

Kripke vs. Wittgenstein on the Notion of Rule-Following and Semantic Contextualism*

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【Abstract】 In this paper, I argue that it is Kripke's Tractarian notion of rule-following that prevents him from giving a non-skeptical (straight) solution to Wittgenstein's paradox. I characterize the Tractarian notion of rule-following as the 'determinate/infinistic' notion of rule-following. The later Wittgenstein, however, advocates an opposite notion of rule-following: the 'indeterminate/finistic' notion. Considering the later Wittgenstein's context-sensitive, pragmatics-oriented approach to meaning and rule-following, the later Wittgenstein could not have endorsed the determinate/infinistic notion of rule-following. To the contrary, a motive behind Wittgenstein's skeptical paradox was to blame the Tractarian notion of rule-following as the major culprit giving rise to the paradox. At the end, I argue that Kripke's adherence to the Tractarian-correspondence theory of truth also contributes to his failure to offer a non-skeptical solution to the paradox. If Kripke had noticed that the later Wittgenstein was a deflationist about truth, he could have avoided his skeptical conclusion.

【Key Words】 skeptical paradox, determinate vs indeterminate rule-following, infinistic vs finistic rule-following, semantic contextualism, deflationism

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1. Setting up the Problem

Kripke behaves like a bridging interlocutor in his *Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language* (henceforth, *WRPL*), one foot in the early Wittgenstein's and the other in the later Wittgenstein's views of meaning.¹⁾ This straddling position he adopts in *WRPL* creates two problems; first, his interpretation of the later Wittgenstein is not coherent; second, it does not offer the best solution to the problem from which his discussion on Wittgenstein is prompted.

The problem is what Kripke calls 'Wittgenstein's paradox' (henceforth it will also be called 'the skeptical paradox'). Wittgenstein in *Philosophical Investigations* (henceforth, *PL*) writes:

This was our paradox: no course of action could be determined by a rule, because every course of action can be made out to accord with the rule. The answer was: if everything can be made out to accord with the rule, then it can also be made out to conflict with it. And so there would be neither accord nor conflict here.²⁾

A rule lacking the function of prescribing the correctness of actions—a normative function—cannot be said to be a rule. Meaning, on the other hand, is a normative notion at least in the minimal sense; the meaning of an expression is inseparably connected to the linguistic rule governing. An expression with

¹⁾ S. Kripke (1982).

²⁾ L. Wittgenstein (1953), §201, p. 81.

which we cannot associate any rule should be considered meaningless. But then, Wittgenstein's paradox (if it were true) would jeopardize the meaningfulness of expressions, which is not only contrary to common sense but is plainly false.

Wittgenstein is not clear about the reason for or the solution to the skeptical paradox. Kripke attempts to read them off from *PL* by focusing on the role played by the notion of interpretation and the differences between the early and the later Wittgenstein's views of meaning. As a way of explaining the role played by interpretation in giving rise to the skeptical paradox, Kripke turns to a thought-experiment.³⁾ Suppose I never computed a number bigger than 57, and someone asks me 'What is the sum of 68 + 57?' I would almost certainly answer '125', which everyone would consider to be the correct, rule-following answer except for Wittgenstein's skeptic. The skeptic's argument is twofold: first, my present answer would be rule-following only if it is grounded on my previous understanding of the rule of addition (as opposed to, saying, quaddition), and second, there is no fact of the matter which shows that I followed the rule of addition (as opposed to, saying, quaddition) when I employed '+' in the past. To illustrate the point more vividly, Kripke brings in an imaginary word 'quus' (symbolized by by '⊕'), which is defined as follows:

$$x \oplus y = x + y \text{ if } y < 57; \text{ otherwise, } x \oplus y = 5.$$

Given that I never computed numbers bigger than 57, even if my

³⁾ S. Kripke (1982).

answers in the past appear to accord with the rule of addition, that cannot by itself justify meaning-attribution (1) as opposed to (2):

- (1) I meant the plus function by ‘+’.
- (2) I meant the quus function by ‘+’.

Thus, the skeptic asks whether there is a fact of the matter showing that only (1), but not (2), is the correct interpretation of my past employment of ‘+’. Or (putting the question in the way Kripke does), is there a rule which tells us what rule I was following when I employed ‘+’ in the past?⁴⁾

Despite many criticisms raised about Kripke’s understanding of Wittgenstein’s paradox, I think Kripke had a keen foresight in emphasizing the role of interpretation in giving rise to the skeptical paradox.⁵⁾ This is especially so when we consider how broadly the notion of interpretation is construed in the current debates of linguistic contextualism or linguistic pragmatism.⁶⁾ One of the core ideas defended by this new wave in the philosophy of language is that the demarcation between semantics and pragmatics is not as sharp as it was traditionally conceived to be. What was traditionally conceived to be an exclusively pragmatic

⁴⁾ S. Kripke (1982), p. 17.

⁵⁾ See J. McDowell (1984); C. McGinn (1984), Ch. 6.

