**Ordinary language philosophy as an extension of ideal language philosophy. Comparing the methods of the later Wittgenstein and P.F. Strawson**

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*Abstract*

The idea that thought and language can be clarified through logical methods seems problematic because, while thought and language are not always exact, logic (by its very nature) *must* be. According to Kuusela (2019), ideal (ILP, represented by Frege and Russell) and ordinary language philosophy (OLP, represented by Strawson) offer opposed solutions to this problem, and Wittgenstein combines the advantages of both. I argue that, given Kuusela’s characterisation of OLP, Strawson was not an OLP’er. I suggest that, instead of seeing ILP and OLP as opposed to one another, it is better to regard OLP as an *extension* of ILP.

1. Introduction

In *Wittgenstein on Logic as the Method of Philosophy*, Oskari Kuusela argues convincingly that Wittgenstein’s philosophical methods are an extension of a broadly Fregean-Russellian logical-philosophical methodology. Like Frege and Russell, Wittgenstein regards logic as a discipline whose task is to clarify thought or language. Unlike Frege and Russell, Wittgenstein extends logical methods beyond calculus-based methods. Logic is no longer limited to function-argument structures characteristic of mathematical or symbolic logic. Wittgenstein introduces new logical methods continuous with calculus-based methods, such as the methods of grammatical rules, language-games and quasi-ethnology.

In the last chapter of his book, Kuusela suggests that Wittgenstein’s later philosophical methods enable us to resolve ‘the long-standing but so far unresolved dispute relating to the philosophy of logic and philosophical methodology between the so-called ideal language and ordinary language schools in analytic philosophy’.[[1]](#footnote-1) The dispute could be seen as a response to what seems to be a problem for the idea that thought or language can be clarified by way of logical methods: thought and language are not always simple or exact, but logical clarifications (by their very nature) *must* be.

The ideal language school, represented by Frege, Russell, the early Wittgenstein, and Carnap, emphasises the importance of simplicity and exactness. Roughly speaking, the idea is that, because actual language use is neither simple nor exact at the surface level, it must either be simple or exact at an underlying level or it must be *made* more simple or exact. Ideal language philosophers postulate or develop languages and concepts that meet logic’s standards. The advantage of this approach is that it secures the simplicity and exactness of their investigations. The disadvantage is what Kuusela calls the problem of falsification: ‘even if we did succeed in developing an ideal language or languages that meet the ideals of logic, and started using them for the tasks of thinking in the future, as Carnap envisages, the problem about the employment of such languages to clarify thoughts expressed in natural language would persist’.[[2]](#footnote-2) The problem is that ideal language philosophers adapt their object of investigation to the characteristics of their methods. What is essential to the methods (simplicity, exactness) is turned into an essential feature of the object of investigation.

The ordinary language school, represented by Austin, Ryle and P.F. Strawson, emphasises the complexity of actual thought and language use. Roughly speaking, the idea is that, because actual language use is not always simple nor exact, it cannot be clarified by logical methods, at least not if the identity of logic is bound up with the ideals of simplicity and exactness. The advantage of this approach is that the problem of falsification does not arise: the object of investigation (actual thought and language use) is not claimed to be more simple or exact than it actually is. The disadvantage is that the ideals of simplicity and exactness, and with them the idea of philosophical methods as methods of logic, are lost. The problem is that ordinary language philosophers adapt their methods to the characteristics of their object of investigation. What is essential to the object of investigation (complexity, inexactness) is turned into an essential feature of their methods.

According to Kuusela, the later Wittgenstein combines the advantages of both the ideal and ordinary language approaches while avoiding their disadvantages. Wittgenstein seeks the resolution of philosophical problems through the clarification of the actual uses of language, but at the same time regards idealisation as essential to such clarifications.[[3]](#footnote-3) The ideals of simplicity and exactness are not treated as requirements that thought and language must meet, but as part of logic’s mode of examination. In logic we employ idealised means to speak about what we recognise to be actually complex. Logic is a mode of representing the use of expressions, it provides simple and exact models with which actual language use can be compared.[[4]](#footnote-4) Thus, Wittgenstein’s approach (1) avoids the problem of falsification (because language is not claimed to be simple and exact), and (2) does not purport to describe actual language use in its actual complexity. The situation is ‘like describing the shape of a colour patch with blurred contours by means of a sharply drawn picture’.[[5]](#footnote-5)

In what follows, I will accept Kuusela’s insightful characterisation of Wittgenstein’s later methods. However, I will question the way in which these methods are distinguished from the methods of ordinary language philosophers, and more specifically from those of P.F. Strawson. Kuusela is careful to emphasise that ideal and ordinary language philosophy are not unified enterprises. He uses the debate between Strawson (1963) and Carnap (1963) about the comparative merits of the two approaches as a key reference point. I will focus on Kuusela’s reading of Strawson and argue that Strawson’s methods are much closer to Wittgenstein’s methods than Kuusela admits. According to Kuusela, ordinary language philosophers such as Strawson try to avoid idealisation and emphasise the importance of describing the uses of natural language ‘in their actual complexity’.[[6]](#footnote-6) In the next section (section two), I will provide some examples from Strawson’s *oeuvre* in order to show that he does not shun idealisation. In sections three to five, I will turn to Strawson’s discussion with Carnap. I will show that a reading consistent with his philosophical practice, a reading quite different from the one offered by Kuusela, can be developed. In the concluding section six, I will briefly discuss the consequences of my view that Strawson’s methods are closer to Kuusela’s description of Wittgenstein’s methods than they are to his description of the methods of ordinary language philosophers. If it is correct, my view leaves us with two options. First, it might be argued that neither Strawson nor Wittgenstein were ordinary language philosophers. The second option, which I will defend, is to rethink Kuusela’s characterisation of the distinction between ideal and ordinary language philosophy.

1. Strawson and Ordinary Language Philosophy

Kuusela describes the difference between ideal and ordinary language philosophy, as represented by Carnap and Strawson respectively, as follows:

[…] the ordinary language school regards it as crucial for philosophy to clarify concepts and the uses of natural language in their actual complexity […] Consequently, […] the emphasis laid by the ideal language school on simplicity and exactness seems detrimental to clarity […] Characteristic of the ideal language approach is the construction of ideal languages and concepts for the purpose of philosophical clarification and their employment in philosophy.[[7]](#footnote-7)

In this passage and others, Kuusela suggests that ordinary language philosophers (1) attempt to clarify the uses of natural language in their actual complexity, and (2) avoid the construction of ideal languages and concepts for the purpose of philosophical clarification. I cannot provide a full discussion of these claims in relation to the whole of Strawson’s *oeuvre,* so I will limit myself to a few examples. The examples are not meant to prove anything but are meant, rather, to put at least some pressure on the idea that Strawson’s work fits Kuusela’s description of ordinary language philosophy.

