Philosophy as a continuation through the educational task

La filosofía como una continuación por medio de la tarea educativa

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Abstract

The article addresses the current state of the Philosophy of Education, which seeks to understand the nature and foundations of education to improve its effectiveness. It identifies a significant gap between the theoretical and practical problems of education, as they are perceived and responded to on the public agenda. This separation limits the explanatory capacity of the discipline and reduces its relevance for educational actors. Given this panorama, the article proposes to explore how to integrate educational theory and practice. The methodology of the article involves a critical analysis of Wittgenstein's point of view, enriched with the perspectives of Williams and Medina. It examines how these philosophers address the relationship between philosophical theory and educational practice, especially in terms of how beliefs and instructional processes are interrelated and can be understood from an integrated perspective. The main results suggest that integrating philosophical theory with educational practice allows not only a deeper understanding of the foundations of education, but also an improvement in the effectiveness of educational strategies. In addition, final considerations are raised about the current state of philosophical research in education, highlighting the importance of continuing to explore these connections to move towards a more comprehensive and practical approach in the Philosophy of Education.

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Resumen

El artículo aborda el estado actual de la filosofía de la educación, que busca comprender la naturaleza y los fundamentos de la educación para mejorar su efectividad. Identifica una brecha significativa entre los problemas teóricos y prácticos de la educación, tal como se perciben y responden en la agenda pública. Esta separación limita la capacidad explicativa de la disciplina y reduce su relevancia para los actores educativos. Ante este panorama, el artículo propone explorar cómo integrar teoría y práctica educativa. La metodología del artículo implica un análisis crítico del punto de vista de Wittgenstein, enriquecido con las perspectivas de Williams y Medina. Se examina cómo estos filósofos abordan la relación entre la teoría filosófica y la práctica educativa, especialmente en términos de cómo las creencias y los procesos de instrucción se interrelacionan y se pueden entender desde una perspectiva integrada. Los principales resultados sugieren que integrar la teoría filosófica con la práctica educativa permite no solo una comprensión más profunda de los fundamentos de la educación, sino también una mejora en la efectividad de las estrategias educativas. Además, se plantean consideraciones finales sobre el estado actual de la investigación filosófica en educación, destacando la importancia de continuar explorando estas conexiones para avanzar hacia un enfoque más integral y práctico en la filosofía de la educación.

Palabras clave

Filosofía de la educación, aprendizaje, enseñanza, rol de la educación, acción humana, pragmática.

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Introduction

In his brilliant 1911 essay "The Handle", Simmel argued that the handle of a vase bridges two worlds, the utilitarian, and the non-utilitarian. A vessel, according to Simmel, "unlike a painting or statue, is not intended to be insulated and untouchable but is meant to fulfil a purpose—if only symbolically. For it is held in the hand and drawn into the movement of practical life. Wittgenstein's Handles, C. Benfey, The New York Review of Books, 2016.

Wittgenstein's references to education are not only frequent, but also reveal his deep interest in early learning processes. In his later phase, Wittgenstein shifts away from philosophically conventional problems to focus on everyday issues and mundane practices, such as language and human interactions. This shift in focus reflects his conviction that understanding how children learn and develop language skills is critical to understanding the very nature of language and human knowledge.

In his later work, Wittgenstein employs methods of description, exemplification, and explanation to illustrate these processes of early learning. He does not limit himself to theorizing about these issues, but addresses them in a concrete and contextualized way, stressing the importance of observing and understanding how children acquire language skills and social practices. This meticulous attention to the mundane and the practical underscores his focus on education as a phenomenon

that not only shapes the individual, but also reveals fundamental aspects about the nature of human knowledge and communication.

Consequently, Wittgenstein's worldly concerns in his late work on education and early learning reflect his commitment to a philosophy that is not limited to the abstract or theoretical but seeks to understand daily life and human interactions as keys to unraveling the mysteries of language and mind. His focus on how children learn and develop language skills highlights the importance of these processes to better understand the social and cultural dynamics that underpin the understanding of the world.

Wittgenstein's frequent allusion to education and early learning has been the subject of analysis among scholars of analytic philosophy. Some focus on the general conception of philosophy attributed to Wittgenstein, exploring how these themes are integrated into his broader philosophical view (Monk, 1990; Moyal-Sharrock, 2017). Wittgenstein, known for his focus on language and meaning, was also deeply interested in how children acquire linguistic and conceptual competencies through social and cultural interaction (McGinn, 1997). Other researchers explore a possible shift in focus in the second stage of their intellectual work, especially from *Philosophical Investigations*, where a shift towards more practical and everyday concerns is observed.

This shift in focus towards more practical aspects is seen as a natural evolution within analytic philosophy, where attention shifts from abstract problems to the concrete phenomena of daily life (Glock, 1996). These hermeneutic approaches seek to shed light on the richness and variety of reflections of the Austro-English philosopher in relation to the education and development of child thought, highlighting how these ideas intertwine with his philosophy of language and mind (Bolaños Vivas, 2017).

Although the task of exegesis has been carried out by numerous scholars with varied and significant results from the philosophical point of view, this work aims to move in a slightly different direction. The aim is to explore the extent to which these considerations of Wittgenstein allow to reinterpret the themes of educational theory in a broad sense, or at least to explore a different perspective. The term "moving forward" implies a specific movement towards what appears to be the general problem of an educational theory, as addressed by Amy Gutmann in her work *Democratic Education* (1987):

> Why should deliberation be considered primary, even for public education, when the opportunity for most citizens to live a good life requires far more basic skills and virtues, such as arithmetic, literacy, and non-

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violence? Deliberation is not a single skill or virtue. It requires literacy, numeracy, and critical thinking skills, as well as contextual knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of other people's perspectives. The virtues of deliberation include truthfulness, nonviolence, practical judgment, civic integrity, and magnanimity. By cultivating these and other deliberative skills and virtues, a democratic society helps to ensure both the basic opportunity of individuals and their collective ability to do justice (p. XIII) (author's translation).

The citation raises the primacy of deliberation in public education, arguing that, despite the need for basic skills such as arithmetic and literacy, deliberation should not be discarded. Rather, it is argued that deliberation goes beyond a simple technical skill, encompassing multiple cognitive abilities and ethical virtues fundamental to a democratic society. Deliberation requires not only skills such as literacy and arithmetic, but also critical thinking skills and the ability to understand and value different perspectives. In addition, it involves the practice of virtues such as truthfulness, non-violence, practical judgment, civic integrity and magnanimity, which are essential for democratic life and social justice (Fenichel Pitkin, 1984).

In the educational context, cultivating these deliberative skills and virtues not only prepares individuals to participate actively in democratic life, but also strengthens society's collective capacity to address problems fairly and equitably. Public education, by prioritizing deliberation along with basic skills, promotes an environment where citizens can not only develop their individual capabilities, but also learn to collaborate and resolve conflicts constructively (Honneth, 2013). This approach not only seeks to ensure the basic opportunity for all individuals to live a good life, but also contributes to the formation of informed and ethically committed citizens, fundamental to the healthy functioning of a robust and participatory democracy (Biest, 2013).

