Christian Georg Martin
christian.georg.martin @ lrz.uni-muenchen.de

Wittgenstein on Perspicuous Presentations and Grammatical Self-Knowledge

Abstract

The task of this paper is to exhibit Wittgenstein's method of perspicuous presentation as aiming at a distinctive kind of self-knowledge. Three influential readings of Wittgenstein's concept of perspicuous presentation – Hacker's, Baker's and Sluga's – are examined. All of them present what Wittgenstein calls the "unsurveyablity of our grammar" as a result of the "complexity" of our language. Contrary to this, a fundamental difference between matter-of-factual complexity and the unsurveyability of grammar is pointed out. What perspicuous presentations are designed to deal with, isn't, accordingly, occasioned by the complexity of our language but by an unnoticed assimilation of our own activities as speaking beings to matter-of-factual affairs. In response to this, perspicuous presentations help us to fully appropriate our activities as speakers in virtue of achieving a transparent understanding of the use of "our words". It thus provides us with a distinctive kind of grammatical self-knowledge.

1. Introduction

According to Wittgenstein, the concept of a "perspicuous presentation" (*übersichtliche Darstellung*) is of fundamental philosophical importance.[1] He introduces it in a notoriously laconic manner in

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[1] Thanks to Fabian Schäfer, Clemens Schmalhorst, Hans Sluga, two anonymous reviewers as well as the editors of NWR for critical comments on earlier versions of this paper.

§122 of the *Philosophical Investigations* as a way of coping with what he calls the "unsurveyability" (*Unübersichtlichkeit*) of "our grammar":

> A main source of our failure to understand is that we do not *command a clear view* of the use of our words. – Our grammar is lacking in this sort of perspicuity. A perspicuous presentation produces just that understanding which consists in 'seeing connections'. Hence the importance of finding and inventing *intermediate cases*. The concept of a perspicuous presentation is of fundamental significance for us. It earmarks the form of account we give, the way we look at things. […]. (Wittgenstein 1958b, §122. Anscombe transl., modified.)

While this passage clearly indicates what perspicuous presentations are designed to do deal with – the lack of a clear view of how we use our words – and while it stresses that "finding and inventing intermediate cases" plays an important role in this connection, it neither specifies *what* a perspicuous presentation consists in nor explains *how* exactly it is supposed to fulfill its task. Since §122 is the only paragraph of the *Investigations*, in which the topic of perspicuous presentation is explicitly touched upon, commentators have taken recourse to various passages from Wittgenstein's *Nachlass* in order to fill in a supposed gap in his "official" treatment of this topic and to bring a coherent conception of this philosophical procedure into view. Following this exegetical guideline, various interpreters have, however, arrived at fundamentally opposed views. This isn't very surprising, insofar as the specific contexts of remarks from the *Nachlass*, which divergent interpretations rely on, and the fact that Wittgenstein's views on perspicuous presentation changed, are usually neglected. In consequence, it seems possible to "support" opposed views of perspicuous presentation by attributing specific importance to those remarks from the *Nachlass*, which fit one's reading. Rather than providing support, I think of this procedure as underestimating the philosophical rigor of the "Investigations".

If Wittgenstein regarded any of his later writing as completed, it is presumably (the first part of) the *Investigations* (cf. preface). It seems charitable, therefore, to look at the *Investigations* as sufficient, in themselves, to provide their readers with a grip on "perspicuous presentation". Aiming at a philosophical clarification of this notion,

rather than at a philological account of the development of Wittgenstein's views of it, I therefore rely, in this paper, on a close reading of §122 and relevant paragraphs in its vicinity, §123 and §125 in particular.

In section 2 I review and discuss three standard readings of perspicuous presentation. Instead of arguing in favor of one of them, I will identify a questionable assumption common to all – namely that perspicuous presentations are ways of coping with the confusing "complexity" of our language. Questioning this assumption will motivate search for an alternative conception. Section 3 expands on remarks, which are situated in the vicinity of §122 of the *Investigations* and points to such an alternative conception. According to it, what perspicuous presentations are designed to deal with isn't, primarily, occasioned by the complexity of our language but by a distorting assimilation of our own activities as speaking beings to matter-of-factual affairs – affairs, which strike us as strange or perplexing, in consequence. Perspicuous presentations are designed to resolve perplexities *of this kind*, as I argue in the fourth section of the paper, relying on a close reading of §122.

2. Three Standard Conceptions of Perspicuous Presentation

The argument of this section falls into three consecutive steps. I will first review three standard conceptions of perspicuous presentation – advanced by Peter Hacker, Gordon Baker and Hans Sluga, respectively. In a further step I will argue that the standard conceptions presuppose a shared understanding of *what* is to be made perspicuous by means of a perspicuous presentation, albeit diverging with respect to *how* and *to what extent* it *can* be made perspicuous. According to their shared presupposition I will refer to them as "substantial conceptions" of perspicuous presentation. In a third step I will motivate search for an alternative, non-substantial conception.

It seems innocent enough to start reflection on the concept of perspicuous presentation with what might appear as a truism: a perspicuous presentation serves *to make something perspicuous.*

Accordingly, one can distinguish between *what is to be made perspicuous* and *what serves to make it perspicuous*. Based on this distinction, one can then ask for the *extent* to which what is to be made perspicuous can indeed be made perspicuous. One might furthermore distinguish between the perspicuity of that which serves to make a certain subject matter perspicuous and the perspicuity of that subject matter as achieved by means of the former. Different conceptions of perspicuous presentation can thus differ with respect to their answers in reply to the question, whether a perspicuous presentation is *itself* perspicuous, as well as to the question, to which extent it succeeds to make its subject matter perspicuous. In what follows I will show that Hacker's, Baker's and Sluga's conceptions of perspicuous presentation differ from each other by their answers to at least one of these questions. – The differing conceptions envisaged are associated by their authors with differing translations of the phrase "übersichtliche Darstellung" into English. In the course of reviewing these conceptions I will stick to the translation their advocates are relying on.

According to Peter Hacker a "surveyable representation" is a tabulation of "the grammatical rules for the use of an expression" (Baker and Hacker 2005a: 332). Thus conceived, it achieves transparency by laying out *the* rules which regulate the use of this expression, allowing one to have them "completely clearly" before one's eyes (cf. Baker and Hacker 2005a: 327). It couldn't achieve *complete* clarity with respect to what it serves to clarify without being surveyable itself, i.e. without being apt to be brought clearly and completely into view. For, what is unsurveyable in itself couldn't serve to achieve *exhaustive* clarity with respect to what it is designed to clarify. On Hacker's conception, a surveyable representation has a "constructive" character on its own, which is independent of its use in dispelling philosophical confusion, and consists in the orderly presentation of the (regulative) rules pertaining to the use of an expression (cf. Hacker 2001a: 37). Insofar as philosophical problems, according to Hacker's reading, arise from our being misled by superficial analogies between expressions which suggest affinities between their use and result in a violation of the rules

which in fact regulate the use of these expressions, surveyable representations *can* serve to uncover philosophical confusion by bringing the relevant rules for the use of an expression into focus.

