

Wittgenstein's Philosophy as Persuasion and the Problem of Style¹

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1. Introduction

The literary styles of Ludwig Wittgenstein's works are markedly different from those of contemporary analytic philosophers. Notably, his two major works, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* and *Philosophical Investigations*, stand out for their distinctive and idiosyncratic styles. Some argue that these unconventional styles may pose challenges for readers trying to grasp Wittgenstein's philosophy². This prompts the question: what is the philosophical significance of Wittgenstein's unique writing style? This paper focuses on addressing inquiries regarding the style of the *Investigations*.

In general, two main responses have emerged regarding this question: externalist and internalist. Externalists hold that "his style is external to method and content, and the latter can be extracted from his writings without any loss of substance" (Kahane et al. 2007, 20). On the other hand, internalists hold that "Wittgenstein's style of writing is an essential part of his philosophical method, and his method and style are internally related" (Stern 2017, 42). Thus, despite the significance of this question, the case is far from complete.

This paper aims to provide an internalist elucidation of Wittgenstein's distinctive style of writing by characterizing his philosophy in terms of persuasion³, for he explicitly states in the preface to the *Investigations* that the style of the book is "connected with the very nature of the investigation⁴." He does not clarify what he means by this remark, and hence, this paper, adopting internalism, allegedly must provide "a clear and well-argued account of what *philosophical* substance (concerning problems, arguments or insights) is lost by rephrasing Wittgenstein's thought in a more conventional manner" (Glock 2007, 63). Although this study does not directly respond to this challenge, it contributes to demonstrating that the challenge is a misconception.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. Section 2 provides an overview of the stylistic features of the *Investigations*. Section 3 is concerned with Wittgenstein's methodological remarks and attempts to characterize his philosophizing as therapies and persuasion. Finally, Section 4 argues that there is an internal connection between the style of the *Investigations* and Wittgenstein's philosophy, that is, that his style is deliberately employed to

better achieve his goals.

2. Stylistic Features of the *Investigations*

First, to address the problem of style, we must identify the stylistic features of the *Investigations*. The most conspicuous stylistic feature of the *Investigations* is that it is composed of numbered remarks rather than seamless, flowing argumentation. Regarding this composition, Wittgenstein says the following in the preface:

The best that I could write would never be more than philosophical remarks; my thoughts soon grew feeble if I tried to force them along a single track against their natural inclination. — And this was, of course, connected with the very nature of the investigation. For it compels us to travel criss-cross in every direction over a wide field of thought.

One might assume that Wittgenstein's inability to write in a more traditional manner forced him to settle for a mere collection of remarks. However, as he asserted, the very nature of his investigation compelled him to write the *Investigations* in the precise manner that he did.

Another feature of his work is the dialogical form. Throughout the history of philosophy, there have been several endeavors to compose dialogues, yet "Wittgenstein does not write dialogue in the sense in which we find in Plato, Berkeley, Hume etc., with named characters to whom remarks are assigned, as in a play script" (Heal 1995, 68). In the *Investigations*, multiple voices⁵, which are not necessarily identifiable, intersect in a complex manner to form a characteristic dialogue. As Beth Savickey notes: "One of the impressive aspects of Wittgenstein's writings is that we can see our own thinking in his writings" (Savickey 1999, 31). In reading the polyphonic dialogue, we identify ourselves with one of the voices and find it examined, criticized and treated in the text. Of course, the highly interactive and conversational feature⁶ of the *Investigations* is Wittgenstein's deliberate contrivance⁷, the purpose of which will be clarified in later sections.

The omnipresence of imaginative similes and metaphors⁸ in the *Investigations* is noticeable. To cite a few examples: language game (*Sprachspiel*), family resemblance (PI §67), philosophy as therapies (PI §133), the fly-bottle (PI §309), etc., all hold fundamental importance for Wittgenstein's philosophy. We can also add his ingenious language games to this list. The

omnipresence is not incidental, or the outcome of Wittgenstein's mere literary inclinations, but rather a philosophically significant feature of his philosophy; he claims that what he invents are new similes (CV 19e) and that "we think of similes as second-best things, but in philosophy they are the best thing of all" (DP 110). Therefore, the abundance of similes and metaphors that characterize the style of *Investigations* is attributable to Wittgenstein's design⁹.

