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Wittgenstein and Anti-Realism

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Abstract

This article examines Wittgenstein's teachings on realism and anti-realism through the lens of his philosophy of language. Realism posits that every linguistic statement is either true or false, independent of human consciousness and knowledge. Consequently, the Principle of Bivalence—accepting only truth and falsity as semantic values—is central to this view. In contrast, anti-realism rejects this principle, asserting that the truth or falsity of statements can only be determined if empirical or epistemic evidence is available, and statements cannot be evaluated independently of mind and language. Wittgenstein challenges both perspectives by critiquing the foundations of language and focusing on its functions within various contexts of life. He views language not as a passive mirror of reality, but as a constitutive agent within which reality takes shape. This article elucidates Wittgenstein's arguments against the notion of realism and utilizes Dummett's analyses of meaning and truth to clarify the anti-realist foundations in Wittgenstein's philosophy of language.

Keywords

Wittgenstein; Realism; Anti-Realism; Semantic Realism; Principle of Bivalence; Language-Games; Use Theory of Meaning

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Introduction

The relationship between language and reality, and specifically the debate between realism and anti-realism (or non-realism), is among the most significant philosophical disputes in the contemporary era. This discussion has deep roots in the history of philosophy, particularly within the Scholastic tradition. It saw a resurgence in the 19th century and continued with new styles and formulations in the 20th century, especially in the philosophy of science and the philosophy of language. The core of this dispute lies in a metaphysical disagreement about the relationship of "truth"—as a characteristic of language or thought—to reality. The central question is whether truth exists independently of language and mind, or if it is shaped within a linguistic framework.

In this context, Michael Dummett and Donald Davidson have played prominent roles in formulating these debates anew. Dummett, despite his intellectual proximity to Frege and his admiration for Frege's explanation of meaning and thought, adopted an anti-realist approach himself and became a primary advocate of semantic anti-realism. His definition of anti-realism is based on the idea that the concept of truth should not be central to a theory of meaning; instead, provability should take its place. This position stands in direct opposition to realism, as, for Dummett, the meaning of a sentence is more concerned with its conditions of use or provability than with its correspondence to reality (Dummett, 1996, pp. 467-475). Conversely, although Davidson does not explicitly use the terms "realism" and "anti-realism," he is often categorized as a realist due to his reliance on Tarski's theory of truth in his analysis of meaning (Rorty, 1979, pp. 261-262). This debate has continued among philosophers such as McDowell, Colin McGinn, and Mark Platts, who have defended realism, while

Dummett, in opposition to them, is considered a staunch opponent of realism.

Within this context, Wittgenstein stands out as one of the most important figures in 20th-century philosophy of language. His views have led to diverse interpretations regarding his alignment with either realism or anti-realism. In the realm of religion, exegetes like D.Z. Phillips, Rush Rhees, and Peter Winch have offered an anti-realist interpretation of Wittgenstein's ideas. Winch, in particular, argues that "reality is nothing more than language, and the distinction between real and unreal is formed within language" (Winch, 1972, pp. 11-13), thus considering reality an intra-linguistic phenomenon.

However, others, including Sabina Lovibond, propose a realist reading of his works, based on Wittgenstein's statement that "the hardest thing in philosophy is to be non-empiricist and yet a realist" (Lovibond, 1983, p. 36). She believes that while Wittgenstein denies the metaphysical role of reality in the theory of language, he doesn't completely remove the concept of reality from the scope of philosophical analysis. In light of these perspectives, fundamental questions arise: Does Wittgenstein consider reality a world independent of mind and language, or does he deem it dependent on linguistic structures? Is the question of the realism-anti-realism debate even meaningful in the first place? Or, as Richard Rorty claims, has this question lost its significance because language and thought are no longer considered representations of reality? (Rorty, Angel, 2014 SH, pp. 14-15).