The late Gordon Baker has put forward a conception of "perspicuous representation" which is critical of the "classical view" just sketched, which Hacker and he had once jointly advocated. According to Baker's mature conception, a perspicuous representation can neither achieve *exhaustive* clarity with respect to its subject matter nor is it itself characterized by perspicuity in the sense of being easily taken in as a whole (cf. Baker 2004: 42). Baker's claim that a perspicuous representation cannot achieve complete clarity with respect to what it is designed to shed light on, might be understood in two ways. On one reading, the phrase "achieving complete clarity" makes sense indeed, but refers to something *we* are unable to do. On the other reading, which seems to be more congenial to Baker and is explicitly advocated by some of his followers, this phrase doesn't even make sense. Accordingly, a perspicuous representation cannot achieve, what, according to the classical view, it is designed to achieve, because there is no "it" to achieve (cf. Hutchinson and Read 2008: 148).

What a perspicuous presentation *can* in fact achieve, according to Baker, is to exhibit further, hitherto "neglected" aspects of the use of an expression (cf. Baker 2004: 31). Noticing an aspect is recognizing an internal relation between an item under consideration and further items. If what is under consideration is the use of an expression, a perspicuous representation, by relating it to other expressions, can highlight traits of use which it shares with them. Instead of looking at the use of "mind" merely from how "brain" is used, for instance, we may notice aspects of use it shares with other expressions and thus correct a distorting understanding of "mind" (cf. Baker 2004: 43).

According to Baker's conception, the achievements of perspicuous representations are strictly local and, at the same time, of a conservative rather than revisionary character. For, what a perspicuous representation is designed to bring into view, are *further* aspects of the use of an expression, which had hitherto been overlooked, but do not contradict the ones already in view (cf.

Baker 2004: 34-35; Hutchinson and Read 2008: 157). Hence, the critical function of a perspicuous representation consists in doing away with the temptation to *exclusively* view the use of an expression by analogy to certain expressions instead of noticing that its use, in a certain respect, isn't characterized by its affinity to these, but by its internal connection to further ones. A perspicuous representation thus serves to dispel confusion of the form "X is like B in a certain respect and, nevertheless, it cannot be like B" by reminding us that the expression "X", although functioning, in certain respects, like "B", indeed, in the respect considered, functions like another expression, rather.

Obviously, in order to exhibit further, hitherto neglected aspects of the use of an expression, perspicuous representations do not have to *be* perspicuous themselves. Rather than *being* perspicuous, they serve to *make their subject matter perspicuous* in a certain respect. In consequence, perspicuous representations have a strictly purpose relative character. In distinction to the attempt to exhaustively tabulate the (regulative) rules (purportedly) characterizing the use of an expression, highlighting *further* aspects of use, presupposes a *particular* constellation of use, in which certain aspects are in focus, while others are neglected. Such neglect is occasioned by the unsurveyability of grammar – the fact that the manifold of internal relations connecting the use of an expression with the use of others is open-ended and always only partially overseen. This condition gives rise to particular philosophical perplexities, which can be dispelled in a piecemeal way, only, by means of perspicuous representations.

Hacker's and later Baker's conceptions of perspicuous presentation are opposed to each other in both respects introduced above, i.e. with respect to *what* perspicuous presentations are to achieve as well as with *how* they are characterized in themselves. Accordingly, it is no wonder that adherents of these conceptions have heavily attacked each other.[2] However, in what follows, I do

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[2] Cf. Hutchinson and Read 2008 as well as Savickey 2014 for criticisms of Hacker's position. McGinn 2011: 655-61 offers a nuanced comparison of Baker's and Hacker's approach. See Hacker 2007: 104-6 for a critique of Baker's conception from the vantage

not want to argue in favor of one of these views, but, rather, focus on an assumption shared by both of them.[3]

The views discussed so far are sometimes presented as the main interpretative alternatives with respect to Wittgenstein's concept of perspicuous presentation.[4] Hans Sluga, however, has developed an intermediate position (cf. Sluga 2011: 95-111). According to Hacker as well as to Sluga, what Wittgenstein calls "übersichtliche Darstellung" must be surveyable in the sense of being easily taken in or grasped. Furthermore, contrary to Baker, both Hacker and Sluga conceive of it as a *representation* of grammatical rules rather than a *presentation* of hitherto neglected aspects of the use of an expression. Sluga's conception, however, deviates from Hacker's in assuming that a surveyable representation cannot, in principle, serve to make its subject matter *completely* perspicuous. For, the ways expressions of a natural language are used are, according to Sluga, "essentially unsurveyable" (cf. Sluga 2011: 108). A surveyable representation will, therefore, provide a *partial* overview of their grammar, at best. Surveyable representations, on this view, are easily graspable models of what they represent, but cannot *qua models* render what they are models of fully transparent. For, it belongs to the grammar of the expression "model" that it can only partly represent what it is a model of. Hence, what surveyable

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point of his own conception and Kuusela 2014 for a nuanced critique of Baker's view, which seeks to preserve its basic insights.

[3] One kind of apparently devastating criticism, which is regularly leveled against Baker's view, even if possibly justified with respect to some of his formulations, doesn't invalidate his approach – the charge of relativism, cf. Hutto 2007: 308. Baker himself mentions the charge and seems to accept it, cf. Baker 2004: 43; 51. His claim that perspicuous presentations help us to see other, equally valid aspects of the use of an expression, might thus suggest that he promotes an attitude, which grants equal validity to views which are in fact incompatible. What is said to be "equally valid", however, aren't incompatible statements about the same subject matter, but aspects of grammar, i. e. internal relations between the use of an expression and further ones. To speak of "equal validity" simply means that, while, at first, the use of an expression was exclusively or predominantly highlighted by its affinity to the use of a certain expression, it can be shed light on by highlighting its internal relations to certain others. Hence, perspicuous presentations serve to bring further characteristics of the use of an expression into focus rather than claiming equal validity for incompatible statements.

[4] Cf. McGinn 2011: 655-661 as well as Hutchinson and Read 2008: 150-52.

representations can achieve (in distinction to what they are) is partial perspicuity, only, according to Sluga.