Finally, the performative aspects of the *Investigations* are striking. Like Savickey, I do not refer to Austinian performativity (Savickey 2017; Austin 1975). The performative aspects are pointed out, first and foremost, in Wittgenstein's extensive use of imperatives: Readers are told by Wittgenstein to imagine, suppose, consider, look, remember, compare, describe, etc. Furthermore, Wittgenstein places a plethora of questions everywhere to which he does not provide answers. Hence, the readers—sincere readers—must try to answer those questions for themselves while reading the *Investigations*. The most salient example would be §182, which Emma McClure claims "is almost indistinguishable from a homework assignment in a grammar workbook" (McClure 2017, 153). §182 will be quoted and discussed in Section 4.

3. Philosophical Therapies and Persuasion

In the previous section, the stylistic features of Wittgenstein's *Investigations* were discussed. This section presents Wittgenstein's conception of philosophy as therapy and persuasion. As mentioned in the previous section, Wittgenstein considers philosophy as therapy, the aim of which is to dissolve rather than solve philosophical problems (cf. PI §§133, 254, 255, 593). He emphasizes the plurality of philosophical therapies (PI §133); however, the overall method for dissolving philosophical problems can be regarded as *persuasion*. That is, Wittgenstein's clarifications or therapies take the form not so much of discursive argumentation as of persuasion, although most analytic philosophers seemingly consider discursive argumentation as *the* philosophical method.

In §109 of the *Investigations*, Wittgenstein asserts: "All *explanation* must disappear, and description alone must take its place. And this description gets its light—that is to say, its purpose—from the philosophical problems." Hence, his philosophy is often characterized by descriptive methods. He does not provide explanations or theories, but merely describes the grammar of words of philosophical importance. How is describing the grammar related to the therapeutic conception of philosophy, or philosophy as persuasion?

Wittgenstein's remarks on aesthetic disputes clarify how the description of grammar aids in dissolving philosophical problems. According to Wittgenstein, aesthetics has been misunderstood (LC 1). Aesthetics properly understood does not aim to set up a standard of taste, nor does it seek to define "beauty." Then, what does it do? G. E. Moore reports:

What Aesthetics tries to do, [Wittgenstein] said, is to give *reasons*, e.g. for having this word rather than that in a particular place in a poem, or for having this musical phrase rather than that in a particular place in a piece of music. [...] *Reasons*, he said, in Aesthetics, are "of the nature of further descriptions": e.g. you can make a person see what Brahms was driving at by showing him lots of different pieces by Brahms, or by comparing him with a contemporary author; and all that Aesthetics does is "to draw your attention to a thing", to "place things side by side". [...] And he said that the same sort of "reasons" were given, not only in Ethics, but also in Philosophy. (Moore 1955, 19)

According to Wittgenstein, providing further descriptions is a way to alleviate aesthetic discomfort, such as: "Why does the poet use this word here?" or "Why do these bars give me such a peculiar impression?" (LC 20). As suggested in the quote, descriptions can assuage one's puzzlement by drawing one's attention to certain aspects; that is, by changing one's way of looking at things.

It is noteworthy that Wittgenstein claims that the same sort of reasons are given in philosophy as well. His descriptive method, therefore, can be understood as serving the same purpose. Wittgenstein describes the use of words through various language games, which are intended to function as objects of comparison.

