

existing senses, where those relations are such that they remain invariable so long as they occur in thoughts relating to the same times in the same possible worlds. Thus the necessity of 'No object is both red all over and green all over' could just as well derive from a truth of this sort:

For all modes of thought of a time,  $\alpha$ , and all modes of thought of a possible world,  $\beta$ , the senses of 'is red all over at  $\alpha$  in  $\beta$ ' and 'is green all over at  $\alpha$  in  $\beta$ ' are mutually incompatible.

Here by quantifying over modes of thought about times and worlds (that is, entities belonging to the realm of sense) we have avoided commitment to anything other than the present existence of senses.

One can thus believe, as both Frege and Wittgenstein did, that there is a class of objective analytic truths: believing that all internal relations between senses were determined, independently of us, as soon as the conventions constituting the senses of our expressions were fixed; believing, indeed, that these relations are genuine objects of discovery. And one can believe that analytic truths are necessary; constraining our talk about remote times and counter-factual worlds just as much as they constrain our talk about the present. And yet one can, consistently with both beliefs, believe that senses depend for their existence upon our existence: only coming to exist when we first begin to use a symbolic system in which those senses may be expressed.

#### SUMMARY

There are no good reasons in favour of Frege's belief in the necessary existence of Gedanken, and some powerful arguments against it. So it is more plausible to believe, as Wittgenstein does, that thoughts (senses) are mind-dependent entities, supervening upon the rules and conventions which govern the languages of intelligent agents.

## Thinking and Language-using

In this chapter we continue to explore the strength of the *TLP* theory of thinking, defending it against the second of the twin extremes between which we placed Wittgenstein's position in chapter 8; namely: out-and-out psychologism.

### 10.1 PRELIMINARIES

The *TLP* view is that both private thinking and public speaking are on a par, each consisting of representations of possible states of affairs by means of structured arrangements of sign-tokens, where both private and public signs are projected onto the world in essentially similar ways. There are then two sides to the psychologism with which such a view contrasts, which we shall proceed to criticize in turn. On the one hand there is what might be called 'The Code-breaking Conception' of speech. This holds that our public signs derive their significance from the private acts of meaning with which they are associated, understanding the public utterances of other people being a matter of decoding them correctly into private thinkings of one's own. And on the other hand there are non-linguistic theories of thinking, which hold, in their various ways, that it is possible to characterize private thinkings and their contents without employing notions which presuppose language or grasp of a language.

It is important to be clear at the outset that our concern is only with thought in the narrow sense, in which thinkings are conscious acts in which people engage on specific occasions. This is not to be confused with the wide sense in which any propositional attitude whatever may be described as a thought.<sup>1</sup> This wide sense covers not only events such as wondering, judging and entertaining a supposition, but also standing states such as belief, desire and

intention. It is generally agreed that these latter states may be possessed (though perhaps only in attenuated form) by non-linguistic creatures such as dogs and cats. So there is no real prospect of establishing that all thought (in the wide sense) involves structures similar to those of natural language. It may well be that there are notions of *conscious* belief and *conscious* desire which are essentially linguistic, if thinking in the narrow sense is linguistic (where a conscious belief is a belief apt to give rise to a conscious thinking with the same content); but this is something which can only be established, if at all, having first focused on thinking in the narrow sense. Indeed it is not a topic which we shall need to pursue further in the present work.<sup>2</sup>

As I shall understand it, thinkings are conscious mental events. But not all conscious mental events are thinkings. For example, a feeling of pain is not, the act of forming a mental image is not, and nor is the onset of a belief in perception. The first two examples are not thinkings because they lack propositional content: thinkings are mental events which can always be reported in the form 'At that moment I entertained the thought [that P]'. And the first and the third examples are not thinkings because they have a substantial sensory component. Thinkings and imaginings differ from pains and perceivings in lacking the distinctive phenomenological aspects of the latter – though whether this is a mere matter of degree, as Hume believed, or rather a difference in kind, as I believe, we need not now decide.