It has already been indicated that a conception of perspicuous presentation according to which it might achieve *complete* clarity with respect to its subject matter, while being unsurveyable itself, seems incoherent. For, how could something, which isn't completely perspicuous in itself, guarantee that the clarity it achieves with respect to what it serves to shed light on is exhaustive? Accordingly, the three conceptions of perspicuous representation reviewed so far can be regarded as "complete" in the following – weak – sense. The preceding classification of divergent conceptions of perspicuous presentation relied on two questions, each of them allowing for two mutually exclusive answers. The first question pertained to whether a perspicuous presentation is or isn't perspicuous, the second to whether the perspicuity it achieves with respect to its subject matter can or cannot be exhaustive. Insofar as one combination of answers has just been rejected as incoherent, the remaining combinations can lay claim to a kind of completeness. This gives us a certain right to call the views of perspicuous presentation characterized by these combinations "standard conceptions".

Even though the standard conceptions of perspicuous presentation are opposed to each other in particular respects, they rely on a shared assumption, with respect to which I will call them "substantial".[5] All of them conceive of what is to be made perspicuous as *something complex* and *fully determined* in itself.[6] What

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[5] Cora Diamond and James Conant have prominently attributed to Wittgenstein – early and late – an "austere" conception of nonsense according to which nonsense comes about by our *failure to make sense*, i.e. a failure to give familiar expressions a determinate use in certain novel contexts (cf. e.g. Diamond 1981 and Conant 2000). They contrast such a conception of nonsense with a "substantial" one, according to which nonsense consists in *meaningful* expressions violating regulative rules for how to *properly* use them. My distinction between "substantial" and "non-substantial" conceptions of unsurveyability and perspicuous presentation is indebted to Diamond's and Conant's distinction between conceptions of nonsense. Unfortunately it is not possible to address the question of how to concretely conceive of the relation between (non-)substantial conceptions of nonsense, unsurveyability, and perspicuous presentation in this paper.

[6] Cf. Hacker and Baker 2005a: 325; Baker 2004: 32; Sluga 2011: 103-4; cf. also Pichler 2004: 195.

occasions the need for perspicuous presentation, accordingly, is the *complexity* of its subject matter, which makes it particularly hard to overview. [7] In consequence, on a substantial conception, the unsurveyability of grammar and the philosophical problems it occasions are clearly distinct. Philosophical problems *can* arise in consequence of our grammar's unsurveyability, which is thought of as rooted in the complexity of our language. What gives rise to philosophical confusions is the evolving *diversity* of our ways of using words, which makes these ways hard to grasp without losing orientation. Accordingly, on a substantial conception, the relation between perspicuous presentations and the task of resolving philosophical problems is external. Even though Baker claims that perspicuous presentations are strictly purpose relative, while implying that their purpose consists in dispelling specific philosophical confusions, his conception doesn't rule out that we can think of perspicuous presentations independently of their supposed purpose. For, if what perspicuous presentations are to do is to bring internal relations between the use of one expression and others into view, there is no reason why this could not be done without thereby solving a philosophical problem or dispelling conceptual confusion. Highlighting internal affinities between the uses of expressions, which hadn't attracted attention, so far, is part and parcel of metaphorical uses of language, for example. Such uses are possible without presupposing conceptual confusions which they serve to dispel.

Having pointed to an assumption the standard conceptions of perspicuous presentation share, I now want to motivate search for an alternative conception. It is striking that Wittgenstein in §122, where the term "perspicuous presentation" is introduced, merely hints at its proper understanding. We have therefore to look at the context of this paragraph for further clarification. Wittgenstein writes in §125 of the *Investigations* that "entanglement in our rules is

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[7] Two recent treatments of perspicuous presentation (Kuusela 2014 and Savickey 2014) seem to share this problematic assumption. According to Savickey "our grammar lacks perspicuity because it is complex and dynamic, and we stand in the middle of language and life" (Savickey 2014, 120; cf. 116); according to Kuusela, the "purpose of clarifying or perspicuously representing complex concepts or uses of language" is central to Wittgenstein's method (Kuusela 2014, 81; cf. 79; 88).

what we want to understand: that is, to survey" (*übersehen*, PI §125). This formulation might point to a conception of perspicuous presentation, which is different from the ones sketched so far. It suggests that the need for perspicuity doesn't have its source in the mere *diversity* of our language, but in a kind of confusion for which we ourselves are in some way responsible. It isn't occasioned by an overwhelming complexity of sense, but, rather, by a failure to make sense which goes hand in hand with our making sense. Wittgenstein's metaphor of "entanglement in our own rules" can be unpacked as follows. In the course of using concepts we arrive at situations, in which we are torn back and forth between rules instituted by our own practice (cf. PI §112).[8] In such situations we only appear to be using concepts, rather than actually using them. Accordingly, the subject matter of perspicuous presentation isn't *something*, which is there, anyway – a network of rules for the use of expressions – but, rather, our failure to make sense, in virtue of which we lack a firm grasp of their meaning. If such failure is the subject matter of perspicuous presentations, their relation to philosophical problems and confusions isn't external but internal. Their task, on this conception, doesn't consist in merely *representing* the *complex* rules governing the use of a word or pointing to its internal relations to the use of other words, but in pinpointing and dissolving certain tendencies to conceive of it in a distorting way.

It might seem, however, that Wittgenstein, when talking about "the entanglement in our rules" as what we want to make perspicuous, refers to something different from what we, according to §122, do not sufficiently overview. For, the entanglement, which he is dealing with in §125, seems to be related to contradictions in mathematics, primarily. In order to reject this worry and to get a better grasp of what perspicuous presentations are to achieve, we have to take a closer look at what they are designed to deal with – the unsurveyability of our grammar.

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[8] Conant 1996: 302-3 points to an understanding of perspicuous presentation according to which its task consists in "clearly marking off a concept from one of its neighbors, so as to home in on the moment of our philosophizing when our words hover between the two concepts and fail to mean either". My paper expands on this remark and seeks to provide and discuss some argumentative and textual evidence for it.

3. The Unsurveyability of our Grammar

Hans Sluga has stressed that the words "surveyable" and "unsurveyable" have a basic as well as a metaphorical sense (cf. Sluga 2011: 99). It is often said that the word "surveyable", in its basic sense, refers to what can be taken in "at a single glance" (cf. Sluga 2011:99; Baker and Hacker 2005a: 325). A paradigmatic example of something surveyable in this sense would be a small number of dots on a piece of paper. However, it isn't static manifolds, only, which can be surveyable, but events and processes can be so as well. Counting money, for example, is an action which can be executed in a surveyable way, i.e. such that nothing relevant escapes the eye. It is this *broader* understanding of surveyability, which plays a certain role in Wittgenstein's conception of mathematical proof. He pointed out, repeatedly, that it belongs to the concept of a proof that it can be gone through or reproduced in such a way that nothing relevant escapes our attention (cf. RFM, 95; 155; 187). That is why we wouldn't accept the computation of a large sum of numbers by operating with heaps of sand as a proof (cf. MS 117 52).