This article aims to examine Wittgenstein's position on theories of meaning and their relation to realist and anti-realist viewpoints. Focusing on the use theory of meaning and the idea of language-games, we will analyze Wittgenstein's arguments against certain realist theories of meaning. In doing so, we'll leverage

Dummett's theoretical framework to clarify the key concepts of realism and anti-realism.

1. Realism and Anti-Realism

The term "realism" has consistently been used by philosophers to describe certain philosophical viewpoints across various contexts. However, there's been limited work done to precisely define realism and anti-realism. It's clear that one can be a realist about one subject and an anti-realist about another. It's even possible for an individual to have a general inclination towards realist views.

For example, you might be a realist about specific mental states, events, and processes, about possible worlds, or about mathematical objects. You could even be a realist about a particular class or type of statements that Dummett calls the "disputed class," such as statements about the future or moral judgments. However, because there are distinct types of realism, realism concerning the future or ethics doesn't easily fit into doctrines related to the realm of entities.

Realism, in general, is the view that accepts the existence of entities independent of us. According to this perspective, statements belonging to a specific class, and external realities, are either true or false, irrespective of human conceptual schemes or our knowledge of their truth or falsity (Dummett, 1982, p. 55). Most philosophers have adopted a realist stance concerning the past. Based on realism about the past, every event either happened or it didn't, regardless of whether anyone has knowledge of it or possesses evidence for it. However, A.J. Ayer, in *Language, Truth and Logic*, rejected this realist idea, stating that propositions about the past can only be true if there's something in the present or future that can be offered as evidence for them.

It's clear that we can never (currently or in the future) provide direct evidence for the truth of what is now past. Since our evidence at any given time must consist of things existing at that time, it seems that, as Russell concluded, a Cartesian doubt about the past is inevitable. Currently, philosophers generally consider Cartesian doubt to be meaningless, and this clearly obliges us to maintain an anti-realist view concerning propositions about the past. This view suggests that propositions about the past, if true, are true only in light of what is or will be. Therefore, it's possible that propositions or statements about the past are neither true nor false (Dummett, 1963, p. 153).

The approach opposing realism is anti-realism (or non-realism), which denies the existence of entities independent of human beings. Their primary reason for rejecting a world independent of humanity and its knowledge is that there's no criterion or standard for the existence of such a world, and the external world cannot be known except through human senses. In essence, this view emphasizes the mediating role of humans, their senses, their cognitive faculties, and their minds in relation to the external world. Among contemporary anti-realists is T.H. Green, who was influenced by and, in a sense, synthesized the ideas of Kant and Hegel. Unlike realists, Green denied the reality of perceptible things or phenomena, stating that what appears in our experience is a set of relationships. For example, when we evaluate the color of something, we shouldn't consider it a real, independent entity. What appears to us as black is the relationship of this sense input to other sense inputs, to the object that is black, and to the living being perceiving it. Therefore, blackness itself is not a real thing; it's inherently meaningless and inexplicable in itself. What is real, then, are the relationships between different things, which are dependent on the human mind (Shariatmadari, 2000 SH, p. 237).

Anti-realists can be broadly divided into two main groups: radical and moderate.

The radical anti-realists believe that reality is entirely linguistic, having no existence within the world independent of human language, society, and culture. They contend that language is the creator of everything, and it is solely humanity and its language that define and determine the nature of everything.

Moderate anti-realists, on the other hand, hold that our understanding of truth must primarily rely on investigation within the social realm and context. They believe the meaning of anything must be grasped through its use (Zandiyeh, 1386, p. 420).

2. Semantic Realism

It is important to clarify that our discussion of realism here does not refer to classical realism, which opposes nominalism, nor to realism that opposes phenomenalism. Rather, in this context, realism is a view that accepts the Principle of Bivalence. According to this view, every sentence or proposition in a language is either true or false, with no third possibility. Crucially, this principle is considered independent of us; that is, its truth or falsity is independent of human knowledge. Examples of this theory of meaning can be found in the philosophy of Russell, Frege, and especially in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*.

