**NOTES ON WITTGENSTAIN HIS PHILOSOPHY AND ITS EVOLVEMENT**

In memoriam of Jaakko Hintikka and Hilary Putnam, astute Wittgensteinian Scholars and dear friends

**Wittgenstein Evolvement in His Neo-Kantian Epistemology: Transcendental Idealism in His *Tractatus*, Phenomenalism in *Philosophical Investigations* and Common Sensism in *On Certainty*.**

Ludwig Josef Johann Wittgenstein was an Austrian-British philosopher who worked primarily on logic, the philosophy of mathematics, the philosophy of mind, and the philosophy of language. He is considered by some to be the greatest philosopher of the 20th century (April 26, 1889,April 29, 1951).

**INTRODUCTION**

Ludwig Wittgenstein is one of the prominent philosophers of the Twenty Century, (26 April 1889 – 29 April 1951) was an [Austrian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Austrians)-[British](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_people) [philosopher](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosopher) his work was in [logic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Logic), [philosophy of mathematics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophy_of_mathematics),  [philosophy of mind](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophy_of_mind), and the [philosophy of language](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophy_of_language) which endeavors to explain human behavior and life. From 1929 to 1947, Wittgenstein taught at the [University of Cambridge](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Cambridge) and his first book was ***Tractatus Logico-*Philosophicus** (1921) and its English translation, in 1922. Among the other published work in his life time was the article, "[Some Remarks on Logical Form](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Some_Remarks_on_Logical_Form)" (1929). The first and best-known of this posthumous series is the book [***Philosophical Investigations***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophical_Investigations)and another important publication is ***On Certainty*** (1969) which in them he endeavor to explain our knowledge of ourselves, reality and life though also from a Kantian perspectives. We can understand Wittgenstein’s philosophy as developed continuously in different stages as a neo-Kantian epistemology presenting different aspects of Kant transcendental epistemology: Transcendental Idealism in His ***Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus***, Phenomenalism in His ***Philosophical Investigations*** and Common Sensism in His ***On Certainty***.

The following is a Review of Wittgenstein in His Gradual Steps Following Different Components of the Kantian Epistemology, thus, in the ***Tractatus Logico-*Philosophicus** Wittgenstein up going after the Kantian *Transcendental Subject* which trying to infer from its *Platonist thoughts* the *picture* of the phenomenal World which without reaching Reality it remains *solipsist*. In the ***Philosophical Investigations*** he is following Kant’s Transcendental epistemology with the formal *empty concepts* of Language and material *blind objects* of Experience without being able to explain how his *language-games* can have meanings and their representation of Reality and thus it remains *confused* abbot how to play those games. At last, in ***On Certainty*** he is a Kantian Phenomenalist of the *sensual intuitions* with their *blind objects* that remain subjective or unexplainable common-sensist and thus remains *skeptics* about knowledge of oneself and of *phenomenal* reality, and of the Kantian *noumenal reality* (cf. Nesher, 1979-2005).

Wittgenstein influence on the philosophy of the Twenty Century was very notable as leading neo-Kantian, and from 1976 and on it was established in the International Wittgenstein Symposium at Kirchberg, Austria in which I participated almost continuously from August 29 - September 4 1977 with my work “The Nature and The Function of ‘Elucidations” in Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus.*” Proceedings of the 2nd International Wittgenstein Symposium 1977, Kirchberg, Austria and until 2017 with my work “Wittgenstein and Pragmatism: On The True Meaning and Knowledge of Our Conventions.”

**1. In The *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* Wittgenstein is Going After the Kantian Transcendental Subject with his Thoughts Presenting the Phenomenal World Only**

And thus, in the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* Wittgenstein going after the Kantian Transcendental Subject, and in the *Philosophical Investigation* he is following Kant’s epistemology with the formal *empty concepts* and phenomenal *blind objects* without being able to explain how his *language-games* can have meanings and their representation of reality; and in *on certainty* he is a Kantian Phenomenalist of the *sensual intuitions* with their *blind objects* that remain subjective or unexplainable common-sense and thus remains *solipsist* and *skeptics* about knowledge of oneself and of Reality, the Kantian *noumenal reality* (cf. Nesher, 1979-2005). Wittgenstein influence on the philosophy in the Twenty Century was very serious and from 1976 and on it was established in the International Wittgenstein Symposium at Kirchberg, Austria in which I participated almost continuously from August 29 - September 4 1977 with my work “The Nature and The Function of ‘Elucidations” in Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus.*” Proceedings of the 2nd International Wittgenstein Symposium 1977, Kirchberg, Austria and until 2017 with my work “Wittgenstein and Pragmatism: On The True Meaning and Knowledge of Our Conventions.” In his ***Tractatus*** Wittgenstein was influence by Gottlob Frege following some of the Fregean interpretations of Kant’s epistemology in his First Critique, with the *formal semantics* which replaces Kant’s *Transcendental logic* as the justification of the *Transcendental empty concepts* to meat *or* clear the *blind objects* of the *sensual intuitions*. But, at the end Kant was unsuccessful in his such enterprise due to the unbridgeable Gap in his epistemology between the Transcendental *formal* component and the Sensual *material* components of cognition as he admitted in a letter to is friend, 1798. However instead of this Kant’s epistemological difficulty Frege uses the *formal logic* to infer from the Transcendental Platonist axiomatic *thoughts* the *model of reality*, which in the Kantian terms it is the *sensual intuitions* with their *blind objects*, that replace reality but does not represent the *noumenal reality*, the *things inthemselves*, and Wittgenstein as a follower of this Kantian and Fregean Transcendental epistemology he ended in the *solipsism* which is the gist of his inquires in the *Tractatus.*

# 2. In *Philosophical Investigations* Wittgenstein Endeavors to Explain the Place of Meaning of Natural Language in Human Conduct in Languish-Games

From this Kantian Transcendental *a prioristic* components Wittgenstein moved to his ***Philosophical Investigations*** (1958) in which he is trying to explain human knowledge and behavior in the framework of the Subject with its unexplainable *empty concepts* of the *ordinary language* to explain human experience; and yet, only with the *blind objects* of the Sensual Intuition as being separated from any experiential representation of Reality. Thus, Wittgenstein remains in the phenomenological epistemology by following the Kantian sensual intuitions components to understand human linguistic behavior in his conception of the *language-games* which is isolated from human experience of learning the linguistic concepts in the empirical perceptual judgments as true representations of components of reality. And yet, the phenomenological intuition must remain subjective without explaining how persons understand the languages of each other without representing the reality through the true representation of the inner subjects and the external objects realities. Namely, Wittgenstein remains in the Kantian sterile epistemology, as the basis of Wittgenstein’s understanding of human *linguistic behavior*.

The last epistemological stage of Wittgenstein’s inquiries which appear is his ***On Certainty*** (1969) being based on human *common-sense* as the accepted general human beliefs, as the Kantian experiential *sensual intuition* of the material *blind objects* which by themselves are meaningless which a`la Kant, without the *a priori* formal *empty concepts* they cannot ended in *logical judgments* of the firs Critique as the evidential knowledge. though for Wittgenstein without the common *a priori* Transcendental Understanding and thus similar to the subjective aesthetical *reflective judgment* of Kant’s *Critique of Judgment*. Indeed, Wittgenstein cannot explain if and how those judgments represent the realities of the subject and the object which as I explained they can be represented only like the Siamese Tweens that we cannot explain the knowledge of the one without of the other in distinction, e.g., from Descartes’ “I think therefore I am (exist)” (Nesher, 2007b).

**3**. **In *On Certainty* Wittgenstein Tries to Explain That by Rejecting Certainty the Skeptic is in Order About Having Any Certain Knowledge of Reality???**

Inn his ***On Certainty*** Wittgenstein tries to explain that if he can reject the certainty our knowledge of reality the skepticism is in order about having any such certain knowledge whoever, since the rejection of knowledge cannot be based on the subjective feeling only, therefore we remain with skepticism about the refutation of *skepticism*, or *solipsism* according his *Tractatus*, and also of Russell, about our knowledge of Reality. This can be explained that like Kant which admitted of not having any theory of truth to prove our knowledge of reality as it is with all the neo-Kantians from Kant on, and yet, I cannot say this on the entire philosophy since we can see the seeds of such theory of truth in Spinoza and Peirce as I show in my 1994, 2018 respectively and especially in my book of 2002: X, and the *epistemic logic*, 2021.