In its basic sense the word "unsurveyable" accordingly refers to what cannot be taken in at a single glance or easily be tracked. I will call such an understanding of "unsurveyability", insofar as it guides us in thinking about its metaphorical senses, the "perceptual picture" of unsurveyability. If we let ourselves be guided by this picture, we will presumably end up with an understanding of unsurveyability which makes it a matter of complexity. Something is unsurveyable, accordingly, if it is characterized by parameters which prevent it from being fully taken in or grasped. In consequence, we might attempt to *explain* unsurveyability as an *epistemic* condition by recourse to *matter-of-factual* properties, which prevent something from being easily taken in or grasped.[9]

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[9] Sluga claims, accordingly, that we must "distinguish between the epistemic condition of something being unsurveyable and the characteristics that make it so – two things which Wittgenstein does not explicitly keep apart" (Sluga 2011: 111). If we keep these things apart, we may, according to Sluga "say that the fact of complexity explains the epistemic situation of unsurveyability" (112). He proposes three parameters which are relevant for

Obviously, on such an understanding, whether something is unsurveyable depends on the level of our engagement with it. A piece of recently mown lawn might count as perfectly surveyable from the viewpoint of a gardener, while being fairly unsurveyable from the viewpoint of a biologist studying the occurrence of certain microorganisms. That something is unsurveyable in this matter-of-factual sense has nothing mysterious about it. It simply means that in the course of surveying it there will always be more to survey, such that we have to confine ourselves with certain approximations.

My aim is to show that matter-of-factual unsurveyability and grammatical unsurveyability differ from each other, fundamentally. If this is the case, treating the latter in the same way as the former – as a matter of complexity – will lead to confusion. If we let ourselves be guided by the perceptual picture, however, it might seem natural to conceive of the unsurveyability of grammar as a matter of complexity. Hence, the picture might lead us to search for reductive explanations, suggesting that something is grammatically unsurveyable if it has too complex a structure to be fully and easily taken in or grasped.

Wittgenstein himself has stated that what is characteristic of metaphysics is a confusion of conceptual (*begriffliche*) and matter-of-factual (*sachliche*) investigations (MS 134 155).[10] I shall argue that conceiving of grammatical unsurveyability along the lines of the perceptual picture of unsurveyability results in exactly this kind of confusion. In consequence, such conceptions serve to promote a metaphysical view of philosophical problems which Wittgenstein's concept of perspicuous presentation is designed to dissolve.

To develop my argument it will be necessary to bring the distinction between matter-of-factual and grammatical unsurveyability more clearly into view. What gives rise to matter-of-factual unsurveyability has already been identified as a situation

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something's being unsurveyable: (i) being composed of a large number of items (ii) being made up of items in flux (c) consisting of items of different kinds.

[10] The German original reads: "Das Wesentliche der Metaphysik: daß ihr der Unterschied zwischen sachlichen und begrifflichen Untersuchungen nicht klar ist" (MS 134 155, cf. Z, §458).

marked by a large and possibly fluctuating number of items or events of different kinds. Faced with such a situation, much will escape our grasp. Accordingly, to *fully* orient ourselves we would need to discover further items and relations or uncover a hidden order between them.

The case of grammatical unsurveyability is different, however: "The problems will not be solved by new experiences, but by putting together what is already known" (*das längst Bekannte*, PI §109). If what is "already known" is still unsurveyable, this cannot be due to its complexity. That something is too complex to be grasped means that we would always need to know more about it. The source of grammatical unsurveyability, however, is not that you would need to know *more* about something, but that "you cannot notice it, *because* you have it before your eyes all the time" (PI §129).[11]

If ordinary ways of using an expression are "already known" to competent speakers, how can they still be unsurveyable? According to Baker, the following analogy might help: We can be aware of all the elements of a puzzle picture, but nevertheless miss the role they play within the whole (cf. Baker 2004: 35). Hence, even if all elements and external relations between them are given, we might still miss their internal relations, i.e. the relations pertaining to their role within the whole. Accordingly, that an item is unsurveyable is not necessarily due to *its* complexity but can as well be due to *our* not seeing how its elements fit together. If one takes the analogy to puzzle-pictures as one's guideline in thinking about perspicuous presentations, it needs to be spelled out, *which kinds* of aspects of the use of an expression it is, which a *competent* speaker might miss,

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[11] According to Wittgenstein the grammar of our language is complex, indeed. At the beginning of part II of the *Investigations*, for example, he refers to the "complicated form of life" of us speaking beings (Wittgenstein 2009: 185 = PI, part II, I, §1). This complexity, however, will *complicate* the unsurveyability of our grammar rather than bring it about. We might easily imagine a language game, which lacks surveyability in Wittgenstein's sense, even though the number of expressions it is based on is very small. All we need is a pair of words with different kinds of use, which might nevertheless *seem* to be uniform. Think, for example, of a game with the pronouns "somebody" and "nobody" and the verb "to whistle". Someone who is perfectly able to play this game and, in ordinary cases, able to tell whether somebody or nobody whistles, might nevertheless be troubled by the use of "nobody", asking: "*Who* is whistling if nobody whistles?"

nevertheless. In reply to this question it is usual to take recourse to Wittgenstein's distinction between surface and depth grammar (cf. PI §664). The surface grammar of a word concerns features of its use, which are relevant for the formation of syntactically well-formed phrases involving that word. Such features "can be taken in by the ear" (PI §664), insofar as they pertain to what makes a phrase *sound like* a phrase of a certain language (cf. PI §134). Depth-grammar, on the other hand, concerns features of the use of a word, which do not manifest themselves in this immediate way.[12]

Unsurveyability cannot be a matter of not managing depth-grammar as Baker's analogy to puzzle-pictures might seem to suggest, for who doesn't manage such features cannot even count as a competent speaker. Grammatical confusion must rather be due to the fact that a speaker who manages *both* surface- and depth-grammar might nevertheless be tempted, upon reflection, to conceive of expressions as grammatically similar, whose surface-grammar is similar, albeit their depth grammar is different. In consequence, he may be torn back and forth between what the depth-grammar of the expression suggests and what the depth-grammar of surface-grammatically similar expressions, to which he wrongly assimilates it, makes him expect. We might, for example, conceive of "I believe that p" as if it were depth-grammatically similar to "I shiver" or "I bleed", misunderstanding it as a descriptive statement and looking for an occult "psychological state of belief" to which it supposedly refers. At the same time, however, we will be capable of using the phrase "I believe that p" in ways which are independent of any observation of such occurrences.