> "A picture either corresponds or does not correspond to reality; it is either true or false; it is either right or wrong" (Wittgenstein, 2000, Proposition 2.21).

For the realist, the truth-value of sentences expressed about external reality doesn't depend on whether we have reasons or proofs for them possessing such a truth-value. Rather, it depends on a reality

that exists independently of our knowledge of it. These sentences will be true or false based on whether or not they correspond to that reality (Dumm'ett, 1969, pp. 358-359). Generally, realism, in the sense discussed, encompasses referential theories of meaning, which hold that the meaning of words and linguistic expressions stems from their reference or indication to objects. According to this view, words are like labels; they are signs used to represent, designate, name, denote, or refer to things in the world. For example, "The cat is sitting on the mat" represents a cat sitting on a mat because the word "cat" designates a specific cat, the word "mat" refers to the mat in question, and "...is sitting on..." indicates the relationship of sitting on something. Therefore, sentences mirror the state of affairs they describe, and it is through this mirroring that they can possess meaning (Lycan, 2013 SH, p. 9).

In this theory, the meanings of atomic propositions are determined by their agreement or disagreement with states of affairs. Once the truth-values of basic propositions are established, the meanings of compound propositions can be ascertained by the truth-values of their fundamental components. This means the truth or falsity of the entire proposition depends on the truth or falsity of its constituent parts. The truth or falsity of these propositions can be determined using a truth table, based on the truth or falsity of their components (Mounce, 2000, pp. 56-57).

During the second phase of his philosophical thought, Wittgenstein rejects this account of meaning. His reason for rejecting realist theories is that they have neglected the use of language in their explanation of meaning. In this period, Wittgenstein adopts a new explanation of language. He believes that, in addition to conveying meaning or stating facts, language has other functions. For the multitude of language-games, one can point to reporting an event,

reflecting on an event, promising, giving orders, or warning (Wittgenstein, 2009, section 23). According to this view, although language is still considered a tool, other functions beyond mere fact-stating and expression have been added to it, consequently moving meaning beyond the limited scope of reference. It seems we can distinguish between two aspects of "use" in Wittgenstein's philosophy, which are the main reasons for his denial of realist theories of meaning.

The first reason Wittgenstein rejects realist theories of meaning is that they're presented outside of language-games (Wittgenstein, 2009 SH, sections 1-37). It's best to explain Wittgenstein's concept of language-games through an example.

3. Language-Games

Wittgenstein compares language to a game. At first glance, this term might be misunderstood as "wordplay," leading one to believe Wittgenstein means that language is just a trivial manipulation of words (Magee, 1995 SH, p. 171). However, his intent is that language resembles games in many respects.

Regarding language-games, Wittgenstein states: "I shall call the whole, consisting of language and the actions into which it is woven, a 'language-game'" (Wittgenstein, 2009 SH, section 7).

Words are like chess pieces, and the meaning of a piece is the role it plays in the game. The use of the word "game" here is an analogy. Just as there are connections and resemblances between various games like chess, football, and swimming, without any inherent commonality, the same applies to the different uses of language. Perhaps nothing could better illustrate that there is no shared essence among the diverse ways language governs life. Another factor leading to the comparison of language to a game is that

both are governed by rules. Although these rules are conventional, players accept them as if they were natural laws. Language, too, is a rule-governed activity (Lacoste, 1997 SH, p. 107).