Hence, from these we can learn that our *Certainty* cannot be absolute which can be explained that in the Pragmaticist theory of truth we prove of our hypotheses in our *relative proof-conditions* available to us in time and we can prove either the *truth* or the *falsity* of them and if we cannot prove them they ate *doubtful* hence, upon the accepted *proof-conditions* those are *certain*. And thus about my proofs of the *truth* and *falsity* I am *certain* and abut the *doubtful* I can be *certainly* *skeptic* for a time unless I will be able to prove their *certainly* upon new *proof-conditions.* The difficulty withWittgenstein and other neo-Kantians like Popper, Putnam, Davison and on that they considered truth as absolute and also identify it with reality which for Kant is the noumenal *realm* that we feel about it but cannot reach it. Indeed, it is interesting to see how much Wittgenstein took the phenomenalist aspect from Kant, the *sensual intuition* but as separated from the Transcendental Logic and Understanding and yet, without showing how we actually replace them in our real experience in Reality, we have to explain what is the relation between the inner experience of pain (or pleasure) and its natural expression of crying (or cheering) and the verbal exclamation of "I am in pain" (or "I am happy").

If I say of myself that it is only from my own case that I know what the word "pain" … means--must I not say the same of other people too? And how can I generalize the *one* case so irresponsibly? Now someone tells me that *he* knows what pain is only from his own case … No one can look into anyone else's box, and everyone says he knows what a beetle is only by looking at *his* beetle. --Here it would be quite possible for everyone to have something different in his box. One might even imagine such a thing constantly changing. --But suppose the word "beetle" had a use in these people's language? --If so it would not be used as the name of a thing. The thing in the box has no place in the language-game at all. (Wittgenstein, *PI*: #293.)

The epistemological difficulty is if and how we can learn and prove that without the inner experience we cannot explain the knowledge of ourselves and the representation of Reality since they are like the Siamese Twins that we cannot know one without knowing the other one and yet this is based on the theory of truth which Kant did not have as he admitted and so also all the neo-Kantians and Wittgenstein among them (Nesher, 2007b)). Indeed, the Pragmaticist epistemology is based especially on Peircean *semiotics* and its elaboration in my *epistemic logic*. Generally, we can say that Wittgenstein as the prominent neo-Kantian, influences in different ways the philosophers of the Twenty Century as Russell, Popper, Davidson, Putnam, Hintikka, Reacher, and many more.

**1. IN THE *TRACTATUS LOGICO-PHILOSOPHICUS* WITTGENSTEIN UP GOING AFTER THE KANTIAN TRANSCENDENTAL SUBJECT, FORMAL LOGIC AND PHENOMENOL WORLD**

**1.1. Wittgenstein Was Influenced by Gottlob Frege in Following Some of the Fregean Interpretations of Kant’s Epistemology in His First Critique**

In his *Tractatus* Wittgenstein was influenced by Gottlob Frege in following some of the Fregean interpretations of Kant’s epistemology in his First Critique, with the *formal semantics* which replaces Kant’s *Transcendental logic* as the justification of the *Transcendental empty concepts* to meat *or* clear the *blind objects* of the *sensual intuitions*. But, at the end Kant was unsuccessful in his such enterprise due to the unbridgeable Gap in his epistemology between the Transcendental *formal* component and the Sensual *material* components of cognitions as he admitted in a letter to is friend, 1798. However instead of this Kant’s epistemological difficulty Frege uses the *formal logic* to infer from the Transcendental Platonist axiomatic *thoughts* the *model of reality*, which in the Kantian terms it is the experience *sensual intuitions* with their *blind objects*, that replace reality but does not represent the *noumenal reality*, the *things inthemselves*, and Wittgenstein as a follower of this Kantian and Fregean Transcendental epistemology he ended in his *solipsism* as being closed in his own *a priori thoughts* which is the gist of his inquires in the *Tractatus.*

**1.2. The *Metaphysical Subject* Presenting-Describing the Worldly Facts and Picturing Reality and Frege Conception of Logic and Mathematics.**

How the *truth-conditions* of elementary propositions can be known in order to determine whether they present truly the World? In Wittgenstein’s metaphysics of the *Tractatus* the Metaphysical Subject is the only one that can with Thoughts with its sense use the Tractarian descriptive language to depict Worldly facts by elementary propositions and picture the Reality (Wittgenstein, *T*: 4-4.01, 4.461-4.463).

4. A thought is a proposition with a sense.

The difficulty is to explain whether the Metaphysical Subject the Philosopher or Wittgenstein himself in his *Tractatus* being outside the empirical-psychological world can present truly the facts of the World and picturing Objects of the possible states of affairs in Reality, a`la Kant, supersensible Reality? The Metaphysical Subject can be considered like the Cartesian God staying outside the World, not like the humble human beings, and has a separate access to propositional facts and to bare facts that enable him to present their logical form, their multiplicity. Thus, the Metaphysical Subject can project a new sense to the propositional fact and its components names in order to connect it with the objects of the states of affairs in Reality it intends to picture.

4.027 It belongs to the essence of a proposition [sign] that it should be able to communicate a *new* sense to us.

The propositional-sign is a fact in the world and by projecting new thought into this sign it became a proposition with sense (cf. Wittgenstein, *T*: 3.12).

**1.3. The Formal Logic and the Phenomenal World**

However, the logical form of the propositional fact is not enough for a pictorial representation because with one logical form, e.g., R(a, b) one can represent different facts with the same logical form but with different material structures, e.g., that “This chair stands at the table” and that “This book stays on the table”; and sometimes a proposition with a particular material structure, e.g., “The bank is crowded” or “Green is green” can represent with different senses different facts which have the same logical form but with different material structures. Only with a specific sense that projected as the content of the pictorial form – the logical syntax – the sign can present an object and propositional-sign can present a possible states of affairs in Reality (Wittgenstein, *T*: 2.18-2.22).

3 A logical picture of facts is a thought.

3.01 The totality of true thoughts is the picture of the world.

3.326 In order to recognize a symbol by its sign we must observe how it is used with a sense.

3.327 A sign does not determine a logical form unless it is taken together with its logico-syntactical employment (cf. 3.328, 3.33).

In other words, the logical expressing in pictorial form of a sign is by its logico-syntax. The proposition-sign can pictorially present states of affairs only with the Metaphysical Subject projecting sense of its Thought onto this sign to projecting it in picturing objects of possible states of affairs to Reality.

3.11 We use the perceptible sign of a proposition (spoken or written, etc.) As a projection of a possible situation. The method of projection is to think of the sense of the proposition.

3.12 I call the sign with which we express a thought a propositional sign. – And a proposition is a propositional sign in its projective relation to the world. (cf. Wittgenstein, *T* 1921: ##3.13 - 3.1431).

3.4 A propositional sign, applied and thought out, is a thought.

3.21 The configuration of the objects in a situation corresponds to the configuration of simple signs in the propositional signs.

However, there is a difference between picturing Reality and of presenting states of affairs in the World, in picturing or describing facts in the World.

4.01 A proposition is a picture of reality.

A proposition is a model of reality as we imagine it.

4.021 A proposition is a picture of reality: for if I understand a proposition, I know the situation that it represents [dargestellte ~ shown]. And I understand the proposition without having had its sense explained to me.

4.0311 One name stands for one thing, another for another thing, and they are combined with one another. In this way the whole group – like a *tableau vivant* [living picture] – presents a state of affairs.

The above paragraphs of the *Tractatus* are the core of Wittgenstein’s pictorial theory of presentation that comprises the theory of meaning and truth in distinction from some basic elements in Russell’s and Frege’s theories of representation. The epistemological difficulty is how we understand the meaning of the proposition without be explained it to us. The realist-Pragmaticist explanation is that we learn language and proposition in our experience such that the preverbal components of a proposition are the iconic feeling and the indexical reaction to it in their synthesis interpreting in the conceptual meaning of a proposition interpreted in the symbolic thought. So not by Use that Wittgenstein will explaining in his latter philosophy but in learning the language in experience as the Peircean semiotic makes clear (Peirce, 1906 *EP*II: #26; Nesher, 2001a. Thus, this preconceptual components of the proportions are what Kant calls *Aesthetic Intuition* of the phenomenal subject and this can be considered by Wittgenstein as the imaginative or pictorial component of the proposition namely, the experiential contents of the propositions (Kant, *CPuR*: A141, *Prolegomena* ##34-35). Thus, realistically propositions are meaningful in their involvement by confrontation in reality as their preconditions of being true or false, and their truth and falsity are not referential objects of sentences but by proving the truth of the perceptual judgments as facts representing Reality (Nesher, 2002: X; cf. Wittgenstein, 1921, *T*:4.064). The factuality of a states of affairs are the proof-conditions of the hypothetical propositions that by being proved true represent this situation. The Wittgensteinian Metaphysical Subject determines the truth of the elementary proposition when he or she detects that the presented states of affairs are an existing fact in the world. This he cannot do from the structure of the form and the content of the proposition but only from outside the world from a nonhuman perspective on the structure of Reality and the factual world.

5.631 There is no such thing as the subject that thinks or entertains ideas.

5.633 Where *in* the world is a metaphysical subject to be found?

You will say that this is exactly like the case of the eye and the visual field. … and nothing *in the visual field* allows you to infer that it is seen by an eye,

5.64 Here it can be seen that solipsism, when its implications are followed out strictly, coincides with pure realism. The self of solipsism shrinks to a point without extension, and there remains the reality coordinate with it.