Although the term 'thought' needs to be taken narrowly, if the thesis that thought and language are essentially similar is to be defensible, the term 'language', on the other hand, needs to be taken widely, to include maps, pictures and diagrams. This is because of the way in which mental images can enter into the contents of our thoughts. For example I might think 'I shall arrange my office furniture thus', at the same time forming an image. This image is surely not a mere adjunct of my thinking, but rather forms a crucial part of its content. So if the thesis that thinking is linguistic is to be defensible we must allow the public analogues of images to count as language.<sup>3</sup> But this is in any case a reasonable extension of the term. For to take a similar example, I might say to someone 'I am going to arrange my office furniture like this', at the same time drawing them a quick sketch; and what I draw ought surely to be counted as belonging to the semantic

content of my performance, since if you fail to interpret it correctly you will not have understood me. So I shall henceforward understand 'language-using' to cover all kinds of public use of symbols.

One further set of preliminary remarks: in what follows I shall abstract from a number of issues surrounding public language, which would unnecessarily complicate our discussions without, I think, affecting our main topic. One of these is the relationship between idiolectic linguistic understanding, on the one hand, and language as a public object on the other. It is this which is involved when we distinguish between what a speaker meant or intended, and what they literally said. In the present context it is idiolectic understanding which concerns us, since the notion of what is said but not meant is surely a derivative one – there could be no sayings which are not meanings, unless there were also cases in which the two of them coincide. Another issue is that of linguistic division of labour.<sup>4</sup> This we may safely ignore, since it appears to hold equally at the level of private thought. If I think to myself 'I must buy some gold', then I may be just as dependent upon the word of experts to identify real gold for me as I would be had I said it out loud. Then finally there are the various conventions of conversational implicature governing public speech. Some of these may operate at the level of private thinking, whereas some clearly do not.<sup>5</sup> But since, as we remarked in the notes to chapter 5, such conventions are not genuinely essential to language as such, we may reasonably leave the issue to one side.

## 10.2 THE CODE-BREAKING CONCEPTION

The simplest and most ancient form of theory which sees the content of public speech as deriving from something inner, holds that words get their life from conscious mental processes which accompany speaking or hearing. In one version, this process consists in a stream of mental images, perhaps with a single image carrying the content of each word in the spoken or heard sentence.<sup>6</sup> Others have held that it consists in a mixture of images and feelings.<sup>7</sup> But all such theories are vulnerable to an argument of the later Wittgenstein's.<sup>8</sup> He urges us to take an example of a meaningful utterance and to try to 'peel away' the spoken words, leaving the inner process of meaning intact. In some cases, no doubt, this

can be done. I might for instance have said aloud 'I shall invite you round sometime' while actually thinking to myself 'I shall take care never to see you again'. But in many cases it cannot. Thus suppose that in the course of discussing possible locations for a holiday, I say to you 'Avignon is hot in August'. In many cases if I try to imagine a situation which is like this one in all respects except that no public utterance is made, then I find I have imagined a situation in which nothing is thought or meant either. In standard instances of public speech, it seems that the act of meaning is inseparable from the act of speaking.

There are, however, more modern versions of the Code-breaking Conception which are not similarly vulnerable. For example, there are the theories of Grice and his followers, who see the meaning of a public utterance as lying in the intentions with which it is made (it being assumed that these intentions can be characterized without mention of linguistic meaning.)<sup>9</sup> If I assert 'P', then what gives this its content, on such a view, is (roughly) that I utter it with the intention that my hearer should come to believe that P on the basis of recognizing this very intention. Such theories are proof against the 'peel away the utterance' argument, since it is in the nature of such an intention (called by some 'an intention in action') that it cannot exist in the absence of the utterance. If I am not in fact saying anything (or do not at least believe myself to be saying something) then I cannot intend that this utterance should induce in you a belief . . . and so on. If Grice is right, then I can no more peel away my utterance while leaving my intention in speaking intact, than I can peel away the motion of my hands at the piano while yet leaving intact the intentions imbued in their movement. But for all that, what gives public speech its content and significance are the mental states of the speaker; and understanding the words of another requires a kind of decoding, in order that one should recover from their words the belief expressed.

The main problem with these more sophisticated versions of Code-breaking Conception, however, is that their focus is almost exclusively upon the use of language to communicate. Yet the use of language in deliberating and reasoning is surely equally essential (if not equally common).<sup>10</sup> In the course of wondering where to go on holiday, for example, I may say aloud 'Avignon is hot in August', in the full knowledge that there is no one else present. Then in whom am I intending to induce a belief? Surely not myself,

since I presumably already know myself to believe that Avignon is hot in August. Nor in anyone else, since I know myself to be alone.