Let's illustrate the concept of a language-game with an example. Consider the sentence: "The broom is broken." How do we determine its meaning? Realist theories of meaning would simply analyze this sentence as a composite of "broom" and the predicate "is broken." The meaning of "broom" is the object itself, and "is broken" denotes the state of the broom. According to realist theory, if this sentence corresponds to reality, it's true; otherwise, it's false. Wittgenstein rejects this analysis because, in his view, the meaning of a word or sentence lies in its function within common usage, not in its referential relationship. To understand the meaning, we shouldn't ask what the sentence depicts, but rather what function it serves. How can we use the sentence "The broom is broken"? We can use it to describe the appearance of an object, report an event, reflect on an event, and many other uses. Considering these diverse uses, we see that the meaning of the sentence changes depending on its application. This implies that the language-game is the primary factor in how a sentence is understood. Suppose the sentence "The broom is broken" is used as a warning not to use the broom. A realist explanation, which equates to a pictorial description of "the broom is broken," certainly wouldn't be able to convey the meaning as a warning. When a sentence is understood as a warning, the realist explanation might provide additional necessary information to convey the meaning of the sentences, but not before its use in a specific language-game. This is because sentences and concepts don't have pre-established, fixed meanings with identical functions. Depending on various situations and conditions, they will have diverse functions and form different language-games. Realists, with their truth-condition theories of

meaning, have neglected the semantic distinctions that different language-games impose on language.

The second argument against realist theories of meaning is the use theory of meaning, which focuses on the shared and universal nature of linguistic usage.

4. The Use Theory of Meaning

In his *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein introduced the use theory of meaning. This theory not only critiques his earlier picture theory of language but also offers a new explanation of language's role in conveying concepts and performing other functions.

In his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, Wittgenstein believed that the only language from which precise meaning could be derived was the language of factual statements (i.e., language that pictured facts and made claims about them). In this earlier period, language was considered singular, with no indication that it served as a tool for communication with others. However, in his later period, he viewed language as a communal, rule-governed practice that, to some extent, constructs the very form of life and culture of its speakers. The uses of language, along with its words and sentences, create meaning. This meaning is connected to what the language user intends and is rooted in the institutions and customs of their social life.

Wittgenstein begins *The Blue Book*, one of his earliest later philosophical works, by urging us to no longer ask, "What is the meaning of a word?" but instead, "How is the meaning of a word explained?" (Wittgenstein, 2006, p. 7). In his final thoughts, Wittgenstein emphasizes that: "For a large class of cases—though not for all—in which we employ the word 'meaning,' it can be defined thus:

the meaning of a word is its use in the language" (Wittgenstein, 2006 SH, section 43).

The concept of the meaning of any expression is a holistic concept: an expression only has meaning within the linguistic context to which it belongs. The meaning of an expression corresponds to understanding it; that is, grasping the meaning of an expression is equivalent to understanding that expression. Understanding an expression means knowing its correct use or its use in accordance with established rules, or providing correct interpretations of its meaning within context, as well as the appropriate reactions of others to its use (Grayling, 2009, p. 139).

When we determine the meaning of an expression, we must provide information that is both learnable and understandable, meaning it must be applicable (Wittgenstein, 2009 SH, sections 190, 692). If we assume that the meaning of some expressions cannot be learned, then without a doubt, that expression or statement becomes impossible to play a role in any language-game, and in such a case, one cannot gain knowledge about how to use it.

Wittgenstein states that: "Understanding an expression may mean knowing how to use it or being able to use it" (Kenny, 1994, p. 63). He also notes that: "To understand the meaning of a word is to know the possible ways of its use from a grammatical point of view" (Kenny, 1994, p. 64).

Norman Malcolm writes that Wittgenstein's intention with "use" of an expression refers to the specific conditions, environment, and context in which it's spoken or written. This contrasts with the misconception that Wittgenstein meant the correct or ordinary use of an expression (Malcolm, 1967, p. 337).

Wittgenstein clarified this point in section 199 of the

Philosophical Investigations, stating: "To understand a sentence means to understand a language. To understand a language means to be master of a technique." And mastery of a technique rests on following a rule, which is the fundamental principle underpinning language itself (Wittgenstein, 2009 SH, section 199).