5.641 Thus there really is a sense in which philosophy can talk about the self in a non-psychological way. What brings the self into philosophy is the fact that ‘the world is my world’. **The philosophical self** is not the human being, not the human body, or the human soul, with which psychology deals, but rather, the metaphysical subject, the limit of the world—not a part of it.

**[5] Wittgenstein’s Conceptions of Meaning of Propositions Picturing My World and Personal Solipsism (5.64f.)**

**“The philosophical self”** “non-psychological I” (5.641) “A logical picture of facts is a thought” (3).

The **Eye** **⁄ MS \**=*Metaphysical Subject* with its Projected Thoughts (Senses) to **World** and **Reality** (5.6331) ⁄ [***Thought*]**\ (3) by the *Metaphysical* *Logic* (5.633-5.641) or *Transcendental Logic* (6.13),

W⎛human body and soul⎞ = “*Pictorial Form*” (2.15-151) = “Representational Form” (2.173-4).

O⎥ / / \ ⎥ = The Structure Possibility of Pictorial Structure. (*T*: 4.01-4.463; 5.62)

R**⎨P = RL (a \* b)** ⎥ = “*Pictorial Structure* “names and relations with *meaning* and *sense* of

L⎥ | | | |the **Actual** States-of-Affairs: **Facts** in **The World ≈ Propositional Facts** (1.)

D⎥ ▼ ▼ ▼ ⎥ = *Truth-Conditions* of Propositions (4,45) A picture is *Model* of Reality (2.12).

⎥ ⎛ **fact**1 **fact**2 **fact**3⎞ | | “Pictorial Relationship” (2.1513) “pictorial form” (2.22)"sign is a fact”(3.14)

⎥ |Facts in The **World**]|⎥Meaning-Conditions of Propositional Signs. ((Kant, *CPuR*: B75/A51)

⎝⎝ *(Model of Reality*⎠ ⎠ = “Logical Space”-“things and relations” (1.12) “The facts in the Logical Space

***Noumenal Reality*** are the world” (1.13)

The *Philosophical Self*is the Metaphysical Subject that with its *Thoughts* is creating in its formal semantics method its World, but itself is outside of the empirical Worldwhich the philosopher can think and pictorially explain it by the Thought being the content-meaning the language of the formal semantics. Indeed, it is crucial to explain (*T*: 4.01) that “A proposition is a picture of reality. A proposition is a model of reality as we imagine it.” Namely, one can imagine or intended to know Reality from its picture which inferred from the Metaphysical Subject’s True Thought to present the World and eventually depict Reality.

Wittgenstein interpreting Kantian Transcendental metaphysics with its Transcendental S into his own Formal Semantic Language in which all its components are of human cognitive mind except the Metaphysical Subject and the Reality of all Objects. the reality outside human cognition. The experiential World, which Wittgenstein considers as psychological of the human being, the empirical human body and human soul. For Kant it is human phenomenal subject with its *sensual perception* and *aesthetic intuition* (Kant, *CPuR*: B137, B296). Indeed, all the philosophical systems that do not have a theory of truth to prove our knowledge of reality are actually solipsist: Russel, Frege, Wittgenstein, Davidson and more beside, let us say, Spinoza and Peirce.

**2. CAN WITTGENSTEIN EXPLAIN OUR KNOWLEDGE OF MEANING? A PRAGMATICIST REVISION OF HIS CONCEPTIONS OF INTERPRETATION AND CRITERIA**

# 2.1, The Place of Meaning in Human Conduct On: *Philosophical Investigations*

From this Kantian Transcendental *a prioristic* components Wittgenstein moved to his ***Philosophical Investigations*** (1958) in which he is trying to explain human knowledge and behavior in the framework of the Subject with its unexplainable *empty concepts* of the *ordinary language* to explain human experience; and yet, only with the *blind objects* of the Sensual Intuition as being separated from any experiential representation of Reality. Thus, Wittgenstein remains in the phenomenological epistemology by following the Kantian sensual intuitions components to understand human linguistic behavior in his conception of the *language-games* which is isolated from human experience of learning the linguistic concepts in the empirical perceptual judgments as true representations of components of reality. And yet, the phenomenological intuition must remain subjective without explaining how persons understand the languages of each other without representing the reality through the true representation of the inner subjects and the external objects realities. Namely, Wittgenstein remains in the Kantian sterile epistemology, as the basis of Wittgenstein’s understanding of human *linguistic behavior*.

The last epistemological stage of Wittgenstein’s inquiries which appear is his ***On Certainty*** (1969) being based on human *common-sense* as the accepted general human beliefs, as the Kantian experiential *sensual intuition* of the material *blind objects* which by themselves are meaningless which a`la Kant, without the *a priori* formal *empty concepts* they cannot ended in *logical judgments* of the firs Critique as the evidential knowledge. though for Wittgenstein without the common *a priori* Transcendental Understanding and thus similar to the subjective aesthetical *reflective judgment* of Kant’s *Critique of Judgment*. Indeed, Wittgenstein cannot explain if and how those judgments represent the realities of the subject and the object which as I explained they can be represented only like the Siamese Tweens that we cannot explain the knowledge of the one without of the other in distinction, e.g., from Descartes’ “I think therefore I am (exist)” (Nesher, 2007b).

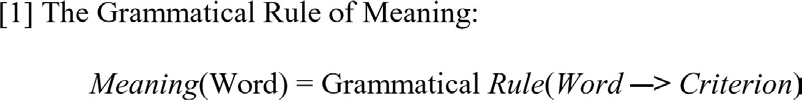
In this inquiry I analyse Wittgenstein´s conceptions of use and criteria for the meaning of our language. I interpret his conception of explanation of meaning of a Word in its use in a Language, or teaching someone the use of the words and show that the knowledge of meaning of words must precede their use in language; otherwise, how may the members of the linguistic community know how to use them? Hence, we have to explain how the communal conventions of meanings are established and used. I argue that Wittgenstein´s conception of ostensive teaching of a language is central to acquiring the meaning conventions by the infant on her way to mastering the language. We cannot start our inquiry from the assumption of the already existing communal meaning conventions since the problem is to explain their acquisition and how humans develop and operate their communication. Hence we face a paradox of learning in Wittgenstein´s Investigations since the only possibility of getting word meaning is inside the verbal language-game; but according to Wittgenstein the ostensive teaching for the Meaning of the word cannot be a move in any language-game. The next problem is to understand what the criterion is for learning and using the meaning of the word in the language-game. We face a Fregean difficulty because if the criterion is a private-subjective experience, how do we know that persons experience the same phenomenon and if it is external to the language-game and to our experience, how do we know that our experience represents it truly? My conclusion is that we have to revise Wittgenstein´s Grammatico-Phenomenological conceptions of meaning interpretation and criteria with the Pragmaticist theory of meaning and truth. The criterion of meanings should be the quasi-proof of the truth of their interpretation in propositions, which makes them clear by being true representation of reality.

**2. 2. Wittgenstein´s Conception of Explanation of Meaning of Words by their Use.**

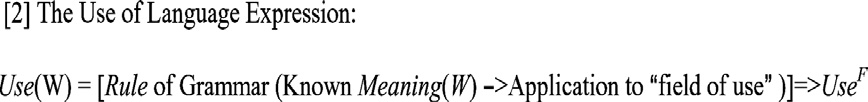
In this inquiry I analyze Wittgenstein´s conceptions of *use* and *criteria* for the meaning of our language. I interpret his conception of *explanation of meaning* of a *word* in its *use* in the language (*PI*: §43; *PI*: §49) and show that the knowledge of meaning of words must precede their use in language; otherwise, how may the members of the linguistic community know how to use them (*PI*§§197-202)? Hence, we have to explain how the communal conventions of meanings are established and used. I argue that Wittgenstein´s conception of *ostensive teaching* of a language is central to the infant´s acquisition of meaning conventions on her way to mastering the language (*BB*:17, *PI*: §§27-49). We cannot start our inquiry assuming the already existing communal meaning conventions because the problem is to explain their acquisition and how humans develop and operate their social communication (Bloor, 1997; Habermas, 1998). Hence, we face a paradox of learning in Wittgenstein´s Investigations: the only possibility of acquiring word meaning is *inside* the verbal language-game, yet the *ostensive teaching* for the Meaning of the word cannot be a move in any language-game. Consequently, the infant cannot learn the *word meaning* either inside or outside a language-game. Therefore, in Wittgenstein's Grammatical Philosophy we cannot explain how language is learned and taught: either we already know mysteriously the language-games or we can never know them (Plato, *Meno*:80e).