⁶⁾ In the tradition of formal semantics, a pragmatic interpretation (an interpretation of a speaker’s intention in a context) does not affect truth-conditional or semantic content. This view, however, is refuted by the recent pragmatic approach to truth-conditional or semantic content. See R. Recanati (2010).

matter—for example, interpreting a speaker's intentions by processing context-specific information—is now considered to affect the semantic properties of expressions.⁷⁾ The early Wittgenstein was not keen on this influence, because Tractarian semantics develops a logical, formal approach to the semantic properties of language. It develops a conception of linguistic understanding which is akin to what Sperber and Wilson call 'the code model of communication,' according to which communication is achieved by encoding and decoding messages.⁸⁾ This approach, however, is harshly criticized by Wittgenstein himself in *PL*: "What confuses us is the uniform appearance of words . . . For their *application* is not presented to us so clearly."⁹⁾ Only when language goes on holiday (only when language is not used in real situations) may we endorse Tractarian semantics.¹⁰⁾

I will argue that the skeptical paradox arises in the midst of the later Wittgenstein's attempt to develop a more context-sensitive, pragmatics-oriented view of semantic properties. One may here object that a contextualist solution cannot be applied to Kripke's quus-example, since semantic contextualism

⁷⁾ This new wave of semantics is aptly called 'truth-conditional pragmatics,' the proponents of which include A. Bezuidenhout (2002); R. Carston (2002, 2004); F. Recanati (2010); D. Sperber & D. Wilson (1986/95).

⁸⁾ D. Sperber & D. Wilson (1986/95).

⁹⁾ L. Wittgenstein (1953), §11.

¹⁰⁾ Wittgenstein says, "For philosophical problems arise when language *goes on holiday*. And *here* we may indeed fancy naming to be some remarkable act of mind, as it were a baptism of an object." (Wittgenstein, 1953, §38) It is interesting that Wittgenstein here mentions "baptism" in a critical tone, which is given a reference-fixing role by Kripke. See S. Kripke (1980).

does not apply to expressions in mathematics or scientific theories.¹¹⁾ In response to this objection, I would first like to point out that Kripke considers a mathematical expression such as ‘plus’ or ‘+’ as part of ordinary language, not technical language. Throughout *WRPL*, Kripke puts the mathematical expression ‘plus’ on the par with an ordinary expression such as ‘pain’ or ‘red.’ Moreover, nowhere in *WRPL* does Kripke say that his skeptical considerations are confined to mathematical language. To the contrary, Kripke derives wholesale skepticism about meaning and rule-following from his skeptical considerations about the plus sign. So, a more appropriate question to be raised is why Kripke focuses on a mathematical example while his discussion ranges across the board.

There may be more than one answer available here. One of them seems to be that if we can reach a skeptical conclusion about a mathematical expression, we can reach the same conclusion about expressions of other types. We usually think that our knowledge of mathematics has the degree of certainty which is lacked by our knowledge of any other kind. For this reason, we often think that the meaning or rule of a mathematical expression is determinately fixed once and for all.¹²⁾ Kripke raises a skeptical question about this belief; if our previous and present understanding of the plus sign is compatible with many different

¹¹⁾ I would like to express gratitude to the anonymous reviewer who raised this objection.

¹²⁾ According to Rodych, Wittgenstein from his middle years gets more drawn into constructivism with “his rejection of *predeterminacy* of mathematics.” See V. Rodych (2011).

semantic rules, how can we justify the belief that there is a uniquely determined semantic rule for a mathematical expression? If this question is legitimate, the same question should be legitimate about expressions of other types.

Another reason why Kripke focuses on a mathematical expression seems to have to do with Wittgenstein's philosophy of mathematics.¹³⁾ Parallel to his general approach to philosophy, Wittgenstein's approach to the philosophy of mathematics undergoes subtle but important changes from the early period to the later period.¹⁴⁾ In the early (Tractarian) period, Wittgenstein makes a sharp distinction between mathematical propositions and empirical propositions. Defending representational semantics, Wittgenstein maintains that only empirical propositions are 'genuine' propositions because they can represent contingent facts. Mathematical propositions, on the other hand, are 'pseudo'-propositions because they have only 'formal' properties; the correctness or incorrectness of a mathematical proposition does not depend on contingent facts. For this reason, mathematical propositions, just like logical propositions, are necessarily true or necessarily false. As Wittgenstein's philosophy evolves, however, he discards the dichotomy between representational vs non-representational/ genuine vs pseudo- propositions. Instead, he

¹³⁾ Fogelin says, "[Wittgenstein's] treatment of problems in the philosophy of mathematics is of a piece with his general approach to philosophical problems. More strongly, I think that the discussions in the philosophy of mathematics provide the clearest (and perhaps best) examples of Wittgenstein's philosophical methods." See R. Fogelin (1976/87), p. 225.

¹⁴⁾ See M. Dummett (1959), P. Frascolla (1994), R. Fogelin (1976/87), V. Rodych (2011).

takes the meaning of any expression to be determined by the rules of a language game; the meaning of a mathematical expression is also determined by the rules of mathematics. So, the skeptical question concerned with an interpretation of a rule can arise both for a mathematical and a non-mathematical expression.¹⁵⁾

Despite his keen insight into the significance of Wittgenstein's paradox, Kripke fails to do justice to the revolutionary aspect of the later Wittgenstein's views of meaning and rule-following. This failure is exhibited in Kripke's claim that Wittgenstein's paradox does not allow a straight solution but only a skeptical solution. To say that the problem does not allow a straight solution is to say that neither the premises leading to the paradox nor the inference involved in the derivation of the paradox is defective. That does not seem to be the later Wittgenstein's diagnosis of the paradox. As a therapeutic philosopher, Wittgenstein would not have been satisfied with offering only a skeptical solution; he would have preferred to solve or dissolve the problem by identifying the problems with the premises or assumptions leading to the paradox.