Our clear and simple language-games are not preliminary studies for a future regimentation of language — as it were, first approximations, ignoring friction and air resistance. Rather, the language-games stand there as *objects of comparison* which, through similarities and dissimilarities, are meant to throw light on features of our language. (PI §130)

Objects of comparison, as in aesthetics (cf. LC 20), aid in altering one's way of looking at things (cf. PI §144), by establishing an order (not *the* order) for a particular purpose (PI §132), an order that represents a clear overview in which a philosophical problem dissolves (PI §122). Hence,

“just as in aesthetics, where an apt comparison allows us to see how the pieces of the aesthetic puzzle fit together, so too in philosophy the right object of comparison may reveal the source of our philosophical confusion” (Appelqvist 2023, 59). In this sense, Wittgenstein’s descriptive method is concordant with his therapeutic conception of philosophy.

We have observed a consonance between descriptions, language games, and therapies. Now, the connection between philosophical therapies and persuasion must be clarified. Fortunately, Wittgenstein explicitly contends that he is engaged in persuasion.

I very often draw your attention to certain differences, e.g., in these classes I tried to show you that Infinity is not so mysterious as it looks. What I’m doing is also persuasion. If someone says: “There is not a difference”, and I say: “There is a difference” I am persuading, I am saying “I don’t want you to look at it like that”. (LC 27)

At one point, Wittgenstein contemplated using a quote from *King Lear*, “I’ll teach you differences,” as the motto for the *Investigations*. This fact, seen against the backdrop of the quotation above, indicates that he conceived persuasion as central to the *Investigations*.

As previously argued, Wittgenstein attempts to resolve a philosophical problem by highlighting specific aspects or differences that remain unnoticed with grammatical descriptions or language games. However, whether one is inclined to regard a case differently when given certain similes or analogies (i.e., objects of comparison) is not necessarily determined by discursive argument (cf. PI §144). As Wittgenstein states, we have an urge to misunderstand the workings of our language (PI §109). For example, we have a natural inclination to assume that “the words in language name objects” and “sentences are combinations of such names” (PI §1). The enticing picture of language, often referred to as the Augustinian picture of language, is not necessarily what we ultimately come to accept after its veracity is revealed¹⁰, but rather what resides in our language (PI §115). In other words, the process of learning a language inherently instills captivating pictures that hinder us from obtaining a clear overview of our word usage, consequently leading to philosophical perplexity¹¹. The urge to misunderstand that needs to be overcome is as fundamental as language and the form of life. Therefore, according to Wittgenstein, the difficulty of philosophy we, language users, confront is not one of the intellect but rather a matter of the will or a change of attitude (BT 406). Wittgenstein seeks to alter our attitude toward language, against our natural inclinations, through descriptions. Thus, Anna Boncompagni asserts

that “Wittgenstein’s descriptive method is essentially a method of persuasion” (Boncompagni 2016, 231).

However, this requires further elaboration. Why must *persuasion* be used to get one to accept different objects of comparison to change one’s way of looking at things? Put simply, this is because captivating pictures (e.g., the Augustinian picture) engender philosophical problems that are so fundamental that they determine the attitude that we take in dealing with the problems. For example:

Suppose someone said, “*All* tools serve to modify something. So, a hammer modifies the position of a nail, a saw the shape of a board, and so on.” — And what is modified by a rule, a glue-pot and nails? — “Our knowledge of a thing’s length, the temperature of the glue, and the solidity of a box.” — Would anything be gained by this assimilation of expressions? — (PI §14)

This is an object of comparison Wittgenstein provides to demonstrate the vacuity of the following assertion: “Every word in the language signifies something” (PI §13). Enchanted by a certain picture, individuals often perceive stubborn instances (e.g., a rule, a gluepot, and nails) as those which should be made to conform to the picture, rather than as instances that invalidate the picture. It is “like a pair of glasses on our nose through which we see whatever we look at. It never occurs to us to take them off” (PI §103). Thus, Wittgenstein does not provide a counterexample, but a mere object of comparison (“*All* tools serve to modify something”) to get one to see her assertion “Every word in the language signifies something” differently. Giving a counterexample is a move in the game dictated by the picture¹²; hence, it does not help to make her stop playing the game. We must make her acknowledge that the picture is at the root of her perplexity, and persuade her to stop playing the game of giving and answering counterexamples through grammatical clarification. We must persuade one to try another pair of glasses.

