lectures says that he would like to destroy his prior
belief that certain words like ‘grammar’, ‘logic’, ‘mathematics’, can be
distinguished according to their philosophical importance. The problem
lies in using language automatically without any thought of the rules of
grammar.36 At times we use language automatically, at other times we
need to look up the rules.37

In the Lectures of 1933-34, Wittgenstein says “understanding a
word” is used in two ways: one as an accompanying mental process and
the other for knowing the use of a word. But they have two different
grammars. The grammar of “feeling something when we hear the word”
is very different from “knowing the words use”.38 Elsewhere Wittgenstein
says that ‘use of a word’ can be substituted for ‘meaning of a word’. And
so understanding a word means knowing its use and its applications. The
use of a word is defined by the rules.39 Wittgenstein attacks the common
notion of understanding as a subtle, hidden, mysterious process going on
in an internal mysterious medium, the so-called mind. In the lectures of

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35 *BT* p.58a.
36 *WL* 1932-35 p.13
Wittgenstein says it is wrong to say that a complete logical analysis can give the complete
grammar of a word because there is nothing like a completed grammar [*Ibid.* p.21].
In the *Blue Book*, Wittgenstein says roughly understanding a sentence means understanding a
language [*BB* p.5].
In the *PG* he writes: ‘We ask “How do you use the word, what do you do with it” – that will tell
us how you understand it’ [*PG* p.87].
1933-35, Wittgenstein points out that although we suppose that in understanding a word, some image or if not, something subtle occurs in the mind where the mind is a kind of storehouse, the fact remains that no such thing can be found. Moreover, it is also true that we can understand a word or sentence instantly without a corresponding process going on in the mind. Now if understanding is a process, the question arises – does it take place along with the words or afterwards? Actually this is not the case at all and this confusion can be disengaged if we take ‘understanding a word’ to mean ‘being able to use it’. This would help to get rid of considering understanding as an accompanying process going on in the mind.40 This confusion generally arises because words are associated with images, though not always the correct image. Like for example, the word “red” conjures a red image, though we can also get a green image. Moreover, since we can speak without thinking like when we say something while thinking of something else i.e., speaking without understanding, we are tempted to consider that speaking and understanding are two activities, occurring at the same time.41 Thus, says Wittgenstein, “Being able to use the word is not an accompaniment of the use, as understanding seems to be.”42 Wittgenstein very explicitly says the word “understanding” is used in two different ways. In the first case it refers to a process that accompanies hearing or uttering a word or sentence. In the second case “understanding” refers to being able to use a word or a sentence. Wittgenstein insists on the latter use. He says, it may be the case that on hearing a word or a sentence something occurs in the

40 Ibid. p.77; BT p.110a.
Understanding a word can manifest itself in a variety of processes and there is no underlying hidden process accompanying and causing these manifestations [PG p.80]. Wittgenstein explicitly says, understanding as a disposition of the mind or the brain is not our concern [BT p.116a].
41 Ibid. p.79.
42 Ibid. p.77.
head, like a light flashing or a bell sounding, but certainly this is not the meaning of “understanding” a word. Although something mental may be involved in the process of understanding but one cannot specify what it is. Wittgenstein points out that we hardly use the word “understanding” for a process accompanying uttered or heard words and in the vast majority of the cases the word is used to mean being able to do something.43 Wittgenstein says that there may be cases where some mental phenomena occur along with the hearing of a word but such a case can by no means be universal. Understanding a word cannot refer to this phenomena although something mental may be involved. But the problem is we cannot say what it is. And Wittgenstein’s point is – that a mental experience must occur along with understanding is objectionable.44

Thus Wittgenstein says:

We hardly ever use the word “understand” for a process happening while the word is uttered. In most cases it is used to mean being able to do so-and-so. When a man understands an order it is true that often certain pictures are present to his mind, though often not. If by “understand” is meant that such a picture is present, then the word is being used by me as it is practically never used.45

Wittgenstein goes on to point out that it is due to the form of words in the expression “I understand” that it seems to describe a state, when in fact it does not do so. If we ask ourselves what happens when we understand, we remain dissatisfied by descriptions like bringing up images. Images are


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only symptoms of understanding.\textsuperscript{46} Wittgenstein says "The question, what is understanding"? or what is knowing how to use a word? is misleading. What one can describe is the use of the words “understanding” and “knowing".\textsuperscript{47}

In the Michaelmas Term of 1934, Wittgenstein points out that we normally tend to suppose that when we hear a particular word, e.g., “plant”, and understand the word a process goes on in the mind. But this supposition would lead to further questions like when does the process occur in the mind; is it along with the hearing or afterwards. Wittgenstein says that this is not the case. No particular process occurs in the mind as part of understanding a word. And the point is, understanding a word should be taken in the sense of being able to use the word. Moreover, being able to use a word is not an accompaniment of the use of the word.\textsuperscript{48}

Wittgenstein points out that words like “understand”, “can” are used either for a conscious mental process, or as a disposition or as a translation. When we say “Now I understand”, it is understanding in the first case. The second case can be illustrated by one’s ability to do something when one understands. In this case, understanding is used in the sense of “is able to”. When understanding is used in the sense of being able to use a sign, the first two cases overlap. In the third case, understanding involves translation into a picture or symbolism as contrasted with merely understanding. And all problems about understanding are due to mixing up these meanings of understanding.\textsuperscript{49}

Wittgenstein insists on comparing William James’s view of special feelings

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid. p.92.
Understanding is not a state [BT p.114e].
\textsuperscript{47} Ibid. p.97.
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid. pp.77-78.
\textsuperscript{49} Ibid. pp.113-114.
being attached to words like 'if', 'then', 'but', etc. with his view. Wittgenstein says that there are sensations attached to these words in the sense of the sounds of the words which are connected with gesture and intonation. But it is wrong to suppose that the sensations connected with words are "in the mind".50

Wittgenstein is of the opinion that words like "not" and "understanding" are only indices and can alter the manner in which a sentence is used. "Not" functions as an index in "not-Fx" and changes the manner in which Fx is used.51

Therefore, we see Wittgenstein making his point that the expression "in the mind" is the cause of confusion in philosophy. So long as we say that sensations may accompany understanding a word or sentence, we do not fall into error. But if we assert that such sensations are always present when we say a word or understand a sentence, we fall into error. It is wrong to assume such a case. Conscious mental acts do have a part in the process of understanding but it is never a necessary case. There are instances of understanding an idea or order without any conscious experience of any kind whatsoever. In the PG Wittgenstein writes:

"Understanding a word" may mean: knowing how it is used; being able to apply it.52

He continues—the grammar of words can be learnt only by watching how the word is used in practice.53 At the same time, Wittgenstein says the

51 Ibid. p.113.
52 PG p.47.
53 Ibid. p.71.
meaning of a word may be called the location of a word in Grammar.\textsuperscript{54} Therefore, the formula we get is:

\textbf{Meaning / Understanding / Thinking = Use of a word = Place in Grammar}\textsuperscript{55}

Therefore, we see, Wittgenstein’s account of understanding during this phase is a non-psychological one. Understanding is not a particular experience that one undergoes when one utters or hears something. Understanding a word is rather an ability. Wittgenstein seems to point out that understanding may be manifested in varied and diverse behaviour. It may be that a variety of images or feelings or sensations may occur to me when I understand a word or a sentence, but they are by no means necessary and inevitable to understanding. So Wittgenstein is not rejecting mental accompaniments to understanding but only rebutting that they constitute understanding. In the Lectures, Wittgenstein says, understanding a word is an ability which may be manifested in three ways. Firstly, in how one uses the word; secondly in how one responds to its use by others; and thirdly in how one explains what it means when asked.\textsuperscript{56} Wittgenstein firstly, argues that mental phenomena are not necessary for understanding. This in general is against the mentalist tradition. Secondly, Wittgenstein argues that mental phenomena are not a sufficient assurance for understanding. Thirdly, understanding is an ability; the capacity of using words in linguistic activities, which are unlimited in number. There are no hard and fast rules, no unitary

\textsuperscript{54} BT p.26e. 
\textsuperscript{55} It is with the phenomenon of thinking that meaning belongs [PG p.144]. 
\textsuperscript{56} WL 1932-35 pp.48-50.
concepts, yet they are circumscribed within the way of human life as lived by us.

SECTION-II: THINKING AND SPEAKING

After 1932 as has already been observed, Wittgenstein emphatically disapproves of the common notion of meaning and understanding as independent processes taking place in the so-called mental medium of mind. This attack is also carried on against the commonly accepted notion of thinking as an 'occult' process, taking place in a 'queer' medium called the mind about which we really have no knowledge. Against what is generally understood to be an invisible and veiled process, Wittgenstein argues to establish the concept of thought or Gedanke as essentially far removed from any kind of mysticism.

In the BB, Wittgenstein states that it is a "general disease" to suppose all our acts as originating from a mental reservoir, the so-called mind. Elsewhere he points out the expression "in the mind" is the cause of enormous confusion in philosophy. And the 'occultness' of thought or thinking is due to the supposition that it arises in an enclosed space, the head. In unequivocal terms, Wittgenstein states that it is misleading to consider thinking as a mental activity. The error of considering meaning or thinking as a peculiar mental act stems from the fact that we suppose it is connected with images and experiences of different kinds. We have a tendency to attribute the incomprehensible parts of thinking to processes occurring in an unseen and peculiar medium of mind. This problem is due

57 BB p.3.
58 Ibid. p.143.
60 PG p.106.
61 BB p.16.
62 Ibid. p.39.
to a ‘muddle’ and the queer aspect of the mind is not of interest to philosophy but rather is a subject matter of the natural sciences. In the PG, Wittgenstein points out, the idea of thought being an “unexplained” process makes it seem “amorphous”. And words like “meaning”, “believing”, “intending” are used in such a manner that they refer to certain acts and mental states, given certain circumstances. In the BT, he writes, as far as one can talk of a thought it has to be something utterly prosaic, usually one thinks of it as something ethereal and unexplored, something about which we know only from the outside and not its essence.

We are prone to suppose that there are two worlds, says Wittgenstein. One is the mental, which we imagine to be kind of gaseous, or ethereal, and the other is the material world. It seems as if the former phenomena occur in “the upper strata of the atmosphere” in contrast to the latter which “happen on the ground”. It is also supposed that mental phenomena arise when the material phenomena undergo a stage of complexity. This problem of the mental and material could be raised in a question like “Is it possible for a machine to think?” This question is not analogous to for e.g. “Can a machine liquefy gas?” but rather it is like “Has the number 3 a colour?” which somehow seems nonsensical. Probably what Wittgenstein is here implying is that the term “thinking” is

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63 Ibid, pp.5-6. The expression “mental process” is suggestive of imperfectly understood processes in an inaccessible sphere [PG p.106].
64 IB p.141.
65 BB p.147.
66 BT p.178e.
67 BB p.4.
Elsewhere in the BB Wittgenstein says we are normally tempted to consider thinking as part of our ‘private experience’, something which is not material but an event in private consciousness [Ibid. p.16].
not used in respect of a machine, as far as usage is concerned in our language; in fact such a usage is not even allowed and hence it is nonsensical to use the term “think” in respect of a machine. But it may be argued that we do use the expressions “thought” and “mental processes” and ordinarily they do not seem to be nonsensical. So if we attribute “mental” to thinking, then why is it not allowed? Wittgenstein is nowhere saying that such a use is prohibited in our language. But his point is rather that such a use is not going to take us anywhere. The “mental” or “mind”, in so far as it is used in our language gives no satisfying knowledge of a substantive entity or process. They on the other hand are largely suggestive of mystical processes about which we know almost nothing.68

The cardinal task that Wittgenstein is undertaking is that he is opening the gates to free ourselves from such unknown paths. He is urging us to look in the direction, in the direction where we may not stop because of some enshrouded, unknowable, quixotic process but where we will be able to consider it as an ordinary concept in our way of life. An investigation in the unknown and hidden sphere will not reveal anything but an enquiry in its use in ordinary parlance will certainly do. So Wittgenstein says: Thought does not appear to be mysterious while we are thinking about it but only when we look at it retrospectively and try to locate the mystery in the nature of the thought process,69 and the puzzle about thinking is caused by the “mystifying use of our language”.70

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68 In the Brown Book, Wittgenstein says people generally suppose an ability like the ability to add or to say a poem by heart etc. refers to a certain state of mind or corresponds to a peculiar state of the brain although they do not appear to have any knowledge of such psycho-physiological correspondences [Ibid. pp.117-118].

69 PG p.154.

70 BB p.6.
According to Wittgenstein, expressions like “before the mind” or “in the mind” are used in a metaphorical sense.\footnote{Ibid p.41.} He points out that we are prone to suppose that when I say for e.g. “Mr. N. will come to see me” and mean it, I make a connection in my mind. This is partly responsible for making us suppose that meaning or thinking is a “peculiar mental activity”. But we must remember that when for e.g. I point to Mr. Smith and say “this is Mr. Smith” in order to explain the meaning of the word “Mr. Smith”, I do not make the connection by means of any mysterious or weird method. Nor is there any shady and queer mental act involved when I think of Mr. Smith even if he is not there.\footnote{Ibid pp.38-39.} Wittgenstein continues: “What makes it difficult to see that this is the connection is a peculiar form of expression of ordinary language, which makes it appear that the connection between our thought (or the expression of our thought) and the thing we think about must have subsisted \textit{during} the act of thinking”.\footnote{Ibid. p.38.} Wittgenstein prefers to interpret the expression “the object of our thought” as meaning “a thing I am thinking \textit{about}” and not “that which I am thinking”.\footnote{Ibid.}