Learning a language means mastering the prescriptive rule-governed techniques for using its expressions. To understand the meaning of any expression means to be able to use it correctly. One cannot follow a rule they don't comprehend or understand. Following a rule is not a mysterious affair; rather, these rules are established in ordinary explanations of meaning during teaching, in correcting incorrect uses of expressions, and in clarifying what was said. Imagine someone being told the meaning of certain expressions in a language they don't understand. And further imagine that this meaning is in no way comprehensible to the recipient of the information. In this scenario, what would count as their understanding of that expression? Absolutely nothing could determine whether they know the meaning or not. Knowing the meaning of an expression is being able to use it in a sentence. These requirements of learnability and comprehensibility of the meaning of expressions are what Wittgenstein had in mind, summed up in his slogan: "Meaning as Use." According to the anti-realist reading of Wittgenstein's teachings, the meaning of a word is closely tied to how it's used among the speakers of that language and the context and background in which it's employed. In this approach, there's no external standard or criterion for ascertaining the truth or falsity conditions of a word's use. Everything depends on the context and situation in which it's used. It is precisely because of this perspective that realist theories of meaning are rejected. Specifically, their realist manifestation is what renders these theories ineffective.

5. Semantic Realism and the Principle of Bivalence

A common characteristic of realist theories of meaning is their emphasis on the Principle of Bivalence. This principle always allows them to assert that every proposition is either true or false (A∨¬A). This principle is often known as the Law of Excluded Middle. While the Principle of Bivalence and the Law of Excluded Middle are frequently treated as interchangeable, this is incorrect. The Principle of Bivalence implies the Law of Excluded Middle, because one can assert A when A is true and ¬A when A is false. However, the Law of Excluded Middle does not imply the Principle of Bivalence.

For the Principle of Bivalence to imply the Law of Excluded Middle, one must be able to infer "A is true" from A, and "A is false" from ¬A. But neither of these inferences is valid unless the Principle of Bivalence has already been accepted. Since this principle implies the Law of Excluded Middle, doubting the Law of Excluded Middle necessitates doubting the Principle of Bivalence (Dummett, 1991, p. 9).

The importance of the Principle of Bivalence lies in its ability to allow speakers of a language to independently engage with the Law of Excluded Middle (LEM). The LEM is based on an unfiltered realism, stating that the state of affairs is such that any proposition we consider is either true or false, with no third possibility. This latter assumption is a common belief regarding the LEM, and it provides a strong reason to reject any realist theory of meaning. "Either this mental image is in his mind or it is not; there is no third possibility!" (Wittgenstein, 2009, sections 352-369).

Let's consider an example of the LEM that holds true under a realist theory of meaning: the sentence "Tehran is the capital of Iran." If I understand the meaning of this sentence, how can I demonstrate my knowledge of its meaning? Certainly, by determining that one of

the approaches is true. Since this sentence is meaningful and decidable, its truth or falsity can be investigated through research and based on available evidence. However, let's assume that neither of these approaches is decidable—meaning there is no method for investigating their truth or falsity, and no arguments for or against them. In this case, how can I demonstrate my knowledge of the sentence's meaning? How can I show that I know its meaning? Simply saying "I know its meaning" isn't enough; I might be mistaken. How can I prove I'm not mistaken? The requirement for public meaning is necessary to demonstrate that my claim of knowing is not an error. For limited domains of objects and decidable sentences, the LEM always holds ($A \vee \neg A$), by stating that it's impossible for the objective situation to be outside these two states: either it agrees with A or it agrees with A. However, as mentioned, this principle is limited to certain domains and loses its effectiveness for undecidable propositions. The rejection of the universality of this principle in parts of formal logic and transcendental logic has been put forth by Husserl.

"It is clear that logic does not concern itself with propositions that we call, by virtue of their content, nonsensical; propositions such as 'The sum of the angles of a triangle equals the color red.' Naturally, no one engaged in scientific theory encounters such a proposition. Nevertheless, every declarative sentence that merely satisfies the conditions of purely grammatical semantic unity is conceivable as a judgment; a judgment in the broadest sense of the word. If the principles of logic are to be related to judgment in general, then they, and certainly the principle of excluded middle, will not be trustworthy. For every judgment that is nonsensical by virtue of its content will violate this principle" (Husserl, 1969, p. 228).