However, even if the surface-grammatical similarity of expressions should *provide occasion* for depth-grammatical confusions it *cannot explain* them (as suggested by Hacker 1996, 107; Baker and Hacker 2005a: 325). An explanation of that sort would make such confusions appear as *caused* by matter-of-factual diversity. Depth-grammatical confusion, however, tends to be *asymmetrical* – a confusion of how an expression "X" is used with how an

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[12] Cf. McGinn 2011: 655-657 for an overview of how Hacker and later Baker understand the distinction between surface and depth grammar, and how this relates to their divergent conceptions of perspicuous presentation.

expression "Y" is used, *rather than the other way round*. One should expect the confusion to *run in both directions*, however, if surface-grammatical similarity was their cause (rather than occasion). Moreover, since it is competent speakers, already managing depth-grammar, who are prone to such confusion, such confusion cannot be due to their lack of *matter-of-factual* orientation. Rather than thinking of grammatical confusions as caused by the diversity of our language, we should think of them as the result of "letting ourselves be taken in", while, in principle, being in a position to know better. The surface-grammatical similarity of expressions with fundamentally different depth-grammar might thus be seen as a *symptom* of our tendency to entangle ourselves in our rules rather than its cause.

According to Wittgenstein, what he is dealing with, in the *Investigations*, aren't purely intellectual problems, but problems, which have their source in an "urge" (*Trieb*) "to misunderstand […] the workings of our language" (PI §109). That Wittgenstein speaks of an "urge to misunderstand" is a further reason against assimilating grammatical to matter-of-factual unsurveyability. While, in scientific contexts, people can be subject to an urge to "misunderstand the facts", it would be absurd to claim that scientific problems *are* problems, which *arise* from such an urge. As I shall argue, unsurveyability is indeed a matter of our assuming a distorting attitude towards our own activities as speakers. Accordingly, philosophical confusions have their roots in ourselves *qua speakers* rather than being brought about by objective, third-personal features of language.

That Wittgenstein conceives of grammatical unsurveyability as connected to a distorting attitude to our own ways with words can be substantiated with respect to the short paragraph following §122: "A philosophical problem has the form 'I don't know my way about'" (PI §123). One thing, which is astonishing about this statement, is that it attributes a common form to *all* philosophical problems. Obviously, "form" does not refer to an accidental feature, here, but to what characterizes philosophical problems *as such*. What characterizes a philosophical problem as such, according to Wittgenstein, is that "I don't know my way about".

The occurrence of "I" in this sentence is irreplaceable. For, if we could replace it, all we were left with is that someone doesn't know his way about, which is simply a metaphorical way of stating that there is a problem. Hence, if "I" was replaceable, what we were left with is: A philosophical problem has the form: there is a problem. If philosophical problems are irreducibly first-personal, this distinguishes them from scientific problems. At first sight, we might as well state: A scientific problem has the form "I don't know my way about". However, even though it is always someone who is at a loss, if confronted with a scientific problem, it isn't a problem about her, but about a certain subject matter. Therefore, the problem might as well be formulated in a third-personal way. Instead of saying: "It is unclear *to me* whether this is a bacterium or not" we can – less misleadingly – say "It is unclear whether this is a bacterium or not". If philosophical problems, in contrast, are *intrinsically* tied to ourselves, we have to bring their irreducibly first-personal character into focus.

Stanley Cavell might help us here. This is how he translates Wittgenstein's form-statement: "I cannot find myself" (Cavell 2004: 23). Cavell's rendering seems illuminating as an interpretation, even if slightly problematic as a translation. It is illuminating insofar as it reveals the internal connection of philosophical problems to a kind of self-loss. Expanding on a remark of Wittgenstein's, one might say that a philosophical problem consists in the fact that we have *lost ourselves in our own doings*, but treat the case as if it wasn't a matter of actually having lost *ourselves*, but of strange *circumstances* we have been placed in.[13] Cavell's translation, instead of giving us the mere *form of the problem*, already hints at the form of its *solution*. It reveals that the task with which a philosophical problem confronts us is not simply to orient ourselves within an objectively given mess, but to thereby *come to ourselves*. What we need to recognize, accordingly, is that the perplexing character of the situation we find ourselves in is the effect of an attitude *we* take towards our own doings, due to

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[13] Cf. Wittgenstein's remark: "You do not understand your own transactions, that is to say you do not have a synoptic view of them, and you as it were project your lack of understanding into the idea of a medium in which the most astounding things are possible" (Z, §273).

which they appear as a perplexing situation. Hence, the first step towards the solution of a philosophical problem seems to consist in recognizing that things do not seem so weird, because *they* are weird, but because in being confronted with them we are actually, in a distorted way, confronted with ourselves *as speaking beings*. The perplexity can only be dispelled, then, by pulling *ourselves* out of this mess. Obviously, it remains to be seen in each case anew with which aspect of ourselves we are thus confronted and how we might regain ourselves. Therefore, the solution to philosophical problems, according to later Wittgenstein, has to proceed piecemeal, even though all have the same form (cf. PI §133).

If recourse to the first person belongs to the form of a philosophical problem, we must ask, which kind of use of "I" we are dealing with in §123. Obviously, it cannot be what Wittgenstein once had called the use of "I" "as an object" (BBB, 66-67). For, this would make philosophical problems a *merely personal* affair, while, at the same time, removing their *first*-personal character. We couldn't claim any longer that *there is* a philosophical problem, but would have to say that *a certain person has* this problem. This way of speaking would distort how we talk about philosophical problems. Moreover, it doesn't comply with Wittgenstein's view that "language contains the same traps for everyone" (PO, 185), which he still holds in the *Investigations* (cf. §109). Hence, the use of "I" in "I don't know my way about" must be irreducible to a proper name or a description. On the other hand, it is obviously different from what Wittgenstein once had called the use of 'I' "as a subject". For, even though the use of "I" as a subject is irreducibly first-personal, it is at the same time tied to an individual in a way which philosophical problems, as indicated, aren't. It is a truism, for instance, that only I can have my pains, but it seems absurd to state that only I can have my philosophical problems. Accordingly, what we are confronted with by "I don't know my way about" is an irreducible use of the first-person pronoun made by an individual, which, however, doesn't merely concern this very individual but everybody *qua speaker of a language*. Thus, even though I, who am lost, when troubled by a philosophical problem, am an individual, indeed, rather than being lost as the very individual I am, I am lost

as a speaking being. Hence, if we call what *we speaking beings* have in common *in virtue of being speaking beings*, the *grammatical* I, we might characterize the kind of confusion which we are subject to in dealing with a philosophical problem a *grammatical self-loss*. A philosophical problem is a situation in which something about the use of our words seems perplexing due to the fact that we speaking beings have lost ourselves *qua speaking beings*.