Grice, in discussing examples of this sort, says that my utterance is made with the intention that it should be such as to induce the belief in an hypothetical and only vaguely specified audience.<sup>11</sup> But this is either false or self-defeating. It is false if it means that my use of words in soliloquy is constrained by the way in which I believe others would in fact take them. If I know my idiolect to be in some respects unique, then I may make utterances while deliberating which I know would not induce in any who overheard me the very same beliefs which I express. The account becomes self-defeating, on the other hand, if the hypothetical audience is defined as being one made up of people who would take my words in the way that I do. For this employs the notion of a 'way of taking words' which cannot be explicated in terms of intentions to communicate.

I conclude that the Code-breaking Conception is false, if taken with full generality. Not all significant speech gains its content from the underlying mental states of the speaker. Sometimes, at least, speech is a matter of thinking out loud to oneself. And in these cases (as in others) the thinking is in fact inseparable from the speaking.<sup>12</sup>

### 10.3 PROJECTING PUBLIC LANGUAGE

If our rejection of the Code-breaking Conception is to be at all satisfying, then we must show that it is possible to give an account of the content of public speech which is not psychologistic, and which will also be equally serviceable for soliloquy as for communication. So when I say that Avignon is hot in August, what is it that makes my utterance concern heat rather than anything else? (For the sake of simplicity I confine myself to the mode of projection of predicates.)<sup>13</sup>

There is an answer ready to hand: it is that I associate a particular rule of classification with the word, which if correctly followed will apply to all and only places which are hot. My grasp of this rule must at least involve, even if it is not constituted by, a classificatory capacity: I must in general be capable, on finding myself in a place, of telling whether it is hot or not. (In some cases I may defer to the capacities of other people, as when I rely upon experts to identify genuine gold for me. But clearly this phenom-

enon cannot be a general one, on pain of vicious circularity.) It is in virtue of possessing such a capacity that I may be said to know the difference between places which are hot and those which are not.

However, there are at least two respects in which my grasp of the above rule cannot be equated with a bare disposition to employ the term 'hot' in one way rather than another. Firstly, it is essential that my capacity contain a normative element. In meaning something by the word I must have the idea that I am committing myself to a determinate pattern of application, such that there will be uses of it which are correct or incorrect irrespective of my inclinations to employ it at the time. In short, meaningful use of a term requires that the speaker have the concept of mistaken use. And secondly, we are inclined to think that the rule I grasp has consequences which outreach any capacity that I may have, determining what should be said even in cases where it may be impossible in principle that I should ever be in a position to make a judgement, such as the remote past or remote regions of space.<sup>14</sup>

Here we have the beginnings of a non-psychologistic account of sense, which will work for both soliloquy and communication. What makes a public utterance of mine represent the state of affairs which it does is my grasp of the rules for the use of the various signs involved, including my capacity to apply those signs to the world and to employ them in other significant sentences. And what enables such an utterance to communicate is that other people know how to employ those signs in accordance with the same, or at least logically equivalent, rules. This is, in effect, the *TLP* conception of public language: sentences consist of structured arrangements of signs which represent the world in virtue of the conventions which the speaker takes to govern the use of those signs and their mode of combination. So what makes public language significant is not any mental process, nor any associated belief or intention, but rather our capacity to use signs in a norm-governed way.<sup>15</sup>

#### 10.4 NON-LINGUISTIC THEORIES OF THINKING

We turn now to consider the other half of the psychologistic enterprise: the attempt to characterize private thinking in non-linguistic terms. Here too Imagism has been, historically, the most

favoured theory. Many have claimed that thinkings consist of images or sequences of images, perhaps feeling that images have a semantic transparency which makes them inevitable candidates for bearing the content of our thoughts. Yet Imagism's inadequacies are now almost universally recognized. Perhaps the best way to sum these up is to say that no image, in itself, can in fact carry the content of a proposition. No image, no matter how detailed or how schematic, can in itself carry the content of the thought [that grass is green], let alone the thought [that microscopic organisms may be discovered on Mars within the next ten or twelve years]. This is not to deny, however, that images can ever enter into the contents of our thoughts. But it will always be images used or taken in a particular way which contribute to the content of a thought, just as in the public case it is a sketch used in a particular way which contributes to the content of the utterance 'I shall arrange my furniture like this'.