To summarize, Wittgenstein regards philosophy as a therapeutic activity that purports to dissolve philosophical problems arising from a misunderstanding of the workings of our language. The misunderstanding results from the enthralling pictures embedded in our language, which urge us to look at things in philosophically problematic ways. Therefore, Wittgenstein offers various language games and descriptions of the grammar of our words to offset the bewitching power of the pictures. In other words, he tries to persuade us to accept certain objects

of comparison through which we can view things differently¹³.

4. The Internal Connection between Wittgenstein's Style and his Philosophy

So far, we have seen some stylistic features of Wittgenstein's *Investigations* (Section 2) and characterized his therapeutic philosophy in terms of persuasion (Section 3). The present section aims to demonstrate that these elements are internally linked, that is, that the style of the *Investigations* is not one of the quirks of the *man* Wittgenstein, but a *sine qua non* of his philosophy as persuasion.

First of all, why does Wittgenstein write down his thoughts “as remarks, short paragraphs, sometimes in longer chains about the same subject, sometimes jumping, in a sudden change, from one area to another” (PI, Preface)? Simply put, Wittgenstein purports neither to present philosophical theses nor to explain or prove anything. If his aim was to argue for philosophical theses or *refute* the views of other philosophers, the lack of a linear structure in his *Investigations* would be a serious flaw. However, as already discussed, his goal is to clarify grammatical confusion and change the way we look at things by presenting various objects of comparison. Therefore, it is not a stylistic flaw, given his purpose, that consideration transitions from one topic to another or that the same or almost the same points are repeatedly discussed from different perspectives. Persuasion does not necessarily need to be achieved through discursive argument. Moreover, the very nature of his investigation requires these stylistic features. Wittgenstein highlights the importance of attaining a clear *overview* of the use of our words, because the lack of it is a main source of philosophical perplexities (PI §122). Thus: “A philosophical problem has the form: “I don't know my way about” (PI §123). In a lecture on the foundations of mathematics, Wittgenstein expands on this simile, which he deems “extremely good” (LFM 44).

I am trying to conduct you on tours in a certain country. I will try to show that the philosophical difficulties which arise in mathematics as elsewhere arise because we find ourselves in a strange town and do not know our way. So we must learn the topography by going from one place in the town to another, and from there to another, and so on. And one must do this so often that one knows one's way, either immediately or pretty soon after looking around a bit, wherever one may be set down. (LFM 44)

The analogy is highly fitting because being proficient in topography necessitates familiarity with more than just a couple of roads in the town, just as obtaining a clear understanding of the specific uses of a few words of philosophical significance is insufficient for dissolving philosophical problems. The use of such words is so deeply interwoven with one another that one cannot fully grasp grammar by isolating any single word from others¹⁴. As Wittgenstein says: "Problems are solved (difficulties eliminated), not a *single* problem" (PI §133). Indeed, in the *Investigations*, Wittgenstein does not discuss a word, say, "meaning" in isolation. Wittgenstein investigates it in its multifarious interconnections with a number of other words, such as "proposition/sentence (*Satz*)," "understanding," "can," "rule," etc. Obviously, it would be extremely difficult to compose such considerations in a linear fashion, and even if it could be done, it is unclear whether it is desirable to do so.

The dialogical form can also be understood as a means of persuasion. As explained in the previous section, Wittgenstein attempts to persuade readers to adopt another picture or object of comparison. To achieve this goal, he must first make the reader acknowledge that she is under the influence of a specific analogy.