In order to remove the temptation of looking at thinking, hoping, wishing, believing, etc. as a mental process which is independent of the process whereby a thought, a hope, a wish etc. is expressed, Wittgenstein gives a rule of thumb: “If you are puzzled about the nature of thought, belief, knowledge, and the like, substitute for the thought the expression of the thought, etc. The difficulty which lies in this substitution, and at the same time the whole point of it, is this: the expression of belief, thought, etc., is just a sentence; - and the sentence has sense only as a member of a
system of language; as one expression within a calculus." And Wittgenstein emphatically asserts that we need not postulate an unexplainable mental act along with our expressions. He goes on to point out that he is of course not denying that peculiar so-called mental phenomena may accompany the expressions of thoughts. But the bottom line is we need not say that they must accompany the expressions. It is an examination of the usages of words like "thinking", "meaning", "wishing", etc. which enables us to throw away the mental aspect of such phenomena as a separate process from their expressions. So what is thinking? It could be just the experience of saying or speaking or could also be the experience of speaking with accompanying experiences. In thinking there are no interpretations necessarily accompanying or going on with it. Wittgenstein points out that there are instances where the expression of the thought is the thought. For example, the sentence "I expect Mr. Smith" is itself the expectation. Wittgenstein takes up the case of reading. If we take a case where we do not read the words mechanically but put an effort into it, like a beginner, we are tempted to consider it as a particular conscious mental act like in "only he knows whether he is reading; nobody else can really know it". Wittgenstein points out that we use the word "reading" in different ways in the case of an accomplished reader and in the case of a beginner. In such cases we are tempted to assume that there is an internal working which is the criterion for a

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75 Ibid. p.42.
76 Ibid.
77 Ibid. p.43.
78 Ibid.
79 Ibid. p.144.
80 WL 1932-35 p.53.

Elsewhere in his lectures, Wittgenstein points out that it is misleading to say that the word "fright" signifies something as accompanying the experience of expressing fright [NFL p.275].
person’s reading or not reading. When in fact no such mechanisms are known to us in such cases.\textsuperscript{81}

In the \textit{BB}, Wittgenstein writes:

It is misleading then to talk of thinking as of a “mental activity”. We may say that thinking is essentially the activity of operating with signs. This activity is performed by the hand, when we think by writing; by the mouth and larynx when we think by speaking; and if we think by imagining signs or pictures, I can give no agent that thinks. If then you say that in such cases the mind thinks, I would only draw your attention to the fact that you are using a metaphor, that here the mind is an agent in a different sense from that in which the hand can be said to be the agent in writing.\textsuperscript{82}

Therefore, it is only in a metaphorical sense that one can say thinking is an activity of the mind. Thinking may be defined as the activity of operating with signs. Elsewhere in the \textit{BB}, Wittgenstein points out that in saying an idea is before our mind, we are using a metaphor. Such expressions should not mislead us and is indicative of a wide variety of processes, more or less similar to each other\textsuperscript{83}. In the \textit{PG}, he says thinking is operating with symbols and thinking is a “fluid concept” because each individual case has to be considered separately and if we say thinking is “operating with language”, then we must make note of the fact that language is a “fluid” concept.\textsuperscript{84} Wittgenstein goes on to consider particular cases of what are called ‘operating with signs’. He gives a simple example of operating with words. He says, supposing I order someone “fetch me

\textsuperscript{81} \textit{BB} p.120.
\textsuperscript{82} \textit{Ibid.} pp.6-7.
\textsuperscript{83} \textit{Ibid.} p.41.
\textsuperscript{84} \textit{PG} p.106.
six apples from the grocer", and a description is given of making use of
the order. A piece of paper with the words “six apples” written on it is
given to the grocer who then matches the written words with one of the
labels and counting six apples, puts them in a bag. This is nothing but a
case of language game exemplifying the use of words. It is by means of
language games that a child starts to use words. Studying language
games, i.e. studying the primitive forms of language helps us to look at the
simpler forms of thinking and in turn assists in overcoming the traces of
mentalism enshrouding the use of ordinary language.85

Wittgenstein further points out that we have an inane tendency to
look for generality. This craving for generality “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.”86 So the
grammar of words like “wishing”, “thinking”, “understanding”,
“meaning” can be studied from a description of the various cases of
wishing, thinking, etc. There can be no definite features which would
characterize all cases of the use of a word, e.g., “wishing”, for the use of a
word cannot be circumscribed within well-defined boundaries. He writes:
“And after all, there is not one definite class of features which characterize
all cases of wishing (at least not as the word is commonly used). If on the
other hand you wish to give a definition of wishing, i.e., to draw a sharp
boundary, then you are free to draw it as you like; and this boundary will
never entirely coincide with the actual usage, as this usage has no sharp
boundary”.87 In the PG, Wittgenstein says that we refer to only one use of

85 BB pp.16-17.
87 Ibid. p.19.
the word "expect", for e.g., if we say "An expectation is a thought"; and the process of thinking may be very various. This reiterates the claim made by Wittgenstein in the PG that thinking is a 'fluid' concept. So in thought or thinking we do not proceed according to strictly defined rules within a given perimeter; everything is open. To give a definition of the concept of thought, Wittgenstein focuses on how the word "thought" or "thinking" is used in ordinary language. He considers the use of other similar words in particular instances to show the changeable and shifting usage of words. There are no hard and fast rules for the use of a particular word – so is the case with the word "thought" or "thinking". And we must not forget that the meaning of a word, i.e., its use is given to it by someone and not by an independent power.

According to Wittgenstein it is an error to suppose that corresponding to the words "thinking", "wishing", etc. there is a process. Just like a physical activity corresponds to the word "writes" in "He writes letters often", we tend to suppose that a process corresponds to the words "wishing", "thinking". But what we call wishing is not one process or activity, like writing and speaking, which is hidden in all cases of wishing.

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88 PG p.140.
Wittgenstein considers various cases to exemplify the use of the word "expectation". For example, to expect someone for tea from 4 to 4.30 p.m., does not refer to any one single process or state of mind. Rather, many different activities are involved, like looking up my diary for confirming B's name, preparing tea, placing cigarettes, feeling impatient near 4.30 etc. There are innumerable variations to this process which are all described by the same expression "expecting B from 4 to 4.30 p.m.". But the important point is that no one common feature can be cited as being common to all the cases, although there are many common features overlapping. Such cases may be said to form a family, although their family similarities are not clearly defined [BB p.20].

89 BB p.28.
Some words have clearly defined meanings while others can be used in innumerable ways, gradually merging into one another. So strict rules cannot be given for the use of words [Ibid].