The analysis of the development and evolution of the philosophy of education, although a debatable term, reveals a field of study that, while theoretically rich, often shows significant shortcomings in terms of effective practical applications. This situation is notably evident in contexts such as Chilean, where advanced educational theories rarely translate into substantial improvements in educational practice. However, this phenomenon is not unique to Chile, it is also observed in other educational contexts worldwide. An example of this theoretical-practical debate can be found in *A Companion to Wittgenstein on Education: Pedagogical Investigations* by Peters and Stickney (2017) (Santoro, 2020).

Peters and Stickney explore how Wittgenstein's ideas about education can illuminate contemporary problems in educational practice. Wittgenstein, known for his focus on language and practice, offers a perspective that challenges traditional conceptions of the philosophy of education, centered on normative theory and abstract models of teaching and learning. His approach emphasizes the importance of understanding educational practices in their cultural and social context, stressing that educational effectiveness is not limited to the implementation of abstract theories, but crucially depends on how these theories are integrated and applied in specific educational environments (Peters & Stickney, 2017).

Thus, the critique of the philosophy of contemporary education, as presented by Peters and Stickney, not only points to the practical limitations of abstract educational theories, but also proposes a more contextualized and sensitive approach to local educational realities. This perspective invites reflection on how philosophical theories can be translated into effective pedagogical practices that impact positively the education and development of students in diverse cultures and educational contexts (Van Manen, 2010).

It is not simply a question of the lack of versatility of research topics in the philosophy of education, as evidenced by the diversity of pedagogical and educational issues dealt with in the aforementioned text. Rather, the problem is that pedagogical research with philosophical roots often contains too much philosophy and too little pedagogy, understood as the latter is illustrated in public debate, both in Chile and internationally, about the need for education for development, the relevance of education for employment, and the importance of education in reducing inequality and the full exercise of citizenship. These are just some of the issues that emerge when looking at the landscape of the contents of the so-called "public educational agenda" (Atria, 2015).

Due to the importance of the educational problem, philosophy cannot remain on the sidelines; on the contrary, it must investigate, using its methods, the nature of the problems of the educational system to understand them. The method used in this work is what is traditionally understood as "conceptual analysis". This involves identifying the concepts that structure the grammar of learning to give them a new meaning, derived from understanding their integration into practice and their relationships within a broader conceptual scheme.

Even more notable is the deep gap between the problems of pedagogy, when viewed from the public agenda, and the issues raised by extending philosophical reflections, such as those of Wittgenstein, for ex-

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ample. I suspect that this gap also extends to other philosophical interests that, at first glance, fail to fully penetrate the most urgent educational debates, which are conditioned by public opinion and the needs of the population in multiple aspects. In other words, a philosophical environment does not turn out to be the most fertile to address the demands experienced by education systems. Some might argue that this is due to the domination of an ideological agenda in Chilean education policy; this conclusion seems to point to the important problems of the agenda.

The importance of this view is not to be underestimated. However, I believe that it should be the starting point for starting the philosophical discussion, not the conclusion that closes the way to philosophically motivated reflection. After all, the relationships between power and truth have long been the subject of profound philosophical consideration. Perhaps, then, the appropriate philosophical strand consists precisely in reflecting on the ideological mechanisms and hegemonic control of the public agenda.

The ideas outline a context that lays the groundwork for exploring the intersection between education and philosophy, using Wittgenstein's philosophy as a frame of reference. It is proposed that philosophy can be seen as a continuation of education through alternative methods, echoing the famous phrase attributed to Bismarck. This perspective suggests that both the practical needs of education systems and philosophical reflections can be addressed in a complementary way. The difference between both approaches is equated to the distinction between the raw and the cooked: while education deals directly with practical and applied problems in the school context, philosophy seeks to address these same problems from a more theoretical and reflective perspective, often questioning the fundamental assumptions and conceptual frameworks that underlie educational practice (Peters & Stickney, 2017).

From this perspective, Wittgenstein's philosophy provides conceptual tools to critically examine the foundations of contemporary educational thought. His focus on language practice and the use of language in specific contexts invites deep reflection on how educational concepts, such as teaching, learning and evaluation, intertwine with broader notions of meaning and action. This analysis not only helps to clarify the practical problems faced by educators, but also offers perspectives to reformulate and enrich educational practices in more coherent and contextually relevant terms (Peters & Stickney, 2017).

In conclusion, the integration between education and philosophy, particularly in the context of Wittgenstein's work, suggests a relationship

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of continuity and complementarity. By considering both fields as part of the same *continuum* of reflection and action, it opens the possibility of enriching both educational theory and pedagogical practices, promoting an important dialog between philosophical theory and the practical realities of contemporary education.

It is crucial to examine the meaning of the terms "continue by other means," "raw and cooked," which is essentially a reference to the fundamental distinction between "practical problem and theoretical problem." These expressions attempt to capture various dimensions emerging from Wittgenstein's thinking, as will be seen below. These dimensions address how Wittgenstein suggests that we should address the problem of the difference between theory and practice by emphasizing the need to adopt a perspective that does not force us to opt for one of the alternatives in play, reformulating the original positions and, metaphorically speaking, leaving things as they are.

The text that follows a clear and defined structure seeks to explore the intersection between education and philosophy through the Wittgensteinian view. A series of well-delineated stages are deployed that guide the analysis towards a deeper understanding of the problems and perspectives involved. First, the characterization of the central problem is presented in a precise way, highlighting its relevance both in educational and philosophical terms. This initial step sets out the basis on which the whole subsequent argument is based, underscoring the importance of addressing critically and thoughtfully the issues arising in these interconnected fields.

Secondly, it explores in detail how Wittgenstein uses the distinction between empirical and conceptual propositions as a central tool in his analysis. This distinction not only facilitates clarification of language and thought structures, but also provides a conceptual framework for understanding how different types of statements relate to knowledge and educational practice. This phase of the analysis reveals the philosophical depth and practical applicability of Wittgensteinian concepts in the contemporary educational context.

Thirdly, following the line of Williams (1994, 1999), a Wittgensteinian "resolution" or "dissolution" of the distinction between empirical and conceptual propositions is proposed. This movement does not seek to eliminate distinction absolutely, but rather to overcome the limitations it imposes on educational thought and practice. It emphasizes how this approach can open new perspectives to address educational challenges from a more inclusive and holistic perspective, allowing a better under-

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standing of the interrelationships between theory and practice in the educational field.

Finally, it concludes with reflections that underline the importance of this relationship between education and philosophy. It highlights how understanding this connection can enrich both educational theory and practice, offering conceptual and methodological tools to face the fundamental dilemmas and objectives in the formation of critical and reflective individuals and citizens. This synthesis between education and philosophy not only seeks to solve specific problems, but also to promote a more comprehensive and humanistic approach to learning and teaching in the 21st century.