One of the most important tasks is to express all false thought processes so true to character that the reader says, "Yes, that's exactly the way I meant it". To make a tracing of the physiognomy of every error. / Indeed, we can only prove that someone made a mistake if he (really) acknowledges that this really is the expression of his feeling. / For only if he acknowledges it as such, *is* it the correct expression. (Psychoanalysis.) / What the other person acknowledges is the analogy I'm presenting to him as the source of his thought. (BT 410)

As mentioned in Section 2, in reading the *Investigations*, we find *our thoughts* being expressed, examined, and criticized. It should be noted that Wittgenstein effectively employs the dialogical or conversational form to engage the reader and get her to acknowledge her mistakes in the manner in which it is described in the quote. Merely identifying her errors will not suffice (see Section 3). We must elucidate the grammar of words so that she recognizes the disparity between what she intends to convey and what she actually expresses, leading her to refrain from talking nonsense. "In this sense, clarification is essentially a dialogue between the philosopher and her

interlocutor” (Kuusela 2008, 79). As Jane Heal maintains, the *Investigations* is a deliberately crafted dialogue to enable us to identify ourselves with one of the voices “if we recognize ourselves in the words and are willing to enter the exchange” (Heal 1995, 73).

Similarly, Wittgenstein’s similes and metaphors are not to be taken as ornamental. On the contrary, as mentioned in Section 2, Wittgenstein regards them as “the best thing of all” for philosophy and “unapologetically introduces his key ideas and carries on his dialogical enterprise by means of metaphoric expressions” (Gill 1979, 281). If Wittgenstein’s purpose was to argue or prove truth, then all figurative languages could, and perhaps should ideally, be eliminated. However, as I have emphasized, his philosophy is not argumentative¹⁵. Deliberately, he weaves in similes and metaphors. Why does he adopt this approach? As far as I can see, there are two primary reasons for this.

First, metaphorical expressions can bring about a change in one’s perspective; similes and metaphors are figures of speech that make *comparisons* to highlight certain similarities between two things. In other words, they are objects of comparison like language games¹⁶. For instance, Wittgenstein introduces the metaphor of family resemblance to dissuade the pursuit of necessary and sufficient conditions for a particular word and make us rest contented, instead of necessary and sufficient conditions, with complex networks of overlapping similarities among instances¹⁷. That is, the metaphor of family resemblance is to be regarded as an object of comparison that is supposed to be replaced by the predominant picture that words and concepts have clear boundaries. Thus, metaphors and similes are employed as means of philosophical therapies or persuasion to change one’s way of looking at things. They are as important for Wittgenstein’s philosophy as language games (*Sprachspiel* is also a simile).

The second reason is concerned with memory. Wittgenstein says: “The work of the philosopher consists in marshalling recollections for a particular purpose” (PI §127). The purpose he mentions is, of course, the dissolution of a philosophical problem, which is “brought about, among other things, by certain analogies between the forms of expression in different regions of our language” (PI §90). The actual uses of our words are not always apparent, especially when we are engaged in philosophical discourse (PI §11); therefore, it is imperative to recollect how the words are employed in everyday contexts.

When philosophers use a word — “knowledge”, “being”, “object”, “I”, “proposition/sentence”, “name” — and try to grasp the *essence* of the thing, one must always

ask oneself: is the word ever actually used in this way in the language in which it is at home?
— (PI §116)

Thus, “memory of a peculiar sort” (LFM 44), which we might call *grammatical memory* as it is concerned with the grammar of words, plays an integral role in Wittgenstein's philosophy.

Now, we can see that it is because metaphoric expressions aid memory¹⁸ that they are significant to Wittgenstein's philosophy¹⁹. Indeed, Wittgenstein's remarks are fairly memorable²⁰, and any reader of the *Investigations* should be able to recall with ease such metaphors as “language game,” “family resemblance,” “a beetle in the box,” and so on. The memorability of alternative ways of looking at things is indispensable when it comes to the dissolution of a philosophical problem because, during philosophical contemplation or when language “*goes on holiday*” (PI §38), we tend to overlook ordinary usage (PI §116). Hence, it could be argued that Wittgenstein's memorable metaphors aid readers in developing an immunity to philosophical confusion by deterring them from adhering to philosophically detrimental pictures.