90 WL 1932-35 pp.52-53.
It is a prejudice to suppose, says Wittgenstein, that in thinking images are essential or necessary. Although sometimes imagery occurs along with understanding a sentence, yet it is not a necessary process. Other times some kind of an “amorphous” feeling may be present but that is not also an essential part. And at other times the expression of thought is itself the thought.\textsuperscript{91} So in thinking a separate and independent process apart from the expression of thought is not always necessary. For Wittgenstein it is a superstition to suppose that pure thought is conveyed by words and is something different from it. It is erroneous to suppose that thinking is some process in the mind accompanying the symbols. It is a fact that in two different languages the same thought may be expressed by two different sentences. But this does not imply that the thought can be found somewhere. Two sentences that express the same thought does not imply that there is a separate entity, the thought, a ‘gaseous’ entity corresponding to the sentences.\textsuperscript{92} Elsewhere Wittgenstein considers the following. Suppose a Frenchman says “It is raining” in French and an Englishman also says it in English. In such a case it is not that something happens in the minds of the two persons which is the real sense of the sentence. We tend to imagine something like imagery as the international language but actually thinking or imagery does not accompany the spoken words or heard words. Moreover the sense, i.e., the thought ‘It is raining’ is not the words with some imagery. The sense, the thought is the thought ‘It is raining’ only within the English language. Thinking is not speaking with accompaniment.\textsuperscript{93} During his lectures at Cambridge during 1933-34, Wittgenstein very explicitly states that thinking is not an accompaniment occurring along with talking or speaking. We are

\textsuperscript{91} Ibid, pp.52-53. 
\textsuperscript{92} Ibid. pp.54-55. 
\textsuperscript{93} Ibid. p.30.
generally prone to suppose that words follow the order of thinking which should hence be a separate process. But thinking can just be the talking.94 During 1934-35, he says our tendency to suppose that understanding and speaking are two different activities occurring simultaneously arises because speaking can occur without thinking and speaking can happen with understanding. According to Wittgenstein the word “understanding” is used in two different ways. One appears to refer to processes that accompany an utterance. The other use is being able to use the word. There may be cases where some mental phenomena occur along with the hearing of a word but such a case can by no means be universal. So understanding a word cannot refer to any mental phenomena although something mental may be involved. But the problem is we cannot say what it is. And Wittgenstein’s point is that a mental experience must occur along with understanding is objectionable.95 It is definitely possible that we may think something and say something else as it is equally possible that we may speak what we think. Wittgenstein asks his students to make the following experiment. He says both speak and mean the sentence “It will probably rain tomorrow”. Then again think the same thought and mean it but without speaking either aloud or to oneself. And he says if thinking the thought that it will rain tomorrow accompanies the speaking that it will rain tomorrow, then we could try leaving out the latter activity while doing only the former. He points out that if thinking and speaking have the same sort of relation as words have to the melody of a song, where it is possible to sing a tune without words, we could similarly leave out the speaking and do the thinking.96 Therefore, Wittgenstein is implying that speaking and thinking are not two independent and

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94 Ibid. p.52.
95 Ibid. p.79.
96 BB p.42.
segregated processes. May we take the liberty to infer that what the philosopher is trying to insist is that speaking is also thinking, that thought is a diverse and varied concept ('fluid') which cannot be tied down to the description of one phenomena? I think the answer is in the affirmative. This claim becomes all the more stronger because Wittgenstein goes on to point out that the distinction between speaking with thinking and speaking thoughtlessly lies in what happens before or after one speaks rather than what happens along with speaking.97

The Blue Book begins with an attack against the occult character of the so-called mental processes. Wittgenstein vehemently criticizes the commonly held belief that thinking is a mental process accompanying speech acts and endowing them with meaning. He points out, it generally appears that something mysterious and mental gives life to utterances; some immaterial thought must be added to language to endow it with meaning without which it appears to be dead. But this is actually not the case. For nothing else but the use of a sign can be called its life.

... Without a sense, or without the thought, a proposition would be an utterly dead and trivial thing. And further it seems clear that no adding of inorganic signs can make the proposition live. And the conclusion which one draws from this is that what must be added to the dead signs in order to make a live proposition is something immaterial, with properties different from all mere signs.

97 Ibid. p.43.
Generally we consider modulation of voice, accentuation, facial expressions or gestures etc. as accompaniments of speech. They are means of expressiveness. And such accompaniments of speech are not called thinking [Ibid. pp.35;148].
Elsewhere in the BB Wittgenstein points out that if “believing” is a process happening while we say that we believe, then believing may be said to be something similar to or the same as expressing a belief [Ibid. p.146].

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But if we had to name anything which is the life of the sign, we should have to say that it was its use.98

According to Wittgenstein the issue about where thought occurs is meaningless and does not constitute an essential part of the description of thought, just as a description of the visual field need not necessarily refer to an organ of sight or a toothache to a tooth.99 Elsewhere Wittgenstein points out the expression “locality of thinking” is used in a different sense if we say thinking occurs in the head. It becomes necessary to understand the grammar of the expression “in the head” with others like “we think with our mouth”. We may say thinking takes place on paper when we write or in the mouth when we speak. We have a tendency to interpret words in ordinary language that have analogous grammars analogously. Words denoting physical activities like writing”, “speaking”, seem to suggest that words like “thinking”, “thought” also might denote an analogous but different activity.100 We try to look for the thought somewhere, but all that the word “thought” has or signifies is its use. And the phrase “locality of thought” has meaning or sense only if we give it

98 Ibid, p.4.
We mistakenly look for an object co-existing with the sign and fail to realize that what we are looking at is the use of a sign. A sentence has life as part of the system of the language to which it pertains to. And we wrongly assume that the life of the sentence is something occult that accompanies the sentence [Ibid. p.5]. In the PG, Wittgenstein says that it is generally supposed that the thought is the living element in the sentence without which it is dead, being only a mere succession of sounds [PG p.107]. Norman Malcolm, interprets Wittgenstein’s remark in the Blue Book as characterizing his own conception in the TLP - Malcolm interprets 3.11 as saying that a sentence becomes a picture i.e. a projection, by virtue of a thought’s transmitting its own sense to the physical sentence. By itself, a sentence is dead and says nothing. Sentences are lifeless or inorganic without thoughts. Only when a thought is added to a sentence does it acquire life and become a visible or audible thought. [Malcolm, Norman. 1986. Nothing is Hidden: Wittgenstein’s Criticism of his Early Thought. Basil Blackwell. UK. pp.72-73].

Wittgenstein says the question “where is the thought?” makes no sense because there is no “where”. It is like the question “where is the individual’s visual space?” In a sense we may say that the thought is “in the head” but of course that is not an important sense [Ibid. p.54].

100 BB p.7.
Wittgenstein further points out, the question about what kind of an activity thinking is, is analogous to "where does thinking take place?" the answer to which could be, on paper, in our head, in the mind. But none of these statements gives the locality of thinking. He says: 'The question what kind of an activity thinking is is analogous to this: "where does thinking take place?" We can answer: on paper, in our head, in the mind. None of these statements of locality gives the locality of thinking. The use of all these specifications is correct, but we must not be misled by the similarity of their linguistic form into a false conception of their grammar. As, e.g., when you say: "Surely, the real place of thought is in our head". The same applies to the idea of thinking as an activity. It is correct to say that thinking is an activity of our writing hand, of our larynx, of our head, and of our mind, so long as we understand the grammar of these statements. Furthermore, it is extremely important to realize how, by misunderstanding the grammar of our expressions, we are led to think of one in particular of these statements as giving the real seat of the activity of thinking. In the PG, Wittgenstein says it is a dangerous idea to suppose "we think with or in, our heads". And it is this association of thinking as a process in the head which gives it its occult character so he says: 'It is a travesty of the truth to say "thinking is an activity of our mind, as writing is an activity of the hand"'.