Form and content: about the determination of what we learn by the way we learn it

This article focuses on a "core idea" that can be summarized as follows: how we learn something determines what we learn. This statement is defended by Williams (1994, 1999) in several of his texts. In the last of them Williams (1999) states:

> Finally, I will argue that learning plays a constitutive role. The way we learn concepts constitutes what we learn. This view runs counter to the idea that the relationship between learning and its product can only be contingent, and thus a matter of "mere history." The objection would go like this: the way we acquire beliefs either by explicit instructions, by taking some appropriate pill, by "osmosis" or by accident, is irrelevant to the content of these beliefs. There may be many ways to believe, but the content is the same. If the way we learn constitutes what we learn, then the intuitive appeal of this objection must be countered (pp. 189-190) (author's translation).

The aforementioned "core idea" is suggestive and invites consideration of at least two issues. First, it raises the need to reflect on whether the difference between "how" we learn and "what" we learn is relevant, especially in philosophical terms, or whether there is some other context where we can make this distinction plausible. In other words, it is crucial to determine whether this difference really marks a significant difference, because if it does, it would require justification and making sense of it, promising to open a heuristic path with broad theoretical and empirical consequences.

Secondly, depending on the answer to the central question, it involves reflecting on the process of belief formation, i.e. on learning and, therefore, on education understood as an empirical process that is part

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of a theoretical body with practical relevance. In relation to the latter, it is proposed to explore the possibility of an approach to the philosophy of education in the following way: any attempt to interpret Wittgenstein's allusions to educational practice must be subordinate to his understanding of learning as the process that constitutes the content of our beliefs.

This brings us back to the initial statement: the way we learn determines what we learn, and consequently makes this question the central issue of every philosophy of education, or mention in another way, every educational theory. Considering both possibilities, both the one that derives from the first and the second question, both result in the idea of "continuing the educational task with the means of philosophy".

From a doctrinal perspective, it is a question of assessing whether it makes sense to call Wittgenstein's point of view a "sociogenetic approach" (Williams, 1994; Medina, 2004). According to this approach, the natural history of human modes of speaking and acting would explain the special normative role that certain propositions play in human practices; a role that provides order to our actions and discourses. This last point brings the proposed reflection to the heart of the questions addressed by Wittgenstein in his so-called "third period" of thought, initiated with *Philosophical Investigations II* and *On Certainty*. Wittgenstein (1969) notes:

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> §144. The child learns to believe a lot of things. Hence, learns to act according to these beliefs. Gradually, beliefs form a system, and in that system some things remain unwaveringly firm, and some are more or less susceptible to change. What stands firm is held not because it is intrinsically obvious or compelling; it is held, rather, by what is around it (author's translation).

Let us look closely at the various expressive strategies that Wittgenstein employs to make sense of the central idea of this paragraph. First, it starts from the fundamental premise that the child not only acquires theoretical knowledge, but simultaneously learns to act according to that knowledge. This natural integration between action and belief implies that what the child does (his visible acting) coincides with what he believes (his invisible beliefs), thus suggesting that the conventional distinction between the visible and the invisible loses relevance. From this perspective, the coherence between the two aspects implies that using separate terms to describe the same act is superfluous.

Wittgenstein questions the very necessity of maintaining this dualistic distinction in the description of cognitive and behavioral processes. He argues that, if beliefs and actions converge and reinforce each other

in the child's everyday practice, then conceptual differentiation between them becomes artificial and possibly unnecessary. This critique points to the idea that our understanding of learning and human behavior can be benefited from a more inclusive approach that recognizes the interdependence between what one believes and how one acts.

Wittgenstein's proposal invites us to reflect on how this natural integration between belief and action could reshape our educational and epistemological conceptions. By underscoring the concordance between what is believed and what is done, it opens the door to a more holistic and unified understanding of learning, where theory and practice are not separate entities, but intrinsic components of a continuous process of human development. This view challenges traditional conceptions that radically separate theoretical knowledge from its practical application, suggesting instead a more fluid and coherent perspective of knowledge acquisition and behavior.

Beliefs are organized into a system gradually, shaping a mode of action. Within this system—a lattice of beliefs—some parts are stable, and others are modifiable. What is firm is not in itself, but because it is part of the surrounding system, i.e. the framework that functions as a balanced scaffolding that allows both the fixation and movement of the parts. The dynamics of the system do not clearly distinguish between moving and fixed parts; rather, everything forms an intertwined totality in constant interaction between what moves and what remains static.

It can be read §144, in continuity with §152:

> I do not explicitly learn the propositions that remain firm for me. I can discover them later as the axis around which a body rotates. This axis is not fixed in the sense that something holds it steady, but the movement around it determines its immobility (Wittgenstein, 1969) (author's translation).

Firm propositions are not explicitly learned. Suddenly, quickly and imperceptibly they are there, like an axis around which a body rotates. The shaft is not static, it remains firm, but its stability depends on the movement around it. However, there is no cause-and-effect relationship here: it is not that movement produces firmness, nor that firmness produces movement. Rather, it is that movement and firmness occur simultaneously, at the same time.

In the discussion of the relationship between cause and effect, the idea is raised that both are intrinsically linked, functioning as a handle that connects two different dimensions. This metaphor suggests that the connection between immobility and mobility of a door reflects a fundamental relationship between two seemingly opposite but interdepen-

dent planes. This image not only illustrates the dynamics between the static and the dynamic, but also underscores how conceptual distinctions, such as the difference between how we learn and what we learn, find their meaning in the inherent interaction between these elements.

However, this representation also poses a significant epistemological challenge. It suggests that conceptual differences do not have an independent existence "in the facts," but arise as constructs derived from the very nature of observed phenomena. This perspective questions the idea of a clear and absolute separation between processes, arguing that any distinction arises more as an interpretation or modeling than as an objective and fixed reality. Thus, we are invited to reconsider how we understand and categorize complex phenomena such as learning, where the interrelations between different aspects can be more fluid and intertwined than has traditionally been thought.

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Ultimately, this reflection suggests that a deep understanding of educational and cognitive processes cannot be reduced to simple dichotomous categories. Instead of seeking rigid divisions, a more inclusive vision is promoted, which recognizes the complexity and inherent interconnectedness between various aspects of learning and human experience. This perspective invites us to explore how perceptions of cause and effect, as well as other conceptual distinctions, can be reconceptualized to better capture the dynamic complexity of educational and cognitive activity.

The relationship between form and content is inseparable and dynamic. By stating that both "go together", it is emphasized that there is no linear sequence where the form precedes the content or vice versa. Rather, their simultaneous emergence implies that the traditional dichotomy between form and content cannot be strictly maintained. This perspective challenges the notion that one can exist without the other independently, proposing instead an integrative vision where formal configuration and content constitute each other.

From this perspective, the deep understanding of any phenomenon, including educational processes, requires recognizing how form and content interact and influence each other. In the educational field, for example, this implies that educational structures and methodologies not only determine the content being taught but are also shaped by the nature and meaning of such content. This dynamic interaction underscores the importance of adopting pedagogical approaches that not only convey information, but also foster a deep understanding of how the form of teaching and content of learning intertwine to build meanings and competencies in students.

Empirical and conceptual

If it were necessary to make a historical journey, it should be mentioned that the aforementioned "central idea" pointed out leads directly to the distinction between empirical propositions and conceptual propositions. "Directly" because it is a distinction whose historical but also systematic merits are difficult to assess fairly. Its merits, in any case, are considerable. The way in which this remission of the problem relates here to the distinction between the empirical and the conceptual is presented here.