The only real non-linguistic alternative to Imagism is to attempt to analyse thinking in terms of a concept which already involves the notion of propositional content, such as belief. Yet we obviously cannot say simply that thinking is believing, since thinkings are conscious events whereas beliefs are not. However, we might introduce the idea of the *activation* of a belief, by saying that an activated belief is one which is somehow engaged in the agent's current cognitive processing. Can we then say that thinking is activated belief? Again clearly not, since in any complex task there may be beliefs which enter into the control of an agent's behaviour without emerging in acts of thinking. For example, it seems likely that your beliefs about the rules of chess will be activated whenever you play, partially determining what you do without necessarily becoming conscious. Moreover, consider the significance of the thesis that perception is theory-laden: this means that our beliefs affect the content of our perceptions (and hence are activated); but without, surely, emerging in conscious thinking. The most plausible response to these objections would be to try saying that thinkings are activated *second-order* beliefs; especially since many see a connection between second-order mental states and the possession of consciousness.<sup>16</sup> To think to oneself that P would then be to have activated the belief that one believes that P.

I can see at least three possible lines of objection to such an account, only two of which will be pursued here. Firstly, we could

challenge the whole idea that it is possible to characterize belief, and the contents of beliefs, independently of the subject's use of language.<sup>17</sup> The claim would be, in particular, that one cannot individuate a person's beliefs finely enough without mentioning their dispositions to use and respond to sentences in their native language. But in fact it is no easy task to make this objection stick. For some have claimed that we can explicate a fine-grained notion of belief in terms of the different ways in which even logically equivalent states can enter into cognitive processing.<sup>18</sup>

A second line of argument is to point out that there are all sorts of thinkings which appear to have only the most tenuous of connections with belief. If I wonder to myself whether P, or entertain in fantasy the thought that P, then I am clearly not believing myself to believe that P. But this point by itself is inconclusive, since wondering whether P, for example, might be characterized as a weak activated desire, to either believe that P or to believe that not P. And as for fantasy thinking, it would seem that this could be accounted for if we could provide an adequate explanation of the notion of 'pretending to oneself to believe'. Then thinking in fantasy that P could be identified with the activation of a pretended second-order belief that one believes that P. But in fact I doubt whether any such account can be given which does not simply help itself to the notion of thinking. For one can only be pretending to have a belief if one engages in some of the categorical actions which would manifest it. (Pretending to believe that I am in danger means starting to run away, or briefly putting on a terrified look, or something of the sort.) But in what categorical actions am I to engage when I privately pretend to believe that I believe that P, if not the act of entertaining the thought that P? For of course I may fantasize without doing anything overtly. In which case not all thinking can be reduced to the possession of propositional attitudes.

The third line of objection, however, is simple and conclusive. It is that the account gets the focus of attention of private thinking quite wrong. When I think to myself that Avignon is hot in August my attention is directed primarily towards Avignon and its likely summer temperature. Yet on the proposed account, I should in reality be concerned with my own states of belief – I should be having a belief about myself activated, that I believe Avignon to be hot in August. Thinkings would then be focused only indirectly on

the world, via the content of the first-order belief involved. Their primary focus would be the self. But this is wrong. Thinking is generally world-directed, not self-directed (unless I happen to be thinking about myself). What we require is a theory of thinking (or more particularly, of that form of thinking which is judging) which presents it as a distinctive mode of activation of belief. Thinkings are conscious events having the same primary world-directedness as beliefs; my judgements somehow serving to express my beliefs without representing them. It will be my thesis that any theory meeting this *desideratum* will have to make thinking out to be essentially linguistic.

### 10.5 SYMBOLIC THINKING

Let us begin by asking how thinkings are related to the world. When I think to myself that Avignon is hot, what is it that links what takes place in my consciousness with heat? (Once again I concentrate upon the predicative element in thinking.) It is surely clear that any adequate answer must mention my classificatory capacities. In general, only someone who is capable of recognizing the difference between places which are hot and those which are not can entertain thoughts about heat. And they, like the person who speaks aloud about heat, must regard themselves as committed to a certain pattern of application, allowing room for the idea of misclassification. Someone only counts as entertaining a conscious thought about heat whose capacities reflect a grasp of a classificatory rule which applies to places independently of the thinker's disposition towards judgement on any given occasion. So what projects our acts of thinking into the world is not essentially different from what projects our statements: in both cases an important part of the connection is constituted by the thinker/speaker's grasp of various rules of classification, together with their attendant capacities. These capacities are exercised in thinking, just as they are exercised in the use of public language.<sup>19</sup>

The next point to notice is that thinkings, like sayings, are structured, being subject to the compositionality principle. Anyone who is capable of thinking that Avignon is hot in August must also be capable of thinking other thoughts which deploy the same and other elements in a variety of ways. They must be able to think that

Avignon is cold in February, that Aberdeen is cold in August, that it is hot here now, and so on – or something of the sort.<sup>20</sup> And as we can now say: these thinkings involve exercises of the very same capacities differently combined. Indeed thinking is unlimitedly creative, in exactly the way that language is: it is essential to thinking that new thoughts can always be formed using old materials in new ways. So any act of thinking must employ a number of component rules and capacities reflecting the structure of the thought.