101 Ibid.
102 Ibid, p.16
103 Ibid.
104 PG p.106; BT p.17e.
The idea that thinking is a process taking place in a completely enclosed space gives it its occult character [BT p.173e].
105 PG p.106; BT p.173e.
The objects a person thinks of are certainly not in his head any more than his thoughts [PG p.143].

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Wittgenstein considers the question "How can one think what is not the case?" It is definitely a puzzle, for example, to think that the King's College is on fire, when it is not actually so. According to Wittgenstein the philosophical difficulties that arise in such a case are due to the misleading forms of expression through which we tend to look at facts and not due to our "inability to imagine how thinking something is done".106 Or as he raises the question in his lectures: "How can not-\( p \) negate \( p \), when \( p \) may not be the case, i.e., when nothing corresponds to \( p \)?"107 The answer, says Wittgenstein, lies in supposing that words like "not" are indices and can alter the manner in which a sentence is used. "Not" functions as an index in "Not –Fx" and changes the manner in which \( Fx \) is used.108

In the last lectures on religious belief, Wittgenstein considers the case whether thinking is experiential. For example, how do I know that when I am thinking of my brother in America, the thought inside me is really of my brother in America? If thought is a process in the concerned person's mind then what is the connection between this thought of my brother being in America and his actually being in America? Why is there no room for doubt that it is the thought of my brother in America? Lewy109 suggests that this could be a matter of convention, or the thought is a shadow or a picture of it. The question arises how we know that a picture is a picture of something. Generally this is due to the similarity of the picture to that thing because in the absence of this likeness anything could be a picture of that thing by a certain method of projection. What is

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106 BB pp.30-31.

In the PG, Wittgenstein points out that his TLP position that there is agreement of form between thought and reality is misleading [PG p.163].

109 Casmir Lewy, Wittgenstein's student who was present in Cambridge during his lectures around 1938.
important is the method of projection. By this method my thought is the picture of my brother in America. Generally we know that a thought is a thought of such and such a thing by means of a shadow or a picture. We do not think of a causal relation between them. Now if my thought consists of my saying that my brother is in America, the question is how do I know that I say my brother is in America. How is the connection made? According to Wittgenstein, we imagine the connection like strings. Wittgenstein points out that thinking is like a projection connection which seems to make it indubitable although when there really is no projection relation at all. If we say the connection is by convention then this connection refers to events happening at various times. It refers to a technique.110

In his lectures on religious belief during 1938, Wittgenstein admits that it is possible to think variously in different ways and we can have different pictures. For example, if someone questions Wittgenstein on his thoughts on punishment, whether he considers it to be an illness or not, he would reply that he has no thoughts of punishment. Completely diverse ways of thinking are therefore possible.111 In his conversations with Rush Rhees in 1943, Wittgenstein discusses the issue whether dream is a thought, whether dreaming is thinking about something. He is of the opinion that it is debatable whether dreaming is a way of thinking, whether it is even a language at all, although there are some obvious similarities of dream with language.112 In the PG Wittgenstein very explicitly emphasises that thought is a common concept like for e.g.,

110 LCA pp. 66-67. This is a complete turnaround from the Tractarian analysis that thinking is a projective relation. He is now saying that although it appears that there is some kind of projection in thinking, it is not really so.
111 LCA p. 55.
112 Ibid. p. 48.
number one. He therefore denies the aura of mysticism that normally surrounds the concept of thought, which consequently places it on a higher pedestal than any other everyday mundane common concept. He says:

Thought can only be something common-or-garden and *ordinary*. (We are accustomed to thinking of it as something ethereal and unexplored as if we were dealing with something whose exterior alone is known to us, and whose interior is yet unknown like our brain.) One is inclined to say: “Thought, what a strange thing!” But when I say that thought is something quite common-or-garden, I mean that we are affected by this concept as we are by a concept like that of the number one. There seems to be something mysterious about it, because we misunderstand its grammar and feel the lack of a tangible substance to correspond to the substantive. (It is almost like hearing a human voice coming from in front of us, and seeing nobody there.)\(^{113}\)

Let us consider the following remarks from *BT* about thought and the expression of thought. “*The scream as an expression of pain, the proposition as an expression of thought*”\(^{114}\); “One doesn’t have a thought and *apart from it* language”\(^{115}\) and “...an articulated thought is essentially a proposition”\(^{116}\). The second remark implicitly points in the direction that thoughts which are unexpressed are thoughts in the language of thought. They are capable of being expressed in language, which then becomes an articulated thought called a proposition. If one is devoid of language, then

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\(^{114}\) BT p.175e.
\(^{115}\) Ibid.
\(^{116}\) Ibid.
one does not also have thoughts, i.e., you cannot have thoughts apart from language. Elsewhere Wittgenstein says the expression of thought is itself the thought.\textsuperscript{117} These remarks reinstate Wittgenstein's belief that thinking and language are intricately interwoven. May we take the liberty to say that there is a necessary connection between them? I feel Wittgenstein's enquiry points in this direction where thinking cannot be possible without language. In the \textit{BT} Wittgenstein says the specific use of symbols is called thinking.\textsuperscript{118} Is not this also how language operates? So thinking and using language are one and the same. At the same time Wittgenstein point out that we cannot give any reasons as to why we think at all except that we do think.\textsuperscript{119}

Wittgenstein's quest into the concept of thought or \textit{Gedanke} is attempted from the side of language. His inquiry reveals the extreme complexity of the grammar of the term "think". It challenges the prevalent notion of thinking as something not occurring in the observable sphere and hence which is covered in mysticism. Just as the expressions in language have innumerable uses, where the use is given by us, so is the case with thought. No one definition can be identified as the process of thinking. It is multifarious and varied. As Wittgenstein had stated in his lectures that in the \textit{Theatetus}, Socrates could not provide one definition of knowledge because no one definition could be given as being common to all cases of knowledge; the word "knowledge" being used in all sorts of ways."\textsuperscript{120}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{117} \textit{Ibid.} p.176e.
\item \textsuperscript{118} \textit{Ibid.} p.175e.
\item \textsuperscript{119} \textit{Ibid.} p.180e.
\item \textsuperscript{120} \textit{WL} 1932-35 p.96.
\end{itemize}
SECTION III: SELF

