

LUDWIG WITTGENSTEIN

---

PHILOSOPHICAL  
REMARKS

Edited from his posthumous  
writings by Rush Rhees  
and translated into English  
by Raymond Hargreaves and  
Roger White

*The University of Chicago Press*  
*Chicago*

### III

But we can look at recognition, like memory, in two different ways: as a source of the concepts of the past and of identity, or as a way of checking what happened in the past, and on identity.

If I can see two patches of colour alongside one another and say that they have the same colour, and if I say that this patch has the same colour as one I saw earlier, the identity assertion means something different in the two cases, since it is differently verified.

To know that it *was* the same colour is something different from knowing that it *is* the same colour.

20 You can draw a plan from a description. You can translate a description into a plan.

The rules of translation here are not essentially different from the rules for translating from one verbal language into another.

A wrong conception of the way language functions destroys, of course, the *whole* of logic and everything that goes with it, and doesn't just create some merely local disturbance.

If you exclude the element of intention from language, its whole function then collapses.

21 What is essential to intention is the picture: the picture of what is intended.

It may look as if, in introducing intention, we were introducing an uncheckable, a so-to-speak metaphysical element into our discussion. But the essential difference between the picture conception and the conception of Russell, Ogden and Richards, is that it regards recognition as seeing an internal relation, whereas in their view this is an external relation.

That is to say, for me, there are only two things involved in the fact that a thought is true, i.e. the thought and the fact; whereas for Russell, there are three, i.e. thought, fact and a third event which, if it occurs, is just recognition. This third event, a sort of satisfaction of hunger (the other two being hunger and eating a particular kind of food), could, for example, be a feeling of pleasure. It's a matter of complete indifference here how we describe this third event; that is irrelevant to the essence of the theory.

The causal connection between speech and action is an external relation, whereas we need an internal one.

22 I believe Russell's theory amounts to the following: if I give someone an order and I am happy with what he then does, then he has carried out my order.

(If I wanted to eat an apple, and someone punched me in the stomach, taking away my appetite, then it was this punch that I originally wanted.)

The difficulty here in giving an account of what's going on is that if someone makes false assumptions about the way language works and tries to give an account of something with language conceived as functioning in this way, the result is not something false but nonsense.

Thus in terms of Russell's theory I could not express things by saying that the order is carried out *if* I am made happy by what happens, because I have also to recognise my being made happy, and this requires that something *else* should happen which I cannot describe in advance.

23 Suppose you were now to say: pictures do occur, but they are not what is regular; but how strange then, if they happen to be there and a conflict were now to arise between the two criteria of truth and falsity. How should it be adjudicated?

In that case, there would, of course, be no distinction between a command and its countermand, since both could be obeyed in the same way.

If when a language is first learnt, speech, as it were, is connected up to action – i.e. the levers to the machine – then the question arises, can these connections possibly break down? If they can't, then I have to accept any action as the right one; on the other hand if they can, what criterion have I for their having broken down? For what means have I for *comparing* the original arrangement with the subsequent action?

It is such *comparison* which is left out in Russell's theory. And comparison doesn't consist in confronting the representation with what it represents and through this confrontation expecting a phenomenon, which, as I have said, itself could not be described in advance.

(Experience decides whether a proposition is true or false, but not its sense.)

24 How is a picture meant? The intention never resides in the picture itself, since, no matter how the picture is formed, it can always be meant in different ways. But that doesn't mean that the way the picture is meant only emerges when it elicits a certain reaction, for the intention is already expressed in the way I *now* compare the picture with reality.

In philosophy we are always in danger of giving a mythology of the symbolism, or of psychology: instead of simply saying what everyone knows and must admit.

What if someone played chess and, when he was mated, said, 'Look, I've won, for *that* is the goal I was aiming at'? We would say that such a man simply wasn't trying to play chess, but another game; whereas Russell would have to say that if anyone plays with the pieces and is satisfied with the outcome, then he has won at chess.

I expect that the rod will be 2 m high *in the same sense* in which it is now 1 m 99 cm high.