Now recall that thinkings are conscious events. When I think to myself that Avignon is hot in August, there must occur in my consciousness an event which expresses the content of that thought. Since this content is structured, and is related to the world via a number of underlying rules and capacities, the conscious event must be structured as well.<sup>21</sup> Indeed it must consist of components corresponding to each of the underlying capacities, in such a way that one can say that, in employing one of those components in consciousness, I thereby exercise the relevant capacity. Consciously thinking that Avignon is hot could hardly involve an exercise of my capacity for recognizing hot places unless it contained an element which was systematically related to that capacity. For in general an event-type which exercises a capacity or disposition must be systematically related to it – otherwise what could pick it out as an exercise of that capacity rather than another? So the elements of the event which is the act of thinking are, in effect, ‘markers’ for the underlying capacities which they exercise.

What we have now found our way to is tantamount to the claim that thinking is essentially symbol-mediated. For our conclusion is that the content-conferring capacities exercised in thinking must each have individual markers in consciousness, in such a way that appropriate combinations of these markers will constitute an exercise of the corresponding capacities. Yet what is a spoken or written sign – considered as an instrument within an idiolect – except a marker, or index, for the exercise of a conceptual capacity? When I think out loud with the sentence ‘Avignon is hot in August’, what is the sign ‘hot’ except a marker whose use on this occasion is an index of the exercise of my capacity for distinguishing between places which are hot and those which are not?

Thinkings are thus world-directed in the same way that speakings are. In both cases we employ structured arrangements of

events, where each component of the structure marks an exercise of a conceptual capacity, those capacities (together with their mode of combination) serving to focus the completed structure upon the world. And note that it is an advantage of our account that it is able to treat fantasy thinking in the very same way as private judging: in both cases it is structures of signs which express the content of the thinking, the difference between the two consisting in the attitude which the thinker adopts towards the completed whole. But as for what the events are which constitute the elements of our thinkings, it would be a matter for psychology to find out.<sup>22</sup> They might be images of spoken or of written words, or visual images of things, or a mixture of all three; perhaps differing in the case of different people. (But note that many of the images here would be functioning as mere signs, comparable to the words in a token utterance, rather than as what confers content on our thoughts, as the Imagist theory would claim.) Yet since we are allowing pictures and maps to count as part of public language, we can still maintain the isomorphism between public and private.<sup>23</sup>

#### SUMMARY

The *TLP* position outlined in chapter 8 stands vindicated as the most plausible account of the relationship between thinking and language-using. Both are on a par, consisting of arrangements of signs which represent the world in virtue of the thinker/speaker’s normative capacities for their use.<sup>24</sup>