Does Strawson attempt to clarify the uses of natural language in their actual complexity? According to Kuusela, Strawson thinks that ‘simple and exact descriptions of language use are problematic as such, or problematic because language use as a matter of fact exhibits greater complexity than relevant kinds of description’.[[8]](#footnote-8) Wittgenstein, by contrast, emphasises the problem-relativity of philosophical clarifications: philosophers need only mention those aspects of language use that are relevant to the solution of particular problems, and these aspects can often be highlighted in a simple way. This is exemplified by Wittgenstein’s method of language-games. These are intended

[…] as poles of description rather than the basis of a theory (Wittgenstein 1980a: §633). Rather than capturing all the uses of an expression in some particular sense in the way in which a general theory is expected to do so, the purpose of language-games is to provide us with points of reference for the description of actual fluctuating uses by way of comparison.[[9]](#footnote-9)

I propose to have a look now at ‘Freedom and Resentment’ (1962), Strawson’s most widely discussed paper today.[[10]](#footnote-10) In that paper, he writes that simplified ways of handling the complex field of phenomena that he is discussing (freedom, responsibility, reactive attitudes, etc.) are of use to him if they help to emphasise the importance that we attach to the attitudes of other people towards us.[[11]](#footnote-11) He admits that the forms, the range and intensity of these attitudes vary widely, but takes resentment and gratitude to be ‘a usefully opposed pair’.[[12]](#footnote-12) He asks ‘what sorts of special considerations might be expected to modify or mollify this feeling [resentment] or remove it altogether’, and adds that ‘It needs no saying how multifarious these considerations are. But, for my purpose, I think they can be roughly divided into two kinds’.[[13]](#footnote-13) Strawson distinguishes between the personal reactive attitude of resentment (my reaction to a person’s ill will towards me), the impersonal reactive attitude of indignation (my reaction to a person’s ill will towards a third party) and the self-reactive attitude of guilt (my reaction to my own ill will). These neat distinctions between resentment, indignation and guilt are not meant to describe the actual use of these terms in its actual complexity. Rather, Strawson self-consciously provides a ‘picture’[[14]](#footnote-14) that highlights certain connections between these reactive attitudes while ignoring others: ‘I am aware that in presenting the argument as I have done, neglecting the ever-interesting varieties of case, I have presented nothing more than a schema […]’.[[15]](#footnote-15) Thus, simplification and idealisation, the importance of problem-relativity and the idea that philosophers provide poles of description or pictures, which Kuusela finds lacking in ordinary language philosophy, are all present in Strawson’s work.

My second set of examples concerns the suggestion that ordinary language philosophers avoid the construction of ideal languages and concepts for the purpose of philosophical clarification. I believe that the famous concepts of ‘reactive’ and ‘objective’ attitudes, as introduced in ‘Freedom and Resentment’, can be understood in this way. According to Kuusela, the methodological toolkits of Wittgenstein and Carnap, but not those of ordinary language philosophers, include ‘the construction of simpler clarificatory concepts and definitions that can be substituted [temporarily in Wittgenstein’s case, more permanently in Carnap’s] for more complex problematic concepts’.[[16]](#footnote-16) An example of this procedure can be found in Strawson’s paper ‘Social Morality and Individual Ideal’ (1961). In this somewhat neglected paper, Strawson distinguishes between what he calls ‘the region of the ethical’ and ‘the region of the moral’. The former is the region of individual ideals, but the latter is more difficult to characterise. Strawson writes:

We might begin by locating the sphere of morality here. It is the sphere of the observance of rules, such that the existence of some such set of rules is a condition of the existence of a society. This is a minimal interpretation of morality. It represents it as what might literally be called a kind of public convenience: of the first importance as a condition of everything that matters, but only as a condition of everything that matters, not as something that matters in itself.

I am disposed to see considerable merit in this minimal conception of morality. By this I mean not that it is really, or nearly, an adequate conception – only that it is a useful analytical idea. There would be objections to claiming that it was an adequate conception. One objection might be simply expressed by saying that, after all, being moral is something that does matter in itself […] There is a lot in this objection. But it is not an objection to *using* the minimal idea of morality. We might for example argue that there was an intricate interplay between ideal pictures of man on the one hand and the rule-requirements of social organisation on the other; and that one’s ordinary and vague conception of morality was the product of this interplay. This would be one way – I do not say the right way – of using the minimal idea of morality to try to get clearer about the ordinary idea.[[17]](#footnote-17)

The minimal conception of morality is a constructed concept, simpler and more exact than the ordinary concept of morality, which is more complex and vague. The idea is not to permanently replace our ordinary concept with the minimal one, but to use the latter for purposes of philosophical clarification. Again, we see that Kuusela’s characterisation of the ordinary language approach does not seem to apply to Strawson’s work.

As I stressed above, my examples are not meant to settle the issue. There are at least two reasons why they cannot do so. First, Kuusela focuses on ‘Carnap’s Views on Constructed Systems versus Natural Languages in Analytic Philosophy’,[[18]](#footnote-18) and he occasionally mentions ‘Construction and Analysis’.[[19]](#footnote-19) He regards the methodological views in these texts as largely similar, and I agree.[[20]](#footnote-20) Still, one might worry about possible differences between these views and later or earlier views. In order to mitigate these worries about methodological differences withinStrawson’s *oeuvre*, my examples were taken from texts published between 1956 and 1963. But it cannot yet be excluded, although it might seem unlikely, that Strawson’s position in the texts discussed by Kuusela differs from his position in the works discussed above. Second, one could point at the possibility of a discrepancy between Strawson’s philosophical practice and his methodological work. My examples may be thought to concern Strawson’s philosophical practice, but he might not have practiced what he was preaching in explicitly methodological work. Although it is significant that Strawson’s philosophical practice does not seem to qualify as ordinary language philosophy as described by Kuusela, it remains to be shown that his methodological work is not representative of ordinary language philosophy in that sense either. In light of these two worries, I suggest taking a closer look at the texts Kuusela is focusing on to see whether a reading of these texts can be developed that is consistent and coherent with Strawson’s philosophical practice at the time.