In this paper, I will argue that the later Wittgenstein tries to *dissolve* the skeptical problem by denying the Tractarian assumption underlying the skeptical paradox. Given that meaning is an essentially normative concept, a theory of meaning and a theory of rule-following should go hand in hand. That is to say,

¹⁵⁾ According to Wright, Wittgenstein does not consider mathematics to have cognitive certainty at all, because we keep inventing new mathematical rules. See C. Wright (2001), p. 408. See also P. Kitcher (1984), Ch. 8.

the notion of rule-following involved in Tractarian semantics should be different from what is involved in use-theoretic semantics of *PI*. Recognizing that the Tractarian notion of rule-following is the culprit behind the skeptical paradox, the later Wittgenstein replaces it with a more realistic, practical notion of rule-following. Kripke, on the other hand, adopts a more conservative stance. Throughout *WRPL*, Kripke assumes only one notion of rule-following: the Tractarian notion. I will argue that that is the reason why Kripke ends up offering only a skeptical solution.¹⁶⁾

2. Two Notions of Rule-Following

Most agree that meaning is a normative notion in the sense that the meaning of an expression determines the correctness or incorrectness of actions. Beyond this platitude, however, it is by no means clear how we are to understand the concept of the normativity of meaning. In *PI*, Wittgenstein deals with this issue by questioning how we are to understand the notion of rule-following. More precisely, Wittgenstein contrasts two very different notions of rule-following, which I will ‘the determinate/infinistic notion of rule-following (DIRF)’ and ‘the

¹⁶⁾ One may argue that Kripke intends to give a *reductio ad absurdum* against Tractarian semantics. I disagree; if he did, he should have offered a straight, not skeptical, solution to Wittgenstein’s paradox. He should have said “The paradox disappears once we reject Tractarian semantics.” But Kripke, unlike the later Wittgenstein, considers the paradox a ‘genuine’ paradox. D. Bloor (2002) criticizes Kripke’s exposition of Wittgenstein in this vein as well.

indeterminate/finistic notion of rule-following (IFRF)' respectively.¹⁷⁾ They are characterized as follows:

(DIRF: The Determinate/Infinistic View of Rule-Following)

- (i) To grasp the meaning of an expression involves grasping the rule for the expression;
- (ii^{DI}) If one has grasped the rule for an expression, one's future actions should be *uniquely*¹⁸⁾ and *infinitely determined* by one's previous understanding of the rule.¹⁹⁾

(IFRF: The Indeterminate/Finistic View of Rule-Following)

- (i) To grasp the meaning of an expression involves grasping the rule for the expression;
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¹⁷⁾ These terms are partly hinted at by D. Bloor's interpretation of the later Wittgenstein's views of meaning and rules. See D. Bloor (2002).

¹⁸⁾ An anonymous reviewer raised a concern about the "unique" determination of an action; that is, whether if one has grasped the rule for an expression, one's future actions should be *uniquely* determined by one's previous understanding. It is Kripke, however, who employs the term 'unique' in characterizing the notion of rule-following. Kripke says "This is the whole point of the notion that in learning to add I grasp a rule: my past intentions regarding addition *determine a unique answer* for indefinitely many new cases in the future." See S. Kripke (1982) pp.7-8 (italics are mine).

¹⁹⁾ As an anonymous reviewer points out, Brandom (1994, pp.64-66) offers a tripartite analysis of Wittgenstein's use of 'rule' in *PI*, the second of which coincides with the indeterminate/finistic notion of rule-following (IFRF) explained in this paper. Brandom does not, however, discuss the determinate/infinistic notion of rule-following. The reason must be that this is not the notion of rule-following the later Wittgenstein subscribes to. As I argue in this paper, it is the notion of rule-following committed by Tractarian semantics.

actions should *only be guided* (without being determinately and infinitely constrained) by one's previous understanding of the rule.²⁰⁾

Both Kripke and the later Wittgenstein take (i) to be an essential feature of rule-following. Wittgenstein says,

Is what we call "obeying a rule" something that it would be possible for only *one* man to do, and to do only *once* in his life? This is of course a note on the grammar of the expression "to obey a rule."²¹⁾

Kripke agrees; rule-following is a trans-temporal activity in the sense that it involves guiding one's actions on the basis of one's previous understanding of an expression. They disagree, however, on *how* one's previous understanding should guide one's future actions. According to Kripke, one's action is rule-following only if it is *uniquely determined* by one's previous understanding of an expression. Kripke says,

One point is crucial to my 'grasp' of this rule. Although I myself have computed only finitely many sums in the past, the rule determines my answer for indefinitely many new sums that I have never previously considered. This is the whole point of the notion that in learning to add I grasp a rule: my past intentions regarding addition determine a *unique* answer for *indefinitely* many new cases in the future.²²⁾

²⁰⁾ Just as the title of the book (*Rails to Infinity*) suggests, Crispin Wright clearly captures the difference between these two notions of rule-following found in Wittgenstein's *PI*. See C. Wright (2001).

²¹⁾ L. Wittgenstein (1953), §193.

Kripke says this in the beginning of *WRPL* without giving any explanation or argument. So, we can only conclude that Kripke *assumes* the determinate/infinistic notion of rule-following. The later Wittgenstein, however, cannot disagree more. He says

“How am I able to obey a rule?”—if this is not a question about causes, then it is about the justification for my following the rule in the way I do. If I have exhausted the justifications I have reached bedrock, and my spade is turned. Then I am inclined to say: “This is simply what I do.”²³⁾

“All the steps are really already taken” means: I no longer have any choice. The rule, once stamped with a particular meaning, traces the lines along which it is to be followed through the whole of space. —But if something of this sort really were the case, how would it help? No; my description only made sense if it was to be understood symbolically—I should have said: *This is how it strikes me*. When I obey a rule, I do not choose. I obey the rule *blindly*.²⁴⁾

My symbolical expression was really a mythological description of the use of a rule.²⁵⁾

Here, Wittgenstein is skeptical of the very idea that grasping a linguistic rule (meaning) consists in past intentions’ *uniquely* determining future applications of an expression. The line between Kripke and Wittgenstein may be subtle but important. Kripke assumes that if we grasped a rule for an expression, our past intentions uniquely determine our future applications of the expression. Wittgenstein, on the other hand, takes the very

22) S. Kripke (1982), pp.7-8. Underlines and Italics are mine.