25 The fulfilment of an expectation doesn't consist in a third thing happening which you could also describe in another way than just as 'the fulfilment of the expectation', thus for example as a feeling of satisfaction or pleasure or whatever.

For expecting that *p* will be the case must be the same as expecting that this expectation will be fulfilled; whereas, if I am wrong,

expecting  $p$  would be different from expecting that this expectation will be fulfilled.

Isn't it like this: My theory is completely expressed in the fact that the state of affairs satisfying the expectation of  $p$  is represented by the proposition  $p$ ? And so, not by the description of a *totally* different event.

26 I should like to say, if there were only an external connection no connection could be described at all, since we only describe the external connection by means of the internal one. If this is lacking, we lose the footing we need for describing anything at all – just as we can't shift anything with our hands unless our feet are planted firmly.

Causality rests on an observed uniformity. Now, that doesn't mean that a uniformity we have observed until now will go on for ever, but it must be an established fact that events have been uniform until now; *that* cannot in turn be the insecure result of a series of observations which again is itself not a datum, but depends on another equally insecure series, etc. *ad inf.*

If I wish that  $p$  were the case, then of course  $p$  is not the case and there must be a surrogate for  $p$  in the state of wishing, just as, of course, in the expression of the wish.

There's nothing left for me, in answer to the question, 'What does  $p$  instruct you to do?', but to say it, i.e. to give another sign.

But can't you give someone an instruction by showing him how to do something? Certainly: and then you have to tell him 'Now copy that'. Perhaps you have already had examples of this before but now you have to say to him that what happened then should happen now. That still means: sooner or later there is a leap from the sign to what is signified.

27 The meaning of a question is the method of answering it: then what is the meaning of 'Do two men really mean the same by the word "white"?'?

Tell me *how* you are searching, and I will tell you *what* you are searching for.

If I understand an order but do not carry it out, then understanding it can only consist in a process which is a *surrogate* for its execution, and so in a *different* process from its execution.

I should like to say, assuming the surrogate process to be a picture doesn't get me anywhere, since even that does not do away with the transition from the picture to what is depicted.

If you were to ask: 'Do I expect the future itself, or only something similar to the future?', that would be nonsense. Or, if you said, 'We can never be certain that *that* was what we really expected.'

*Co-ordinating* signals always contains something general, otherwise the co-ordination is unnecessary. It is a co-ordination which has to be understood in the particular case.

If I say to someone that it will be fine *tomorrow*, he gives evidence of his having understood by not trying to verify the proposition *now*.

28 Expecting is connected with looking for: looking for something presupposes that I know what I am looking for, without what I am looking for having to exist.

Earlier I would have put this by saying that searching presupposes the elements of the complex, but not *the* combination that I was looking for.

And that isn't a bad image: for, in the case of language, that would be expressed by saying that the sense of a proposition only presupposes the grammatically correct use of certain words.

How do I know that I have found *that* which I was looking for? (That what I expected has occurred, etc.)

I cannot confront the previous expectation with what happens. The event that replaces the expectation, is a reply to it.

But for that to be so, necessarily *some* event must take its place, and that of course implies that the expectation must be in the same space as what is expected.

In this context I am talking about an expectation only as something that is necessarily either fulfilled or disappointed: therefore not of an expectation in the void.

29 The event which takes the place of an expectation, answers it: i.e. the replacement constitutes the answer, so that no question can arise whether it really is the answer. Such a question would mean putting the *sense* of a proposition in question.

'I expect to see a red patch' describes, let's say, *my present mental state*. 'I see a red patch' describes what I expect: a completely different event from the first. Couldn't you now ask whether the word 'red' has a different meaning in the two cases? Doesn't it look as if the first proposition uses an alien and inessential event to describe my mental state? Perhaps like this: I now find myself in a state of expectation which I characterize by saying that it is satisfied by the event of my seeing a red patch. That is, as though I were to say 'I am hungry and know from experience that eating a particular kind of food will or would satisfy my hunger.' But expectation isn't like that! Expectation is not given an external description by citing what is expected, as is hunger by citing what food satisfies it – in the last resort the appropriate food of course can still only be a matter of conjecture. No, describing an expectation by means of what is expected is giving an internal description.