1. The Role of Constructed Concepts

Strawson’s discussion with Carnap is rich and multifaceted. I will focus on three issues, already mentioned in the previous section, where Kuusela sees a crucial difference between Wittgenstein’s later methods on the one hand and Strawson’s methods, as set out in his discussion with Carnap, on the other. Kuusela suggests that ordinary language philosophers (1) avoid the construction of ideal languages and concepts for the purpose of philosophical clarification, (2) attempt to clarify the uses of natural language in their actual complexity, and (3) cannot account for the fact that problem-relativity is essential to philosophical clarifications. I will argue that, in these three cases, Strawson’s methods are closer to Wittgenstein than Kuusela thinks. I will start in this section with the role of constructed concepts, while the second and third issues will be discussed in sections four and five respectively.

Is there a place for constructed concepts in Strawson’s ordinary language philosophy? According to Kuusela, Wittgenstein’s later methods of logical clarification (grammatical rules, language-games and quasi-ethnology) are ‘continuous with calculus-based logical methods but extend logic beyond them’.[[21]](#footnote-21) Wittgenstein extends the scope or reach of logic, but continues to hold on to an idea that is central to ideal language approaches, namely that philosophical problems are to be resolved by means of logical clarification.[[22]](#footnote-22) Whereas Wittgenstein’s later methods can fruitfully be regarded as an *extension* of the ideal language approach, Strawson is said to *dismiss* this approach,[[23]](#footnote-23) criticising ‘ideal language philosophy generally for its employment of calculus-based logic as a metalanguage in clarification’. For Wittgenstein, by contrast, ‘there is no problem with the employment of this kind of metalanguage as such, even if a logical calculus may in particular cases (in relation to some specific problems) prove too rigid for successful clarification’.[[24]](#footnote-24)

Kuusela’s interpretation of Strawson is based partly on this passage:

It is precisely the purpose of the reconstruction […] to solve or dispel problems and difficulties so rooted [that is, rooted in the use of unconstructed concepts]. But how can this purpose be achieved unless extra-systematic points of contact are made, not just at the one or two points necessary to fix the interpretation of the constructed concepts, but at *every* point where the relevant problems and difficulties concerning the unconstructed concepts arise? That is to say, if the clear mode of functioning of the constructed concepts is to cast light on problems and difficulties rooted in the unclear mode of functioning of the unconstructed concepts, then precisely the way in which the constructed concepts are connected with and depart from the unconstructed concepts must be plainly shown. And how can this be achieved without accurately describing the modes of functioning of the unconstructed concepts? But this is precisely the task of describing the logical behaviour of the linguistic expressions of natural languages, and may *by itself* achieve the sought-for resolution of the problems and difficulties rooted in the elusive, deceptive mode of functioning of unconstructed concepts.

[…] Moreover, the general usefulness of systems of constructed concepts as objects of comparison with the unconstructed concepts in which our problems are rooted is necessarily limited. For the types or modes of logical behaviour which ordinary concepts exhibit are extremely diverse. To detect and distinguish them is a task in which one may well be hindered rather than helped by fixing one’s eye too firmly on the limited range of types of logical behaviour which the concepts in a formal system can there be shown to display.[[25]](#footnote-25)

Kuusela comments on this passage as follows:

[…] because the description of everyday uses already suffices, on Strawson’s account, to clarify any unclarities relating to the logic of everyday concepts, there is ultimately no need for constructionism. […] in Strawson’s view, the ideal language approach is at best dependent on the ordinary language approach, but ultimately constitutes an unnecessary and roundabout way of clarifying the uses of natural language. ‘The description of the modes of functioning of actually employed linguistic expressions […] is simply the least clouded form of a procedure’ for logical clarification (Strawson 1963: 517). Evidently, this is not to outline any genuine possibilities for collaboration, but to dismiss the other approach.[[26]](#footnote-26)

Does Strawson dismiss the ideal language approach here? Strawson writes that ‘the *general* usefulness of *systems* of constructed concepts […] is necessarily limited’ (my italics). It is noteworthy that he means *formal* systems which use the ‘apparatus of modern logic and in which the concepts forming the subject-matter of the system are introduced by means of axioms and definitions’.[[27]](#footnote-27) The idea here is that it is an illusion to think that formal systems of constructed concepts could be generally useful, that is, useful for the clarification of *all* philosophical problems. This does not imply what Kuusela takes this passage to imply, namely that the use of calculus-based logic as a metalanguage in philosophical clarification is problematic as such, and that the use of constructed concepts more generally ‘ultimately constitutes an unnecessary and roundabout way of clarifying the uses of natural language’.

The latter claim is based on Strawson’s requirement that ‘the way in which the constructed concepts are connected with and depart from the unconstructed concepts must be plainly shown’ (to which I will come back in section five) in combination with the thought that ‘the general usefulness of systems of constructed concepts […] is necessarily limited’. The usefulness of constructed concepts is necessarily limited, Kuusela thinks, because whenever we want to use a constructed concept for philosophical clarification, the relation with the unconstructed concept that we want to clarify must be spelled out, and once we have elucidated the way of functioning of the unconstructed concept, we have clarified what we had to clarify, and the need for the constructed concept disappears.

Instead of linking ‘necessarily limited’ to the previous paragraph in the text, however, I suggest linking it to what immediately follows, namely the thought that ‘the types or modes of logical behaviour which ordinary concepts exhibit are extremely diverse’. The concepts occurring in a particular formal system cannot capture all types of logical behaviour, and that is why the general usefulness of such systems is necessarily limited. Kuusela ascribes this thought to Wittgenstein:

[The method of language-games] constitutes an *extension* of logic to new areas where calculus-based methods cease to be useful. As Wittgenstein emphasizes, it is crucial to choose the right method […] for particular clarificatory tasks. A calculus may be a good way to study another calculus, and calculus-based methods might be the most suitable clarificatory tools in tasks connected with mathematics and geometry in areas of logic that merge with metamathematics. But this does not show what the best methods would be for clarifying the concepts and expressions of natural language.