Since §123 characterizes the kind of confusion which perspicuous presentations are devised to deal with, having clarified the form of the problem, we may now look back to §122 and to what it says about the form of its solution, i.e. perspicuous presentation. It is a commonplace to state that, according to Wittgenstein, philosophical problems arise from our falling prey to misleading analogies between the ways our words are used. This is surely right as far as it goes. A philosophical problem, however, cannot *simply* be due to the fact that we lose our orientation within a vast field of apparently similar linguistic tools and wrongly assimilate the uses of certain expressions, falling prey to misleading analogies. This kind of diagnosis would *externalize* the reasons of philosophical confusion and thereby contribute to sustain it. Contrary to this, philosophical confusion comes about by assimilating what belongs to the *form* of our activity as speaking beings – i.e. to the *activity* of us *speaking beings as such* – to matter-of-factual affairs we speak *about*. In other words, philosophical problems arise in situations, in which tools of language, which indicate what belongs to the form of *our activities qua speaking beings*, appear as though they would refer to *something* – superlative facts, private objects, internal states etc. I will shortly illustrate this claim by recourse to three prominent examples:

(1) The perplexities regarding the concept of "meaning", for instance, which Wittgenstein deals with in the so-called "rule-following considerations" of the *Investigations*, are rooted in a tendency to assimilate the concept of meaning to concepts of objects or matter-of-fact. In consequence, we will either be bewildered by not being able to find objects, facts, dispositions etc., by recourse to which meaning could be explained, or by the perplexing properties of the objects, facts or dispositions, to which

we assign this job. We can only be relieved from our confusions by coming to see that we have reified our own practice of speaking, in the course of which our words gain their significance. (2) Similar lessons apply to the assimilation of a phrase such as "I believe that p" to the description of a state or occurrence – which might make one look for such states or occurrences in an occult inner sphere and lead one into troubles such as Moore's paradox. Rather than *referring* to a mental state, the phrase "I believe that…" plays a certain role in one's act of asserting that p by pointing to the *form* of one's act, exhibiting it as one of asserting, rather than asking, for instance. (3) First-personal, linguistic expression of pain might be misconceived as talk about inner, private objects, which can apparently be spoken *about* in the same way as outer objects, while both kinds of talk appear as unrelated insofar as they seem to deal with objects situated in different realms. Freeing oneself from this confusion involves coming to see that expressing pain is an activity of ours which is both internally related to and different in form from our activities of speaking about objects as well as from linguistically reacting to the pain of others.

The solution to a philosophical problem will, accordingly, consist in dissolving perplexities tied to the use of certain linguistic tools by coming to see that these perplexities arise from assimilating them to other tools, which are used, indeed, to speak *about something* rather than pertaining to the form of our activities qua speaking beings.

Having followed Cavell in saying that a philosophical problem has the form "I cannot find myself", we can now state that the solution of a philosophical problem has the form "I have found myself". However, even if, indeed, all philosophical problems *as such* should have this form of solution, the task of devising perspicuous presentations will be specifically different in each case, for they will have to cope with *particular* assimilations between the uses of *certain* linguistic tools in order to exhibit the *particular* way in which their use is tied back to our activities as speaking beings. Obviously, unsurveyability as explained so far is not restricted to the use of *linguistic* tools. For, any self-conscious human practice will be such that its practitioners can be confused about its form

and the roles of its elements. A non-linguistic case of such confusion would be the assimilation of the use of religious pictures to a representation of "supernatural" objects. Such confusion might be exhibited *as* confusion by recourse to the role these pictures actually play within a religious practice (e.g. to stimulate a contemplative attitude in which certain liturgical activities are to proceed) and by showing that treating these items as representations of objects conflicts with this role.

The previous considerations suggest that deeply opposed views of Wittgenstein's concept of perspicuous presentation can nevertheless, for all their differences, coincide in their metaphysical underpinnings. They may stress the partial or the comprehensive, the constructive or the therapeutic, the absolute or the purpose-relative character of perspicuous presentations. As long as they conceive of unsurveyability in quasi-objective, third-personal terms rather than as a *grammatically* first-personal issue, they suffer from confusion between matter-of-factual (*sachliche*) and conceptual (*begriffliche*) investigations and are, *insofar*, metaphysical in character.

As seen, the term "unsurveyable" is ambiguous. We might either say that there isn't *one* concept of unsurveyability but *two,* or describe the situation, more precisely, by saying that the word "unsurveyable" has a primary and a secondary sense. Accordingly, matter-of-factual and grammatical unsurveyability aren't *species* of a supposed genus of unsurveyability. There is no common trait *in virtue of which* we speak of "unsurveyability" in both cases. Conceptual unsurveyability is tied to confusions which are *grammatically* first-personal, arising from a distorted, reifying attitude towards our activities *as speaking beings*, while matter-of-factual unsurveyability is tied to impersonal features, rendering a subject matter too complex to be fully and orderly grasped or represented.

In §116 of the *Investigations* Wittgenstein characterizes "what we do" – obviously the same task as devising perspicuous presentations of the grammar of certain linguistic tools which give rise to philosophical perplexity – as bringing "words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use". It might seem that he thereby postulates a dimension of linguistic activity – the everyday use of language – which is perfectly perspicuous as it stands.

According to this picture, it would be due to some kind of misguided second-order reflection, only, that we tend to distort things which we, qua everyday speakers of natural languages, are perfectly at home with. At certain times Wittgenstein toyed with analogies which seem to support this assumption, e.g. when talking about someone who is perfectly at home in a city, being able to find her way from any one spot to the other, who would be at a loss, however, if confronted with the task to devise a map of the city (cf. Z, §121).[14] One shouldn't overestimate the scope of such analogies, however. For, there is ample evidence that Wittgenstein doesn't reckon with a level of linguistic behavior which would be completely unfettered by any grammatical reflection. Rather, *rudimentary* grammatical reflection, i.e. *recourse to how to use certain words*, is built into language from the outset. For, if "the meaning of a word is what the explanation of its meaning explains" (PI §560), it is essential that words gain their meaning *in the course of explanations*, even if such explanations usually won't consist in definitions but in recourse to *exemplary* instances of use. Accordingly, one will not grasp the meaning of a word as a competent speaker, unless one is capable of at least making the attempt to give such explanations. Hence, we can say that everyday language is endowed with its own – rudimentary – grammatical self-knowledge (in the sense of what a speaker *as such* is able to do in order to elucidate how certain words are used), which is built into itself from the outset.