The next problem is to understand what the *criterion* is for learning and using the meaning of the word in the language-game. We face a Fregean difficulty because if the criterion is a private-subjective experience, how do we know that different persons experience the same phenomenon, and if the criterion is external to the language-game and to our experience, how do we know that our experience represents it truly? Wittgenstein´s device to maintain his conception of meanings in the language-game is similar to Frege´s conception of objective Platonic *thoughts*, while Wittgenstein replaces them by his communal *conventions*, which come from nowhere (Nesher, 1987, 2002:X). My conclusion is that we have to revise Wittgenstein´s Grammatico-Phenomenological conception of *criteria* within the Pragmaticist theory of meaning and truth. The *criterion* of *meanings* should be the *proof* or nonverbal perceptual *quasi-proof* of the truth of their *interpretation* in propositions, which makes them *clear* by being *true* representation of reality (Nesher, 2002, 2004).

According to Wittgenstein the meaning of the word is given by the *grammatical rule* of a *language-game* which connects a word with a specific criterion for its meaning in the language-game. Following the *grammatical rule of meaning* is performed according to our *conventions* about how to use this specific word in a proposition while asserting it in the language-game (Hintikka, 1986:201ff.).



According to Wittgenstein we can learn the meaning of a word either *inside* the language when someone explains a word for us by using other words whose meanings we already know, or by *ostensive teaching*, when someone shows us an object *outside* the language that the word is about. When Wittgenstein says “Let the use *teach* you the meaning” (*PI*: §212) he means that we can learn the rule of meaning of the word from the use of the word by others who already know its meaning. This *use* is the *criterion* for learning the *rule of meaning* and we cannot identify the *meaning* itself with the *use*, as some suggest (Nesher, 1992). To describe our use of the verbal language, Wittgenstein extended the framework of language to what he calls the *language‑game*. This extension includes nonverbal activities, tools, samples, and objects, i.e., “the field of use of the expression” (Malcolm, 1958:50), pertaining to the operations of the language itself (Wittgenstein, *PG*§29; *P I* §§6, 7, 16, 23, 50).



Accordingly, to know how to use a word is to know the rule of grammar operating the word with its *known meaning*, and applying it in the specific field of use (UseF) of the language-game. The knowledge of word meaning must *precede* its use and only in *ostensive teaching* of words to an infant does she first learn the meanings of rules and words. Thereby we can see clearly how one can learn a verbal language without knowing any implicit conventions about the meanings of its expressions.

**2. 3. Wittgenstein´s Problem with *Ostensive Learning*.**

The predicament of *ostensive teaching* is that if it is a language-game then how the infant learns such a language-game without knowing any verbal language. Clearly, she learns the first conventions of a language-game instinctively and practically outside any verbal language-game, and she must learn it with her private pre-verbal language. According to Wittgenstein, however, without *public criteria* there cannot be any objective understanding of meanings of rules and words. This is probably the reason why Wittgenstein tries to avoid calling *ostensive teaching* a language-game and regards it only as a preparation for the language-games.

We may say: *nothing* has so far been done, when a thing has been named. It has not even *got* a name except in the language-game. This is what Frege meant too, when he said that a word had meaning only as a part of a sentence. (Wittgenstein, *PI* §49)

We can see how Wittgenstein´s problem with the *ostensive teaching* is connected to his rejection of the conception of private language (*PI*:174ff., 378ff.; *BB*:3-4). This paradoxical situation about how an infant learns the meaning of the first words in language can be due to Wittgenstein restricting the conception of learning to the verbal language alone. Consequently, one has to learn verbal language meanings in a language-game one does not yet know; therefore, it is impossible to learn verbal-language, and with non-verbal language there cannot be any *certain* communication (*PI*: §202). Hence, the infant learns her first language-game with pre-verbal cognitive communication. Similarly, we can explain the entire development of the language-game, how humans start to use language.

Our language-game is an extension of primitive behavior. (Wittgenstein, Z §545)

But what is the word “primitive” meant to say here? Presumably that this sort of behavior is *pre-linguistic*: that a language-game is based *on it*, that it is the prototype of a way of thinking and not the result of thought. (cf. Wittgenstein, *Z* §541)

The explanation of the ostensive teaching must start from the instinctive and practical components of our perceptual operation and how they represent external reality and terminate in true judgments. This is Wittgenstein´s difficulty with the relation of the basic empirical propositions to external reality. According to his Grammatico-Phenomenology, our “picture of the world” is the “reality” against which we evaluate other propositions. (Wittgenstein, *OC* §§94f.; *PI* §§354-5)

The propositions describing this world-picture might be part of a kind of mythology. (*OC* §95)  
If the truth is what is grounded, then the ground is not *true*, nor yet false. (*OC* §205)

However, the criteria for meaning and truth are both in the system of language-games and constitute its foundations (cf. Wittgenstein, *OC* §§80ff.). For Wittgenstein, the ostensive definition is problematic as a move to establishing meaning because it does not have the *certainty* he claims grammatical rules to have (cf. Wittgenstein, *PI* §§31ff.). For him only rational justification inside the language-game can be certain, and such justification is based on already accepted *empirical propositions* of our inherited background. Yet this relation of linguistic expressions to their meaning *criteria* is the most primitive and genuine grammatical relation: without it the grammatical rules *in the language* cannot be established.

**2.4. Wittgenstein´s “Paradox of Interpretation” and the Meaning of Rules, Words, and Propositions.**

In his discussion on the interpretation of meaning of rules Wittgenstein shows that under some understanding of *interpretation* we arrive to a paradox about following rules.

But how can a rule shew me what I have to do with at this point? Whatever I do is, on some interpretation, in accord with the rule.” --not what we ought to say, but rather: any interpretation still hangs in the air along with what it interprets, and cannot give it any support. Interpretations by themselves do not determine meaning. (Wittgenstein, *PI*: §198)

This is the case with Wittgenstein´s kind of hermeneutic conception of *interpretation*.

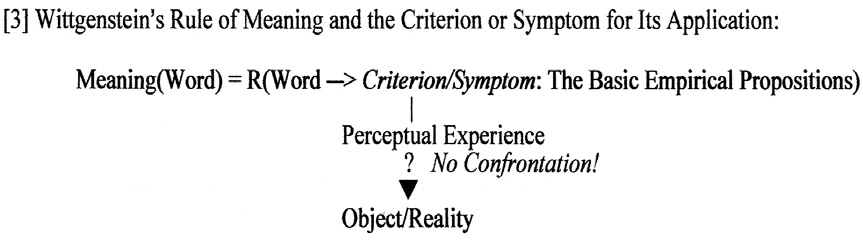
This was our paradox: no course of action could be determined by a rule, because every course of action can be made out to accord with the rule. The answer was: if everything can be made out to accord with the rules, then it can also be made out to conflict with it. And so there would be neither accord nor conflict here. It can be seen that there is a misunderstanding here from the mere fact that in the course of our argument we give one interpretation after another; as if each one contented us at least for a moment, until we thought of yet another standing behind it. What this shows is that there is a way of grasping a rule which is *not* an *interpretation*, but which is exhibited in what we call “obeying the rule” and “going against it” in actual cases. Hence there is an inclination to say: every action according to the rule is an interpretation. But we are to restrict the term “interpretation” to the substitution of one expression of the rule for another. (Wittgenstein, *PI*: §201)

I argue that Wittgenstein´s “Paradox of Interpretation”, as I call it, comes from a wrong conception of *Interpretation*, like the “liar paradox” which comes from a wrong conception of *truth* (Nesher, 1997). Wittgenstein´s conception of *Interpretation* is of endless operations in which we replace “one interpretation after another.” The epistemological base of this conception of interpretation is Wittgenstein´s Phenomenological conception of language-game, neither inside nor outside of which can we reach any *confrontation* with *reality* (*PG*: §68). Yet only by such confrontation we can prove the *truth* of our *interpretation* without continuing it endlessly. But without such proof “Interpretations by themselves do not determine meaning.” Due to this paradoxical situation, Wittgenstein rejects *Interpretation* as a way of understanding the meanings of expressions (Baker & Hacker, 1984:19).

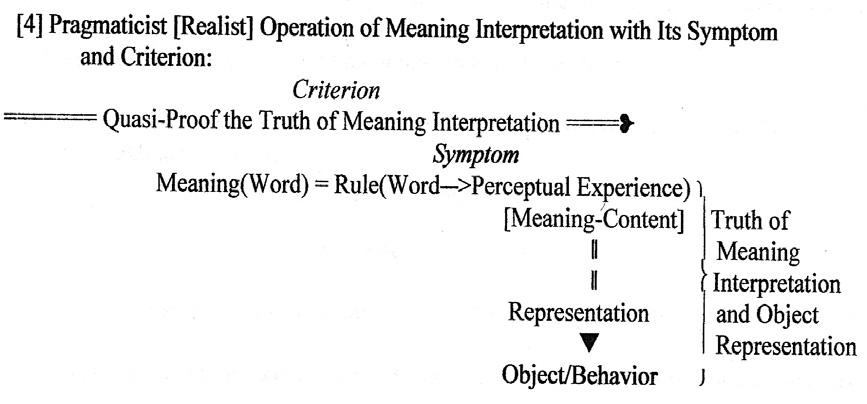
To overcome the “paradox of interpretation” Wittgenstein had to invent a mysterious conception of “grasping a rule which is *not* an *interpretation*” (Wittgenstein, *PI*: §201). Without having any epistemological explanation of how we learn the rules, understanding them and controlling their use, we cannot distinguish between “`obeying the rule´ and `going against the rule´ in actual cases”, which is only a description of a behavior in respect to already established conventions. Therefore, we have to accomplish a radical revision of the epistemology of our acquiring the meaning and the truths of our cognitions (Tarski, 1969; Nesher, 2002). I suggest moving from the premisses of Wittgenstein´s grammatico-phenomenological conception of knowledge of meanings to Pragmaticist realism, to understand the *criterion* not as the phenomenon but as the *proof* of the *truth* of the *interpretation* of the *meanings* of our cognitive signs to “make our ideas clear”, to know their *meanings*.