[…] Logical methods (in plural) might still be the right way to approach philosophical problems, even if there is no single privileged logical method.[[28]](#footnote-28)

When Strawson writes that the general usefulness of systems of constructed concepts is necessarily limited, I believe that he means precisely this: that clarification by means of formal systems of constructed concepts is not the single privileged logical method. Strawson repeats this point in the following passages:

Why should it be presupposed that *the only way* to gain understanding of the words which express the philosophically puzzling concepts was to translate sentences in which they occurred into sentences in which they did not occur? The belief in the *exclusive* efficacy of this method is just the troublesome legacy of discredited theories. […] It is *too narrow,* because it neglects altogether very many different features of the functioning of language […][[29]](#footnote-29)

The living creatures of language […] are still seen as performing a range of functions of immense diversity, whereas *only a few of these functions* can be imitated by the logical machines built by the constructionist.[[30]](#footnote-30)

Model objects of linguistic comparison may help us to understand the given objects; but it is dogmatism to maintain that the construction of model objects is *the best or the only means* of achieving such understanding.[[31]](#footnote-31)

It is *only when the claim to exclusiveness is made* on behalf of the constructionist method, and of particular constructions, that one must begin to query the enlightenment [that the method may bring].[[32]](#footnote-32)

The use of formal systems of constructed concepts is not the single privileged logical method, but it may often be helpful for the purpose of philosophical clarification. Formal or informal, constructed concepts or systems thereof could help to clarify philosophical problems, and Strawson’s own minimal conception of morality is an example.

Kuusela does not deny that, according to Strawson, constructed concepts may be helpful. To deny this would be to contradict Strawson, who explicitly maintains that ‘the construction of a model object of linguistic comparison may be of great help’.[[33]](#footnote-33) Kuusela’s point is, rather, that even in cases where Strawson thinks that constructed concepts may be helpful, the use of such concepts is ‘unnecessary and roundabout’: there is ‘ultimately no needfor constructionism’ because ‘the description of everyday uses already suffices, on Strawson’s account, to clarify any unclarities relating to the logic of everyday concepts’. It is certainly true that, for Strawson, the use of constructed concepts will be unnecessary in many cases. If we do not assume that constructionism is the best or the only means of achieving understanding, alternative means will often be available. As Strawson writes, ‘the task of describing the logical behaviour of the linguistic expressions of natural languages’ ‘may *by itself* achieve the sought-for resolution’ of a philosophical problem. ‘May’ indicates a possibility, however, and Strawson’s phrase does not exclude the possibility that, in some cases, the description of everyday uses will *not* suffice or even be necessary, and that constructing concepts *will* be necessary to resolve the problem.

My disagreement with Kuusela turns around Strawson’s use of ‘necessarily limited’. According to Kuusela, Strawson thinks that, for every philosophical problem *x,* the use of constructed concepts and, more generally, of simple and exact descriptions in order to resolve the problem will be unnecessary and roundabout: ‘Strawson’s point is that a simple and exact description can *never* constitute an accurate description of a complex actual use of an expression, so that the usefulness of such descriptions is necessarily limited’.[[34]](#footnote-34) My own reading emphasises Strawson’s use of the phrase ‘*general* usefulness’. He does not exclude that, for some philosophical problems, the use of constructed concepts and, more generally, of simple and exact descriptions will be necessary in order to resolve the problem. Rather, he finds it dogmatic to think that constructionism must be useful *in general,* that it must be useful to resolve *all* philosophical problems.[[35]](#footnote-35) Thus, he is concerned about exactly the kind of dogmatism against which Wittgenstein’s later methods are directed according to Kuusela.[[36]](#footnote-36) My interpretation locates Strawson’s methodological views much closer to Wittgenstein’s later methods than Kuusela allows for. Apart from being supported by Strawson’s methodological work, it has the advantage of cohering well with his philosophical practice.

1. The Description of Actual Language Use

If the use of constructed concepts is necessarily limited as a philosophical method, then what is the alternative for ordinary language philosophers? In short, the alternative is ‘to describe […] the actual conduct of actual words’.[[37]](#footnote-37) But this statement, simple as it may seem, is open to very different readings.

According to Kuusela, it means that Strawson, and ordinary language philosophers more generally, intend to describe the actual uses of language in ‘their actual complexity’.[[38]](#footnote-38) If that is what Strawson and ordinary language philosophers think they should be doing, it seems almost impossible for them to avoid losing the ideals of simplicity and exactness. As we have seen, Wittgenstein does not purport to describe actual language use in its actual complexity. Rather, the situation is like describing the shape of a colour patch with blurred contours by means of a sharply drawn picture. Logical clarifications highlight ‘specific aspects or facets of language use’,[[39]](#footnote-39) more specifically those aspects ‘that are relevant to the resolution of the particular problems at hand’.[[40]](#footnote-40) In section five, I will say more about the problem-relativity of logical clarifications. For now, the important point is that Wittgenstein’s logical clarifications are not meant to describe actual language use in its actual complexity. With regard to this issue, as with regard to the role of constructed concepts in philosophical clarification (see previous section), I again think that Strawson’s methods are very close to Wittgenstein’s methods.

It is significant that Strawson never uses Kuusela’s phrase ‘in its/their actual complexity’. Let us have a look at Strawson’s description of the procedures of ordinary language philosophers. Here is the passage in which the expression ‘the actual conduct of actual words’ occurs:

[…] it [the method of ordinary language philosophy] consists in the attempt to describe the complex patterns of logical behaviour which the concepts of daily life exhibit. It is not a matter of prescribing the model conduct of model words, but of describing the actual conduct of actual words.[[41]](#footnote-41)

To describe the actual conduct of actual words is to describe the complex patterns of *logical* behaviour which the concepts of daily life exhibit. The qualification ‘logical’ is important, and it is used by Strawson in several other passages that I have quoted above. Recall that the task of ordinary language philosophers is ‘the task of describing the *logical* behaviour of the linguistic expressions of natural languages’. Recall the claim that ‘the types or modes of *logical* behaviour which ordinary concepts exhibit are extremely diverse’, and that ‘to detect and distinguish them is a task in which one may well be hindered […] by fixing one’s eye too firmly on the limited range of types of *logical* behaviour which the concepts occurring in a formal system can there be shown to display’ (my italics).

I believe that Strawson’s frequent use of ‘logical’ suggests that, like Wittgenstein, he regards philosophical methods as methods of logic. Admittedly, this does not settle the issue. One might hold that the logical behaviour of expressions in natural language can be described in many different ways. At least, the question about *how* the actual conduct of actual words should be described, by which kind of method, is left open. Kuusela reads Strawson’s phrase ‘describing the logical behaviour of the linguistic expressions of natural languages’ as ‘describing actual language use in its actual complexity’, thereby foreclosing a possible (and, in my view, the most plausible) interpretation, namely ‘describing actual language use in simple and exact ways by way of logical methods’.

