

The Scenery of Knowledge's Language-Game in Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*

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1. Our Claims

Our purpose is to take into account Wittgenstein's analyses about knowledge in the *Philosophical Investigations*, in order to articulate them and elaborate a concept of knowledge (*Wissen*). My first claim is that this is possible. My second claim is that the complexity of this concept has not been taken into consideration and its originality has been misunderstood in the horizon of the Philosophy of Mind (Vohra, A. 1986), of Philosophy of Psychology (Schulte, J. 1993; Budd, M. 1989). My objection is that the analysis of "knowledge" presupposes the dissolution of mind and psychology. My third claim concerns the interpretation of the verb "to know" from K. Bühler's point of view as a kind of signal (*Signal*), at least in some uses, and as a symbol or an expression in some others. This connection concerning "knowledge" has not been brought out in, e.g., (Hacker, P.M.S. 1993; von Savigny, E. and Scholz, O.R. 1995).

2. Wittgenstein's Concept of Knowledge

Wittgenstein analyzes the use of the word "knowledge" (*Wissen*). Then this word becomes a language-game. That is to say, it is applied correctly under certain circumstances. All these constitute the scenery (*Schauplatz*) of our language-game. Wittgenstein emphasizes the network of actions (*Handlungen*), which constitute the scenes (*Szenen*) corresponding to every move of the language-game. Consequently, we do not find out a mere state of consciousness, mental process, or experience. Accordingly, the concept of psychology is not sufficient for this approach. We need to know in what family of language-games we learn its use. Wittgenstein also advises: "you should consider the occasion and purpose of these phrases" (PI p. 221).

Wittgenstein considers that "to know" has a grammar. This one is closely related to that of "can", "is able to", and also to that of "to understand". It is a matter of a mastery of a technique (PI § 150). In this sense, to know is a condition of possibility of the denomination: "One has already to know (or to be able to) something in order to be capable of asking a thing's name" (PI § 30).

Wittgenstein identifies, as one possibility at least, knowledge and concept when he says: "Isn't my knowledge, my concept of a game, completely expressed in the explanations that I could give" (PI § 75).

For Wittgenstein, "to know" is primarily a queer phenomenon. He accepts to consider phenomena as "mental processes" (*seelische Vorgänge*), but these take roots in the ground of actions and human body.

With regard to doubt, " 'I know' may mean 'I do not doubt' " (PI p.221). Doubt is not logically excluded from knowledge. It belongs to the horizon of knowledge: "but does not mean that the words 'I doubt' are senseless" (PI *ibid*).

When does doubt begin?: "if we cut out human behaviour, which is the expression of sensation, it looks as if I might *legitimately* begin to doubt afresh" (PI § 288).

Even knowledge can become belief: "One says 'I know' where one can also say 'I believe' or 'I suspect'" (PI p.221), where we can become convinced (*sich überzeugen*).

Paradoxically, knowledge cannot be applied to the others: "I can know what someone else is thinking, not what I am thinking. It is correct to say 'I know what you are thinking', and wrong to say 'I know what I am thinking'" (PI p.222). Neither can be applied to sensations: "I cannot be said to learn of them. I have them." (PI § 246).

For Wittgenstein, there is a particular use of "to know" when we say: "Now I know", "Now I can do it" and so on (PI § 151). Concerning an example of series of numbers, it "is something that makes its appearance in a moment" (PI *ibid*). We have an assumption (*Annahme*) that is confirmed. And finally, there is the human body as part of the scenery: "he watches A writing his numbers down with a certain feeling of tension" (PI § 151), or he has perhaps the sensation "of a light quick intake startled" (PI *ibid*). This represents a certain pragmatics of human body, which exceeds the domain of psyche. Besides, human behavior is able to put off-center the psyche: "We can also imagine the case where nothing at all occurred in B's mind (*Geist*) except that he suddenly said 'Now I know how to go on'" (PI § 179).

3. Taxonomy of knowledge and Bühler's viewpoint

Wittgenstein distinguishes three cases of use of "to know" from the point of view of saying:

1) "how many feet high Mont Blanc is" (PI § 78). It is surprising that one can know something and not be able to say it. It is the matter of descriptions: "what we call 'descriptions' are instruments for particular uses" (PI § 291). For instance, after looking how my finger was moving, knowing it is "being able to describe it" (PI p.185). This approach concerns *Darstellungsfunktion* proposed by K. Bühler, that is to say, it is a question of symbols.

2) "how the word 'game' is used". It is disputable that we can say it. It concerns a know-how.

3) "how a clarinet sounds" (PI § 78). There is nothing to say: "Certainly not of one like the third" (PI *ibid*). This case is isomorphic to the following use: "I know the direction from which the sound comes; for instance, I look in that direction" (PI § 185). Concerning sensation, "if we construe the grammar of the expression (*Ausdruck*) of sensation on the model of 'object and designation as irrelevant'" (PI § 293). That is to say, we have here Bühler's distinction between expression (*Ausdruck*) and symbol (*Symbol*). Let us consider the following case: "if someone whispers 'It'll go off now', (...), still his words do not describe a feeling; although they and their tone may be a manifestation (*Äusserung*) of his feeling" (PU § 582). In conclusion, we have two Bühler's functions at work: *Darstellungsfunktion* and *Ausdrucksfunktion*.

In these three cases, the *Appellfunktion* of Bühler, performed by signals is not applied. Nevertheless, it is applied in the *Philosophical Investigations*. When Wittgen-

stein analyzes the words "I know how to go on", he concludes that there is no description of a mental state, but a signal (*Signal*): "One might rather call them a 'signal', and we judge whether it was rightly employed by what he goes on to do" (PI § 180). Afterwards, Wittgenstein interprets the words "Now I now!" (PU p.218) also as a signal: "What is the signal for?" (PI *ibid*).*

References

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