- understood in terms of conscious selection and explanation. For on the *TLP* account of thinking to be defended in ch. 10, conscious thinking is itself language-like and hence convention-involving. But it is in any case plausible to maintain that there are other ways for norms to arise than by conscious decision.
- 3 For example Katz (1981) takes such a view, for reasons which appear similar to Frege's reasons for believing in the necessary existence of thoughts.
  - 4 Frege nowhere explicitly says that sentences have temporal existence. But such a view would seem to be implicit in the fact that he continually stresses the necessary existence of thoughts without once mentioning language in this connection. See also *BLA* xvi, where he implies that syntax is dependent upon historically conditioned facts of human psychology, and that languages are in consequence subject to change.
  - 5 On this see Dummett's discussion in his (1981b), ch. 3.
  - 6 As an aid to the reader, whenever designating a particular thought I employ square brackets to indicate its scope.
  - 7 A limited version of this idea has been defended recently by Evans (1982) and others, particularly in connection with demonstrative thoughts. For a critique, see my (1987a).
  - 8 Note that the arguments deployed here count equally against the Russellian model of thinking, which requires us to be in cognitive contact with a necessarily existing universal. This point will prove to be of some importance in ch. 16.
  - 9 These arguments are discussed in greater detail in my (1984c). I also respond there to the suggestion that thoughts might have an existence which is timeless, where this means that it is nonsense (rather than necessarily true) to say of a thought that it exists at particular times. The immediate problem with such a suggestion is that it is then difficult to see how it can be possible for thoughts to be *grasped* at particular times either, given that the grasping-relation is supposed to be a real (as opposed to an intentional) one.
  - 10 See Frege (1984), pp. 361–3 and 369, and Frege (1979), pp. 133–4 and 137.
  - 11 Of course we have also seen that there is a strong case for rejecting the first premiss as well, at least where factual communication is concerned. See ch. 5 for the argument that understanding does not require mutual knowledge of cognitive content.
  - 12 See *FA* vi, Frege (1984), pp. 363, 368 and 370–1, and Frege (1979), pp. 129, 135 and 148.
  - 13 This principle needs to be made marginally more complicated to accommodate thoughts which themselves imply that they are not asserted at the time in question, such as the thought [that there are no intelligent agents prior to 20 million BC]. We need to add the rider: 'So long as the content of the thought does not imply that it is not entertained at the time in question'.

- 14 I owe this distinction to Dummett's (1973), pp. 368–70.
- 15 See for example *FA* vii, where Frege argues that if nothing remained fixed for all time then there could be no knowledge and no truth.
- 16 There is perhaps one possible difference between the two cases, in that I cannot in principle get into the remote past, whereas it is only the laws of nature which prevent me from getting into remote regions of space. But consider thoughts about all places. I cannot, even in principle, get into all places at once.
- 17 For further development and discussion of this position see *MT* chs. 4 and 5.
- 18 See *FA* vi–vii, Frege (1984), pp. 363, 367–8 and 370 and Frege (1979), pp. 133, 135 and 148. The argument I give in the text is of course a rational reconstruction, since Frege himself does not make use of the notion of a possible world.

#### CHAPTER 10 THINKING AND LANGUAGE-USING

- 1 This use of 'thought' is especially common amongst philosophers. Indeed it is quasi-technical, since someone with a long-term desire to be famous would not normally be described as thinking or entertaining a thought at all.  
The distinction is of some importance since many of those who discuss the question whether thinking is linguistic fail to draw it, yet some of their arguments for a negative conclusion only succeed if 'thought' is taken widely. See for example McGinn (1982b), ch. 4.
- 2 One related issue, which does need to be pursued further, is that one clearly cannot maintain any simple version of the thesis that thinkings (narrow sense) are linguistic. For as Dummett points out in his (1986), p. 144, there are conscious thinkings which are not, on any account of the matter, linguistically formulated. He gives an example of a canoeist seeing two boats closing on one another and deciding that he just has time to slip his canoe between them. This decision is an occurrent event, not a standing state; yet it clearly need not have been formulated in words or anything like words. The distinctive feature of such thinkings is that there need be no events in the thinker's consciousness at the time which may be said to express them. But then just for this reason (and for reasons similar to those which will emerge in the final section of this chapter) I do not see what account can be given of what it is for such a decision to be a conscious one (as opposed to the sort of non-conscious decisions one takes while driving the car with one's conscious mind wholly occupied with something else) except to say that it is an event apt to emerge in an explicitly formulated thinking with the same content. If this is correct, then all conscious thinkings may turn out to be language-involving in the same way that I suggested in the text that conscious beliefs and desires