It may be thought that ‘description’ points in the direction of non-logical clarifications, but this is not so. Kuusela himself uses ‘description’ and ‘describe’ in the case of logical clarifications (‘*describing* the shape of a colour patch with blurred contours by means of a sharply drawn picture’). Kuusela seems to assume that, according to Strawson, actual language use is to be described in its actual complexity. I contend that Strawson at least leaves open the possibility, and sometimes even explicitly suggests, that it is to be described in simple and exact ways by way of logical methods. Immediately following the already quoted passage in which Strawson emphasises that the modes of logical behaviour of ordinary concepts are extremely diverse, and that a formal system cannot capture all types of logical behaviour, he writes:

This is not to say that the metavocabulary of description and classification should not itself be made as systematic as possible. (*This* aim, it need hardly be said, is entirely independent of formal systematisation of the concepts which the metavocabulary is used to discuss.)[[42]](#footnote-42)

Here, Strawson distinguishes between the systematisation of the concepts that are the philosopher’s *object of investigation* and the systematisation of the *metavocabulary of description*. Philosophers should not seek to make their object of investigation, actual language use, more simple or exact than it actually is, as doing so would be to turn characteristics essential to their methods (simplicity and exactness) into essential features of their objects of investigation (the expressions of natural language). Strawson warns against the problem of falsification that plagues ideal language philosophy. (See, in that respect, also his suggestion that behind the claims of constructionists ‘may lie a formalizing mystique: the belief that the model systems embody the *real* structure of our concepts, hidden from us by the untidiness of our actual practice’.[[43]](#footnote-43))

When Strawson writes that philosophers should describe ‘the actual conduct of actual words’ instead of ‘the model conduct of model words’,[[44]](#footnote-44) his primary concern is with the problem of falsification, that is, the problem of making the philosopher’s object of investigation more simple and exact than it is by changing it from actual language and actual words to a model language and model words. He is not thereby losing the ideals of simplicity and exactness, because these are not ideals that the objects of description should meet, but ideals concerning the *method* of describing actual language. As Strawson writes, ‘it is certainly not *enough* to say that he [the ordinary language philosopher] should describe the functioning of actually employed linguistic expressions. For simply to say this would not be to give any indication of the *sort of description* he should provide’.[[45]](#footnote-45)

Why think that Strawson wanted to provide logical (simple and exact) descriptions of actual language use? First, there are examples from his philosophical practice, as outlined in section 2. Second, he claims that the vocabulary of describing actual language use should be as systematic as possible. Third, Strawson uses the word ‘picture’ (as he does in ‘Freedom and Resentment’, see section 2) in his explicitly methodological work:

And it is in the actual use of the linguistic expressions for the concepts concerned, and nowhere else, that we find the data from which we can draw this accurate picture.[[46]](#footnote-46)

Ordinary language philosophers draw pictures for logical clarification, much like Wittgenstein does. Of course, these pictures must not be based on misconceptions, as Kuusela notes with regard to Wittgenstein’s methods.[[47]](#footnote-47) The same point is made here by Strawson, who emphasises that the philosopher’s picture must be accurate, not in conflict with the data of actual use.

Fourth, consider the following passage:

For evidently there is a difference between constructing a segment of artificial language and systematically describing the workings of a slice of natural language. One must not exaggerate the difference. The task of tracing patterns in living language is difficult, and would be almost impossible if one were not allowed to do a little regimenting.[[48]](#footnote-48)

Ordinary language philosophers describe actual language in a *systematic* way, their task is to *trace patterns,* a task which would be almost impossible without *regimenting.* It is difficult to see how this fits with Kuusela’s claims that ‘Strawson’s point is that a simple and exact description can neverconstitute an accurate description of a complex actual use of an expression’ and that Strawson ‘neglect[s] the possibility of idealization’.[[49]](#footnote-49) Kuusela mentions Strawson’s use of ‘regimenting’, but he takes Strawson to tacitly admit something that is denied in other descriptions of his method: if ordinary language philosophy is almost impossible without regimenting, ‘clarifications by ordinary language philosophers do not differ in principle from analyses and explications by ideal language philosophers in that both are recognized as involving abstractions from features of actual language use’.[[50]](#footnote-50) According to my reading, Strawson’s use of ‘regimenting’ is not in tension with other descriptions of his method. The methods of both ideal and ordinary language philosophers involve abstractions from features of actual language use. Strawson’s ordinary language philosophy should be regarded as an *extension* rather than as a *dismissal* of ideal language philosophy: clarification by way of formal systems of constructed concepts may be legitimate, but it is not the only method of logical clarification.

Again, my interpretation of Strawson locates his methodological views much closer to Wittgenstein than Kuusela allows for. It is at least equally well supported by Strawson’s methodological texts as Kuusela’s interpretation, and it has the additional advantage of cohering well with his philosophical practice.

1. The Problem-Relativity of Logical Clarifications

I have mentioned a few times now that, according to Kuusela, Wittgenstein emphasises the problem-relativity of philosophical clarifications. Kuusela takes problem-relativity to be absolutely crucial to Wittgenstein’s philosophical methods.[[51]](#footnote-51) Indeed, the very ‘purpose of a logical account is to order or organize the facts relating to a case in such a way that we can make sense of them’.[[52]](#footnote-52) Logical clarifications are complete if they explain what is *relevant* to *the question at hand,* and what is relevant depends on what is considered problematic.[[53]](#footnote-53)

On Wittgenstein’s account, a clarification is complete insofar as it clarifies those particular unclarities that it was intended to clarify. There is no such thing, however, as the clarification of every possible unclarity relating to a concept or issue, because the notion ‘every possible unclarity’ cannot be specified abstractly but is open-ended. New unclarities may always arise or be imagined.[[54]](#footnote-54)

Two remarks are in order here. First, an ordering that enables us to make sense of the facts must be sensitive to the facts.[[55]](#footnote-55) It must not be based on misconceptions.[[56]](#footnote-56) If it is, it can at most yield the mistaken *belief* that the problem has been successfully dealt with.[[57]](#footnote-57) Second, ‘individual philosophical problems may typically constitute larger interconnected networks of problems, where it is not possible to solve one without solving many’.[[58]](#footnote-58)

