Re-evaluating Communicative Language Teaching:

Wittgenstein and Postmethod Pedagogy

by

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners. I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

This thesis analyses some ways in which Ludwig Wittgenstein's later philosophy can make a valuable contribution to the current re-evaluation of the concept of method within postmethod pedagogy. First, the emergence and development of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is traced in order to reveal the ways in which theorists' and practitioners' understandings of language, the learner, and language learning have influenced practice in three developmental phases of CLT. The analysis then integrates the concepts of *Sprachspiel* (language-game), *Lebensform* (forms of life), and *Regelfolgen* (rule following) from Wittgenstein's *Philosophische Untersuchungen* into the theoretical assumptions implicit in CLT to produce a model which fosters reflection upon the concepts of language, the learner and language learning in light of the postmethod pedagogic parameters of particularity, practicality, and possibility. This consideration and integration of Wittgensteins's perspective not only promotes a deeper understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of CLT, but also seeks to initiate a re-conceptualization of CLT as a postmethod pedagogy by reflecting upon historical understandings of language, language learners, and language learning and by redefining these core concepts. The analysis culminates in the creation of a table that outlines the concepts of language, language learners, and language learning within a postmethod conceptualization of CLT using combined insights from CLT, postmethod pedagogy, and Wittgenstein's concepts of *Sprachspiel*, *Lebensform*, and *Regelfolgen*.

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Chapter 1: Shifting Paradigms, Changing Concepts: CLT in the 21ˢᵗ Century

Postmethod has recently become the new paradigm for conceptualizing language teaching as a result of the disenchantment regarding the notion of methods which has thus far dominated the discourses within twentieth century pedagogy. Since the emergence of the Direct Method, various language teaching methods have come into and out of fashion, each of them attracting devoted followers (see Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 16). However, teachers and researchers alike began to realize that the method paradigm was not as helpful as it had long seemed. Amidst much criticism of various methods and demands for more research-based theory in language instruction, the field of language pedagogy has effectively entered the age of *postmethod pedagogy*, in which the concept of method has been discarded and replaced by the context-sensitive, guiding pedagogic parameters of particularity, practicality, and possibility (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 171).

This awareness of the insufficiency and inappropriateness of implementing one single, overarching method regardless of contextual factors parallels the movement in philosophy that began to question the validity of one single explanation of the world and its people: "Was unsere Zeit kennzeichnet, so erklärt Jean-François Lyotard, einer der entscheidensten Verfechter des philosophischen Postmodernismus, ist das Hervortreten einer Vielzahl heterogener und autonomer Sprachspiele, Lebensformen und Lebensbedeutungen, eine Pluralität unvereinbarer Praktiken und Konzepte, vergleichbar der babylonischen Sprachverwirrung" (Hügli/Lübcke, 2000, p. 7). This postmodernist perspective harmonizes well with current sentiments in the field of language pedagogy. No longer does a single view dominate the discourse; rather, it is the many perspectives on language teaching and learning which are now taken into consideration in the literature on Second Language Acquisition (henceforth SLA). It is within this climate of plurality that this work offers insights into the connections between philosophy and teaching practice.

1.1. Research Question and Thesis Objectives

This work fits into the current discussion on the era of postmethod pedagogy within the field of SLA. It incorporates concepts from the field of language philosophy in order to address the

growing need for clarity of key concepts and goals of language instruction and language teacher education. It provides an overview of twentieth century trends in language philosophy, linguistics, and language pedagogy and integrates key concepts in order to provide insights into the current state of postmethod pedagogy. The aim of this work is to identify the connections between Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Spätphilosophie*, which describes the works of "the late period from 1929 until his death, [and] whose most famous expression is the *Philosophical Investigations*, published in 1953" (Blackburn, 2008) and the development of Communicative Language Teaching (henceforth CLT). Using the resources in selected works, I will construct a framework of definitions that is relevant to the current development of CLT within a postmethod paradigm. This model will provide further theoretical clarification for the design of communicative classroom procedures in the postmethod era.

The objective of this project is threefold:

1. To promote a deeper understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of CLT and their development by examining the historical shift in linguists' understanding of the nature of language, as well as to identify shared assumptions with Wittgenstein's *Spätphilosophie*;

2. To integrate key concepts from the *Philosophische Untersuchungen* into the theoretical assumptions of CLT in order to clarify its definition of communication and its assumptions about language, the learner and learning as CLT adapts to a postmethod paradigm;

3. To create a model which provides direction for teachers as they develop more informed and reflective classroom procedures within the framework of postmethod CLT. This "communicative postmethod pedagogy" will seek to preserve the successful practices of the past while reforming aspects of the CLT model that are in need of re-evaluation.