The way the word 'red' is used is *such that* it has a use in all these propositions: 'I expect to see a red patch', 'I remember a red patch', 'I am afraid of a red patch', etc.

30 If I say 'This is the same event as I expected', and 'This is the same event as also happened on that occasion', then the word

'same' has two different meanings. (And you wouldn't normally say 'This is the same as I expected' but 'This is what I expected'.)

Could we imagine any language at all in which expecting *p* was described without using '*p*'?

Isn't that *just as* impossible as a language in which ~ *p* would be expressed without using '*p*'?

Isn't this simply because *expectation* uses the same symbol as the thought of its fulfillment?

For if we think in signs, then we also expect and wish in signs.

(And you could almost say that someone could hope in German and fear in English, or vice versa.)

31 Another mental process belonging to this group, and which ties in with all these things, is *intention*. You could say that language is like a control room operated with a particular *intention* or built for a particular purpose.

If a mechanism is *meant* to act as a brake, but for some reason accelerates a machine then the purpose of the mechanism cannot be found out from it alone.

If you were then to say 'That's a brake lever but it doesn't work', you would be talking about intention. It is just the same as when we still call a broken clock a clock.

(Psychological – trivial – discussions of expectation, association, etc. always leave out what is really remarkable, and you notice that they talk all around, without touching on the vital point.)

32 I only use the terms the expectation, thought, wish, etc., that *p* will be the case, for processes having the multiplicity that finds

expression in *p*, and thus only if they are *articulated*. But in that case they are what I call the interpretation of signs.

I only call an *articulated* process a thought: you could therefore say 'only what has an articulated expression'.

(Salivation – no matter how precisely measured – is *not* what I call expecting.)

Perhaps we have to say that the phrase 'interpretation of signs' is misleading and instead we ought to say 'the use of signs'. For 'interpretation' makes it sound as if one were now to correlate the word 'red' with the colour (when it isn't even there), etc. And now the question again arises: what is the connection between sign and world? Could I look for something unless the space were there to look for it in?

Where does the sign link up with the world?

33 To look for something is, surely, an expression of expectation. In other words: How you search in one way or another expresses what you expect.

Thus the idea would be: what expectation has in common with reality is that it refers to another point in the *same* space. ('Space' in a completely general sense.)

I see a patch getting nearer and nearer to the place where I expect it.

If I say I remember a colour – say, the colour of a certain book – you could take as evidence for this the fact that I was in a position to mix this colour or recognize it again, or say of other colours that they are more like or less like the colour I remember.

Expectation, so to speak, prepares a yardstick for measuring the event when it comes and what's more, in such a way that it will necessarily be possible to measure the one with the other, whether the event coincides with the expected graduation mark or not.

It is, say, as if I guess a man's height by looking at him, saying

'I believe he's 5 ft 8 in' and then set about measuring him with a tape measure. Even if I don't know how tall he is, I still know that his height is measured with a tape measure and not a weighing machine.

If I expect to see red, then I *prepare* myself for red.

I can prepare a box for a piece of wood to fit in, just because the wood, whatever it's like, must have a volume.

If there were no connection between the act of expectation and reality, you could expect a nonsense.

34 The expectation of *p* and the occurrence of *p* correspond perhaps to the hollow shape of a body and the solid shape. Here *p* corresponds to the shape of the volume, and the different ways in which this shape is given correspond to the distinction between expectation and occurrence.

If I say 'I can make you a sketch of that any time you like', then that presupposes that I *am* in the same space as the business involved.

Our expectation anticipates the event. In this sense, it makes a model of the event. But we can only make a model of a fact in *the* world we live in, i.e. the model must be essentially related to the world we live in and what's more, independently of whether it's true or false.

If I say that the representation must treat of my world, then you cannot say 'since otherwise I could not verify it', but 'since otherwise it wouldn't even begin to make sense to me'.