Problem-relativity is essential to Wittgenstein’s methods and to the idea of logical clarifications in general. By contrast, Kuusela claims that Strawson ‘does not think that problem-relativity is *essential* to understanding the completeness and correctness of philosophical clarifications. At this crucial point Strawson’s view does not seem compatible with Wittgenstein’s’.[[59]](#footnote-59)

It is important not to misunderstand Kuusela’s point. We have seen in section two that, in ‘Freedom and Resentment’, Strawson explicitly recognises the problem-relativity of his investigations. Similarly, Strawson mentions problem-relativity in his methodological work:

[…] it is certainly not *enough* to say that he [the ordinary language philosopher] should describe the functioning of actually employed linguistic expressions. For simply to say this would not be to give any indication of the sort of description he should provide. That indication is given when it is shown how description of the right sort may bear upon our conceptual confusions and problems.[[60]](#footnote-60)

The idea here seems to be that logical clarification (‘description of the right sort’) is complete when it helps us to resolve our conceptual problems. The task of ordinary language philosophers is not to describe *all* features of the use of problematic expressions, but only those that are *relevant* to the resolution of the philosophical problem at hand. Kuusela comments on Strawson’s references to problem-relativity:

It is notable that Strawson himself, too, acknowledges that not all features of the actual employment of linguistic expressions are always important for philosophical clarification. Commenting on the elucidation of the use of everyday expressions, he [Strawson] says: ‘Of course, not all features of the use of these expressions will be relevant to the philosopher’s task’ (Strawson 2011: 34). This may seem like stating the obvious, but it is also to implicitly admit something essential for the ideal language approach, namely, that complete faithfulness in describing the uses of natural language, or the description of all aspects of the use of an expression, may not always be desirable – or even possible – in philosophy. Rather, as I will argue with Wittgenstein, what is important for the resolution of philosophical problems is that everything *relevant* for the problems is accounted for.[[61]](#footnote-61)

Kuusela’s point is not that Strawson does not mention problem-relativity. Rather, it is that Strawson’s references to problem-relativity cannot be reconciled with his methodological commitment to ordinary language philosophy. That commitment, Kuusela suggests, involves the idea that philosophers should be completely faithful in describing the uses of natural language, which means that they should describe ‘*all* aspects of the use of an expression’ (my italics), not just those that are relevant to the resolution of a particular problem. One cannot have it both ways. Either one fully recognises, in the spirit of ideal language philosophy, the importance of idealisation and problem-relativity; or one opts, in the spirit of ordinary language philosophy, for the description of all aspects of the use of an expression.

Why does Kuusela think that ordinary language philosophers, including Strawson, cannot fully recognise the importance of problem-relativity? First, Strawson writes that

[…] it would itself be a paradox to represent the whole task of philosophy as the correction of philosophical mistakes. Even if such mistakes provide the initial impulse to this conceptual anatomy, the enterprise then acquires its own momentum and may be pursued for its own sake. There may be pure research as well as *ad hoc* therapy. So the philosopher may undertake a more detailed examination, a more systematic ordering and description, of speech-forms, of types of discourse, of types of concept, than would be necessary simply to relieve the pressures of paradox.[[62]](#footnote-62)

This passage, to which Kuusela refers,[[63]](#footnote-63) might seem to support the idea that Strawson does not recognise the importance of problem-relativity. The Wittgensteinian therapist, for whom problem-relativity is essential, is contrasted with the Strawsonian systematiser, who recognises the possibility of pure research ‘for its own sake’. I do not think, however, that the idea of pure research for its own sake implies that this research is not problem-relative in the relevant sense. As we have seen, Kuusela recognises that individual philosophical problems may constitute larger interconnected networks. It is often impossible to specify whether a clarification elucidates one problem or more. Moreover, although I agree with Kuusela that resolving ‘every possible unclarity’ is impossible, there is no reason to limit (and Kuusela does not limit) the notion of problem-relativity to very specific actual problems. It is often possible to *foresee* the kinds of problems that philosophers will run into (even if these problems have not been actually formulated), and sometimes the resolution of these problems does not require addressing the very specific problem at hand, but the provision of a map with the help of which a whole area of problems might disappear. The latter qualifies, in my view, as ‘pure research’ in Strawson’s sense, that is, as a ‘more systematic ordering’ different from *ad hoc* therapy.

I believe that this broad notion of problem-relativity is present in Wittgenstein’s later philosophical methods. He famously contends that a philosophical problem has the form ‘I don’t know my way about’.[[64]](#footnote-64) If someone does not know their way about, we can give definite directions, but giving them a map of the area may also be very helpful. A map describes an area in an idealised way: certain aspects are highlighted, others are left out. The map is accurate not if it represents everything in full detail, but if it helps people to find their way about. Wittgensteinian ‘perspicuous representations’[[65]](#footnote-65) may be more like definite directions or more like maps.[[66]](#footnote-66) For examples of the latter, think about the colour-octahedron and Wittgenstein’s ‘plan for the treatment of psychological concepts’,[[67]](#footnote-67) in relation to which he explicitly states that he strives ‘for a view of the whole’.[[68]](#footnote-68) Striving for a view of the whole is compatible with recognising the importance of problem-relativity, but only if problem-relativity is understood in a rather broad sense: the same map may help to resolve many different philosophical problems, both actual and foreseen.

If problem-relativity is understood in a broad way, as I think it should if we want to understand Wittgenstein correctly, then Strawson is not committed to denying that it is essential to philosophical clarification. Here is another passage in which Strawson uses the phrase ‘for its own sake’:

[The] examination of current concepts and types of discourse to which paradox and complexity so commonly give the initial impulse, can be pursued with no particular therapeutic purpose, but for its own sake. *This is not to say that puzzlement is not in question here.* One can, without feeling any particular temptation to mistaken assimilations, simply be aware that one does not clearly understand how some type of expression functions, in comparison with others.[[69]](#footnote-69)

Strawson makes clear that ‘for its own sake’ is compatible with problem-relativity in a broad sense. If someone does not have an overview, or does not clearly understand how some type of expression functions in comparison to others, this is a problem in the relevant sense. Compare some of Wittgenstein’s problems: ‘What kind of connexions and analogies exist between seeing and hearing? Between seeing and touching? Between seeing and smelling?’.[[70]](#footnote-70)

I do not wish to deny that there are differences between Wittgenstein and Strawson concerning the problem-relativity of their investigations. I do believe, though, that Strawson’s reference to research for its own sake does not make it impossible for him to hold, as he explicitly seems to do in both his philosophical practice and his methodological work, that philosophical investigations are problem-relative.