1.2. On Theory, Methodology, and Categories for the Analysis

The purpose of this project is to assess the evolution of the philosophy of language pedagogy in the twentieth century and to investigate the contributions and current relevance of Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Spätphilosophie* to the field of language pedagogy. This project will not deal with data per se; rather, it will deal mostly with theoretical considerations and will explore possible practical implications only in light of the theory and practice of the past. The analysis makes use

of various theoretical underpinnings from the field of SLA, some of which will be defined in chapter one, and others which will receive more attention in the course of the analysis.

In the subsequent chapters of this thesis, I will utilize a textual analysis to deal with the selected literature on language philosophy, linguistics, and applied linguistics in the twentieth century, and claims will be made about the texts using specific evidence from the texts themselves. The focus will be on the description and comparison of the key concepts of *language*, the *learner,* and *language learning* as they are used in the selected works. While it is not possible to assess the entire body of literature that exists on these topics, a selection of influential works will provide the insights necessary to determine the *philosophy of language, language learners,* and *language learning* prevalent at certain periods of time or within certain fields of research and practice. The intention of this broad way of approaching the literature is to allow the texts to speak for themselves and to allow similarities, differences, and conceptual developments to emerge among the various philosophies of language pedagogy they represent.

The works have been chosen from each of the three phases of CLT which will be discussed in subsequent chapters. The first phase is characterized by the emergence of a "communicative approach", for example the one employed as part of the Functional-Notional Syllabus promoted by the Council of Europe. The second phase represents the shift in language pedagogy to base its practice on research-based theory from the field of linguistics and other relevant fields. The third phase marks a fundamental change in language pedagogy: namely, the shift from the method-paradigm to a postmethod pedagogy and the resulting impact on CLT.

The categories that appear in the analysis have been borrowed from Kumaravadivelu's (2006, p. 93) table for categorizing language teaching methods. This table has been modified to categorize and describe developmental phases undergone by the communicative language teaching paradigm and will be of central importance to this work. This descriptive tool will show how underlying assumptions regarding language, language learners, teachers and learning itself affect curricula and, in turn, actual classroom practice. This analysis of the literature on CLT will show the historical development of researchers' understanding of communication in the language learning classroom and the advantages and shortcomings of these. In addition, the analysis will

reveal the potential contributions of Wittgenstein's *Spätphilosophie* to the continued evolution of CLT within the postmethod paradigm.

The results of the textual analysis will be discussed in chapters three and four. These chapters will summarize what knowledge has been gained in the relatively short history of SLA and CLT and how this has affected theory and practice in language pedagogy. Chapter five explores the ways in which the ideas in Wittgenstein's work, the *Philosophische Untersuchungen*, can facilitate the development of CLT in the context of the postmethod paradigm in language teaching. This chapter integrates some of Wittgenstein's key concepts into a model which defines an understanding of language, language learners, and language learning that is grounded in the successes of the past and which is also compatible with the postmethod challenge.

Because of the conceptual overlap of terms and ideas, it is important to emphasize that this project will not attempt to prove or disprove Wittgenstein's direct influence on the fields of research discussed in the analysis. As S. Morris Engel, author of *Wittgenstein's Doctrine of the Tyranny of Language* (1971) aptly observed:

> …it is not what one writer owes to, or has borrowed from another that is really of any great interest; rather it is what he has done with it and the new kind of life he has breathed into it that is of interest to us. And from this point of view there can be no doubt that Wittgenstein has added… a new dimension to the thought and ideas of these thinkers and expressed their insights in a new and striking idiom, one which… is alive with meaning for us. …to give a philosophical idea a new expression is in a very real sense to rediscover it. (Engel, 1971, p. xvi).

With that in mind, this project's focus on Wittgenstein's later philosophy, its indirect contributions to other fields, and its potential to propel current theory forward is intended to clarify some fuzzyassumptions which have until recently pervaded common understandings of language and communication. An analysis of Wittgenstein's *Philosophische Untersuchungen* and a comparison of its theoretical underpinnings with those of CLT will reveal the similarities these philosophies of language share. Moreover, an integration of Wittgenstein's ideas into the theoretical framework of CLT will provide some insights into how principles may be translated

into appropriate communicative classroom procedures as the era of postmethod pedagogy simultaneously supports and challenges its assumptions.