**2. 5. Wittgenstein´s Conceptions of Criteria and Symptoms and how they are Distinguished.**

Without Wittgenstein´s mysterious “grasping”, what are the *criteria* for the pre-verbal behavior for creating and learning new conventions of a verbal language-game? According to Wittgenstein, the tacit presuppositions of our language-games are our basic *empirical propositions*, the basic “descriptions” of our form of life activities. These are the indubitable *criteria*, our norms against which we measure the truth and falsity of other propositions, the meanings of their words, and our right or wrong behavior in following the rules of our language-games (Wittgenstein, *OC*: §§94ff.). But how we acquire these *criteria* and how is the conception of the *criteria* distinct from the conception of *symptoms*? Some interpreters suggest that the distinction is not comprehensive and systematic because it follows a variety of the ordinary language usages of these terms. Wittgenstein suggests a relative distinction between *criteria* and *symptoms* because it is not clear how the normative criterial justifications of meaning and truth differ from the empirical inductive logic of symptoms (*BB*:24-25, 51, *PI*: §§322ff., 354f.). The distinction between criteria and symptoms seems to be between the grammar of conventions and the sense-impressions experience by which we acquire the former (*OC*: §§94ff.). Our basic propositions are our basic conventions but as such cannot be derived from other conventions, and since they are not just arbitrary propositions, they must be somehow proved to be true representation of our reality. Without confrontation of the language-game system with reality through the sense-impressions experience, our common-sense world-picture will remain only *mythology* without any explanation of the development of our form of life through replacement of the norms of one language-game by the norms of a new one (cf. Wittgenstein, *OC*: §94ff.). But Wittgenstein, in his Grammatico-Phenomenological Investigations, cannot explain such confrontation with reality.



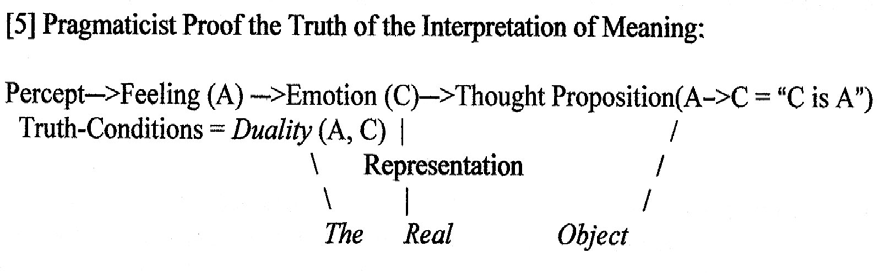
What is the Criterion by which we “explain” or “define” the Meaning of the Word? Some Wittgensteinians call the explanation of the nature of the criteria for the meanings of the rules and words in the language-game “criterial semantics”, as distinct from “truth-conditions semantics.” What is the nature of this Criterion? Is it for the *meaning* of the word or for the *truth* of the ostensive teaching, or for both? According to Wittgenstein it is for the meaning of the word, but since the first basic words can be learned only in the *ostensive teaching* how a private experiential phenomenon can be an objective criterion for the meaning of its name? Therefore, the *true perceptual representation of the name's object* is constitutive for the *criterion* in the *ostensive teaching*. The *Meaning* of the *word* and the *Truth* of the *ostensive teaching* are connected, and without them the entire move cannot work. Wittgenstein's epistemological problem lies in his severing the connection between the *interpretation* of cognitive meanings inside the language and the representation of reality outside it. This must lead to an endless series of interpreting criteria and to the impossibility of representing reality. The question is whether Wittgenstein can explain the meaning of our language without connecting the experiential meaning-content and the truth of such experience. The experience of the *feeling of meaning* can only be the *symptom* of understanding the meaning of the word, and not its *criterion*, if it has to be a conventional norm and therefore certain. The *symptom as feeling the meaning* of a word is one´s reflection on the relation between the word and the *meaning-content of experiencing* an object. If the feeling of meaning of a word is only the *symptom* of *understanding* its *initial-vague meaning*, how may we establish it as *clear* meaning? The *criterion* for such meaning cannot be any phenomenal experience or external object but rather the *quasi-proof* of the *truth* of our *interpretation* of the initial-vague meanings of the components of the perceptual judgment. The conception of *quasi-proof*, which I developed from the Peircean cognitive semiosis, is the perceptual instinctive self-controlled proof of our perceptual judgments (Nesher, 2002). The following is a Pragmaticist-Realist reconstruction and an alternative to Wittgenstein´s rule of meaning in ostensive teaching.



Here the *symptom* is the Feeling of initial-vague Meaning-Content of one Perceptual Experience with Object/Behavior. The *criterion* is the *quasi-proof*of the *truth of the Interpretation*of the *initial-vague meanings* synthesized in the Perceptual Judgment *Representing* the real Object/Behavior. Hence, the feeling of “wet and cold” is only a Symptom of experiencing rain, the initial-vague feeling of Meaning-Content which without the proof the truth of its interpretation is still doubtful (cf. Wittgenstein, *PI*: §354). This is distinguished from the Wittgensteinian conception of the *criteria* as phenomena which belong to the grammar of language-game without being proved a true representation of external reality, and which thus can be defeasible (McDowell, 1983:369ff.). This Pragmaticist epistemology of the Criterion as the Quasi-Proof of the Truth of the Interpretation of Meaning is not the *truth-conditional conception of meaning*. It is not the *truth-conditions* that determine the meaning of the Word but the *criterial proof* upon the truth-conditions, which are components of the proof operation (Nesher, 2002).

**2.6. Conclusion: Pragmaticist Theory of the Truth of Interpretation and Representation.**

My conclusion is that with the Pragmaticist theory of meaning interpretation and the proof of its truth, we also prove our knowledge of reality. These proved true cognitions are the communal conventions of our form of life. The problem of Wittgenstein´s two philosophical perspectives is that neither the Tractarian *formal semantic model* nor the *grammatico-phenomenological* Investigations can explain human cognitive behavior and its meaning and truth. Thus neither Analytic Philosophy nor Philosophical-Phenomenology can explain our representation of the reality in which humans operate and develop their lives (Nesher, 2004). The pragmaticist revision of Wittgenstein´s conception of criterion is also a solution to the Fregean Puzzle of “compositionality” and the “hermeneutical circle” paradox.



We begin our perceptual operation from the initial-vague cognitive meanings of Feeling A and Emotion C as experiences of the Real Object. If there is a *Coherence* between A and C then their Interpretation in the proposition A–>C is proven a true representation of the same *Real Object*. Therefore, the Interpretations of A and C are True and their Meanings are *certainly clear* as components of true A–>C being *true representation* of the real object. This can be seen as a solution to the Fregean “compositionality” and the “hermeneutical circle” that through reflective control over a complete proof, not a formal proof but the Peircean trio sequence of Abduction, Deduction, and Induction, we can avoid any vicious circle or an infinite regress (Nesher, 2002). We do not prove the truth of the meanings of the proposition’s components but the truth of their interpretation-synthesis in the proposition itself. We prove the interpretation because every proof is an interpretation of the assumptions and every complete proof is a true interpretation.

This is not a sort of *Verificationist Theory of Meaning* since the proof of the truth of the proposition “C is A” only makes *certainly clear* the meanings of its initial-vague components A and C. According to the Logical Positivist Verifiability Principle of Meaning a proposition is meaningful if, at least in principle, it can be verified or falsified in the formal semantics. This *Verificationist* principle has the function of eliminating metaphysical propositions that are meaningless because they are unprovable as true or false. According to my pragmaticist theory of meaning and truth every human experience has some initial-vague meanings and in the *interpretation* we can make the meaning-ideas *clear and distinct* representation of reality. Metaphysical propositions also have experiential meaning-contents as our utmost empirical generalizations, but in distinction from Kant and the contemporary neo-Kantians, e.g., Putnam, we can evaluate them empirically. If such propositions have not been proven true or false they remain doubtful, but a doubtful proposition is meaningful though it is still vague. Thus I reconstruct Wittgenstein´s conceptions of *meaning* and *criterion* with the Pragmaticist theory of meaning and truth.