23) L. Wittgenstein (1953), §217.

24) L. Wittgenstein (1953), §219.

25) L. Wittgenstein (1953), §221.

assumption to be grounded on a naïve, illusory, or wishful thinking.²⁶⁾ True, we tend to naively believe that a linguistic rule is “stamped with a particular meaning,” which would enable our future applications of an expression to be uniquely determined by our grasping of a rule. That is an illusion, says Wittgenstein. As we may fancy that ★ “fits” into its white surrounding because there is a blank which was made for it in advance, we may fancy that our application of an expression at time t_n was determined in advance long before we actually use the expression at time t_n .²⁷⁾ Psychologically, this blind feeling is understandable,

²⁶⁾ According to an anonymous reviewer, the indeterminate/finistic notion of rule-following makes even a ‘stronger’ requirement than the determinate/infinistic notion does. Moreover, the reviewer claims that Wittgenstein is not committed to the feasibility of the indeterminate/finistic notion of rule-following. It is by no means clear, however, how the indeterminate/finistic notion of rule-following can make a stronger requirement. The gist of the determinate/infinistic notion of rule-following is that the criterion of normative correctness is determined in advance before we actually use an expression in a real situation. As Wittgenstein aptly puts, it underlies “the idea that the beginning of a series is visible section of *rails invisibly laid to infinity*.” (§218, Italics are mine.) One of the most important goals of *Philosophical Investigations* is to show that this idea is “wrong.” It is the early Wittgenstein who accepted the idea that semantic rules are like rails invisibly laid to infinity. The later, more mature, Wittgenstein does not accept this idea. The reason is that it is an “infeasible” idea; its goes against the “pragmatics” of our language use (see K. Bach, 2005, b). As epitomized by “Don’t think, but look!” the later Wittgenstein was not concerned with a ‘theory’ but with ‘practice.’ So, unlike the reviewer claims, the later Wittgenstein did believe in the practicality of the indeterminate/finistic notion of rule-following.

²⁷⁾ ““A thing is identical with itself.”—There is no finer example of a useless proposition, which yet is connected with a certain play of the imagination. It is as if in imagination we put a thing into its own shape and saw that it

but logically it is not.²⁸⁾ Logically speaking, our previous understanding of an expression is compatible with more than one course of action in the future.²⁹⁾ Wittgenstein says,

“It is as if we could grasp the whole use of the word in a flash.” Like *what* e.g.?—Can’t the use—in a certain sense—be grasped in a flash? ... But have you a model for this? No. It is just that this expression suggests itself to us. As the result of the crossing of different pictures.³⁰⁾ You have no model of this superlative fact, but you are seduced into using a super-expression. (It might be called a philosophical superlative.)³¹⁾

What the later Wittgenstein claims here is in direct opposition to what Kripke claims about grasping a rule, according to which the whole point of grasping a rule is my previous understanding of an expression uniquely determines my actions for indefinitely new cases in the future. According to the later Wittgenstein, however, to think so is to be seduced into a super-expression, a myth. Quite clearly, they endorse very different notions of rule-following, the later Wittgenstein the indeterminate/finistic notion and Kripke the determinate/infinistic notion.

Curiously, Kripke pays little attention to the later Wittgenstein’s notion of rule-following. Instead, Kripke argues, from the outset

fitted.” L. Wittgenstein (1953), §216.

28) Here, Wittgenstein behaves like a scientist of the modern-era who criticizes Aristotelian teleologism, according to which everything that happens in the world was predetermined by the first cause with the view of the final cause.

29) In *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein says, “A proposition can determine only one place in logical space: nevertheless the whole of logical space must already be given by it.” L. Wittgenstein (1961), §3.42.

30) L. Wittgenstein (1953), §191.

31) L. Wittgenstein (1953), §192.

of his discussion, as if the determinate/infinistic notion of rule-following were the only game in town. Kripke's determinate/infinistic notion of rule-following, however, is a product of the bygone era—the days of Tractarian semantics.

3. Tractarian Semantics vs Semantic Contextualism: the Determinate/Infinistic Notion of Rule-Following vs the Indeterminate/Finistic Notion of Rule-Following

In this section, I will contrast Tractarian semantics with semantic contextualism, which parallels the contrast between the determinate/infinistic notion of rule-following and the indeterminate/finistic notion of rule-following.

Tractarian semantics is a case of close-ended, contextually insensitive semantic theory because it defends a thoroughly atomistic theory of meaning. In a thoroughly atomistic theory of meaning, the meaning of a complex expression is fully determined by a small number of semantic building blocks, where the meaning of each semantic building block is explained *independently* of the meaning of another building block. In Tractarian semantics, the semantic building block is a simple name, and the meaning of a simple name is exhaustively explained by a simple object which is directly referred to by a simple name.³²⁾ So, in Tractarian semantics, the meaning of a

³²⁾ In Tractarian semantics, an ordinary name such as 'Barack Obama' is analyzed into a concatenation of simple names, which lack intensional content entirely. Simple objects have a similar feature; "In a manner of speaking, objects are colorless." (L. Wittgenstein, 1961, §2.0232)

simple name is characterized in terms of “none of web,” implying that meaning is determined purely atomistically.³³⁾ Being semantic building blocks, simple names constitute an elementary proposition, the meaning of which is fully determined by the meanings of simple names and logical structures. As a result, the meaning of an elementary proposition is also determined atomistically. That is to say, the meaning of an elementary proposition is exhaustively explained by a state of affairs which is constituted by the simple objects referred to by the constituents of an elementary proposition, i.e., simple names. Finally, the meaning of a complex proposition is exhaustively determined by the meanings of elementary propositions and logical constants.