In the Blue Book Wittgenstein says that the subject of personal experience is the source of a great deal of philosophical difficulties.\(^{121}\) His enquiry about the thinking experiencing self or the “I” intends to show whether there is any substantive corresponding to the “I”. His answer is negative in keeping with his view of meaning of terms as the uses that we give them. So what is the use of the term “I”? For Wittgenstein it serves no useful purpose of picking out someone amongst others nor does it refer to an inner state of consciousness. It is only used as a convention in our language. Therefore, he says, the mouth which says “I”, or the hand which is raised to indicate that it is I who wish to speak, or I who have toothache does not thereby point to anything.\(^{122}\)

Wittgenstein during this stage is continuing to make the distinction between first person present tense utterances and third person present tense ones in order to show that the term “I” does not denote any person. Moreover, experiencing a sense-data is also different from having or owning a material object. The difference lies in their grammars. In the lectures during 1932-33,\(^{123}\) Wittgenstein says that the grammar of “having a toothache” is very different from that of “having a piece of chalk”. Similarly the grammar of “I have toothache” and “Moore has toothache” are also different; the word “toothache” in these two cases is part of two different games. The verification for “I have a toothache” is different from that of “He has toothache”. We fall into the risk of error if we say that he has what I have, when I have a toothache, except that I know it directly in

\(^{121}\) BB p.44.
\(^{122}\) Ibid. p.68.
Elsewhere in his lectures, Wittgenstein says that the idea of an ego dwelling in a body is to be abolished [NFL p.282].
\(^{123}\) WL 1932-35.
my case and indirectly in his. The root of this blunder lies in our tendency
to confuse grammatical statements with statements of facts. It is sensible to
say "His ache is worse than mine". But it is nonsensical to say "I feel my
toothache" or "Two people cannot have the same pain" as it is
meaningless to ask whether someone else can have what I have, when I
have a toothache. These are questions and statements about facts which
we muddle with grammar.\textsuperscript{124} Wittgenstein says: 'Nonsense is produced by
trying to express in a proposition something which belongs to the
grammar of our language. By "I can't feel his toothache" is meant that I can't try. It is the character of the logical cannot that one can't try.\textsuperscript{125}
Wittgenstein points out that it is nonsense to ask "How do you know you
have a toothache?" in case of oneself, because the verification of my
having a toothache is simply having it. It would be absurd to say "I know
it because I feel it". But it is not nonsensical to ask "How do you know?"
in case of "He has toothache".\textsuperscript{126} Wittgenstein points out that we tend to
confuse "I have a piece of chalk" and "He has a piece of chalk" with "I
have toothache" and "He has toothache". In the former pair the
verifications are analogous unlike the latter pair. He further points out the
function "x has a toothache" can have different values like Tom, Dick and
Harry but never I. Wittgenstein points out that the personal pronoun "I"
do not indicate a possessor nor is it necessary in sentences that describe
having an experience unlike in sentences like "I have a cigar". Therefore,
instead of saying "I think" or "I have an ache" we can say "It thinks" just as in "It rains" or "There is an ache here". Although it appears that the
word "I" refers to a person and any omission of it would imply describing
phenomena incompletely, it is not so. The word "I" can be done away

\textsuperscript{124} Ibid, pp.17-18.
\textsuperscript{125} Ibid. p.18.
\textsuperscript{126} Ibid, pp.18-19.
with and we can describe phenomena without using it. Thus Wittgenstein says: 'I is in a class by itself. The word “I” does not refer to a possessor in sentences about having an experience, unlike its use in “I have a cigar”.'

Moore records Wittgenstein during 1932-33 as saying that the verification for “I have toothache” is quite different from that of “He has toothache” and therefore the meanings of the two expressions must be different, i.e., the meaning of verification is different in “I have” from “He has”. There is in fact no verification for “I have” because the question “How do you know that you have toothache?” is nonsensical. The answer “Because I feel it” is not acceptable because “I feel it” means the same as “I have it”. Or the answer “I know it by inspection” is also unacceptable, because it implies I can “look to see” if I have it or not, but “looking to see whether I have it or not” has no meaning. The fact that it is nonsense to talk of verification in case of “I have it” places “I have it” on a different grammatical level from “he has it”. This is further testified by the fact that both are not values of the single propositional function “x has toothache”. Wittgenstein further pointed out that “I don’t know whether I have toothache” is always absurd or nonsense but “I don’t know whether he has toothache” is not nonsense. Still further “It seems to me that I have toothache” is nonsense, whereas “It seems to me that he has” is not nonsense. Moore points out Wittgenstein’s lectures suggest that it not that the word “toothache” is used differently in “I have toothache” from

\[\text{Ibid. p.21.}\]
\[\text{Ibid.}\]
\[\text{WL 1930-33 p.307.}\]
"He has toothache". But the latter expression necessarily refers to a physical body, whereas the former does not.\textsuperscript{130}

Wittgenstein further points out that in describing a sensation, we need not refer to a person or to a sense organ. In a description of the visual field we need not necessarily refer to a person; the visual field being mine is not essential to the description.\textsuperscript{131} Or in other words, it is not an essential property of a visual sensation or a pain to belong to someone. The locality of the pain is not related to the person who has it. Just by naming a possessor, the pain cannot be given. Wittgenstein considers the statement "The noise is approaching my right ear"; in such a case the existence of a physical ear is not necessary. It only describes an auditory experience and this experience is logically independent of the existence of my ears. The audible phenomena are in an auditory space and are independent of the human body. Thus we can talk of toothache without the existence of teeth or we can talk of thinking without a head being involved.\textsuperscript{132}

The solipsistic position that "only my experiences are real" is obviously absurd if taken as a statement of fact. The solipsist who says "only I have real toothache" does not need either the word "I" or the word "real". "I" is not opposed to anything. It would rather be better to say "There is toothache". And this is exactly what the solipsist is trying to say — "Getting into the solipsistic mood means not using the word, "I" in describing a personal experience."\textsuperscript{133} During 1932-33, Wittgenstein had said

\textsuperscript{130} Ibid. p.308.
\textsuperscript{131} Moore points out that later Wittgenstein seemed to suggest that "He has toothache" does not necessarily refer to a body but could be referring only to a voice, without reference to a body, identified as 'his'.
\textsuperscript{132} In a language game where I paint for myself what I see, the picture does not contain me [NFL p.282].
\textsuperscript{133} Ibid. 1932-35 p.23.
\textsuperscript{133} Ibid. p.22.
the solipsistic statements “The only reality is the present experience” or “The only reality is my present experience” both are equally absurd but the idea expressed in them is of great importance. Moore points out that elsewhere Wittgenstein said the solipsists’ statement “Only my experience is real” is absurd as a statement of fact and the solipsist falls into error when he says he has something which another does not have; that is equally absurd. But he will not fall into error if he says “I have toothache” and “He has toothache” are on different levels.134 Wittgenstein says the solipsist is right in treating “I have toothache” as being on a different level from “He has toothache”. But the solipsists’ claim that he has something that no one else has is absurd. Here both the terms “I” and “real” in “only I have real toothache” are redundant. Moreover, the person who denies the solipsist’s claim is equally absurd. “Only my experiences are real” and “Everyone’s experiences are real” are equally nonsensical.135