A proposition like "The sum of the angles of a triangle equals the color red" is certainly not true. However, it doesn't follow that the

proposition "The sum of the angles of a triangle does not equal the color red" is true, because the original proposition is nonsensical. Therefore, such propositions are not subject to the Law of Excluded Middle. Many propositions are undecidable, meaning there's currently no proof to confirm or deny them. For example, Goldbach's Conjecture, which states "Every even number greater than two is the sum of two prime numbers," is not a nonsensical proposition. Nevertheless, this conjecture has neither been proven nor disproven, nor is there any method or proof that can definitively determine its truth or falsity. Therefore, applying the Law of Excluded Middle to this proposition is not justifiable (Shafiei, 2018).

Wittgenstein's argument is to deny the Principle of Bivalence because it implies the truth of the Law of Excluded Middle for every arbitrary proposition. However, as mentioned, some sentences are not true according to LEM (and we can't say they are false). Therefore, if the universality of LEM is denied, the Principle of Bivalence is also certainly denied. The key to his argument is that meaning must be public; that is, when someone claims to know something, they must be able to demonstrate their understanding of that meaning.

Considering these two arguments, we derive the following view of realist theories of meaning:

1. They are incapable of determining the language-game for a specific utterance of a sentence, and thus they fail to provide a correct meaning for that sentence within that game.
2. Even in a pre-determined game, realist theories of meaning lead to contradictory performance, where the Law of Excluded Middle either holds true or it doesn't.

It's not hard to understand why Wittgenstein wants to reject

such a realist theory of meaning. A significant part of the private language argument stems from the rejection of the Principle of Bivalence. This is because there's no rule for stating sentences like "Either he is in pain or he is not in pain, or we can say so or not." Other philosophical fields have also been influenced by this principle, and we'll touch upon some points regarding Wittgenstein's philosophy of mathematics. For example, in *Philosophical Investigations*, section 352, Wittgenstein discusses the recurrence of 7777, stating:

Mathematical arguments, like "The sequence of 7777 either appears or it does not—there is no other possibility." But what does this even mean? We are using an image: the image of a visible number sequence where one person sees the whole thing and another does not. The Law of Excluded Middle here says: it must appear either this way or that way. So, in truth, it says absolutely nothing; rather, it presents us with an image—and this is merely stating the obvious. Now the question must be: Does reality correspond to the image or not? And this image seems to determine what we should do, what we should search for, and how (we should search for it)—but it doesn't. This is only because we do not know how to apply it. Saying here that "there is no third possibility" or "But a third possibility cannot exist!" demonstrates our inability to look away from the image: an image that appears as if it should already contain both the problem and its solution, while we always feel that this is not the case.

Generally speaking, any philosophical position that views the world as independent of language (meaning, independent of us) is unacceptable. The rejection of realist theories of meaning presented philosophers with a new approach: when encountering philosophical problems, they could recognize the limitations of realist theories of meaning and resolve many philosophical issues through anti-realist arguments.

Given Wittgenstein's negative stance on specific theories of meaning, we aim to demonstrate whether a positive outlook on meaning exists within the philosophy of language presented in his *Philosophical Investigations*. Although he opposed systematic theorizing in philosophy and didn't explicitly present a theory of meaning, his critique of realist theories of meaning implicitly contains the essential elements of a theory of meaning that can be called anti-realist.