Now, to see more clearly why Tractarian semantics is a case of close-ended, context insensitive semantic theory, let’s consider a hypothetical situation in which we discover a new piece of metal which is similar to what we now call ‘gold’ in all respects except that it emits a new sort of radiation.³⁴⁾ Would it be normatively correct if we call it ‘gold’? Put differently, would our calling the newly discovered metal ‘gold’ be rule-following?

If we follow Tractarian semantics, we would have to answer the questions negatively. As explained above, Tractarian semantics defends a strictly atomistic theory of meaning. Moreover, in the Tractarian system, an ordinary expression such as ‘gold’ should be analyzed into a concatenation of simple names.³⁵⁾ So, presumably,

³³⁾ See N. Block (1996).

³⁴⁾ This example is drawn from F. Waismann (1945).

³⁵⁾ Wittgenstein does not say anything at all how to treat a mass noun such as ‘water’ or ‘gold.’ So, I here stretch his analysis of an ordinary proper name

an expression such as ‘gold’ is to be analyzed into a definite description of the form ‘the x such that x is $G^1, G^2, \dots \& G^n$ ’, where ‘ G^n ’ is to be replaced by a simple name. That is to say,

(G) For all x , x is gold if and only if x is $G^1, G^2, \dots \& G^n$.

Since ‘gold’ is *analyzed* into ‘the x such that x is $G^1, G^2, \dots \& G^n$ ’, (G) should be analytic and necessary. But then, the semantic rule governing the use of ‘gold’ should be determinate and inflexible; x ’s having properties $G^1, G^2, \dots \& G^n$ constitutes a necessary and sufficient condition for x ’s being gold. From this it follows that it would be normative incorrect to call a newly discovered piece of metal ‘gold’ as long as we accept Tractarian semantics.

It is indeed such close-endedness of old-fashioned, formal semantics which contemporary contextualists revolt against. According to Tractarian semantics, an elementary proposition of each type should represent or correspond with a state of affairs of a certain type. Semantic contextualism, however, denies it. Recanati says,

Thus we think we know the truth-conditions of ‘There is a cat next door’, or ‘This is gold’ (or ‘This is a man’): we can specify a state of affairs s such that the utterance is true if and only if s obtains. But this is an *illusion* – we can’t really.

into the analysis of a mass noun such as ‘gold.’ By the way, some Wittgenstein scholars claim that “objects” in *Tractatus* include properties and relations (presumably logically simple properties and relations whatever they are). See I. Proops (2013).

Given an utterance *u* and the state of affairs *s* which is its alleged truth-maker, it is always possible to imagine a world in which, although *s* obtains, yet it is not the case that *u* is true (with respect to that world).³⁶⁾

According to Recanati, it is impossible to map an utterance *u* onto a state of affairs *s*, because the semantic content of an expression can be modified or modulated by contextual factors. For example, the semantic content of an expression may be modulated by the *topic* of a context (*topicality* of semantic content). Or it may be affected by new situations that give rise to new linguistic uses (*semantic openness*).³⁷⁾ Waismann, more than a half decade ago, characterized such phenomena as the “open texture” of empirical concepts.³⁸⁾ According to Waismann, the semantic boundary of an empirical concept is infinitely *open*; there is always room for an empirical concept to be modified as new facts are discovered. Waismann says, “there simply are no fixed rules that govern the use of words,” the point of which is exactly coincides with the the indeterminate/finisitic notion of rule-following. Semantic contextualists deny that our previous applications of an expression *uniquely* determine our future applications because semantic content of a complex expression is not only determined in a bottom-up manner but also in a top-down manner. Thus, Kent Bach characterizes semantic

³⁶⁾ F. Recanati (2004), p.141. Italics mine.

³⁷⁾ See F. Recanati (2004), Ch.9.

³⁸⁾ See F. Waismann (1945). Waismann was a close of Wittgenstein, and his conversation with Wittgenstein was later published (B. McGuinness, 1979). Also see. L. A. Hart (1961).

contextualism as follows:

Contextualism about a given expression (or class of expressions) is a semantic thesis. It says that any sentence containing the expression, even if otherwise free of ambiguity, indexicality, and vagueness (or if the effects of these are kept fixed), expresses different propositions (or, if you prefer, has different truth conditions) in different contexts of utterance.³⁹⁾

Semantic content is determined in a top-down manner, since the meaning of a complex expression is affected by contextual factors of surroundings even if the expression is not *explicitly* contextual. In short, the difference between Tractarian semantics and semantic contextualism is that Tractarian semantics subscribes to a thoroughly bottom-up, close-ended account of semantic content, whereas semantic contextualism subscribes to a top-down, open-ended account of semantic content. From this it follows that the notion of rule-following involved in Tractarian semantics is determinate/infinistic, whereas what is involved in semantic contextualism is indeterminate/finistic.

4. Kripke's Notion of Rule-Following Vs the Later Wittgenstein's Notion of Rule-Following

As mentioned above, Kripke says that if I have grasped the rule for an expression, my past intentions regarding the expression should give a unique answer for indefinitely new cases in the future. What this implies is that in order to say that I am

³⁹⁾ K, Bach (2005, a).

following the rule for an expression e at time t_n , my action at time t_n should be the only type of action determined by my previous understanding of the rule for e at time t_{n-x} .