- might – provided, of course, that we can show that all explicitly formulated thinkings are linguistic.
- 3 I here bypass contemporary debates over whether images are themselves propositional (see for example the essays in Part Two of Ned Block, 1981), and whether thoughts are themselves imagistic (see for example Johnson-Laird, 1988). For I take it that these debates concern the appropriate sub-personal explanations of imagery and thought. What is clear is that at the personal (conscious) level, images and (some) acts of thinking are quite distinct. It is also clear that no image can constitute an act of thinking by itself, but only when embedded within an appropriate propositional context (explicit or implicit). And even here, it is not the image itself, but the image used or taken in a particular way, which contributes to the content of the thought. See the discussion which follows later in the chapter.
  - 4 The idea was first introduced in Putnam's seminal paper 'The Meaning of "Meaning"', which is reproduced as Essay 12 of his (1975).
  - 5 For example, if I think to myself 'I have a girl-friend' when in fact I have three, then I shall not have misled myself in the way that I would have misled my mother if I had asserted that sentence aloud to her. On the other hand, if I think to myself 'Some Australians are too big for their boots' while watching a young man who I know to be an Australian strut by, then I shall take myself to have implied that that man is conceited, just as my audience would have understood from my utterance if I had spoken the sentence aloud. (The example is Blackburn's. See his 1984, p. 308.)
  - 6 Locke is generally credited with having held such a view.
  - 7 As did Russell in his (1940).
  - 8 See *PI* 332. Note that I am claiming that Wittgenstein's views on the nature of thinking remained basically unchanged throughout his career.
  - 9 See Grice (1957) and (1969).
  - 10 The fact that the use of speech in soliloquy is rare need not prevent it from assuming a central theoretical importance. (Compare: reading aloud to oneself is rare amongst adults, yet that is how we all learned to read.) Nor is it really so very rare. Many of us chat to our dogs and cats (and babies) without intending to induce beliefs in them. Many of us first work out our thoughts and calculations on paper, thinking with our fingers as it were. And in philosophy one famous lecturing technique is to think aloud in the presence of an audience.
  - 11 See Grice (1969), pp. 174–7.
  - 12 Let me stress that I do not mean that there are some things which can only be thought aloud. Rather, there are some token-utterances which express thought, but where there is no separable process of thinking them.
  - 13 The issues surrounding names will be discussed in ch. 13. I also abstract from debates as to whether 'hot', in such a use, is a natural-kind term, rigidly designating mean molecular momentum. This

- would unnecessarily complicate the discussion without affecting its outcome. For even so the word will designate a natural kind in virtue of expressing a particular rule of classification along the lines of 'heat is whatever fundamentally explains *this* range of phenomena' (with here a gesture at a range of recognizable examples of hot places and things).
- 14 This idea will be discussed in some detail in *MT* chs. 4 and 15.
  - 15 Dummett argues against equating knowledge of a language with mastery of a technique in his (1986), pp. 146–7. But the contrast he draws between knowing a language and knowing how to swim fails to make his point. It would indeed be peculiar for someone who had never learned Russian to say 'I don't know whether I can speak it; I have never tried', in a way that it would not be so peculiar to say 'I don't know whether I can swim; I have never tried'. This is because swimming is not a normative activity. But it does not follow that knowing a language is a matter of genuine (propositional) knowledge. For it would be equally strange for someone to say 'I don't know whether I can play chess; I have never tried'. Yet knowing how to play chess is surely a mastery of a technique. One could learn it without ever being given, or formulating for oneself, an explicit statement of the rules; just gradually acquiring the ability to distinguish allowable from unallowed moves. In the same way, Dummett's point that someone who has not learned Russian does not know what it is to speak Russian, being incapable of distinguishing genuine Russian speakers from others, holds equally in the case of chess. Someone who has not learned to play does not know – in precisely the same sense – what chess is, being incapable of telling whether or not two people moving pieces around on a board are playing it.
- Where Dummett is right, is that to know that I speak Russian (or any other shared language) I have to know that my capacities coincide with those of other speakers. And this will be genuine propositional knowledge. The truth is that knowing an idiolect is mastery of a normative technique, whereas knowing a shared language is this together with the knowledge that one's normative capacities coincide with those of others; it being this propositional knowledge which underpins communication.
- 16 See for example Smith and Jones (1986), Part III.
  - 17 See Davidson's 'Thought and Talk' in his (1984) or in Guttenplan (1975).
  - 18 This is Loar's strategy in his (1981), following Stalnaker (1976).
  - 19 This account is not unlike that given by Geach in his (1957), ch. 5.
  - 20 Of course I do not mean that subjects must be capable of thinking precisely these thoughts – they may never have heard of Aberdeen.
  - 21 Not that the complete structure must occur in every instance of thinking – for as Wittgenstein remarks at *PI* 319, I can entertain a thought in a flash in the same sense that I can make a note of it in a few pencilled words. What makes the incomplete sign into something expressing a complete thought is that I know how to complete it, and



act exactly as if I had completed it. The point here is related to the one made in note 2 above – it is the aptness of the incomplete thought-token to give rise to complete thinkings with a particular content which constitutes it as a conscious expression of that content.