If it is stated that there is a difference between the learning process and the result of that process, between the formation of a belief and the content of the belief, then it must also be accepted that what can be said about the process is different from what can be said about the result, i.e. while the process—learning—must be considered contingent, synthetic, or *a posteriori*; the result—belief—must be regarded as necessary, analytical, a *priori*, or grammatical, if Wittgenstein's terminology is to be employed. In relation to the scope of the distinction, Quine (1985) can be summoned who, in his unrivaled manner, serves as authority:

> The Kantian distinction between analytic truths and synthetic truths was anticipated by Hume's distinction between relations of ideas and questions of fact, and by the Leibnician distinction between truths of reason and truths of fact. As for the truths of reason, Leibniz said that these are true in all possible worlds. Leaving aside that picturesque, what I meant was that the truths of reason are those that cannot be false […]. The two notions are the face and the cross of the same problematic coin (pp. 49-50).

Quine's critique of the Kantian distinction between analytical truths and synthetic truths has a significant historical reach by contextualizing it within the previous philosophical framework. Quine argues that this distinction, fundamental in Kantian philosophy, finds precursors in the distinctions made by philosophers such as Hume and Leibniz. Hume distinguished between relationships of ideas, which are necessary and true by definition, and matters of fact, which are contingent and dependent on empirical experience. This distinction sets a key precedent for Kant, who developed the notion of analytic truths as those whose denial implies contradiction, in contrast to synthetic truths, whose denial is possible without contradiction.

On the other hand, Leibniz introduced the distinction between truths of reason and truths of fact, where the former are true in all possible worlds due to their logical necessity, while the latter are true only in

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our current empirical world. Quine (1985) criticizes these distinctions by arguing that both categories, both analytical and synthetic truths, are interdependent and involved in the same central philosophical problem. For Quine (1985), the critique of this dualistic distinction aims to show that the criterion of truth and the epistemological foundation of analytic truths cannot be sustained in isolation from synthetic truths, since both are intertwined in the network of empirical and conceptual knowledge.

However, it is intended more than simply to recall the undoubted historical value of the conceptual distinction. It seeks to establish a parallel between the empirical/analytical distinction and the process/result. This is because the intelligibility and plausibility of this idea were fundamental to enable an approach to education without committing to a dichotomy that, both theoretically and practically, has been a significant limitation. This dichotomy has required elaborating an extensive critical apparatus to sustain the value of the distinction between theory and practice, even in contexts where maintaining it does not seem to bring any benefit. In fact, sometimes maintaining this distinction has forced us to abandon important consequences derived precisely from not sustaining this difference. To a large extent, these are the pragmatic consequences that Quine obtains without committing to a new ontology, or even committing to any ontology.

For this purpose, it is useful to consider Garavaso's interpretation of Quine's "web of beliefs" (1985) and Wittgenstein's "riverbed" analogy (1969, §§ 96-99). Garavaso (1998, p. 252) seeks to defend what considers the more general and plausible version of Wittgenstein's idea, in contrast to Quine's more popular and well-known version. From the summary of Garavaso's comments on this matter, what is especially relevant for the present purpose is his second observation: "There is no clear 'categorical' distinction between logical and mathematical propositions on the one hand, and empirical propositions on the other, but only a degree distinction between the different roles that propositions play in a system" (p. 260) (author's translation).

Garavaso's perspective accepts the existence of differences between propositions. However, the author adds that it is necessary to clarify the nature of these differences. Garavaso interprets that, according to Wittgenstein, the difference is not "categorical" (of quality), but a difference of "degree" (quantitative). This means that the difference arises from the fact that propositions play different roles within a system. In other words, these different roles distinguish one type of proposition from another. The question, therefore, is that, accepting the existence of this difference,

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how to maintain it depends on the interpretation of the limit that distinguishes some propositions from others: either as a border limit that divides or separates two realities, or as a limit that unites two areas of the same reality. In the first case, there are two separate realities; in the second, there is only one reality with two distinct domains.

Moyal-Sharrock pronounces in this sense. Recognizing the difficulty of finding a convincing solution to the rationale for the distinction between types of propositions, Moyal-Sharrock (2000) responds critically, stating that to say that there is no "categorical distinction" between propositions does not imply that there is no clear difference between them, but that "the limit is permeable" (p. 54). Moyal-Sharrock's idea seems to be that in order to understand the nature of difference, one must observe the "boundary" that separates both sides of the distinction. This boundary is "permeable," suggesting that the idea of distinction should not be abandoned. By contrast, for the difference to be clear, it is sufficient that the boundary separating the two sides be permeable.

This is a singular solution: the distinction not only exists but exists as a difference in a distinct but porous reality. This means highlighting the porosity of the border that separates, thus allowing both sides of the dilemma to be maintained. It is like taking the bull by the horns and saying, in Moore's style, "Here's a horn" and then "Here's the other horn."

The controversy over the distinction between the empirical and the conceptual accurately, but indirectly, implies a fundamental question: philosophy, in a relevant sense, is a normative task. This means that philosophy is a conceptual enterprise, not an empirical one, and deals with problems of a theoretical order, since this is the kind of propositions with which it works. The same, in my opinion, applies to the sense of a philosophy of education and its relationship to the "public agenda."

If the distinction is held as a difference of degree—according to Garavaso—the philosophical idea remains solid; but if the distinction is held as it is—according to Moyal-Sharrock—the distinction dissolves and with it philosophy. This reasoning can be applied to educational questions: if there is no way to connect how we learn with what we learn, to link the process of belief formation with the content of the beliefs that are its result, then there is nothing philosophically relevant to say about education. Consequently, whatever education is, it would be covered by purely empirical research, about which philosophy as a discipline or theory in general would have little or nothing to contribute.

Since the analysis of the distinction was important for understanding the difference between the empirical and the conceptual, as a way of

representing the distinction between the way of acquiring a belief and its content, it should be borne in mind that, in Wittgenstein's case, the intelligibility of the distinction depended precisely on understanding learning.

This leads to examining why Williams alludes to the role of learning. The move from asking "what is learning?" to asking "what role does learning play?" is equivalent to the initial approach:

> What is the meaning of a word? Let us address this question by asking, first, what is an explanation of the meaning of a word; what does the explanation of a word look like? How this question is analogous to how the question "how do we measure a length?" helps us understand the problem "What is length?" The questions "What is length?", "What does it mean?", "What is number one?" etc., produce in us a mental cramp. We feel that we cannot point to anything in response to them, and yet we must point to something. (We face one of the great sources of philosophical bewilderment: a noun makes us look for something that corresponds to it) (Wittgenstein, 1958, p. 1) (author's translation).

The "central idea" put forward is precisely what Wittgenstein (1958) suggests when he changes one question for another in the *Blue and Brown Notebooks*. In doing so, he not only guides the answer in a different direction, but by stating that the new question is "analogous" to the original one, he represents the problem differently. The new question introduces a new problem, albeit one that is "analogous" to the previous one.