If we assume this notion of rule-following, we are bound to arrive at a skeptical conclusion. Recall Kripke's quus-example; can we decide which of the two answers between '125' and '5' is what is *uniquely* determined by our previous understanding of the plus sign? Indeed, we cannot. Consider all the candidate facts examined and rejected by Kripke: my past behavior, my mental states, and my dispositions to use the plus sign before t_n . As Kripke argues, none of these facts can prove that '125' is the only answer compatible with my previous understanding of the plus sign. What about the collective disposition of a whole community? Some commentators criticize Kripke on the grounds that he only considers individual facts, ignoring a collective fact.⁴⁰) This criticism, however, is off the mark, because even the collective disposition of a whole community cannot prove that '125' is the only acceptable answer.⁴¹) So, as long as we assume Kripke's notion of rule-following, we cannot escape a skeptical conclusion. There is simply no fact showing that only one course of action at t_n is uniquely determined by our previous understanding of an expression.

The gist of my criticism of Kripke's skeptical argument is that there is no reason to accept Kripke's overly inflated notion of

⁴⁰) C. McGinn (1984).

⁴¹) As long as we stick to Kripke's notion of rule-following (the determinate/infinistic notion), even agreement between members of a community would be of no help.

rule-following. Most of all, the later Wittgenstein does not accept it; to the contrary, he rejects it. According to the later Wittgenstein, the way we use a concept is not uniquely determined by our previous understanding of the concept. He says

I can also use it so that the extension of the concept is *not closed by a frontier*. And this is how we do use the word “game” ... “But then the use of the word is unregulated, the ‘game’ we play with it is unregulated.”-----It is not everywhere circumscribed by rules; but no more are there any rules for how high one throws the ball in tennis, or how hard; yet tennis is a game for all that and has rules too.⁴²⁾

Unlike Kripke, the later Wittgenstein does not require us to prove that our action at time t_n is uniquely determined by our previous understanding of an expression. Instead, the later Wittgenstein advocates a more relaxed, open-ended notion of rule-following, i.e., the indeterminate/finistic notion of rule-following (IFRF).

Once we accept (IFRF), we do not need take the plus-rule and the quus-rule to be contradictory to each other. Both of them are compatible with our previous understanding of the plus sign. Of course, we will follow one of them at time t_n in the future, but we do not need to decide between them before we use it at time t_n . The rule for an expression is not determinately fixed in advance before we use the expression in a context. For the later Wittgenstein, rules and meanings are constantly recreated by our language game. Clearly, the later Wittgenstein got rid of the old ladder of Tractarian semantics. Kripke didn't.

⁴²⁾ L. Wittgenstein (1953), §68. Italics are mine.

5. Family Resemblance and the Indeterminate/Finistic Notion of Rule-Following

In his illuminating discussion on Wittgenstein's notion of family resemblances, Michael Pelczar relates the notion of family resemblance with speakers' discretion: speakers' ability to decide whether they should apply a familiar expression to an unfamiliar case. The ability of deliberation seems to be essential to a rule-following activity as well. As Kant says, rule-following is not simply to act in accordance with rules; it is to act by recognizing the reasons for following rules.⁴³⁾ Viewed in this light, the determinate/infinistic notion of rule-following is against the very idea of rule-following; it relegates rule-following into a machinelike, thoughtless activity. While we use expressions in contexts, "we are continually putting words to new uses, connected with, but not identical with, their familiar uses."⁴⁴⁾ Thus, Wittgenstein asks, "If from one day to the next you promise: "To-morrow I will come and see you" -are you saying the same thing every day, or every day something different?"⁴⁵⁾ Presumably, the right answer is 'The same and also different thing,' since as we use expressions in particular contexts, we modulate their meanings. We appeal to our previous understanding of expressions as a "guide", but we also modulate their meanings while we practice rule-following activity in particular contexts.

⁴³⁾ I. Kant (1785/2002).

⁴⁴⁾ P. Strawson (1952), p.230.

⁴⁵⁾ L. Wittgenstein (1953), §226.

Modulation of meaning is closely related to Wittgenstein's notion of family resemblance. Consider topical expressions such as 'light,' 'green,' and 'high,' (what Pelczar calls 'low-grade polysemes').⁴⁶⁾ The contents of topical expressions may vary from context to context depending on the topics discussed in context s.⁴⁷⁾ For example, the word 'light' expresses different contents in 'There was a light breeze in the air,' 'The package was light,' and 'The novelist deals with a light subject in this book.' Unlike explicitly ambiguous words (e.g., 'bank') or "situational words" (indexicals or demonstratives), there is a *continuum* for the possible contents for topical words.⁴⁸⁾ The later Wittgenstein calls such continuity 'family resemblance,' by which he means the meanings of an expression in different contexts are related to each other in terms of a family-resemblance-like similarity.

Thus, family resemblance may be viewed as the pragmatic principle in terms of which we modulate meanings across different contexts. For instance, we may explain the omnipresence of polysemous expressions (expressions with multiple meanings) by invoking the notion of family resemblance. Many basic verbs in English are high-grade polysemes, e.g. 'can,' 'is,' 'do,' 'take,'

⁴⁶⁾ A major difference between low-grade polysemes and high-grade polysemes is that the content variability of high-grade polysemes is not as obvious as the content variability of low-grade polysemes. Low-grade polysemes "wear their content variability on their sleeves" (M. Pelczar, 2000). By contrast, high-grade polysemes behave like monosemes in the sense that their contents vary from content to context in such a wide variety of ways that we are not usually aware of their content variability.