- 22 Here I consciously echo Wittgenstein's remarks in his 1919 letter to Russell, to emphasize the point that they do not commit him to any version of the code-breaking conception of language. (See Wittgenstein, 1974, p. 72.)
- 23 The two are isomorphic not just in that both employ structured arrangements of sign-tokens, but in that anything thinkable will be sayable and vice versa. For someone who entertains privately the thought [that P] need only select some public markers to play the same roles as the ones which exercise the capacities involved in their thinking. And conversely, someone who asserts publicly that P need only find some markers in consciousness to play the roles of their public words, in order to be able to entertain that thought privately.
- 24 It is worth indicating how the position outlined in this chapter differs from the theory of mental representation defended by Fodor (1981). There is agreement that thoughts are relations to sentences. But Fodor denies that these sentences will belong to a natural language, whereas I maintain that they very likely will be. Given that public thinking takes place in natural language, parsimony supports the suggestion that private thinkings will similarly employ natural language sentences. Moreover Fodor believes that all propositional attitudes are relational, whether they be conscious or non-conscious, personal or sub-personal; whereas I am inclined to believe that only conscious propositional attitudes are relations to sentences; a conscious attitude being one which is apt to emerge in a conscious thinking (an event employing an arrangement of signs) with the same content. I hope to develop these ideas elsewhere.

## CHAPTER 11 NAME AND OBJECT

- 1 Some have sought to find a distinction between objects (*Gegenstanden*) and things (*Dingen*) – see for example Finch (1971). I myself can see no significant difference between the two. Indeed the way in which the terms are introduced at 2.01 strongly suggests that they are to be understood equivalently. There Wittgenstein tells us that a state of affairs is a combination of objects (or things).
- 2 Those who adopt the wide interpretation include Stenius (1960), Allaire (1963), Mounce (1981) and Hintikka and Hintikka (1986).
- 3 Those who adopt the narrow interpretation include Copi (1958b), Anscombe (1959), Sellars (1962a), Griffin (1964) and Fogelin (1982).
- 4 Pears (1987, pp. 137–9) has suggested that Wittgenstein does not

commit himself to either these two doctrines in particular, arguing that what is of value in the Picture Theory is consistent with either of them. I think this suggestion is intrinsically implausible, for reasons which will emerge shortly. But in any case, since he concedes that what he finds important in the Picture Theory is consistent with the narrow reading, a demonstration that there is additional significance to be found in that theory if the narrow reading is adopted will provide a reason for embracing it. This is what I shall argue.

Ishiguro (1969, pp. 48–9) also suggests a third alternative, arguing that the *Simples* referred to by the names of *TLP* are instantiations of simple properties (immanent universals). Although this reading does have some advantages, it is hard to see how, in that case, *Simples* could have necessary existence. (See *MT* ch. 8.) For there is no reason to think that the set of universals which are immanent in a world should be the same across all possible worlds. Moreover, on this account it is hard to see what the Picture Theory, as it applies at the level of elementary propositions (which would consist only of 'names' of immanent universals), could usefully show us about the semantics of ordinary sentences: though Ishiguro herself defends an interpretation of the Picture Theory similar to my own (see ch. 15 of this work) in her (1979).

- 5 See Allaire (1963), who argues that objects and properties (and names and predicates) are much more nearly alike, in Wittgenstein's view, than Frege thinks. On the interpretation to be defended in ch. 15, on the other hand, Wittgenstein not only accepts Frege's distinction between names and predicates but widens it still further, claiming that predicates and relational expressions do not have reference. His view is that their *Bedeutungen* are not items in reality, as are the *Bedeutungen* of names.

Note that the central importance of the concept/object distinction in Frege counts also against Pears' suggestion, mentioned in note 4 above, that Wittgenstein leaves the categorial status of objects unresolved.

- 6 Though strictly speaking, whether they are metaphors at all is a matter of interpretation. I think they clearly have to be, since if states of affairs were literally spatial configurations of physical particles then there could be no question of them being logically independent of one another. See the discussion which follows.
- 7 See Long (1982) for an account of the distinction.
- 8 See for example Stenius (1960), p. 132.
- 9 See Stenius (1960), p. 62.
- 10 I am aware that it is to a degree controversial to take the objects of *TLP* to have necessary existence. I shall return to the matter in *MT* ch. 8.
- 11 Notice that on the wide reading the claims in 2.0231–2.0232 become utterly banal. They would merely deny that any individual, or property, or relation can constitute a state of affairs by itself. Rather it is only 'combinations' of objects with properties, or objects with re-