**3.** **IN *ON CERTAINTY* WITTGENSTEIN TRIES TO EXPLAIN THAT BY REJECTING *CERTAINLY* THE *SKEPTICISM* IN ORDER**

**3.1. On Having Any Certain Knowledge of Reality and Vice Versa**

Indeed, in his ***On Certainty*** Wittgenstein tries to explain that if he can reject certainly the skepticism in order about having any certain knowledge of reality whoever, since this cannot be based on the subjective feeling only and therefore we remains with skepticism about the refutation of skepticism, or solipsism according his *Tractatus*, and also of Russell, about our knowledge of Reality. This can be explained that like Kant which admitted of not having any theory of truth to prove our knowledge of reality as with all the neo-Kantians from Kant on, and if I can say of the entire philosophy though we can see the seeds of such theory of truth in Spinoza and Peirce as I show in my 1994, 2018 respectively and especially in my book of 2002: X, and on *epistemic logic*, 2021. Hence, from these we can learn that *Certainty* cannot be absolute since in the Pragmaticist theory of truth we prove it in our *relative proof-conditions* available to us any time and we can prove either the *truth* or the *falsity* of our hypotheses and if we cannot prove them they ate *doubtful* which for a time this is *certain*. And thus about my proofs of the *truth* and *falsity* I am *certain* and abut the *doubtful* I can be *certainly* *skeptic* for a time until I will be able to prove their *certainly* upon new *proof-conditions.*

Indeed, it is interesting to see how much Wittgenstein took the phenomenalist aspect from Kant, let us say, the *sensual intuition* but as separated from the Transcendental Logic and Pure Understanding and yet, without showing how we actually replace them in our real experience in Reality, we have to explain what is the relation between the inner experience of pain (or pleasure) and its natural expression of crying (or cheering) and the verbal exclamation of "I am in pain" (or "I am happy").

If I say of myself that it is only from my own case that I know what the word "pain" … means--must I not say the same of other people too? And how can I generalize the *one* case so irresponsibly? Now someone tells me that *he* knows what pain is only from his own case … No one can look into anyone else's box, and everyone says he knows what a beetle is only by looking at *his* beetle. --Here it would be quite possible for everyone to have something different in his box. One might even imagine such a thing constantly changing. --But suppose the word "beetle" had a use in these people's language? --If so it would not be used as the name of a thing. The thing in the box has no place in the language-game at all. (Wittgenstein, *PI*: #293.)

The epistemological difficulty is if and how we can learn and prove that without the inner experience we cannot explain the knowledge of ourselves and the representation of Reality since in cognitive experience they are like the Siamese Twins that we cannot know one without knowing the other one and yet this is based on the theory of truth which Kant did not have as he admitted, and so also all the neo-Kantians and Wittgenstein among them. Indeed, the Pragmaticist epistemology based especially on Peircean *semiotics* and its elaboration in my *epistemic logic*. Generally, we can say that Wittgenstein as the prominent neo-Kantian, influences in different ways the philosophers of the Twenty Century as Russell, Popper, Davidson, Putnam, Hintikka, Reacher, and many more (Nesher. 2021).

However, what brings Wittgenstein to reject *skepticism* is that humans and animals are knowing instinctively how to live in nature and society and also, what brings him to reject *certainty* is the facts that we err and harm ourselves in nature and society and nevertheless why we need rational knowledge and even sciences in order to leave better in them? That means that animals and humans have instinctive knowledge of the reality but Wittgenstein like Kant cannot explain it and therefore Wittgenstein and probably also Kant are moving between certainty and skepticism without being able to explain our life in reality indeed, due to not having any theory of truth.

The epistemological question is to explain this instinctive behavior in reality when it successive and then *certain* and when it is a failure and then *skeptical*, and what it can be true knowledge and how long it can be so?

# 3.2. The Place of Meaning in Human Conduct: The Nature of Mental Processes of Humans and Other Living Things

The nature of mental processes of humans and other living things is the realm of the philosophy of mind. Cognition is the self-conscious mental process and thus is the subject matter of the philosophy of language, the theory of knowledge, and subsumed by other branches of philosophy such as aesthetics, ethics, logic, and philosophy of science. Wittgenstein's later philosophy is a paradigmatic case for addressing the relations between cognitive behavior and language where I understand every human behavior as cognitive while cognition encompasses also inner experience processes. An analysis of Wittgenstein's philosophy can show why the meaning of language and of human behavior cannot explained within it.

It seems quite clear that Wittgenstein made all efforts to separate the "subjective" component of cognition from the "objective" component of cognitive behavior. His position is that we cannot rely on introspective reports for our description of human cognitive and linguistic behavior; therefore, the inner experience cannot be a subject matter of philosophy *qua* analysis and description of the grammar of language and its rules of meaning (cf. Wittgenstein, 1991(*TS*: 213):11, 16, *PI*: ##90, 109; comp. Hacker, 1986: Ch. VI).

I will contend that, if Wittgenstein's conception of the language-game is intended to explain the meaning of language and its representational relation with reality (cf. J. Hintikka, 1986: 212-213), then it cannot work without assuming the cognitive inner experience as a necessary element of the entire cognitive process and therefore, also, of the language-game.

**3.3. Wittgenstein's and Frege's Struggle for The Objectivity of Meaning** Wittgenstein, in his *Philosophical Investigations*, attempts to overcome Frege's Platonism and his own Tractarian Kantianism with respect to the nature of *thought* and its function in the meaning of language (e.g., *BB*: 4). Frege, in his program to explain how communication in language is possible, endeavored to avoid mentalism, introspectionism, and psychologism in understanding the meaning of language in order to sustain its objectivity. Frege's solution to the problem of the objectivity of meaning is to locate meanings in the "third domain" of Platonic thoughts, which are distinguished from the "second domain" of mental states and the "first domain" of physical objects (cf. Frege, 1918:523ff.; comp. Plato's Sophist; Popper, 1972: Chs. 3, 4). Thus thoughts of the third domain are not subjective mental states and the same thought is "the common property of many". The objective thoughts are combined with and expressed in the objective physical signs of language (cf. Frege, 1892:59-61, 1918:511-524, 1923). And yet, unfortunately, Frege cannot get rid of the dross of subjectivity pertaining to the meaning of language. The problem for Frege's enterprise, and Platonism at large, is how different persons can know that they are thinking and talking about the same thought. The argument against this position is that in order to know that they are thinking and talking about *the same* thought, their subjective acts of thinking about this thought must be compared; yet according to Frege, that can only be done if these acts of thinking are located in the same mind, and they are not (cf. Frege, 1918:522). Therefore, even if there are objective *Thoughts* independent of human mental consciousness, we cannot know them as objective entities because we cannot separate them from our acts of thinking about them.

Wittgenstein faced this Frege's problem of the objectivity of language meaning. In the *Tractatus* he wants to anchor the meaning of language in the objectivity of the objects (physical and psychical) of independent reality. These objects can be known only through our acquaintance with empirical facts being configurations of these objects. However, if psychological facts are subjective and intentional then their objects are also so, and the meanings of psychological words received from reference to these objects remain also subjective. In order to maintain also the objectivity of psychical objects Wittgenstein had to avoid the intentionality of the psychical states, the empirical facts of psychology. Thus he had to separate intentional thoughts from psychical states and to locate these thoughts themselves in the transcendental "metaphysical subject," outside the world of facts and reality of objects (Peirce, *CP*: 2.221-3.11, 4.1121-121, 5.5421,5.641, 6.41, 6.423; cf. Nesher, 1992b. Comp. Pears, 1986: 154-155).2 In the *Tractatus*, linguistic meanings are formed by the metaphysical subject projecting his thoughts as linguistic senses into the propositional facts of the world and connecting their names with the objects of reality. Hence, if there are different metaphysical subjects they have different thoughts that are projected differently and give different meanings to language (cf. Wittgenstein, *T*:##5.62-5.641; PG:163ff., 213f.; cf. Nesher, 1992b: #II). Yet, with this solution Wittgenstein could not avoid solipsism and subjectivism for how can a metaphysical subject compare his thoughts and projected rules with other metaphysical subjects, if such beings could be at all? (Cf. Nesher, 1979, 1986: II).

In this way Wittgenstein returned to the subjectivism that he and Frege attempted to avoid. In order to achieve objectivity of the meaning of language and of knowledge, Wittgenstein had to criticize both mentalism and solipsism without falling back, with Frege, into the Platonistic pitfall. Wittgenstein's later philosophy critically evaluated the so called mentalistic approaches of Russell's *The Analysis of Mind* (1921) and James's *The Principles of Psychology* (1890). Hence, Wittgenstein first argued that mental states are only ornaments and idle knobs, which have no real function in language-games and in the human form of life (cf. PI##270-280, 132; C&E:429). Secondly, he suggested that we understand the meaning of language not in the heavenly Platonic thoughts but in the framework of the public "language-game" based on "the common behavior of mankind", "the form of life", as the independent "hard rock" that grants meaning its objectivity (PI##19, 23, 241, pp. 226; OC##94-99, 114, 446). These concepts become the corner stones for the understanding of the objectivity of language meaning in the framework of his cognitive behaviorism (e.g., RPP I: #927, BB:4, 47; PI#36; comp. Pears, 1986:154-155, 1988:208ff.; Hallett, 1977:43-44; Newell, 1986:65).