According to Wittgenstein, the word “I” in answer to the question “who has toothache?” has two very different kinds of use. More often the word “I” is used as a sign coming from a certain body. But my answer to the question whether I have toothache is not made by reference to anybody. There is no need for a criterion; my body and the toothache are independent.136 During the lectures of 1933-34, Wittgenstein shows that the word “I” cannot be used to refer to “my body”. Two persons may have the same body. The terms “I” and “my body” are used differently. It would be a wrong expression if I said my body has toothache instead of “I have toothache”. It would further imply the non-existence of the “I” and would amount to replacing “I” with “my body”. It would be nonsense to

134 WL 1930-33 p.311.
suppose that I have a self without a body and therefore “I” cannot be replaced with “my body”. “I” has meaning only with reference to a body. Yet “I” and “this body” cannot be interchanged and therefore it is incorrect to suppose that pointing to this body is an indirect way of pointing to me.\(^{137}\) In his lectures on private experience and sense data Wittgenstein says it is misleading to suppose that I know directly what I see and only indirectly what others see. I cannot be said to know indirectly what another person sees if I cannot be said to know it directly. So: ‘We can’t say: “I say he has toothache because I observe his behaviour, but I say that I have because I feel it” (This might lead one to say that “toothache” has two meanings, one for me and one for the other person)’.\(^{138}\)

Wittgenstein divulges his intention of giving the example of having a toothache in someone else’s tooth. Its purpose was to show that one may be tempted to do away with the simple use of the “I” in certain situations. His intention was to show that the use of the word “I” is suggested by certain invariable experiences and if we suppose these experiences are changed (like having a toothache in someone else’s tooth) the ordinary use of the word “I” breaks down and other words can be used. We tend to have a feeling that our language would be incomplete if we omit the “I”. We suppose that leaving out the personal pronoun would describe phenomena in an incomplete manner. But says Wittgenstein, this is not the case.\(^{139}\)

\(^{138}\) *NFL* p.319.
\(^{139}\) *WL 1932-35* pp.62-63.
Thus Wittgenstein says:

One symbolism is just as good as the next. The word “I” is one symbol among others having a practical use, and could be discarded when not necessary for practical speech. It does not stand out among all other words we use in practical life unless we begin using it as Descartes did. I have tried to convince you of just the opposite of Descartes’ emphasis on “I”.\textsuperscript{140}

So any kind of privileged status is denied to the term “I”. Being one among other ordinary words it has no uniqueness. Its use is given by us in our language and we can get rid of the term where it is not essential. So the indubitableness of the “I” that so characterized modern philosophy with the start of Descartes’ \textit{Cogito} is completely shred by Wittgenstein. Yet elsewhere in his lectures, Wittgenstein says “I” is in a class by itself.\textsuperscript{141}

According to Wittgenstein, the word “I” has a peculiar grammar which makes us think that the body is the “seat” of “I”. The statement “The body is the seat of that which really lives” is senseless nor is it an experiential proposition which can be known only by me, for only I can have that experience. Wittgenstein distinguishes between two different cases in the use of the word “I” or “my” which he calls “The use as object” and “the use as subject”. The former kind is exemplified in cases like “My arm is broken”, “I have grown six inches”, “I have a bump on my forehead”, “The wind blows my hair about”. Examples of the latter kind of use are “I see so-and-so”, “I hear so-and-so”, “I try to lift my arm”, “I think it will rain”, “I have toothache”. The difference in the two categories lies in the fact that the former use involves the recognition of a particular

\textsuperscript{140} \textit{Ibii} p.63.
\textsuperscript{141} \textit{Ibii} p.21.
person and there is the possibility of error while in the latter case there is no recognition of a person involved nor is there any room for error. Wittgenstein says it is possible in an accident to mistake someone else’s broken arm for mine or mistake someone else’s bump on the forehead to be mine when we are looking at the same mirror at the same time. But when I say “I have a toothache” there is no possibility of error; the question “How are you sure that you have a toothache?” is nonsensical.\textsuperscript{142}

Thus Wittgenstein says:

\begin{quote}
The word “I” does not mean the same as “L.W.” even if I am L.W., nor does it mean the same as the expression “the person who is now speaking”. But that doesn’t mean: that “L.W.” and “I” mean different things. All it means is that these words are different instruments in our language.\textsuperscript{143}
\end{quote}

In his task of eliminating the “I” Wittgenstein distinguishes between two cases: “How do you know that he has pains?” and “How do you know that you have pains?” The answer to the former could be “Because I hear him moan”, i.e., I see him in pain while the answer to the latter is somewhat different—“Because I feel them” i.e., I do not see or observe that I am in pain unlike the former but I rather have the pains. And in the latter case, points out Wittgenstein, we are inclined to lay emphasis on the word “feel” and not on the word “I”. This attests the fact that the term “I” does not serve to distinguish one person among others. The distinction between “He has pain” and “I have pain” is between saying that someone moans and moaning and not that of “Smith has pain” and “L.W. has pain”.\textsuperscript{144}

Therefore, Wittgenstein says: 'When we feel that we wish to abolish the

\textsuperscript{142} \textit{BB} pp.66-67.
\textsuperscript{143} \textit{Ibid} p.67.
\textsuperscript{144} \textit{Ibid.} p.68.
"I" in "I have pain", one may say that we tend to make the verbal expression of pain similar to the expression by moaning. — We are inclined to forget that it is the particular use of a word only which gives the word its meaning... We feel then that in the cases in which "I" is used as subject, we don't use it because we recognize a particular person by his bodily characteristics; and this creates the illusion that we use this word to refer to something bodiless, which, however, has its seat in our body. In fact this seems to be the real ego, the one of which it was said, "Cogito, ergo sum". — "Is there then no mind, but only a body?" Answer: The word "mind" has meaning, i.e., it has a use in our language; but saying this doesn't yet say what kind of use we make of it.\(^\text{145}\)

Wittgenstein considers the two cases: "A has a gold tooth" and "A has toothache". He points out that at first sight the two propositions might appear to be similar but they are not used analogously. They have different grammars.\(^\text{146}\) The terms "to have" have different usages here. According to Wittgenstein it is conceivable that I can feel pain in someone else's tooth, or I can feel pain in someone else's body. "I can't feel his pain" is a metaphysical proposition while "We can't have pains in another person's tooth" is an experiential one and we are prone to confuse these two kinds.\(^\text{147}\)

Moore says Wittgenstein called "having toothache" a primary experience. And the characteristic feature of primary experience is that in its case "I" does not denote a possessor. Wittgenstein points out that just as the idea of a person does not enter into the description of a visual field, or a physical eye does not enter into the description of what is seen, so