Lastly, the significance of the performative dimension of the *Investigations* can also be understood if we keep in mind that Wittgenstein's aim is not to put forth philosophical theses but to persuade. That is to say, it is because one misunderstands Wittgenstein's purpose as discursive that the numerous questions and imperatives in the *Investigations* seem anomalous. The measure for persuasion is its effectiveness²¹; hence, Wittgenstein's extensive use of various types of speech acts should be justified if they are conducive to his purpose. How, then, does the performative dimension lend itself to the fulfillment of his therapeutic objectives?

Take §182 of the *Investigations* as an example, which McClure states “is almost indistinguishable from a homework assignment in a grammar book” (McClure 2017, 153):

The grammar of “to fit”, “to be able” and “to understand”. Exercises: (1) When is a cylinder C said to fit into a hollow cylinder H? Only as long as C is inside H? (2) Sometimes one says that: C has ceased to fit into H at such-and-such a time. What criteria are used in such a case for its having happened at that time? (3) What does one regard as criteria for a body's having changed its weight at a particular time, if it was not actually on the balance at that time? (4) Yesterday I knew the poem by heart; today I no longer know it. In what kind of case does it make sense to ask, “When did I stop knowing it by heart?” (5) Someone asks me, “Can you lift this weight?” I answer, “Yes”. Now he says, “Do it!” — and I can't. In

what kind of circumstances would one accept the excuse “When I answered ‘yes’ I *could* do it, only now I can’t”? (McClure 2017, 153)

Wittgenstein provides these exercises to get the reader to see *for herself* that “the game with these words, their use in the linguistic intercourse that is carried on by their means, is more involved—the role of these words in our language is other than we are tempted to think” (McClure 2017, 153). There are at least two reasons that necessitate spontaneity or active participation by the reader.

Philosophical treatment requires the reader’s active involvement. As previously stated, Wittgenstein endeavors to make the reader realize that the captivating pictures entrenched in our language are not the only ones by proposing alternative pictures. However, whether the reader embraces the alternative pictures put forth by Wittgenstein is not, as it were, deductively determined; it hinges on persuasion. Since human nature is reluctant to accept what is forced upon it, encouraging the reader to try it for herself is effective for the purpose of persuasion. Not only is it effective, but it is also *required* so that persuasion does not degenerate into *manipulation*. As Wittgenstein himself is well aware, he has “no right to want you to say anything except just one thing: “Let’s see”” (LFM 55). “The only thing which [Wittgenstein has] a right to want to make you say is, “Let’s investigate whether so-and-so is the case” (LFM 55).

Second, Wittgenstein seeks to provide a method rather than a doctrine. He says, “All I can give you is a method; I cannot teach you any new truths” (AWL 97). Certainly, Wittgenstein employs persuasion, yet he does not aim to convince us of any specific opinion or truth; rather, his intention is to encourage us to engage in a particular kind of investigation (LFM 103). Similar to a math teacher showcasing problem-solving techniques by solving several similar problems in front of her students, Wittgenstein illustrates how the reader can embark on grammatical clarification through the presentation of examples (PI §133). The significance of the “homework assignment” cited above can be understood in this light; that is, Wittgenstein offers tasks to nurture the reader’s skills²² to independently dissolve problems. “One could teach philosophy solely by asking questions” (AWL 97).

5. Concluding Remarks

I argue that Wittgenstein’s unique writing style is internally connected to his conception of

philosophy. Now, how can we address Glock's challenge: "what *philosophical* substance (concerning problems, arguments or insights) is lost by rephrasing Wittgenstein's thought in a more conventional manner"? As I have elucidated, Wittgenstein's philosophy should not be characterized so much by discursive arguments as by persuasion. He does not argue for anything nor does he have any opinions. What, then, is it that Glock calls philosophical *substance*? What should we make of it? I do not see how one could rewrite the *Investigations* in a more conventional manner without compromising the capacity to provide clear overviews, keeping it as memorable, as educational, and as persuasive as it is²³. Perhaps, one could improve the *Investigations* to some extent — recall Wittgenstein's remorseful remark in the preface: "I should have liked to produce a good book. It has not turned out that way, but the time is past in which I could improve it" — but I am sure that one can never do that in a conventional manner, in which the purpose is to establish philosophical theories or theses. He does not discover truth but uncovers nonsense.