**3.4. Criticizing Wittgenstein and Putnam for Rejecting Mental Meaning** In this paper I will argue against Wittgenstein's position about the place of the inner experience in the meaning of language. Wittgenstein makes a philosophical-categorical mistake in assuming that images, feelings, and emotions are *objects* of "psychological concepts" (cf. *RPP* II: #62 (1980); comp. M. & J. Hintikka, 1986: Ch. 10; Budd, 1989: Chs. I, III, VII. Comp. *BB*: 47). These inner experience processes are not objects at all and, therefore, are also not objects of linguistic names, but rather "private" cognitive signs representing internal physiological and external physical processes. I will claim that these "private" signs are rather interpreted in our "public" conduct and linguistic behavior, and that these acts of interpretation are also cognitive processes. The "private language" of sensations, feelings, and attention, and the behavioral "public language" interpreting them, can only be separated abstractly, as they are merely different stages of the same cognitive process. Putnam (e.g., 1975: Ch. 12, 1981: Chs. 2, 3, 1983: Ch. 4) claims to follow Wittgenstein in rejecting mental states as components of language and its meaning.3 The difficulties with his case arguments will be discussed, and a pragmaticist alternative to Wittgenstein's and Putnam's anti-mentalist position will show that meaning and reference are cognitive processes of which mental images and mental acts are essential components, without which neither non-verbal behavior nor verbal language can work. Yet, these "subjective" components are not the ultimate source of our meaning, because they are developed and interpreted in social inquiry and communication.

**4. WITTGENSTEIN AND PRAGMATISM: ON THE TRUE MEANING AND KNOWLEDGE OF OUR CONVENTIONS**

# 4.1. The Epistemology of Forms of Life and Their Conventions

In Wittgenstein’s conceptions of *forms of life* and their *conventions*, there is no clear indication whether there can be any objective criteria for understanding how they can be known and considered as the framework for our entire cognitive life. The challenge is to show how the common-sense knowledge of those conceptions can make them valid and true explanations of human activity (Nesher, 1994).

To *imagine* language means to *imagine* form of life. (Wittgenstein,1953 *PI*: 19)

Indeed, according to Wittgenstein, to understand language is to consider it as a component of our activities in language-games, operating in the framework of our entire form of life.

Here the term “language-*game*” is meant to bring into permanence the fact that the *speaking* of language is part of an activity, or of a form of life. (Wittgenstein, 1953 *PI*: 23)

The difficulty is to show how we understand each other in different language-games and, moreover, how we can distinguish between true and false in the activity of *speaking* in language-games.

It is what human beings *say* that is true or false, and they agree in the *language* they use. That is not agreement in opinions but in form of life. (Wittgenstein,1953 *PI*: 241)

What has to be accepted, the given, is—so one could say—*form of life*. (Wittgenstein, 1953 *PI*: p. 226)

Accordingly, we accept our *form of life* as a given and, hence, to be our last criterion for understanding each other, i.e., as our accepted conventions, but without being proved true the conventions cannot be the criteria for agreement on truth and falsity, but only the mode of behavior. In that case, however, the assumptions of truth and falsity of linguistic behavior is no more than an empty convention, since Wittgenstein cannot explain how our linguistic cogitations can be true, in the sense of “agreement with reality” (Wittgenstein, 1950-1951, *OC*: #215). Therefore, the epistemological difficulty is to explain how our *forms of life* can serve as criteria of agreement for our linguistic behaviors in language-games in our life if we cannot prove our true knowledge of them. We can only conclude that by assuming that our forms of life are common to us without providing proof of their veracity as common knowledge, they remain a *mythology*, although in most cases, it is felt grounded (Wittgenstein,1950-1951, *OC*: #95). Accordingly, there is no commonly accepted criteria for truth and falsity of any eventual agreement on our social behaviors to be the rules for the meanings of our activities in language-games (Wittgenstein, 1950-1951, *OC*: #204; Nesher, 2005).

The concept of *the given* is the Positivistic-Analytical *sense data*, the so called facts of the world, which are accepted as given but without proving their truth they are merely our perceptual cognitions, which we accept tacitly most of the time (Davidson, 1986; Nesher, 2002: VI). Wittgenstein’s conception of meaning and use in language-games is of the Ordinary Language Philosophy, as the given forms of life, and his *Philosophy of Common-sense*, which is only the phenomenological investigation of our ways of behavior in speaking language. Yet, Wittgenstein cannot explain how we can commonly behave common-sensically, and the difficulty remains how can the meanings of our behavior serve as the criteria for judging their truth, without any objective criteria? And if we cannot prove them to be objectively true, then we cannot presume to understand either our behaviors or our basic judgments. (Wittgenstein, 1950-1951, *OC*: ## 38, 308; Nesher, 1992, 1994, 2005).

# 4.2. Wittgenstein on Propositional *Meanings in Use* and William James’ *Practical Consequences* vs. Peirce on *Truth*

It is illuminating to see the similarity between Wittgenstein’s conception of *behavioral-linguistic meaning* in *use* and James’ conception of meaning and truth as traceable through their *behavioral practical consequences*, which can be attributed to Wittgenstein’s interest in James’s writings and their eventual influence on his own theories (Wittgenstein, 1954, *PI*: pp. 219-220, 950-1951, *OC*: #422; Goodman, 2002).

… I have tried to show that, even if Wittgenstein was not in the strict sense either a “pragmatist” nor a “neo-Kantian” he shares with pragmatism a certain Kantian heritage (which William James, too, was extremely loathe to acknowledge), and he also shares a central – perhaps *the* central – emphasis with pragmatism: the emphasis on the primacy of practices. (Putnam, 1995: 52; comp. Nesher, 2005c)

In this context it is interesting to follow the controversy between Peirce’s and James’s understanding of the Pragmatic conception of meaning, by either the proof of its truth or by its practical consequences.

The pragmatist method in such cases [of disputes] is to try to interpret each notion by tracing its respective practical consequences. What difference would it practically make to anyone if this notion rather than that notion were true? If no practical difference whatever can be traced, then the alternatives mean practically the same thing, and all dispute is idle. (James, 1907: 28)

As we can see the Jamesian “respective practical consequences” is the alternative to the Peircean Cognitive Proof so, due to James’ Kantianism that lack the theory of Truth and thus he is looking to the alternative, let us say, the Pure Common-Sensist versus Peircean “Critical Common-Sensist” in his separating from and criticizing the Kantian epistemology (Peirce, 1905 *EP*II: #25, 353-4).

In a nutshell, it is the Jamesian position to consider behavior as based on the semiotic interpretation of meanings; if our interpretations lead us to accomplish our intentions, they can be considered *behaviorally* true. Although James’ formulation seems to echo Peirce’s initial explanation of the Pragmatic Maxim of 1878, however, later (about 1898-1907) Peirce elaborated his realist epistemology and dub it named his epistemology *Pragmaticism*, to separate it from James’ *Pragmatism*. Thus according to Peirce, proving the true interpretation of cognitive meanings is connected to the proof the true representation of reality and this is the condition for the successful conduct in such known reality (Nesher, 1983, 2018). However, epistemologically, James’ Pragmatism is rather similar to Peirce’s early Pragmatism, still being nominalist and “pure Kantist”, but in controversy with Peirce’s mature Realist Pragmaticism as Peirce admitted:

The present writer was a pure Kantist until he was forces by successive steps into Pragmaticism. The Kantist has only to abjure from the bottom of his heart the proposition that a thing-in-itself can, however indirectly, be conceived; and then correct the details of Kant’s doctrine, and he will find himself to have become a Critical Common-Sensist. (Peirce, 1905 *EP*II: #25, 353-4)

Moreover, the philosophers of our times that call themselves Pragmatists like Popper, Davidson, Putnam, Hintikka, Reacher, and many more are based on Peircean early writings and unfortunately they remained, like the early Peirce as pure Kantist and Nominalists.