Wittgenstein's arguments against realist theories of meaning were divided into two categories:1- Arguments related to the ineffectiveness of these theories in different language-games.2- Arguments that consider any theory advocating the Principle of Bivalence improbable. We'll now examine both groups separately. When someone proposes a theory of meaning for a language, they almost certainly intend for that theory to apply to the entire language, as it's impossible to isolate a part of language for study. Therefore, when we interpret realist theories of language as theories of the whole language, we become confused by the fact that a given sentence or statement can be used for various purposes and intentions. Consequently, the meaning of a sentence will vary from one language-game to another. Realist theories failed to grasp this diversity in meaning because they strictly defined meaning in terms of reference and truth-value.

1. A component that expresses the mood (or force) of the utterance. Speech acts are evident in the works of figures like Strawson, Grice, Searle, and others.
2. A syntactic theory that shapes grammatical relations.
3. A transformational component that takes the utterance along with its mood, converts it into related declarative sentences, and then subjects it to semantic analysis in the old-fashioned way.

The theory of force posits that countless sentences or expressions in language do not possess truth conditions, yet they are still meaningful. For example, "Tehran is the capital of Iran" has truth conditions and is in the indicative mood. However, the sentence "Rostam is the most prominent character in the Shahnameh" lacks truth conditions, as Rostam is a name with no referent in reality, but it is still meaningful. In addition to the indicative mood, there are also interrogative moods (e.g., "Is Tehran the capital of Iran?") and imperative moods. Dummett believes that "mood is a feature of the form of a sentence, and force is related to the meaningfulness of that sentence's utterance" (Dummett, 1993, p. 202).

While such a comprehensive theory of force doesn't fully exist yet, some work has been done in this area. It appears that no Wittgensteinian would fundamentally object to this theory.

Assume there are infinitely many language games. In this case, every judgment, for example, a mathematical judgment, is applied to infinite cases, in infinite declarative acts, all of which are different. How can a force theory be able to recognize all of them? Perhaps this is an infinite theory, and for this reason, its acceptance as a theory is difficult, so it seems that no theory of meaning can be offered. But Wittgenstein has a kind of argument that shows something other than this. What is meant when speaking of "infinite" language games? Surely Wittgenstein does not accept the idea that language as a whole is equivalent to a truly infinite language/game. For him, "infinite" language games are always capable of creating another language game. This idea is what is expressed in the example "there is no house on this road" just because you can build another house, it does not mean that the last one does not exist. From this point of view, the "infinite" problems raised are resolved. Language as a whole consists

of a finite number of language games, so the force theory seems to be limited to a distinct set of operations for each speech act and grammatical mood. It is true that a new speech act can be created, but then we can only add a new condition (Clausy) to this theory. We do not say that the last condition does not exist, this is what you would say if you want to say: "There is no house on this road, you can always build another house" (Wittgenstein, 2009, paragraph 29). Given these statements, we witnessed Wittgenstein's first objection against the realist theory of meaning. His second objection is deeper, which arises with respect to the principle of bivalence. It is not that this principle proves ineffective in the face of certain characteristics of language, but rather that this principle, given some of Wittgenstein's theories, including the theory of "meaning as use," lacks coherence. There are examples of undecidable judgments and sentences that clearly indicate that there is no way for the principle of bivalence, and therefore realism should be abandoned. But does this not destroy the opportunity for a theory of meaning? Dummett's answer to this question is negative because, in his opinion, you can replace the theory of reference/truth conditions with a theory based on assertibility.

According to Dummett, constructing a suitable semantic theory can resolve the disagreements between realists and anti-realists. From the realist perspective, the truth condition of a judgment determines its meaning. However, for anti-realists, the meaning of a judgment lies in knowing how it is true and what evidence supports it. The truth of the judgment, in this view, is the existence of that very evidence. This means a judgment's meaning is directly linked to the evidence that confirms it (Dummett, 1963, p. 146).

This approach allows for a semantic theory of meaning that

aligns with the requirements of "meaning is use," where understanding the meaning of any sentence is provable through verification. Of course, certain judgments or sentences will remain neither true nor false, and consequently, their meanings will be incomplete. Such a theory already exists for a significant portion of language. This is essentially intuitionistic logic, which forms the basis of intuitionistic mathematics, where verifiability is conditional on the existence of proof and evidence. Although these specifics aren't directly found in Wittgenstein's research, he seemingly wouldn't oppose such theories, as they too consider the criterion of use.