So, are we facing a different problem or is it the same? It is neither other nor the same: they are analogous. We could say that the analogy allows us to continue doing the same thing, but in a different way. This is similar to how philosophy approaches education: it continues the educational task using different approaches. Philosophy formulates questions that are analogous to questions that arise directly in the field of education; it reformulates these questions to continue doing the same, but in a theoretical context. However, it remains the same in the sense that it is "analogically the same."

The roles of learning

In Wittgenstein's work, the question of "training" in language arises in contexts where normativity is debated, i.e. in situations where it is crucial to determine how to distinguish substantially between correct and incorrect uses of words (Williams, 1999, p. 189, no. 1). Williams proposes to explore this process through an analysis of the roles played by learning;

in order to illustrate the approach he seeks and, according to Williams, reveals the conclusions that Wittgenstein intended to highlight.

First, consider the "causally foundational" role. In relation to this, the problem lies in the distinction between teaching and ostensive definition (Williams, 1999, pp. 192-194). As recalled, Wittgenstein questions the idea that ostensive definition can explain how a learner acquires language, since, according to him, this procedure involves regression. His critique of ostensive definition, which involves identifying members of a class by ostension, reveals crucial aspects about language and its acquisition (p. 191).

Wittgenstein, by introducing the concept of "ostensive training" (Wittgenstein, 1988, §6), not only seeks to overcome the difficulty of infinite regression in definitions, but also reveals his active commitment to the philosophical task of offering constructive answers. This perspective contrasts with the mere criticism or pointing out of paradoxes, evidencing their attempt to move towards a deeper and more practical understanding of the functioning of language.

This explains how Wittgenstein addresses a crucial philosophical problem related to the definition of terms in language. Traditionally, "ostensive definition" (giving concrete examples to define something) addresses the problem of infinite regression: each example needs to be defined ostensibly, generating an endless string of examples. Wittgenstein proposes "ostensive training" as an alternative. This idea involves a learning process where terms are not defined individually by examples, but rather a practical use of language is acquired through interaction and contextual practice.

By adopting "ostensive training," Wittgenstein shows an active commitment to the philosophy of language. Rather than simply criticizing the limitations of traditional definitions, it seeks to provide constructive solutions that allow us to understand how meanings actually operate in human communication. This perspective contrasts with approaches that merely point out paradoxes without offering practical alternatives.

Wittgenstein's notion of "ostensive training" is similar to the behavioral concept of "conditioning", which will be explored later. The student, however, does not start out as a *tabula rasa*: for ostensive training to be effective, certain perceptual and behavioral skills are required without which it could fail. However, this does not suggest that higher cognitive abilities simply emerge from more basic abilities. Rather, the learner is adjusting their behavior according to norms, where language proficiency plays a crucial role in this process. The term "normative" here refers specifically to

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actions, both verbal and nonverbal, that can be evaluated as correct or incorrect, and that are individualized by norms, standards, examples, or rules (Williams, 1999, p. 193). Both aspects are important because they suggest that there is no difference between belief and action, nor between action and norms. All of this ultimately manifests itself as action.

In summary, we discuss how competence is acquired and demonstrated through practice and social context. Competence manifests itself not only as a skill in itself, but as the ability to apply that skill within a framework of rules or norms that guide specific practice. Hence, competition is demonstrated by effective action within a given context, where rules are fundamental to defining and evaluating such competition.

The difference between the learner and the teacher is crucial in this process. While the learner is in the process of acquiring competence, the teacher already possesses and can guide due to his previous experience in practice. The teacher acts as the possessor of the contextual and cultural knowledge accumulated over time, providing a background that the learner does not yet possess. This knowledge of the teacher is actively transmitted through his actions and teachings, serving as a model for the learner to acquire and demonstrate the desired competence.

This process of teaching and learning is not limited to the transmission of static information, it implies a form of "action". Here, the learner not only internalizes abstract rules, but actively integrates them into their daily practice. By imitating the teacher's actions and learning from them, the learner demonstrates his or her competence by applying the rules effectively in specific situations. This notion of "action" connects knowledge with practical action, highlighting how competence manifests itself not only in theoretical understanding, but in the demonstrated ability to apply rules in real contexts of social and cultural interaction.

Second, the "methodological role" of learning reveals the source of normativity by distinguishing between the contexts of the learner and the expert. The main challenge lies in how a beginner follows a rule, i.e. how an initially linguistically incompetent person becomes competent. There is a strong case for the idea that the "performance" demanded of the learner should be public and social (Williams, 1999, pp. 197–198). Wittgenstein's social conception of meaning plays a crucial role, given that the action is publicly presented for evaluation and correction by expert teachers in practice. In this way, learning is socialized through practice, which inherently includes the rules that constitute it as such. Based on these observations, it should be pointed out (Medina, 2002).

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The "methodological role" of learning and normativity focuses on how the norms and rules that guide language behavior are established and maintained within specific practices or contexts. This approach seeks to understand how norms emerge dynamically through interaction and participation in linguistic and cultural communities. The rules are not static or imposed from outside but evolve in the context of everyday practices and social relations, thus defining linguistic competence within a community.

The differentiation between the learner and the expert focuses on how a beginner, initially without linguistic competence, acquires skills and knowledge over time under the guidance of more experienced individuals. This process involves not only the acquisition of technical skills, but also the internalization of shared norms and practices that define language competence within a community. Learning is therefore understood as a process rooted in social and cultural relationships that influence how language skills are acquired and applied.

The public and social nature of the learner's performance underscores that effective learning requires that the learner's performance be publicly visible and evaluated. Social interactions and corrections by teachers or other experts are essential to guide and improve learning. This approach recognizes that the development of language skills does not occur isolated but is strengthened through participation in contexts where language and social norms are constantly applied and negotiated.

A crucial implication is the imperative need for initial training. According to Quine (1985), the social and learned nature of meaning are two inseparable aspects of the same reality. If meaning is intrinsically social, then both the individualistic perspective of cognitivism and natural teleology fail to provide satisfactory explanations of what they attempt to address. The first approach fails because of an incorrect interpretation of the concepts of "rule" and "representation," while the second lacks the conceptual resources to understand the normativity inherent in action (Williams, 1999, p. 198).

In both cases, the problem arises as a consequence of the incompleteness of the initial explanation, about how individual learning integrates into the social environment of execution and how the correct action generates beyond a mere mechanical repetition of actions in a temporal sequence, without a "unity of consciousness" according to Kant's classical formulation.

The above addresses the fundamental importance of initial training in the acquisition of meaning and knowledge from the perspective of the philosopher Willard Van Orman Quine. For Quine, meaning is not

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an entity that is innately owned; rather, it is something that is acquired through social interaction and learning. The social and learned nature of meaning are two inseparable aspects of the same reality. This conception deeply challenges the explanations provided by both the individualistic perspective of cognitivism and natural teleology. Individualist cognitivism holds that the mind and internal processes of the individual are sufficient to explain knowledge and meaning. However, according to the criticism presented in the paragraph, this approach fails because it misinterprets the concepts of "rule" and "representation".

