

Given our focus on an a priori relationship of concepts that is valid in all possible worlds, I must admit to having a deep puzzlement about the proposed proposition that 'thought entails the possession of language.' Much of my puzzlement has to do with what account we are to give of the key concepts before we can begin to consider whether the one entails the other or even what entailment might mean in the context of the proposed proposition.

Given the view that language expresses thought (5/111), much will turn on what we have to say about 'thought' itself. Wittgenstein uses 'thought' to refer to the concept of the activity of thinking (5/94-96), but that only raises the further question of what account are we to give of this activity? Acknowledging all the difficulties in determining the normativity of usage, ordinary talk would suggest that we have to take account of a broad range of acts, most of which have no apparent or obvious linguistic or verbal feature: the visual running through of potential scenarios or inchoate anticipations of future events, the recurrence in a given situation of essential features of a memory, the use of abstract schema or hints of diagrams, a strong sense of rightness or wrongness to—or the truth or falseness of—a proposition offered up for agreement or assent, or of the simple recognition of the truth or falsity of inferences and conclusions drawn from them (in a Eureka moment, say).

While we are not to slip into discussing the phenomena themselves (5/96), surely we need to decide whether these acts fall within the concept of the activity of thinking, and, if so, on what basis. In answering that question, it is worth considering, for a moment, the strict sense of the concept, which can be broken down, on first approximation, as being the application of concerted and deliberate mental effort in deriving (or arriving at), in a non-arbitrary fashion, meaningful signs from other meaningful signs. Looking at the strict form of the concept allows us to draw out the least common denominator between it and the broader sense of thinking:

in both cases we have mental processes; in both cases we have objects of intention that interact with those mental processes which interact with other objects of intention in complex ways; in both cases the objects of intention, either singly or however combined, already are, or can be made, intelligible, and are, or can be, expressed through, or reduced to, language acts. Although one mental process is more active than the other and accords more with the norms of reasoning than the other, are these indicia enough to suggest that these are two distinct kinds of activities or are they to be taken merely as indicia of the mode or quality of the particular thinking activity? I would say the latter but I do so under the influence of some idea or concept of what is essential and what is accidental to the concept of thinking, fully conscious of Wittgenstein's cautions about searching for any such thing as a definable essence undergirding the family resemblances amongst particulars associated with a given concept (*Philosophical Investigations*, 65-70). All the same, and at the very least, common to the range of activities there does seem to recur this idea of an interaction of a mental process with intentional objects which are not only intelligible, or potentially intelligible, but also truth functional, or potentially truth functional.

Given these aspects of intelligibility and truth functionality which appear to undergird the activity of thinking, I would echo or extend (to the point of distorting, perhaps) Wittgenstein's picture theory in some sense and draw the inference that all intentional objects may have an underlying propositional structure even though any intentional object is not necessarily exhausted by any one particular proposition. If this idea is a reckless one, it may seem less so if one considers that language signs (however constituted, whether visual or aural) may themselves be intentional objects expressive of propositions which are not identical to the aggregate of those signs (as in a particular sentence), that different sentences can assert the same proposition, and that any particular sentence can also suggest a number of different propositions, such that any particular sentence is not necessarily exhausted by any one particular proposition. Taken in this sense, what a proposition would seem to refer to is not only a particular truth functional meaning about something but also that particular sense of

understanding or grasping of that meaning—a mental state in other words—which is not exhausted by any particular linguistic, verbal, pictorial or otherwise representational assemblage, such that the proposition that 'A is an idiot', for example, is just as expressible with an eye roll in A's vicinity as by saying "A is an idiot" or by a mental image or memory that expresses the idea that A is an idiot. Whatever final ontological account we may give of propositions (and I entertain no such final account here), they are, at the very least, intertwined with intelligibility and truth functionality, which in turn opens up the horizon for concepts associated with language acts, *viz.*, expression, and communicability.

In proposing that intelligibility and truth functionality constitute, in part, the essence of thought, or the activity of thinking, have I, in effect, affirmed that thought entails language? Before answering that, I must point out my ongoing puzzlement about the precise nature of the entailment relation here. Although the history of our discussion (6/120) appears to suggest that we should have logical relations in mind, the challenge in employing this sense of the term here is that, strictly speaking, we do not appear to be exploring an entailment relation between two propositions, as would ordinarily be the case. Given that we are dealing with an a priori relationship between concepts, there is a distinct danger, then, of "discovering" an entailment relation between 'thought' and 'language' in a purely stipulative fashion, or by dint of analyzing a concept in an ad-hoc and unmotivated manner with the effect of stacking matters towards a certain result. For example, I shore up a view about the underlying propositional structure of all intentional objects by proposing that language signs are a subset of these and then extending to the entire set what may be a distinctive feature of the subset. But even supposing that we reject this assumption and keep to the more modest idea that the concept for the activity of thinking is constituted, at least in part, by intelligibility and truth functionality, I have associated with thought the very properties typically associated with language. For what do we mean by language? A first approximation would be that 'language' refers to a concept for that ordering of signs in combinations that have semantic content (and thus are intelligible) and that, by extension, have propositional content (and thus have truth functionality). In trying to

understand 'thought', have I merely smuggled in ideas that are better left for understanding language acts exclusively, *viz.*, intelligibility and truth functionality? In trying to determine the existence of an entailment relation between thought and language, have I merely linguisticized the concept of thought?

Given all of the above dangers, is there any way of arriving at a view of an entailment relation (if any) between 'thought' and 'language' which avoids them? If I keep working within the constraints set out in the unit essays—ie: that we focus on the concepts and not the phenomena, that we attempt to discern an a priori relationship that is valid in all possible worlds—the question becomes formidable—I draw a blank—and it seems next to impossible to arrive at a conclusion that is not on some level question-begging, circular, or otherwise uninformative. At the risk of settling upon a merely pat resolution, perhaps therein lies the answer, that our tendency to use 'thought' and 'language' to discuss what seem to be distinct things (6/114) may itself be an illusion based on an insufficient analysis of what precisely we mean by these words, and that these two concepts in fact articulate different aspects or modes of what might be a deeper unity, *viz.*, the complex of mental state-proposition-intentional object which has a particular logical structure. This is a conclusion with all sorts of interesting implications, but one that only holds if my inference about the propositional content of all varieties of thinking is true. While the inference seems true, it may be too early to tell, and I come to the end of this exercise feeling as though I am left in the same muddle and puzzlement in which I had begun. I shall have to bide my time.