Regarding my characterization of Wittgenstein's philosophy as persuasion, one might say, "But what becomes of logic now?" (PI §108). However, logic, as *idealized* by analytic philosophy, is a *preconception*, and characterizing his philosophy as persuasion does not make it any less logical or rational. The elucidation of this point must be reserved for future work.

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² E.g., Kanterian 2012.

³ James Creighton Edwards (1972) also touches on the problem of style in terms of persuasion, but he fails to address it sufficiently since he goes no further than to argue that Wittgenstein's remarks should not be seen on what he calls the scientific model of philosophy. In other words, he does not discuss how Wittgenstein's stylistic features respectively contribute to his philosophy.

⁴ It is also reported that Wittgenstein said: "I spend more time than you perhaps could ever understand, thinking about questions of style" (Erbacher et al. 2019, 237).

⁵ Some interpreters find two voices in the *Investigations* while others find three (cf. Pichler 2023).

⁶ Cf. Lieber 1997.

⁷ Wittgenstein maintains: "I ought to be no more than a mirror, in which my reader can see his own thinking with all its deformities so that, helped in this way, he can put it right" (CV 18e).

⁸ Wittgenstein does not use the words "simile" and "metaphor" in the technical senses but uses them interchangeably (cf. Erden 2012).

⁹ Cf. Pichler 2023, 25.

¹⁰ Pictures, metaphors, analogies, etc. are neither true or false in and of themselves (cf. PI §3).

¹¹ Cf. BT 424: "So long as there is a verb "be" that seems to function like "eat" and "drink", so long as there are the adjectives "identical", "true", "false", "possible", so long as there is talk about a flow of time and an expanse of space, etc., etc., humans will continue to bump up against the same mysterious difficulties, and stare at something that no explanation seems able to remove."

¹² Cf. Yamamuro 2021; Baz 2012.

¹³ Some commentators characterize Wittgenstein's philosophy as pedagogical (e.g., Cavell 1979; Peters 2020);

however, the characterization is consonant with the one discussed in this paper since education “is a form of that which Wittgenstein calls “persuasion”” (cf. Perissinotto 2016, 173–4).

¹⁴ Repetition, which is another characteristic feature of the style of the *Investigations*, is suggested “as a means of surveying the connections” between the roads (AWL 43).

¹⁵ Note that it does not follow that one cannot find any arguments in Wittgenstein’s writings, since persuasion and argumentation are not mutually exclusive. One can occasionally persuade somebody by discursive argument. However, whether one can find any, not whether one can *reconstruct* any, is a moot issue to be discussed in future work.

¹⁶ Lakoff and Johnson (2003, 5) say: “*The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another.*” Note that Wittgenstein’s language games can shed light on aspects of our language through dissimilarities as well as similarities (PI §130).

¹⁷ It is important to note that Wittgenstein *does not prove* that our words do not have clear boundaries but form fluctuating unities held together by overlapping and interconnected resemblances. For how could we be sure that definitions do not exist, eliminating the possibility that we just have not found any so far? In other words, he does not present the word “game (*Spiel*)” as a counterexample.

¹⁸ Cf. Shafiei and Ghassemzadeh 2021; Shafiei et al. 2022.

¹⁹ Savickey suggests that Wittgenstein’s “use of numbered remarks can also be understood as a memory aid” (Savickey 1999, 125).

²⁰ Cf. Savickey 1999, 125.

²¹ Cf. Edwards 1972, 63.

²² Wittgenstein says that “the required skill could not be acquired merely by hearing lectures” (Moore 1955, 26).

²³ It is rather challenging to enumerate what would be *specifically* lost by philosophizing in the traditional way for several reasons. This point needs to be further discussed in future work.

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