With Dummett's perspective, we've constructed a theory of meaning for language that addresses each of Wittgenstein's objections to specific theories of meaning. This theory explains the different uses of a sentence within language and considers the meanings of sentences in accordance with the apparent needs of the general public.

However, this theory came at a cost for Wittgenstein: we had to abandon realism. We can't talk about a reality independent of ourselves, and our true and false judgments aren't possible without considering our ability to discern them. If sentences or judgments are neither true nor false, there can be no world for them to either agree or disagree with, because it is through our language that we bring the world into reality. Wittgenstein didn't explicitly state this, but he seems to agree on this point. For him, "grammar tells what kind of object anything is" (Wittgenstein, 2009, paragraph 373), or he states that "one ought not to ask what A is, but what its use is" (Wittgenstein, 2009, paragraph 370). Nevertheless, this constructed world remains objective because language itself is objective and public. Therefore, for speakers of a language, reality remains objectively fixed among them.

Considering the above, Wittgenstein's philosophical research can be regarded as a precursor to recent anti-realist theories of meaning, especially Dummett's theory.

Conclusion

The fundamental issue in the debate between realism and anti-realism revolves around the existence or non-existence of entities independent of human beings. Does the world exist as a reality independent of our minds and language? And is there an external reality that can be the object of our knowledge, or is this reality dependent on the knowing subject? Various answers have been offered to these questions. Most interpreters of Wittgenstein, including Ayer, have adopted an anti-realist reading of his philosophy of language. On the one hand, in *On Certainty*, Wittgenstein advocates for pure certainty in light of language games and forms of life. In paragraph 559, he states: "The language-game is not based on grounds. It is not reasonable (or unreasonable). It is there—like our life" (Wittgenstein, 2011, paragraph 559). This suggests that, in a sense, he believes in realism within the domain of language games and forms of life.

However, classifying him as a realist becomes problematic when considering the classic definition of realism. Realists view the world as a reality independent of human beings, where human existence or non-existence has no impact on it. In contrast, according to Wittgenstein's concept of language games, an individual is either inside a language game, playing a role by knowing how to use it, or outside the language game, unaware of what is happening within it. From Wittgenstein's perspective, one cannot step outside language to speak about the world and its truths; in fact, it is language that gives meaning to reality. Hanfling, to illustrate Wittgenstein's anti-realist

stance, cites an example from *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics*, paragraph 357. Wittgenstein asks: "Are these systems part of our nature or the nature of things? How can one put it? Not part of the nature of numbers and colours" (Wittgenstein, 2005, paragraph 357). If someone (unlike Wittgenstein) answers "yes" to the second part, they are considered a realist. However, Wittgenstein's response implies he does not subscribe to realism. Although Hanfling believes Wittgenstein doesn't adopt the first option either (that it's part of our nature).

Furthermore, when Wittgenstein discusses disparate systems in different cultures, if realism were correct, there would be a supra-linguistic criterion by which the correctness or incorrectness of other systems, or even our own, could be determined. But in his view, there is no criterion or standard outside of language games by which the truth or falsity of a system can be proven, and this demonstrates his anti-realist approach. In summary, classifying Wittgenstein as a realist or anti-realist depends on the meaning we attribute to realism. If realism refers to a reality independent of our minds, Wittgenstein might be considered a realist given his statement in *On Certainty*: "We cannot help believing a great deal; we cannot help believing, for example, that there is a chair here." Demanding reasons for such beliefs is also meaningless to him, and he considers doubting the existence of reality to be neither possible nor meaningful. However, if realism implies a belief in a supra-linguistic standard or criterion by which the reality of different systems is evaluated, then he can be considered an anti-realist, as in his view, nothing exists outside of language.

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