⁴⁷⁾ M. Pelczar (2000), p. 487.

⁴⁸⁾ See F. Recanati (2004), Ch. 9; R. Grandy (1990).

‘bring,’ and so forth (see footnote #43 for an explanation of a high-grade polyseme). From the Tractarian perspective, the prevalence of polysemes may only be viewed as a defect of natural languages. From the later Wittgenstein’s perspective, however, it is viewed as a merit; it shows that natural languages are flexible enough to accommodate contextual needs. High-grade polysemes such as ‘get,’ ‘is,’ ‘do,’ and ‘bring’ behave like super-elastic sand-bags which can take on many different sizes and shapes depending on the sizes and shapes of other sand-bags they interact with.⁴⁹⁾ After all, if we can succeed in communication by employing a small number of basic verbs, why would we multiply them by coining new expressions whenever we encounter new contexts of use? As Sperber and Wilson point out, we aim to achieve our communicative intentions in the most cost-effective way: maximizing benefits with the least effort.⁵⁰⁾ To do so, we should behave like top-chefs; just as top chefs modulate old recipes in order to meet a wide variety of tastes in a wide variety of situations, we should know how to modulate meanings of expressions. Here, the notion of family resemblance—like the notion of analogy—is useful. We can explain how humans can modulate meanings of expressions in such a wide variety of ways by invoking the notion of family resemblance. Without invoking the notion of family resemblance or something

⁴⁹⁾ J. Cohen compares the ways in which complex expressions in natural languages are constructed from constituent expressions with the ways in which walls are constructed from sand-bags rather than bricks. See J. Cohen (1986).

⁵⁰⁾ D. Sperber & D. Wilson (1985/95).

similar to that, we would have hard time in explaining how humans can categorize objects in terms of groups of various kinds. In this regards, Wittgenstein's notion of family resemblance is considered to be the major inspiration for the prototype theory of categorization, according to which categorization is not a digital, all-or-nothing but a graded, analogy cognitive phenomenon.⁵¹⁾ To be sure, we cannot explain humans' ability to modulate meanings just by appealing to Wittgenstein's notion of family resemblance. Recent developments in linguistic pragmatics show how difficult it is to explain the cognitive processes involved in contextually sensitive human communication. Thus, Wittgenstein's keen insight into the nature of meaning is vindicated. He says,

The criteria which we accept for 'fitting', 'being able to', 'understanding', are much more complicated than might appear at first sight. That is, the game with these words, their employment in the linguistic intercourse that is carried on by their means, is more involved—the role of these words in our language other—than we are tempted to think. (*This role is what we need to understand in order to resolve philosophical paradoxes...* ⁵²⁾

⁵¹⁾ According to E. Rosche (the founder of the prototype theory in psycholinguistics), category membership had long been considered a digital, all-or-nothing phenomenon in psychology, linguistics, anthropology, and philosophy. This trend started to change literally with the introduction of Wittgenstein's notion of family resemblance. See E. Rosch (1975).

⁵²⁾ L. Wittgenstein (1953), §182. Italics are mine.

6. The Solution: Deflationism

Kripke's skeptical solution consists of a positive thesis and a negative thesis. The positive thesis has it that meaning attributions have assertability conditions, from which the criteria for meaning attributions are derived. The negative thesis has it that there is no fact of the matter by virtue of which meaning attributions are true, from which it follows that meaning attributions don't have truth conditions. As Horwich points out, however, this is an inconsistent position; the positive and the negative theses conflict with each other.⁵³⁾ If we can recognize assertability conditions and thereby criteria for meaning attributions, we should be able to recognize facts and truth conditions for meaning attributions.⁵⁴⁾ Put even more simply, as far as meaning attributions are concerned, assertability conditions *are* truth conditions.⁵⁵⁾ To defend these claims, I shall bring in the deflationary conceptions of facts and truth.

Whereas the deflationary concept of truth is now well

⁵³⁾ The argument I offer in this section is inspired and influenced by Horwich's criticism of Kripke's skeptical solution to Wittgenstein's paradox. See P. Horwich (1995, 1998).

⁵⁴⁾ See P. Horwich (1998) p. 222.

⁵⁵⁾ The point is not that a truth condition is *defined* in terms of an assertability condition. The point is rather that the truth condition of a sentence is *trivially* derived from its meaning via the disquotational schema ('*p*' is true if and only if *p*) or the equivalence schema (the proposition that *p* is true if and only if *p*). Since the deflationary concept of truth has no nature other than that it conceptually entails the instances of the disquotational or equivalence schema, it is the best (presumably, only) match for the context-sensitive notion of meaning.

recognized, the deflationary concept of a *fact* is not. Interestingly, Friedrich Waismann advances a good case of the deflationary concept of a fact. Waismann says,

There is a group of words such as ‘fact’, ‘event’, ‘situation’, ‘case’, ‘circumstance’, which display a queer sort of behaviour. One might say of such words that they serve as pegs: it's marvelous what a lot of things you can put on them (‘the fact that -- ’). So far they are very handy; but as soon as one focuses on them and asks, e.g., ‘What is a fact?’ they betray a tendency of melting away. The peg-aspect is by far the most important of all.⁵⁶⁾

To see why Waismann’s notion of a fact should be considered ‘deflationary,” I will first characterize the deflationary conception of truth and a fact as follows. First, our cognitive attitudes toward a fact- or truth-claim of the form ‘*p*’ is true’ or ‘It is a fact that *p*’ are entirely dependent upon our cognitive attitudes toward ‘*p*’ itself. For example, if we agree with, endorse, or approve ‘Snow is white,’ ‘ $2 + 3 = 5$,’ and ‘Manipulation is immoral,’ then we agree with, endorse, or approve ‘It is true (or a fact) that snow is white,’ ‘It is true (or a fact) that $2 + 3 = 5$,’ ‘It is true (or a fact) that manipulation is immoral.’ Therefore, second, we first derive ‘*p*’ and then derive ‘it is true (or a fact) that *p*’, not the other way around.⁵⁷⁾

Applying this idea to a meaning attribution, we can trivially infer (4) and (5) from (3):

⁵⁶⁾ F. Waismann (1945), p. 142. Underlining mine.