\(^{145}\) Ibid, pp.69-70.
\(^{146}\) Ibid. p.53.
\(^{147}\) Ibid. p.49.
also "the idea of a person" does not enter the description of "having toothache". Moore points out that in one passage Wittgenstein seemed to imply that he used "person" to mean the same as "physical body". Wittgenstein had said: "A description of a sensation does not contain a description of a sense-organ, nor, therefore, of a person". But Moore points out, Wittgenstein was not always using the term "person" to mean the same as physical body.\(^{148}\) Moore writes:

For he said that 'just as no (physical) eye is involved in seeing, so no Ego is involved in thinking or in having toothache'; and he quoted with apparent approval, Lichtenberg's saying 'Instead of "I think" we ought to say "It thinks", ('it' being used, as he said, as 'Es' is used in 'Es blitzet'); and by saying this he meant, I think, something similar to what he said of 'the eye of the visual field' when he said that it is not anything which is in the visual field. Like so many other philosophers, in talking of 'visual sensations' he seemed not to distinguish between 'what I see' and 'my seeing of it'; and he did not expressly discuss what appears to be a possibility, namely, that though no person enters into what I see, yet some 'person' other than a physical body or a voice, may 'enter into' my seeing of it.\(^{149}\)

The root cause of statements like "If what I feel is always my pain only, what can the supposition mean that someone else has pain?", is our oscillation between logical impossibility and physical impossibility, says Wittgenstein. The problem which so perplexes us can be got rid off by investigating "how the words in question are actually used in our language". We are alternately inclined to use a word in different and varied ways and

\(^{148}\) WL 1930-33 p.309.

\(^{149}\) Ibid p.309. [cf. Chap-II].
as a result the grammar of our words sometimes appears to be queer. It is
difficult to see that an assertion of metaphysics can also be used to state an
experiential fact. When a man says “only my pain is real” he is not using
the expression in the way it is normally used.\textsuperscript{150} Wittgenstein says: ‘The
man who says “only my pain is real”, doesn’t mean to say that he has
found out by the common criteria—the criteria, i.e., which give our words
their common meanings—that the others who said they had pains were
cheating. But what he rebels against is the use of this expression in
connection with these criteria. That is, he objects to using this word in the
particular way in which it is commonly used. On the other hand, he is not
aware that he is objecting to a convention’.\textsuperscript{151} The solipsist who says only
his own experiences are real is using a certain form of expression only
(restricting the use of the epithet “real” to what we should call his
experiences).\textsuperscript{152} And we must remember that the meaning of a phrase is
the use we give it. Wittgenstein concludes the \textit{Blue Book} by saying: “The
meaning of the expression depends entirely on how we go on using it.
Let’s not imagine the meaning as an occult connection the mind makes
between a word and a thing, and that this connection contains the whole
usage of a word as the seed might be said to contain the tree.”\textsuperscript{153} So the
word “I” in “I have pains” does not denote a particular body because we
can never substitute a description of a body in place of “I”.\textsuperscript{154} The word “I”
is hence a part of our language and has a use that is accorded to it by us.
We use the word “I” to refer to an owner in the sense of belongingness
like in “I have a pen”. This use is different from the one where we use the
term “I” to denote immediate experiences like in “I have a pain”. In the

\begin{footnotes}
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\item\textsuperscript{150} \textit{BB} pp.56-57.
\item\textsuperscript{151} \textit{iibid.} p.57.
\item\textsuperscript{152} \textit{iibid.} pp.58-59.
\item\textsuperscript{153} \textit{iibid.} pp.73-74.
\item\textsuperscript{154} \textit{iibid.} p.74.
\end{footnotes}
latter case the "I" is not significant of an owner and the same can be expressed without the term like in "There is a pain".\textsuperscript{155}

Wittgenstein says the answer "I" to the question "who has toothache?" has two very different kinds of use. Mostly the word "I" is used as a sign coming from a certain body. But my answer to the question whether I have toothache is not made by reference to any particular body. There is no need for a criterion. My body and the toothache are independent. Therefore, one answer to the question "who" refers to a body and another appears not to refer to a body and is of a different kind.\textsuperscript{156} In the BT, Wittgenstein writes the phenomenon of pain in 'I am in pain' has nothing to do with my body and hence I can have toothache without teeth. Moreover, when we say that a machine cannot think or cannot have pain, the understanding of the expression "having pain" is the main point.\textsuperscript{157} In the BT he writes:

\begin{quote}
\textit{could a machine think? - could it have pain? ... Here it depends on how the expression "have pain" is used. But in the sentence "I'm in pain", "I" doesn't signify a body, and therefore neither does it signify a machine.}\textsuperscript{158}
\end{quote}

Wittgenstein pointed out the terms "I" and "he" is on the same grammatical level where "I" can be replaced by "this body". Moore says Wittgenstein was very much convinced that the word "I" or any other

\textsuperscript{155} In his lectures on private experience and sense data, Wittgenstein says that the expression "I have toothache" stands for a moan but it does not moan "I mean". [NFL p.301]. He further says we teach a child to use the words "I have toothache" to replace the moans and in this manner I was also taught the expression [Ibid. p.295]. And the important point to note is that there is nothing behind the moaning nor is moaning the description of an observation [Ibid. pp.302-319].

\textsuperscript{156} WL 1932-35 p.24.
\textsuperscript{157} BT p.166e.
\textsuperscript{158} Ibid. pp.166e-167e.
word denoting a subject is used in two very different ways. In one sense it is used on a level with other people and in another sense it is not. This difference, according to Wittgenstein, is due to the difference in the grammar of our ordinary language.159 Moore writes:

As an instance of one of these two uses, he gave ‘I’ve got a match box’ and ‘I’ve got a bad tooth’, which he said were ‘on a level’ with ‘Skinner has a match-box’, and ‘Skinner has a bad tooth’. He said that in these two cases ‘I have ...’ and ‘Skinner has ...’ really were values of the same propositional function, and that ‘I’ and ‘Skinner’ were both ‘possessors’. But in the case of ‘I have toothache’ or ‘I see a red patch’ he held that the use of ‘I’ is utterly different.160

CONCLUSION

It is seen in the post verificationist phase, Wittgenstein’s Notebooks entry that thinking and language are the same is made more evident and is shown more revealingly how thinking means using language and vice versa. In conclusion, it may be pointed out that Wittgenstein’s analysis of thought or Gedanke establishes and reinforces the arguments against the correlation between thought and its several connotations ranging from the mystical to the occult.

His works embody the spirit of rationality that emancipates thought from the servitude of inhibiting ‘isms’. Hence, thought or Gedanke remains and revels in its mundaneness, perhaps something not shown ever before. As for the thinking self, Wittgenstein’s insistence that the term “I” is redundant in describing immediate sense data is shown more

160 Ibid. [cf. Chap-III].

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exhaustively and the continuity is unmistakable. This phase does not vary much with the early transitional years except that Wittgenstein is more inclined towards the concept of use of language in our life. The concept of ‘use’ is gaining ground as related to both thought (Gedanke) and the thinking self (Seele).