Apart from Strawson’s reference to research for its own sake, there is a second reason why Kuusela thinks that Strawson cannot fully or unambiguously embrace the importance of problem-relativity. The reason has to do with the idea, mentioned in section three and ascribed to Strawson by Kuusela, that the use of constructed concepts, and of idealised means of clarification more generally, ‘ultimately constitutes an unnecessary and roundabout way of clarifying the uses of natural language’. This claim is based on Strawson’s requirement that ‘the way in which the constructed concepts are connected with and depart from the unconstructed concepts must be plainly shown. And how can this be achieved without accurately describing the modes of functioning of the unconstructed concepts?’.[[71]](#footnote-71) Kuusela argues that this requirement is not justified because logical clarifications are problem-relative:

This requirement is not justified because what matters for philosophical clarification is not that the relation of constructed concepts to everyday concepts is made clear in all respects. Rather, what is important is that the constructed concepts clarify those aspects and features of use and those conceptual relations that are relevant for the problems at hand.[[72]](#footnote-72)

I disagree with Kuusela’s paraphrase of Strawson’s requirement. The requirement is *not* that the relation of constructed concepts to everyday concepts must be made clear *in all respects* or, as Kuusela puts it in a previously quoted passage, that ‘the description of *all* aspects of the use of an expression’ is ‘always desirable’ in ordinary language philosophy.[[73]](#footnote-73) If this were Strawson’s requirement, then it would indeed be problematic: there would be a tension between (1) the idea that philosophical clarification is problem-relative, so that which specific aspects and features of use have to be clarified depends on the problem at hand, and (2) the idea that philosophical clarification necessarily involves the description of *all* aspects and features of use. Strawson could then be charged with failing to see that sometimes describing all uses is not necessary for the resolution of a problem, that a simplified picture can be enough.

Strawson’s requirement is that ‘the way in which the constructed concepts are connected with and depart from the unconstructed concepts must be plainly shown’. Kuusela takes this to imply that the similarities and differences between the constructed and unconstructed concepts must be spelled out in all respects, but I do not think that the implication holds. Take Wittgenstein’s example of the colour patch:

I have a picture with blurred contours and complicated transitions. Next to it, I place a simple one, with clearly separated colours but related to it. I don’t say that the first is actually the second; but I invite someone to look at the second one, and expect that in doing this certain worries he has will disappear.[[74]](#footnote-74)

The relation between the first and the second picture is not spelled out, but it is plainly shown: if it were not clear that and how the second picture is related to the first, then how could it make worries with the first picture disappear? Strawson’s requirement that the relation between unconstructed and constructed concepts be plainly shown may be nothing more than this. The mode of functioning of the unconstructed concept is ‘accurately described’ not if all relations to the constructed concept are spelled out in all respects, but if the constructed concept makes salient those features of the unconstructed concept that are relevant to the resolution of the problem. Thus, Strawson’s requirement does not stand in tension with a full acknowledgment of the importance of problem-relativity.

Again, this means that, in my view, Strawson is criticising what he regards as a kind of dogmatism on the ideal language philosopher’s part. Precisely *because* Strawson recognises the problem-relativity of philosophical clarifications, nothing can be said *in general, independently of the problem at hand,* about the necessity of explaining the relation between constructed and unconstructed concepts, or between idealised means of clarification and their non-idealised counterparts. *Pace* Kuusela, I think that Strawson *does* regard problem-relativity as essential to understanding the completeness and correctness of philosophical clarifications, and that there is no irresolvable tension between (1) his recognition of the importance of problem-relativity and (2) his requirement that the relation between constructed and unconstructed concepts be plainly shown. The result is, again, that Strawson methods appear to be quite close to those of the later Wittgenstein.

1. Wittgenstein, Strawson, and Ordinary Language Philosophy

I have suggested that Strawson, both in his philosophical practice and in his methodological work, (1) did not avoid the construction of idealised concepts for the purpose of philosophical clarification, (2) did not attempt to clarify the uses of natural language in their actual complexity, and (3) considered problem-relativity to be essential to philosophical clarification. In general, then, Strawson’s methods, both practiced and preached, are closer to the later Wittgenstein’s methods than Kuusela thinks (which is not to say, of course, that there are no differences). Strawson, like Wittgenstein, avoids both the problem of falsification and the problem of losing the ideals of simplicity and exactness.

If Strawson agrees with Wittgenstein on these points, *and* if we accept Kuusela’s characterisation of the difference between ordinary language philosophy and ideal language philosophy, then neither Strawson nor Wittgenstein were ordinary language philosophers. This conclusion is difficult to accept, because their work is often regarded as *paradigmatic* for ordinary language philosophy. Their names are bound up with the very identity of ordinary language philosophy, and what ordinary language philosophy *is* is often explained by reference to their work. While there may in principle be room for arguing that one of the key figures commonly associated with ordinary language philosophy (such as Wittgenstein) was not in fact an ordinary language philosopher, because his work differs in crucial ways from that of other paradigmatic figures, arguing that *two* of them were not ordinary language philosophers immediately prompts a further question: ‘If *they* were not ordinary language philosophers, then who was?’ Ryle’s conception of philosophy as conceptual cartography suggests the possibility, indeed even the necessity, of idealisation in philosophy.[[75]](#footnote-75) Austin famously remarked that ‘ordinary language is not the last word’.[[76]](#footnote-76) Nat Hansen has argued that Austin and Stanley Cavell should not be understood as providing descriptions of actual language use, but as making metalinguistic proposals.[[77]](#footnote-77) Both are open to the ‘constant need to […] revise and to supersede the classifications’ of ordinary language.[[78]](#footnote-78)

If there is truth in this, it becomes doubtful whether *any* of the philosophers traditionally associated with ordinary language philosophy, or more specifically whether any of the philosophers associated with ordinary language philosophy by Kuusela (Strawson, Austin, Ryle) would qualify as ordinary language philosophers in Kuusela’s sense. One option is to claim that none (or almost none) of the philosophers traditionally associated with ordinary language philosophy were *really* ordinary language philosophers. The more attractive option, in my view, is to adapt Kuusela’s characterisation of the distinction between ideal and ordinary language philosophy in such a way that ‘ordinary language philosophy’ remains a significant label for a class that includes at least the later Wittgenstein, Strawson, Austin and Ryle. Of course, to group these philosophers under one label is in no way to deny the differences between them.