35 In expecting, the part corresponding to searching in a space is the directing of one's attention.

Surely the strange thing about expectation is that we know that it is an *expectation*. For we couldn't, e.g., imagine the following situation: I have some image or other before me and say: 'Now, I don't know whether it's an expectation or a memory, or an image without any relation to reality.'

And *that* is what shows that expectation is immediately connected with reality.

For of course you couldn't say that the future the expectation speaks of – I mean the concept of the future – was also only a surrogate for the real future.

For I await in just as real a sense as I *wait*.

Could you also say: You cannot describe an expectation unless you can describe the present reality; or, you cannot describe an expectation unless you can give a description *comparing* the expectation with the present, of the form: *Now* I see a red circle *here*, and expect a blue square *there later on*.

That is to say the yardstick of language must be applied at the point which is present and then points out beyond it – roughly speaking, in the direction of the expectation.

36 It only makes sense to give the length of an object if I have a method for finding the object – since otherwise I cannot apply a yardstick to it.

What I once called 'objects', simples, were simply what I could refer to without running the risk of their possible non-existence; i.e. that for which there is neither existence nor non-existence, and that means: what we can speak about *no matter what may be the case*.

The visual table is not composed of electrons.

What if someone said to me 'I expect three knocks on the door' and I replied 'How do you know *three knocks* exist?' – 'Wouldn't that be just like the question 'How do you know six feet exist?' after someone has said 'I believe A is 6 feet high'?'

37 Can absolute silence be confused with inner deafness, meaning *having* no acquaintance with the concept of sound? If that were so, you couldn't distinguish lacking the sense of hearing from lacking any other sense.

But isn't this exactly the same question as: 'Is a man who cannot see any red around him at present, in the same position as someone incapable of seeing red?'

You could of course say: The one can still imagine red, but the red we imagine is not the same as the red we see.

38 Our ordinary language has no means for describing a particular shade of a colour, such as the brown of my table. Thus it is incapable of producing a picture of this colour.

If I want to tell someone what colour some material is to be, I send him a sample, and obviously this sample belongs to language; and equally the memory or image of a colour that I conjure by a word, belongs to language.

The memory and the reality must be in *one* space.

I could also say: the image and the reality are in *one* space.

If I compare two colour samples in front of me with one another, and if I compare a colour sample with my image of a sample, that is similar to comparing, on the one hand, the lengths of two rods standing up against each other and on the other of two that are apart. In that case, I can say perhaps, they are the same height, if, turning my gaze horizontally, I can glance from the tip of the one to the tip of the other.

As a matter of fact I have never seen a black patch become gradually lighter and lighter until it is white and then reddened until it is red; but I know that this would be possible because I can imagine it; i.e. I operate with my images in colour space and do with them what would be possible with the colours. And my words

take their sense from the fact that they more or less completely reflect the operations of the images perhaps in the way in which a score can be used to describe a piece of music that has been played, but for example, does *not* reproduce the emphasis on each individual note.

Grammar gives language the necessary degrees of freedom.

#### IV

39 The colour octahedron is grammar, since it says that you can speak of a reddish blue but not of a reddish green, etc.

If I can only see something black and say it isn't red, how do I know that I am not talking nonsense, i.e. that it could be red, that there is red? Unless red is just another graduation mark on the same scale as black. What is the difference between 'That is not red' and 'That is not abracadabra'? Obviously I need to know that 'black', which describes the actual state of affairs (or is used in describing it), is that in whose place 'red' stands in the description.

But what does that mean? How do I know it isn't 'soft' in whose place 'red' stands? Can you say red is less different from black than from soft? That would of course be nonsense.

40 How far can you compare the colours with points on a scale? Can you say that the direction leading from black to red is a different one from the one you must take from black to blue?

For, if there is black in front of me and I am expecting red, that's different from having black in front of me and expecting blue. And if there is a valid comparison with a ruler, the word 'blue' must so to speak give me the direction in which I go from black to blue; so to speak the method by which I reach blue.

Couldn't we also say: 'The proposition must give a construction for the position of blue, the point the fact must reach if such and such is to be blue'?

The fact that I can say that one colour comes closer to what I expected than another belongs here.