Cavell indicates that the everyday to which words are to be brought back from metaphysical distortions of their use is a "home" where we never might have been (cf. Cavell 2004: 23). We are now in a position to give this insight a further twist. Obviously, it only makes sense to speak of "return", if one has already been where one returns to. On the other hand, however, I have argued that, according to Wittgenstein, we cannot assume a basic stratum of language use which is free of metaphysical confusion, in principle. Hence, the homecoming which Wittgenstein speaks

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[14] Another, somewhat unconvincing, example is Wittgenstein's claim that most people aren't capable of *explaining* a game of cards, which they are perfectly able to play, cf. Wittgenstein (MS 136 144b).

about must aim towards a place, where we have always already been, but from which we have also always already been alienated – a home where we have never *fully* been at home. If everyday language has its own rudimentary grammar and if humans have a tendency to grammatical confusions, everyday language will contain its own metaphysical traps rather than constituting a pre-grammatical paradise, which is lost only later on due to some kind of second-order reflection. Accordingly, we can read in section 90 of the *Big Typescript*:

> Why are grammatical problems so tough and seemingly ineradicable? – Because they are connected with the oldest thought habits, i.e., with the oldest images that are engraved into our language itself. […] People are deeply imbedded in philosophical, i.e. grammatical confusions. And to free them from these presupposes pulling them out of the immensely manifold connections they are caught up in. One must so to speak regroup their language. – But this language came about // developed // as it did because people had – and have – the inclination to think in this way. Therefore, pulling them out only works with those, who live in an instinctive state of rebellion against // dissatisfaction with // language.[15]

Even if grammatical confusions should indeed be "connected with the oldest thought habits", language cannot be "spoiled" *through and through*, however. In some sense it must, according to Wittgenstein, be the only viable corrective against our distorting attitude vis-á-vis the grammar of our words.[16] Such distortions cannot affect their

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[15] PO, 184-5. A possible reason why this section of the *Big Typescript* didn't find its way into the corresponding stretch of the *Investigations* might be that it seems to have an air of determinism about it, making it appear as if language *necessarily* led us astray. If this were the case, a critique of metaphysical confusions wouldn't even make sense. As Wittgenstein stresses in §132 of the *Investigations*, language *as it is* must – in some sense – be completely in order, far from standing in need of *reform*. It only *tempts* (*rather than forces*) us to misconceive of the uses of certain linguistic tools. At the same time it contains the resources to resist this temptation in virtue of the proper usage it incorporates. Hence, what philosophy aims at is a way of using language which reflectively resists the temptations and traps built into it. *That* these traps and temptations are built into *language as such*, rather than amounting to second-order confusion, is a view still held by the Wittgenstein of the *Investigations*: "Philosophy is a struggle against the bewitchment of our understanding *by the resources of our language*" (PI §109, my emphasis). What tempts us into confusion, however, is, in another respect, the only weapon to resist the temptation.

[16] I would suggest that it is *this* dimension of language which Wittgenstein calls the "everyday use" (*alltägliche Verwendung*) of words (PI §116). Obviously, this dimension

use completely, for otherwise there would be no point of reference by recourse to which they could count as distortions. Hence, we must concede that our ordinary ways of speaking are fundamentally ambiguous. On the one hand we are perfectly capable to use our words in a proper, undistorted way – this being a grammatical remark –, but on the other hand, our relation to their grammar will be distortive from the outset.

4. Surveyable Representations or Perspicuous Presentations?

Having focused on the unsurveyability of grammar, so far, I will now complete the case for a non-substantial conception of perspicuous presentation by way of a closer look at §122, focusing on how to translate "übersichtliche Darstellung" into English. Wittgenstein as well as his translators had difficulties with this task. [17] I am not interested in this question for its own sake, however, but my reflections on translation serve as a means to bring the concept of perspicuous presentation more clearly into view. With this aim in mind I will give some reasons in favor of Stanley Cavell's translation. He renders "Darstellung" as "presentation" (instead of "representation") and "übersichtlich" as "perspicuous" (instead of "surveyable"). [18] Accordingly, section §122 reads as follows:

> A main source of our failure to understand is that we don't have a *clear view* of the use of our words. – Our grammar is deficient in perspicuity. A perspicuous presentation produces precisely that kind of understanding which consists in 'seeing the connections'. Hence the importance of finding and inventing *intermediate links*.

doesn't coincide with how "everybody" speaks if untroubled by philosophical reflection. Far from being transparent and trivial, the everyday use of words is a dimension of language which is alien to us – not in spite but in virtue of its everyday character (cf. PI §129).

[17] Cf. Hacker and Baker 2005a: 307-8 as well as Pichler 2004: 182-3 for a list of proposals.

[18] Cf. Cavell 2004 – a paper which first appeared in 1996. Cavell's proposal has recently been adopted by Floyd 2001: 257; Moyal-Sharrock 2007; Hutchinson and Read 2008. Anscombe's translation had "perspicuous representation" (Wittgenstein 1958b: 49), which Baker 2006 sticks to, as well. The current revision of Anscombe's translation by Hacker and Schulte has "surveyable representation" (Wittgenstein 2009: 59).

> The concept of a perspicuous presentation is of fundamental significance for us. It characterizes the form of account we give, the way we look at things. (Is this a 'Weltanschauung'?). (Wittgenstein 2009: 54-55, transl. modified.)

There are at least two reasons why not to translate "Darstellung" as "representation". First of all, what serves to make us see an item, which is already known, in a new light, need not be a *representation* of this very item. With respect to grammar in particular, it is clear that what helps us to achieve a concise grasp of how to use an expression, which we are already capable of using, against a tendency to misconceive of its use, doesn't have to do so in virtue of representing its use. It might rather function as an "object of comparison", shedding light on ordinary usage of the expression at issue *by means of contrast*. Perspicuity might also be achieved by discovering an equivalent of the item in question.[19] An equivalent of an expression, however, isn't, as such, a representation of it, because equivalence is a symmetric relation, while representation isn't.

A further reason, why not to translate "Darstellung" as "representation" is that knowledge of grammar isn't representational in a straightforward sense. Empirical knowledge represents something which could have been there without being represented (even if not without being representable). Therefore, representational knowledge *follows* its object and is, as such, receptive. Grammatical knowledge, however, is knowledge *in virtue of a capacity to do* something, namely to speak. As indicated above, in a rudimentary way such knowledge belongs to our capacity to speak *from the outset*, because it is a know-how with a built-in understanding of itself. Therefore, knowledge of grammar isn't representational knowledge, but self-knowledge of speakers *qua speakers* – knowledge which they possess in virtue of their very ability to speak.