These are fundamental ideas in the philosophy of language and mind, related to how we understand and follow rules and how we mentally represent the world around us. Natural teleology, on the other hand, seeks explanations in terms of natural purposes. However, this approach lacks the conceptual resources needed to understand the normativity inherent in action. Normativity refers to the norms and standards that guide and justify our actions, which is crucial to understanding why we act in certain ways in specific social contexts.

Criticism of both approaches reveals a deeper problem: both are insufficient to explain how individual learning is integrated into a social environment of execution. In other words, due to the incompleteness of their initial explanations, neither individualistic cognitivism nor natural teleology can elucidate how individual learning is incorporated and manifested in a social context. Moreover, they fail to explain how the correct action occurs in a meaningful way, i.e. beyond a mere mechanical repetition of actions in a temporal sequence. The latter connects with the idea of the "unity of consciousness" according to Kant's classical formulation, which emphasizes the coherence and continuity of conscious experience.

The importance of initial training lies in its ability to integrate individual learning into a social context and generate correct actions that are not merely repetitive but are imbued with meaning and normativity. This underscores the interdependence between individual learning and social dynamics, as well as the need for a deep understanding of normativity and the unity of consciousness to explain how we act and understand the world in a meaningful way.

Finally, we find the concept of the "constitutive role", which implies that the way we learn concepts is essential to define what we really learn (Williams, 1999, pp. 189-190). This perspective directly opposes the idea that the relationship between the learning process and the result of that learning is simply contingent, i.e. a mere matter of "history." In clearer terms, this stance rejects the notion that describing how we acquire our

beliefs – whether through explicit instruction, by ingestion of some substance, by osmosis, or even by accident – is irrelevant to the content of those beliefs. If we accept that the way we learn is constitutive of what we learn, then we could counter the intuitive objection that the learning process is unimportant. This is because the learning process plays an essential and necessary role in understanding the beliefs we ultimately hold.

The central idea of the "constitutive role" is that we cannot separate the way we learn from what we actually learn. According to this perspective, the method and context of learning are inseparable from the content of the acquired knowledge. This means that the way concepts are acquired is not a mere historical circumstance with no relevance to the content but is an essential component of that content.

In contrast to the notion of contingency—which suggests that the details of how we arrive at our beliefs have no bearing on the value or nature of those beliefs—the constitutive role states that these details are crucial. For example, if a person acquires a scientific belief through a rigorous process of experimentation and validation, that belief is intrinsically linked to the process by which it was acquired. It would not be the same as acquiring it by accident or from an unreliable source. The context and method of learning profoundly influence the nature and validity of belief.

Furthermore, this perspective questions the idea that beliefs can be understood and evaluated from their acquisition process. If the way a concept is learned is constitutive of that concept, then any analysis or evaluation of belief must consider the learning process. This implies that, to fully understand a belief, it is not enough to look only at its content; it is equally important to understand how it was learned.

The constitutive role proposes that the learning process is an indispensable element to understand the beliefs and knowledge that we possess. It rejects the notion that the relationship between learning and its outcome is merely contingent and holds that the method and context of learning are integral parts of the content of acquired knowledge. This leads to a deeper and nuanced understanding of how our beliefs are formed and validated, highlighting the importance of the learning process in shaping what we really know and believe.

Sustaining the inseparability of both—the unity of what we learn and how we learn it—solves the problem of determining which of the two is most relevant. Rather than trying to discern whether the learning content or learning process is more meaningful, this perspective regards them as equally necessary and interdependent components. This integrated view reflects a more holistic understanding of the human way

of learning, where each element influences and defines the other. The importance of this approach lies in its ability to offer a more complete and nuanced explanation of human learning, avoiding simplifications that may arise from separating these aspects.

This "constitutive" sense of the function of learning provides a solid foundation for understanding how the human way of being is established or instituted. Rather than viewing learning as a series of isolated events leading to knowledge acquisition, this perspective understands it as a continuous and dynamic process, where method and content are intrinsically intertwined. Thus, the way we learn is not simply a vehicle for arriving at predetermined knowledge, but it shapes and defines knowledge itself. This approach reveals the depth and complexity of human learning, highlighting the need to consider both aspects to truly understand how people acquire and apply their knowledge.

Recognizing the inseparability between aspects of human learning opens the door to new challenges that need to be addressed in an independent and differentiated way. Once overcoming the tendency to divide simplistically, problems arise that require specific, contextualized approaches. For example, the integration of different learning methods in different cultural or technological contexts could pose significant challenges. Each cultural or technological environment can uniquely influence how knowledge is learned and applied, requiring flexible and adaptive educational strategies that consider these variations without reducing the learning process to binary categories.

In this sense, addressing the specific challenges related to the diversity of learning methods and contexts involves recognizing and managing the complexity inherent in the human educational process. The variety of approaches and learning environments should not be perceived as an obstacle, but as an opportunity to enrich our educational strategies, making them more inclusive and effective. Each cultural, technological or socio-economic context influences how it is taught and learned, requiring adaptations and educational methods that respect and exploit these differences.

It is essential to avoid falling into the trap of simplistic dichotomies, such as the dichotomy between traditional and technological methods, or between face-to-face and virtual teaching. These divisions may limit our ability to fully understand the complexity of contemporary educational practices and to adequately respond to their challenges. Rather than seeking universal answers or unique solutions, it is crucial to adopt an attitude of flexibility and adaptability. This means being open to experimentation with different pedagogical approaches, leveraging

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emerging technologies creatively, and promoting intercultural and multidisciplinary dialog in education.

Likewise, the recognition of the interconnection between individual learning and social context underscores the need to develop educational policies that are sensitive to the various local and global realities. Promoting educational equity involves not only providing equal access to educational resources and opportunities, but also recognizing and valuing the multiple forms of knowledge and experience that enrich the educational process. In this sense, learning becomes a dynamic and collaborative process where the diversity of perspectives and practices is not only tolerated but celebrated as a fundamental asset for 21st century education.

Final considerations

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Wittgenstein's discussion of language learning highlights that there are certain aspects of this process that behavioral and cognitivist approaches cannot explain. Essentially, these approaches fail to explain how learner behavior becomes structured by norms or standards of correctness underlying language use. According to Wittgenstein, language learning is not reduced to the accumulation of well-confirmed verbal provisions or hypotheses; rather, it involves the internalization of normative standards for word application, which he describes as a "usage technique."

Understood in this way, language learning involves a normative structuring process of behaviors that transcends mere "conditioning" (Wittgenstein, 1988, §6). It is a process of socialization or enculturation. From Wittgenstein's observations, two central aspects of this learning enculturation perspective can be reaffirmed.

Learning a language is fundamentally a social process, as it is mediated and structured by the social environment that imposes norms regulating the correct use of words (Wittgenstein, 1988, §257). These norms dictate not only how words should be used, but also how they should be interpreted and understood in various contexts. Through interaction with other members of the community, individuals internalize these norms and develop the ability to use language autonomously and appropriately. In this sense, learning a language is not limited to acquiring an isolated cognitive ability, it is a process of integration into normative practices that govern communication and social behavior. Language, therefore, becomes a fundamental tool for human interaction, structuring the way we relate to the world and to others.