I cannot develop a full defense of a particular way of distinguishing between the two schools here. Nevertheless, as I have tried to show, it cannot be maintained that ordinary language philosophers, in contrast to ideal language philosophers, reject the use of constructed concepts, want to describe actual language use in its actual complexity and cannot account for the problem-relativity of philosophical problems. Both ordinary and ideal language methods should be thought of as logical rather than empirical methods*,* both aim to describe thought and language. The most plausible way of distinguishing between them, I believe, is to see ordinary language philosophy as an extension of ideal language philosophy, parallel to the way in which Kuusela sees Wittgenstein’s methods as an extension of ideal language methods. Whether the philosophical methods of Austin and Ryle can be understood in this way remains to be shown on another occasion, but I have given some reasons to think that there is room for developing such an argument.

If ordinary language philosophy can be understood as an extension of ideal language philosophy, it is much closer to the latter than Kuusela thinks. This understanding of the relation between ordinary and ideal language philosophy not only allows us to keep using ‘ordinary language philosophy’ as a significant label, it also helps to make sense of the way in which Strawson himself sees the relation: ‘[Ordinary language philosophy] involves continued close attention to the forms of common speech, together with a vastly altered and *extended conception of the nature and techniques of analysis*’.[[79]](#footnote-79) Finally, it is unsurprising from my perspective (but difficult to understand from Kuusela’s perspective) that, according to Strawson, considering some of the things which Carnap says will ‘show how thin (despite appearances) may be the barrier which divides the philosopher who constructs systems from the philosopher who describes the workings of ordinary language’.[[80]](#footnote-80)[[81]](#footnote-81)

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1. Kuusela (2019: 220). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Kuusela (2019: 125). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Kuusela (2019: 238). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. See Wittgenstein (2009: §131) on ‘objects of comparison’. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Kuusela (2019: 171). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Kuusela (2019: 220, 223, 235). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Kuusela (2019: 221-222). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Kuusela (2019: 233). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Kuusela (2019: 172). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. On Strawson’s method in ‘Freedom and Resentment’, see Heyndels (2019). I have argued in a series of papers that ‘Freedom and Resentment’ is deeply Wittgensteinian; see De Mesel (2018, 2021a, 2021b). For another Wittgensteinian reading of ‘Freedom and Resentment’, see Bengtson (2019). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Strawson (1974a: 5). [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Strawson (1974a: 7). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Strawson (1974a: 7). [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Strawson (1974a: 16). [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Strawson (1974a: 20). [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Kuusela (2019: 240). [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Strawson (1974b: 34-35). [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Strawson (1963). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Strawson (2011), originally published in 1956. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. I also think that these views are largely similar to (and at least compatible with) the views expressed in the introduction to *Individuals,* where Strawson coins the term ‘descriptive metaphysics’. Descriptive metaphysics, he says, ‘does not differ [from conceptual analysis] in kind of intention, but only in scope and generality’ (Strawson 1959: 9). For reasons of space, I cannot discuss descriptive metaphysics here. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Kuusela (2019: 2). [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Kuusela (2019: 177). [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Kuusela (2019: 228). [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Kuusela (2019: 236). [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Strawson (1963: 513). [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Kuusela (2019: 228). [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Strawson (1963: 503). [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Kuusela (2019: 143-145). [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Strawson (2011: 34), my italics. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Strawson (2011: 37), my italics. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Strawson (1963: 517), my italics. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Strawson (1963: 518), my italics. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Strawson (1963: 513). [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Kuusela (2019: 234), my italics. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Whether this dogmatic idea can really be attributed to Carnap is unclear. In his reply to Strawson, Carnap writes that ‘the use of symbolic logic and of a constructed language system with explicit syntactical and semantical rules is the most elaborate and most efficient method. For philosophical explications the use of this method is advisable only in special cases, but not generally’ (Carnap 1963: 986). It would be interesting to investigate in detail to what extent Strawson’s criticism of Carnap is based upon an accurate understanding of Carnap’s position. See also Carnap’s claim that ‘We constructionists should not claim that our method is the only one for the solution of philosophical problems, or necessarily the best in all cases’ (Carnap 1963: 989). Because my focus in this paper is on Strawson’s views rather than on (his interpretation of) Carnap, I cannot go into this issue here. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. On Wittgenstein and dogmatism, see Kuusela (2008). [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Strawson (1963: 503). [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Kuusela (2019: 220, 223, 235). [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Kuusela (2019: 167). [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Kuusela (2019: 129). [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Strawson (1963: 503). [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Strawson (1963: 513). [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Strawson (1963: 518). [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Strawson (1963: 503). [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Strawson (1963: 518). [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Strawson (2011: 37). [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Kuusela (2019: 238). [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Strawson (2011: 37). [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Kuusela (2019: 234-235). See also Kuusela (2019: 238): ‘[Strawson] ignores the possibility of idealization’. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Kuusela (2019: 229). [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Kuusela (2019: 146). [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Kuusela (2019: 188). [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Kuusela (2019: 218). [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Kuusela (2019: 233). [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Kuusela (2019: 205). [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Kuusela (2019: 238). [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Kuusela (2019: 279). [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Kuusela (2019: 279). [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Kuusela (2019: 279). [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Strawson (1963: 518). [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Kuusela (2019: 228). [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Strawson (2011: 35-36). [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Kuusela (2019: 279). [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Wittgenstein (2009: §123). [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Wittgenstein (2009: §122). [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. For my interpretation of Wittgenstein’s notion of ‘perspicuous representations’, see De Mesel (2014). [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Wittgenstein (1975: 278) and Wittgenstein (1980b: §63, §148). [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Wittgenstein (1980a: §895). [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Strawson (1963: 517), my italics. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Wittgenstein (1980b: §60). [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Strawson (1963: 513). [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Kuusela (2019: 234). [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Kuusela (2019: 228). [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Wittgenstein (2000: TS 213: 258). [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Ryle (2009 [1953]). [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Austin (1956: 11). [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Hansen (2019), Cavell (1958). [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Austin (1956: 12); see also Hansen (2019: 15). [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Strawson (2011: 32), my italics. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Strawson (1963: 507). [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Many thanks to Oskari Kuusela and Sybren Heyndels for helpful comments on earlier drafts of this article, and to Alex Chituc for proofreading. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)