We can now turn to an argument in favor of "presentation". "To present…as…" means to let something, which is already there, be seen in a new light or to accentuate certain features of it, which

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[19] Cf. Wittgenstein 2003: 49-51 with respect to "belief".

have been overlooked or misconceived, so far. If I present someone to you, I do not necessarily *represent* him, but I give the both of you occasion to take a new stance towards each other, switching from a third-personal to a second-personal attitude. In the context of §122 "presentation" means exhibiting what is "already well known" such as to bring some of its features into view, which had until now been distorted. Accordingly, perspicuous presentations deal with grammatical blind spots in the sense of what even perfectly competent speakers might still miss about the use of their words. A second argument in favor of "presentation" can be drawn from Wittgenstein's claim that perspicuous presentations produce "precisely that kind of understanding which consists in 'seeing the connections'" (PI §122). It would be misleading to say that a *representation* produces understanding which *precisely* and, hence, *exclusively* consists in "seeing the connections". A representation may convey knowledge of connections, though it will not exclusively convey such knowledge, but at the same time convey knowledge of what these connections connect. What *exclusively* conveys knowledge of connections cannot aptly be understood as a representation but rather as a presentation.

I now turn to "übersichtlich". As already indicated, Baker has argued that it doesn't have an attributive function within the phrase "übersichtliche Darstellung" (cf. Baker 2004: 28; 42). It doesn't mark a property of the presentation at issue, but rather tells us, what this presentation is to achieve. Hence, instead of saying that a perspicuous presentation *is* perspicuous, we should say that it *serves* to *make something perspicuous*. Since we aren't dealing with a representation, but a presentation whose function it is to help us to clearly appropriate the meaning of an expression that we are already capable of using, the adjective "perspicuous" can be read as accentuating this very role rather than marking a property of the item serving it. It is an advantage of this aspect of Baker's reading that it allows us to recognize much more of Wittgenstein's philosophical procedures as instances of perspicuous presentation than the attributive reading allows for. Wittgenstein, for example, characterizes the task of his work in the philosophy of psychology

as making the use of psychological concepts "übersichtlich" (Z, §464). However, his investigations in this area obviously didn't result in anything like a concise synopsis of psychological concepts – one that could be easily taken in and remembered. In fact, his investigations open up a vast field of conceptual connections which cannot be overlooked in one glimpse. Shall we say, then, that his philosophy of psychology was a failure, that he didn't achieve *at all* what he was after? If we read "perspicuous" in §122 attributively, we should. However, if it is the task of perspicuous presentations to help us see certain features of concepts we hitherto conceived of in a distorted way, this undertaking can be carried out with relative success, without resulting in some kind of manageable overview which would be easy to summarize.

If a perspicuous presentation isn't a representation, which *can* be easily taken in or grasped, but, rather, something which *actually* helps one to appropriate the use of expressions which one is already able to use, but failed to do so transparently, what it achieves is *actual* perspicuity. This is a further reason against "surveyable" as a translation of "übersichtlich". For, the word "surveyable" seems to point to what *can* easily be taken in or grasped. However, something is a perspicuous representation, *only*, when *actual* transparency is produced. Since the suffix "–able" indicates a possibility rather than an actuality, "surveyable" is slightly misleading as a translation.[20]

With respect to §122 a final remark might be helpful. Finding or inventing what Wittgenstein calls "intermediate links" (*Zwischenglieder*) is said to play a crucial role in devising perspicuous presentations. Since the term "intermediate link" has one occurrence, only, within the *Investigations* (and, possibly, within Wittgenstein's whole oeuvre, excepting the precursors of §122), in order to get a grip on its meaning, we have to rely on a precise examination of the context at hand. The relevant passage reads as follows: "Our grammar is deficient in perspicuity. A perspicuous presentation produces precisely that kind of understanding which

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[20] It would be an appropriate translation of the German word 'überschaubar', which indicates a possibility rather than an actuality.

consists in 'seeing the connections'. Hence the importance of finding and inventing *intermediate links*."

Accordingly, the importance of finding and inventing "intermediate links" is a *consequence of* the task of a perspicuous presentation to bring a concept clearly into view against a tendency to conceive of it in certain distorting ways. It is tempting to let one's understanding of the term "intermediate link" be guided by the spatial picture of a series of items, containing empty places, which have to be filled in. In light of the foregoing reflections, there seems to be no reason to assume that a perspicuous presentation *necessarily* involves situating its elements within an ordered series. Rather than subscribing to an all to narrow reading of "intermediate link" which much of Wittgenstein's philosophical practice doesn't seem to comply with, it will be worth looking for a more comprehensive understanding. Such an understanding can be obtained, if we allow us to be guided by a functional picture, rather than sticking to a spatial one, exclusively, when thinking about the role of intermediate links. Accordingly, what Wittgenstein calls "intermediate link" does not necessarily refer to what assumes a position within an ordered series, but might as well play an *intermediate role* in making the use of an expression perspicuous in a certain respect. This allows us to count what Wittgenstein calls "objects of comparison" as intermediate links, e.g. imaginary language games, which serve to elucidate an aspect of an expression of *our* language by means of contrast. Such items fulfill an intermediate role in the course of grammatical clarification, without necessarily ending up in a determinate place within an ordered series.

The main result of the preceding considerations can now be summarized. Perspicuous presentations serve to exhibit internal connections between elements involved in meaningful activities of us human beings – expressions, gestures, pictures etc. –, connections, which had been overlooked or misconceived, so far, due to a proneness of us to relate to (the form of) our own activities *qua speaking beings* in a distorted, reifying way. A perspicuous presentation consists, accordingly, in what helps one to achieve an unconfused, grammatically first-personal perspective

onto what hitherto appeared as strange and inscrutable. It does so by dispelling the air of strangeness *surrounding a certain subject matter* by revealing how it fits into the *activities* of us speaking beings *as such.*

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Biographical Note

Christian Georg Martin is assistant professor of philosophy (*wissenschaftliger Mitarbeiter*) at LMU Munich. During the academic year 2015-16 he is a visiting scholar in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Chicago. He has published a book-length study on Hegel's "Science of Logic", entitled *Ontologie der Selbstbestimmung* (Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck 2012). In his more recent work he seeks to develop an account of language as a form of life, which is inspired by both Hegel and Wittgenstein. He is currently editing a volume of papers on Wittgenstein, entitled *Language as a Form of Life.*