In addition, language facilitates a unique entanglement between actions and beliefs, becoming an essential realm of human actions. Through language, we not only express thoughts and feelings, but also coordinate actions, establish relationships and build shared meanings. This ability to intertwine actions and beliefs through language underscores its radical explanatory importance. It allows us to understand and predict behaviors, as well as form cohesive communities based on mutual understanding. Thus, language transcends its function as a mere communication tool to become the foundation of social and cultural life, evidencing its crucial role in the configuration of human reality.

Second, enculturation, or the incorporation of learners into language, is not based solely on passive observation, but requires active action. Wittgenstein proposes a "participatory view of learning", emphasizing that learners must actively engage in language practices to master it. This approach suggests that learning is not simply a process of internalizing rules by observing others, but it involves direct participation in linguistic and social activities. Through participation, learners not only imitate behaviors, but also develop a deeper, contextual understanding of how language is used in different situations.

From this perspective, mastering the practices of a language is a process of learning by doing. Learners should be involved in real communicative situations where the use of language is necessary and meaningful. This participation allows learners to experience first-hand the regularities and rules that govern the use of language. Medina (2004) emphasizes that this process not only establishes behavior patterns in learners, but also instills a normative attitude about how they should proceed in their language interactions. Participation in the use of language helps learners internalize the social rules and expectations associated with language practices.

Furthermore, this participatory approach to learning implies that learners develop a normative attitude towards the use of language, as Medina (2004) and Gottschalk (2017) point out. This means that learners not only acquire language skills, but also adopt the norms and values that govern proper communicative behavior in their community. Normative attitude refers to the understanding and acceptance of what is considered right or wrong in the use of language, which is essential for effective and appropriate communication. In summary, the perspective of learning by participation highlights the importance of action and interaction in the enculturation process, stressing that learning a language is both an act of doing and of understanding, and that it implies the internalization of norms and attitudes that guide linguistic behavior.

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Through this training process, shared practices and techniques become a "second nature," as Medina describes it, thus acquiring a normative force: when training succeeds, learning procedures and techniques not only causally determines our actions, but also explains why we do what we do and how we do it. Wittgenstein emphasizes that, although there is a genuine distinction between reasons and causes, there is no autonomous space of reasons separate from causal determinations.

According to Wittgenstein, there is no radical separation, but a *continuum* between deliberate acts motivated by automatic reasons and behaviors determined by causal laws (Medina, 2004, p. 84). The affirmation of this *continuum* fulfills the same function as Moyal-Sharrock's idea of gradual differentiation, allowing one to accept difference without needing to completely separate realities. So, there is no clear separation between areas, but rather a gradual differentiation.

How does this *continuum* progress? How does our behavior become structured by regulation? The progress of this *continuum*, from causally determined behavior to normatively structured behavior, can be understood as a process in which the actions of individuals begin to be increasingly guided by social norms and rules. Initially, the behavior may be predominantly influenced by causal factors, such as instincts or automatic reactions. However, as individuals interact with their social environment and undergo processes of enculturation and learning, these actions begin to be structured in a normative way. This means that actions are not only responses to stimuli, but are regulated by shared expectations, conventions, and rules that define what is appropriate or inappropriate in a given context. Medina (2004) and Toulmin (1958) emphasize that, although there is a distinction between these types of behavior, it is not absolute; rather, it is a continuum where both coexist and interrelate.

Recognizing the conceptual difference between causally determined and normatively structured behavior does not mean that one excludes the other. Like the distinction between a jungle and a garden, where both represent forms of nature organization, but with different degrees of intervention and structure, human behavior can range from being more causally determined or more normatively structured depending on the context and enculturation level of the individual. In a jungle, vegetation grows wild and without human intervention, while in a garden, plants are grown and cared for following certain aesthetic and practical rules. Similarly, in human behavior, actions can originate in instinctive and automatic responses, but through socialization and learning they can be guided by norms and rules that reflect society's practices and values.

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This continuous and dynamic process shows how individuals move along this spectrum, gradually integrating normativity into their actions while continuing to respond to causal influences.

Thus, in considering how the contrast between causally determined behavior and normatively structured actions is progressively established throughout individual life, the learning process plays a crucial role. In his later works, Wittgenstein highlights how learning radically transforms our behavior. For Wittgenstein, the dividing line is established between what is learned and what is not learned: the presence of learning processes ensures the adoption of a behavior that can be evaluated normatively. This seems to be the result of his discussion of chimpanzee behavior in *Observations on the Foundations of Mathematics* (Wittgenstein, 1978).

Moreover, frequent references to "our natural history" are meant to blur the distinction between nature and culture, between the raw and the cooked. In fact, human beings, as humans, develop in an area where nature and culture converge to create a previously unimaginable standard of living. This challenges the usual dichotomies that we divide into our thoughts, both in terms of various types and on various levels.

This version clarifies how learning, according to Wittgenstein, transforms our behavior and how references to natural history and culture help to understand the complexity of human development in his writings.

The reference to "natural history" in the *Observations on the Psychology of Philosophy* (Wittgenstein, 1997) provides a theoretical framework for overcoming rigid dichotomies between nature and culture. In these observations, Ludwig Wittgenstein proposes that human beings cannot be fully understood through a vision that separates them in purely natural or cultural terms. Instead, it suggests an integrated view in which nature and culture are deeply intertwined. This means that human actions and behaviors cannot be properly explained if they are considered solely as biological phenomena or exclusively as cultural constructs. "Natural history" provides a context in which both aspects are seen as parts of a unified whole.

In this theoretical framework, human beings are considered inhabitants of an environment that is inseparably cultural and natural. Wittgenstein uses multiple mentions of "natural history" to illustrate how our intentional activities, such as thinking, waiting, and measuring, are rooted in both our biology and cultural practices. For example, the act of thinking (1997, II, §18) cannot be understood only as a brain process; it also involves the use of language and concepts that are the product of culture. Similarly, waiting (1997, II, §15) is not only an instinctive reaction, but an

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action charged with cultural significance, influenced by social expectations and previous experiences.

In addition, activities such as measuring (1997, I, §109) demonstrate how natural history sheds light on our intentional practices. Measuring is not just a physical action but involves the use of tools and methods that have been developed culturally. Wittgenstein mentions these activities (1997, II, §77) to show that our daily actions are always in a context that is both natural and cultural. By recognizing the inseparability of these aspects, we can gain a more complete and nuanced understanding of human psychology, which transcends the limitations of traditional dichotomies and allows us to see human beings as integrated into an environment where nature and culture are continually intertwined.

The understanding of intentional phenomena in terms of their natural history is explored in depth in the first part of the *Philosophical Investigations* (Wittgenstein, 1988). In this work it is argued that intentions and intentional activities can only be properly understood when placed within their proper context. This means that it is not enough to analyze intentions in the abstract or in isolation; it is crucial to consider them within the situations, customs and human institutions in which they manifest. By placing intentions within these contexts, the interdependence between individual action and the cultural and natural framework in which it occurs is revealed.