Pragmaticism makes the ultimate intellectual purport of what you please to consist in conceived conditional resolutions, or their substance, and therefore, the conditional propositions, with their hypothetical antecedents, in which such resolution consist, being the ultimate nature of meaning, must be capable of being true, that is, of expressing whatever there be which is such as the proposition expresses, independently of being thought to be so in any judgment, or being represented to be so in any other symbol of any man or men. (Peirce, *CP*: 5.453, 1905)

Kant’s *Transcendental logic* as the justification of the *Transcendental empty concepts* to meator clear the *blind objects* of the *sensual intuitions* and give meanings to these concepts. But, at the end Kant was unsuccessful in his such enterprise due to the unbridgeable Gap in his epistemology between the Transcendental *formal* components and the Sensual *material* components of cognition as he admitted in a letter to is friend, 1798. Thus we can understand that the forms of the *empty concepts* cannot have any meanings without closing the Gap between the Transcendental empty language and the blind objects of the sensual intuition and in this way we can understand Peircean conception of the Kantian nominalism namely, names of concepts without content meanings which led Peirce to his, let us say, the contra Copernican Revolution of Kant, as his realist epistemology.

To say, as the article of January of 1878 seems to intend, that it is just as an arbitrary “usage of speech” choses to arrange its thoughts, is as much as to decide against the reality of the property, since the real is that which is such as it is regardless of how it is, in any time, thought to be. (Peirce, *CP*: 5.457, 1905)

The above is the criticism of the phenomenalist nominalism of James’ Practicalist Pragmatism and, indirectly, of the ordinary-language language-game of Wittgenstein’s conventionalism. According to Peirce’s realist epistemology, the meaning of the basic intellectual concepts, the linguistic symbols, can be interpreted and proved true by quasi-proving the truth of our perceptual judgments as our basic true facts representing external reality (Nesher, 2002: X). Hence, our conduct in reality can be considered as the extension of the proof the truth of a proposition or a theory, which through them we are able to accomplish our resolves (Peirce, *CP*: 5.467, 1907).

But that the *total* meaning of the predication of an intellectual concept consists in affirming that, under all conceivable circumstances of a given kind, the subject of the predication would (or would not) behave in a certain way, —that is, that it either would, or would not, be true that under given experiential circumstances (or under a given proportion of them, taken *as the would occur* in experience) certain facts would exist, —*that* proposition I take to be the kernel of pragmatism. (Peirce, *EP*II (1893-1913): #28, p. 402, *MS* 318, 1907)

Hence the core distinction between Peirce’s Pragmaticism and James’ Pragmatism is that according to the former, our ensuing conduct is based on the proved true interpretation of meaning and proved true propositions and theories representation of reality and insuring conduct, and not reversely, as James contends, that the truth of conduct determines their meaning and truth.

*‘The true,’ to put it very briefly, is only the expedient in the way of our thinking, just as ‘the right’ is only the expedient in the way, of our behaving*.(James, *Pragmatism*, 1907: 106)

In the following we can detect the similarity between the Kantian conception of the Reflective Judgment the beauty of artworks by feelings or satisfactions and not by proving the truth of cognitions to enable the normative conduct and moreover, according tp the realist Pragmaticism there are no *degree of truth* a`la James but complete probed truth yet relative to the accepted proof-conditions (Nesher, 2002: X).

Well, I need hardly explain that *that degree of truth is also provided for in my account of the matter*. And if satisfactions are the marks of truth’s presence, we may add that any less true substitute for such true idea would prove less satisfactory. (James, *The Meaning of Truth*, 1907: 254)

Thus we can understand the controversy between Peirce’s Pragmaticism and James’ Pragmatism, namely his “Radical empiricism,” and also, how it relates to Wittgenstein, as he follows the Jamesian Practicalism, by understanding meaning in practical use (Wittgenstein, *WL* 1930-1932: 75-76). However, according to the Peircean realist epistemology, the proof of the truth of our interpretation of meaning is gained by proving the truth of our propositional representation of Reality which is independent of our experience. Such proof constitutes the objective criteria with which we seek to prove our knowledge of cognitive meaning and conduct in reality (Nesher, 2018). Hence, given that without knowledge of external reality we cannot achieve our purposes and gain “satisfaction” through acting, the behavior is the application of the experiential knowledge and not the criterion of it (Peirce, 1893-1913, *EP*II: #28).

This is the difference between the Peircean Pragmatic Maxim of his early writings, from 1878, and his Pragmaticist Maxim, expressed in his controversy with James’ Pragmatic “Practicalism” (which James presented in his 1898 lecture in California), and Peirce’s mature epistemology, of the years 1903-1907 (Fisch, 1986: 284-585).

# 4.3. Wittgenstein as Phenomenalist in his Epistemology of the *Language-Games* and the *Form of Life* and His Return to Solipsism Is Enclosed in the Prison of Phenomenal Form of Life

Interestingly, for James *use* or *usefulness* is related to the notion of *Truth,* whereas for Wittgenstein, the *Use* is the criterion for *Meaning* in playing language-games, probably because Wittgenstein does not have a real theory of truth and meaning in his late philosophy (Wittgenstein, 1946: *RPP*: #266, 1953: *PI*: ##136-138, 1950-1951, *OC*: #200; Ellenbogen, 2003).

191. Well if everything speaks for a hypothesis and nothing against it—is it certainly true? One may designate it as such—but does it agree with reality, with the facts? — With this question, you are already going round in a circle.

200. Really “The proposition is either true or false” only means that it must be possible to decide for or against it. But this does not say what the ground for such a decision is like.

378. Knowledge is in the end based on acknowledgment. (Wittgenstein, *OC*: 1950-1951)

Indeed, we use the words *true* and *false* to say something about propositions pertaining to our eventual knowledge, but on what grounds? What can be the criterion, for such a decision, if it is not possible to represent the reality in which we live? If propositions cannot relate to reality, how can we determine whether they are true or false, and how does the absence of such criteria affect the Language-Games in our form of life? According to Wittgenstein, the ultimate criterion for judging the empirical propositions of our linguistic behavior is not whether they correspond to reality or facts, but if they correspond to the “ungrounded way of acting” (Wittgenstein, 1950-1951, *OC*: #110). In the Jamesian behaviorist phenomenology, the meaning and truth of our linguistic behavior is in the practical acting,but the difficulty is about the criterion for our action, and how can we know whether we act in an effectively or illusory manner if we do not know the reality in which we act, or if our behavior is indeed *expedient* (James, 1907: 106). The “radical empirism” of James and the linguistic behaviorism of Wittgenstein, are enclosed in the phenomenal human experience, wherein inexplicable common-sense is the accepted background. Neither James’s nor Wittgenstein’s conceptions constitute a realistic epistemology and neither offers objective criteria or proof of the truth of the interpreted meaning or of the true representation of reality (Ellenbogen, 2003: I.2.).

266. But you aren’t a pragmatist? No. for I am not saying that a proposition is true if it is useful.

The usefulness, i.e., the use, gives the proposition its special sense, the language-game gives it. (Wittgenstein, 1946, *RPP*).

This can be argued as well, when we understand that Wittgenstein basically accepted the Jamesian phenomenal Practicalism and Deweyan Conductivism without accepting their conceptions of truth, but rather attributing our phenomenal understanding of meanings to our conduct in language-games (Goodman, 1998, 2002). In that respect, it is interesting to note —and I wish to emphasize— that the body of philosophical works of the last two centuries is basically neo-Kantian, including the works of the contemporary “American Pragmatists,” with the exclusion of Peirce (Nesher, 2018).

Indeed, Wittgenstein is philosophizing within his behaviorist *grammatical phenomenology* and looking into the meaning and the use of words and propositions in *language-games*, including the meanings of “true” and “false”, in order to understand common human behavior. However, Wittgenstein’s methodology misses the basic problem of philosophy, namely, how we attain *true knowledge of reality*, including our knowledge of the social reality and of ourselves. Alas, without attaining this knowledge, we cannot explain how we reach our common social conventions, which must be based on proved true meanings and knowledge of ourselves and reality. It seems that Wittgenstein’s behavioral-linguistic approach isolated from reality is related to his type of solipsism, as expressed in his *Tractatus*. Despite his efforts to avoid solipsism, Wittgenstein, like his contemporaries like Russell, could not explain how we can go beyond the subjective cognitive-phenomenal perceptions to truthfully represent ourselves and the external reality, as Russell sorrowfully admitted (Russell, 1914, 1959; Pears, 1988). Indeed, there are traces in Wittgenstein’s later epistemology of the criterion for understanding the human behaviors that serves as a common background of human experience in this *form of life*.

Nevertheless, without having any proof of its truth, this understanding of common human behavior is no more than a myth, because humans cannot accept any convention without proving its truth (Wittgenstein, *OC* §95). Only objective criteria can suffice if we are to prove our ability to truthfully represent the external reality, and only by attaining such proof, can we agree to accept our propositions, and be released from the *prison* of our subjective, mental, and private languages. Indeed, the role of the philosophers is to elaborate the epistemology of true representation of reality to explain human knowledge and conduct in it and this we can do by starting from our initial feelings and emotions interpretations which are the basis of the phenomenalism but in continuing to interpret them into rational conceptions of our perceptual judgments to prove the truth of them as our *basic facts* representing Reality, as I elaborated also in the *epistemic logic*, as the basis of all our knowledge, Theoretic, Ethic And Aesthetic (Nesher, 2002, 2018, 2021).

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