⁵⁷⁾ See Field’s treatment of Kripke’s Gödel-example in Field (2001).

- (3) Jones means the plus function by '+’.
- (4) 'Jones means the plus function by '+’' is true.
- (5) It is a fact that Jones means the plus function by '+’.

So, the question is how we can make sense of (3). Ironically, we can make sense of (3) by appealing to Kripke's notion of assertability condition, which is in turn grounded on Wittgenstein's notion of agreement. According to Kripke, if Jones' use of '+’ agrees with the standard way in which the members of his linguistic community use '+,’ (3) meets its assertability condition. Suppose (3) meets its assertability condition. But then, by Kripke's own standards, we can assert (3). Once we can assert (3), we can derive (4) by applying the disquotational schema for truth (DS)

(DS) 'p' is true iff p

to (3).⁵⁸⁾ Similarly, we can derive (5) by applying the disquotational schema for fact (DF)

(DF) It is a fact that p iff p

to (3). Thus, we can easily recognize a truth condition or fact of the matter about meaning and rule-following by combining Kripke's assertability conditions with the deflationary theory of truth and fact.

⁵⁸⁾ See H. Field (2001).

Kripke may protest that I am here conflating a truth condition with an assertability condition. When it comes to a meaning attribution, however, an assertability condition *is* a truth condition. Wittgenstein says,

“So you are saying that human agreement decides what is true and what is false?”—It is what human beings *say* that is true and false; and they agree in the *language* they use. That is not agreement in opinions but in form of life.⁵⁹⁾

Kripke might have understood this as Wittgenstein denying a truth condition to a meaning attribution. But this seems to be a misunderstanding. As Wittgenstein says, when we say that Jones' use of the plus sign ('+') agrees with the standard way in which Jones' linguistic community uses the sign, we do not say that they agree in their “opinions.” Here, we simply say that they agree in their linguistic usage, i.e., a form of life. To be sure, in deciding whether ‘The earth is round’ is true, we cannot merely appeal to linguistic usage or a form of life. Here, we should appeal to how the world is independently of our linguistic usage or a form of life. Meaning and rule-following, however, are not matters of the super-objective world which exists independently of our linguistic usage or form of life. Therefore, truth or a fact of the matter concerned with meaning or rule-following should be determined by agreement in linguistic usage or a form of life.

Obviously, Kripke takes (5) (‘It is a fact that Jones means the plus function by ‘+’) to be explanatorily prior to (4) and (3). I

⁵⁹⁾ Wittgenstein (1953), §241.

suppose that is another sign that Kripke did not get over Tractarian semantics. In Tractarian semantics, the truth condition of a proposition is explained in terms of the state of affairs to which the proposition corresponds. When the later Wittgenstein kicked off the ladder of Tractarian semantics, however, he also kicked off the correspondence theory of truth. Using Waismann's terminology, the later Wittgenstein construes truth and fact as "peg notions." The notions of truth and fact serve no serious explanatory purpose. The later Wittgenstein was a deflationist through and through, which was made possible by leaving Tractarian semantics behind forever.

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규칙 따르기에 관한 크립키와 비트겐슈타인의 상반된 견해와 맥락주의적 의미론

오 은 영

크립키는 비트겐슈타인의 회의론적 역설을 다름에 있어서 규칙 따르기에 대한 어떤 특정한 개념을 처음부터 전제하고 시작한다. 그런데 문제는 크립키가 자신이 이런 전제를 가정한다는 것을 전혀 명시적으로 밝히지 않고 있으며 더 나아가 크립키가 전제하는 규칙 따르기에 대한 개념은 후기 비트겐슈타인이 옹호하고자 하는 규칙 따르기의 개념과 완전히 반대되는 개념이라는 것이다. 크립키가 전제하는 개념은 전기 비트겐슈타인이 옹호하는 비맥락주의적 의미론에 근거하는 ‘무한적이고 결정지어진’ 규칙 따르기 개념이다. 비트겐슈타인의 회의론적 역설은 바로 이런 전기 비트겐슈타인적인 의미론과 규칙 따르기 개념으로부터 발생한다고 볼 수 있다. 따라서 크립키가 비트겐슈타인의 역설은 직접적인 해결이 아닌 회의론적 해결만이 가능하다고 주장한 것은 그가 여전히 전기 비트겐슈타인적인 의미개념과 규칙 따르기 개념을 받아들이기 때문이라고 볼 수 있다. 즉, 크립키는 후기 비트겐슈타인과는 달리 여전히 한 발을 트락타투스적 의미론에 담근 채 비트겐슈타인의 역설을 논하고 있기 때문에 회의론적 해결에 머문다는 것이다. 필자는 이를 크립키가 암묵적으로 가정하는 또 하나의 전제인 진리 대응론에 연결시킴으로써 크립키와 후기 비트겐슈타인의 차이점을 분명히 하고자 한다.

주요어: 회의론적 역설, 규칙 따르기에 관한 두 가지 개념, 맥락주의적 의미론, 축소주의