Wittgenstein emphasizes that human situations, where intentions are inserted, encompass both cultural and natural aspects. This is exemplified in his assertion that activities such as ordering, asking, telling, and chatting are part of our natural history in the same way as walking, eating, drinking, and playing (Wittgenstein, 1988, §25). This inclusion of cultural and biological activities in the same framework underscores that our communicative and social practices are as rooted in our nature as our physical needs and behaviors. In other words, the ability to interact through language and other forms of communication is as fundamental to our humanity as our basic biological functions.

By considering intentions in this integrated context, Wittgenstein offers a holistic view of human action. This approach allows us to understand how cultural customs and institutions provide the necessary background for intentions to make sense and be interpreted. Intentions do not exist isolated but they are shaped and directed by the norms, values and practices of the community in which they develop. In this way, Wittgenstein invites us to see human actions not only as expressions of individual wills, but as phenomena deeply rooted in the fabric of social and natural

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life. This enriched perspective provides us with a fuller understanding of human psychology, recognizing the inseparability of the cultural and the natural in shaping our intentions and actions.

In addition, Wittgenstein makes observations on "the facts of natural history" as a significant method of contrast. This approach makes it possible to highlight that certain characteristics may be part of human natural history but not necessarily present in the natural history of other species (1997, II, §18). This distinction is crucial to identify the specific aspects that distinguish humans from other animals and to characterize actions that are typically performed by intentional agents in contrast to those that are not. Wittgenstein uses this contrast to highlight how our cognitive and cultural abilities uniquely intertwine in our natural history, reflecting not only our biology, but also our social and symbolic practices.

From a philosophical perspective, this differentiation takes on relevance by suggesting that differences between human beings and other animals are not based on absolute *a priori* categories but emerge as a result of a contingent process of natural evolution (1997, II, §24; 1997, I, §78). Wittgenstein argues that our linguistic abilities and behavioral forms cannot be understood simply as extensions of basic animal skills, but as products of complex development incorporating biological, cultural, and historical factors. This integrated view challenges simplistic conceptions that neatly separate the human from the animal, suggesting instead a complex and dynamic continuity that recognizes both our biological roots and the distinctive features of our cultural and social history.

The historical and naturalistic elucidation of intentional actions raises two significant concerns. One of them is that these elucidations seem to suggest some kind of foundationalism. Is not the reference to "natural history" a subtly foundationalist tactic that attempts to integrate grammar within the confines of nature? This concern lies in the risk of reducing the complexity of linguistic and grammatical practice to mere natural foundations. Another concern is that by introducing considerations about "natural history," Wittgenstein's philosophy could slip toward "scientism." Does not this naturalistic perspective imply that philosophy collapses into science, abandoning its distinctively philosophical character? Wittgenstein himself echoes these concerns in his works. If conceptual formations can be justified on the basis of natural, psychological, and physical facts, does not the description of our conceptual formations then become a sort of covert natural science? Also, should not we focus on what naturally underlies grammar rather than grammar itself? (1997, I, §46).

Wittgenstein, however, answers both questions negatively. On the one hand, it presents the facts of natural history as contingent preconditions for human intentional activities. These facts are not absolute determinations that can play a special explanatory or justifying role. On the other hand, Wittgenstein insists that his philosophical investigations should not be confused with scientific investigations on the natural history of the human being. While these investigations depend on our natural history, they are not an inherent part of it.

This distinction is crucial for Wittgenstein: while he recognizes the influence of natural foundations on our conceptual practices and formations, he argues that the task of philosophy is to elucidate the grammar of human language and practices from a perspective that is not reduced to mere scientific explanations, but that preserves the complexity and normative character of human activities.

Wittgenstein's research focuses deeply on normativity, but it is not conceived as a separate or autonomous domain outside of our linguistic and action practices. From the Wittgensteinian perspective, normativity is not something that exists independently as an order of abstract reasons that substantiate or guarantee our ways of speaking and acting. Instead, Wittgenstein argues that the ways of speaking and acting are in themselves the ones that establish and maintain norms and practices within a linguistic and cultural community. This view implies that norms are not external principles that dictate our behavior from the outside but emerge from our interactions and practical agreements in concrete contexts.

Wittgenstein does not attempt to dissolve or eliminate normativity, but rather to provide a sociogenetic approach to it (Medina, 2004, p. 89). This means that normativity arises and develops through social and cultural processes in which individuals participate actively. Wittgenstein does not seek to reduce norms to mere arbitrary conventions, but to understand how they are formed and maintained over the course of a community's linguistic and practical life. Thus, normativity acquires its meaning and validity in the context of shared practices and ways of life that characterize a particular community.

Thus, Wittgenstein offers a dynamic and contextualized perspective of normativity, in which it arises as a result of our interactions and practical agreements, rather than being imposed from outside as a set of universal and immovable rules. This sociogenetic view not only enriches our understanding of how norms work in practice, but also underscores the importance of considering the cultural and social context in the interpretation and application of norms in everyday life.

Wittgenstein's approach is clearly illustrated in *On Certainty* (1969), where he develops a sociogenetic perspective of the norms that guide our linguistic and research practices. In this text, Wittgenstein argues that the normative role of certain fundamental propositions, known as hinge propositions, cannot be understood separately from the history and context of our communicative and behavioral practices (1969, §144, §152). Hinge propositions are those that we consider to be true and that serve as foundations for our everyday actions and beliefs, such as trust in our sensory perceptions or in the existence of the external world.

According to Wittgenstein, these norms do not exist in an isolated way, but are maintained and validated through our discursive interactions and practices within specific contexts. Hence, hinge propositions acquire their meaning and normative authority through their integration into our daily lives and into the shared ways of life within a community. This implies that certainty and trust in these propositions cannot be separated from the social and linguistic practices that support them. Thus, Wittgenstein suggests that understanding norms and certainties involves understanding how they emerge and sustain themselves in the course of our everyday, discursive activities.

Wittgenstein's sociogenetic approach challenges traditional conceptions that might consider norms to be abstract or universal principles that exist independently of concrete human practices. Instead, it emphasizes the importance of contextualizing the rules within the social and linguistic practices in which they arise and are applied. This dynamic and contextualized perspective offers a richer and more nuanced understanding of how norms and certainties operate in human life, underscoring their intrinsic connection with our ways of interacting, communicating and making sense of the world around us.

Wittgenstein argues that understanding standards in this way is critical to recognizing that our language and action practices not only passively conform to them but play an active role in their constant maintenance and recreation. According to their approach, norms are not static rules imposed from outside, but emerge and are validated through our everyday interactions with the environment and with other individuals. For example, rules governing the use of language or social practices are reinforced and evolve as people use and negotiate them in specific contexts. This dynamic process implies that norms not only guide our actions, but are also shaped by them, in a continuous cycle of practice and reflection that defines our ways of life.

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Wittgenstein's contextualized approach challenges traditional conceptions that could see norms as abstract or universal entities. Instead, it stresses the importance of understanding them as emerging products of concrete social and linguistic interactions. This dynamic perspective suggests that norms are not only applied mechanically but are continually reinterpreted and reaffirmed through our daily actions and communications. Wittgenstein invites us to consider standards not as external constraints, but as an integral part of our social and linguistic practices, which actively contribute to shaping our shared experience of the world.

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