1.3. Context: Language and Language Pedagogy in the 20th Century

A brief overview of some major developments by language philosophers and linguists in the course of the past century reveals the evolution of our current understanding of the nature of language and language teaching. In the early twentieth century, words and sentences were understood as a system used to describe the world, but as the century progressed, this widely accepted notion was beginning to change within academic circles. Research in the philosophy of language will be important for this project because the analysis seeks to describe and develop certain implicit assumptions about language that underlie past and existing approaches to language teaching. The writings of Ludwig Wittgenstein as well as J.L. Austin, and J.R. Searle are particularly valuable because they represent a historical shift away from conceptualizations of *language as system* in philosophy toward a conceptualization of language as *contextualized discourse*. This movement ultimately had a profound influence in the field of linguistics.

1.3.1. Developments in 20th Century Language Philosophy

In the 1930's and 40's, the work of the language philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein began to shed light on the fact that traditional understandings of language were insufficient in providing explanations for language use. Wittgenstein's later writings, including *Das Blaue Buch* and *Das Braune Buch*, which were dictated to students between 1933-35 and published in 1958, as well as the *Philosophische Untersuchungen*, which were published posthumously in 1953, show the inadequacy of explanations which treat language as a static system of naming objects and stating facts and discuss a new way of understanding meaning in language. Wittgenstein elaborates on the concept of *Sprachspiele* (language-games) which are governed by *Regelfolgen* (rule following) and which illustrate his argument that language is woven into activities and *Lebensformen* (forms of life). These works, considered to be part of his *Spätphilosophie*, proved to be ahead of their time. For the purpose of this work, the *Philosophische Untersuchungen* will be the focal point of the analysis because they comprise the main arguments about language that are found scattered throughout *Das Blaue Buch* and *Das Braune Buch*. The contents of the

Philosophische Untersuchungen and their and relevance to SLA will be discussed in depth in chapter two. First, it will be helpful to examine shortly the work of subsequent influential language philosophers in order to demonstrate that our collective understanding of language today was strongly influenced by the understanding of language that is evident in Wittgensein's lectures and writings.

Another language philosopher whose work dealt with the nature of language was John Langshaw Austin. Austin, like Wittgenstein, recognized the shortcomings of the view of language as system. He introduced new terms in order to demonstrate that multiple types of utterances exist, some of which do not fit into the traditional framework for describing the function of 'sentences'. For example, he draws a distinction between *constative* and *performative* utterances. In doing so, he argues that speech itself can be a form of action and dispels the myth, popular in his time, that the function of language is purely descriptive.

Constative utterances, according to Austin (1962), are 'true or false' statements about the world that are 'verifiable' (pp. 2-3). This distinction is the result of some debate in philosophy regarding what constitutes a 'statement':

It was for too long the assumption of philosophers that the business of a 'statement' can only be to 'describe' some state of affairs, or to 'state some fact', which it must do either truly or falsely. Grammarians, indeed, have regularly pointed out that not all 'sentences' are (used in making) statements: there are, traditionally, besides (grammarians') statements, also questions and exclamations, and sentences expressing commands or wishes or concessions. (Austin, 1962, p.1)

Constative utterances are, therefore, those 'sentences' traditionally described by philosophers, those that in fact 'describe' or 'state facts'. *Performative utterances*, on the other hand, are those utterances which satisfy the following conditions:

A.   They do not ,describe' or ,report' or constate anything at all, are not 'true or false'; and

B.   The uttering of the sentence is, or is a part of, the doing of an action, which again would not *normally* be described as saying anything. (Austin, 1962, p.5)

Austin's initial differentiation between constative and performative utterances eventually gave way to an understanding that even constative utterances can function as performative utterances.

A central concept that emerges out of Austin's work is the *illocutionary act*, which refers to a person's *intention* in saying or writing something to another person. Besides having the function of stating a fact or describing some state of affairs, an utterance may be intended to inform, greet, warn, threaten, promise or convince the hearer or reader (Linke, Nussbaumer & Portmann, 2004, p. 210). The publication of Austin's work provided the impetus in the field of linguistics for the study of the use of language in order to understand its meaning. John R. Searle, also a language philosopher and a student of Austin's, continued to work with Austin's concept of illocutionary acts and developed the notion of *Speech Acts*, which he published in his work *Speech Acts* (1969). He emphasizes that language is not an abstract object that can be analysed independently from communication, but rather that the meaning of words and sentences is wrapped up entirely in their role in communication. Searle quickly became the leading expert on Speech Act Theory and proved to be rather influential in the field of applied linguistics.

Searle describes four components, or smaller "acts", which together comprise a speech act: the *locutionary act*, the *propositional act,* the *illocutionary act* and the *perlocutionary act*. (Searle, 1969, pp. 23-24). The locutionary act is the act of speaking or writing, thereby making use of the phonemes, morphemes, words and sentences available in a given language. The propositional act is the fact that these words and sentences refer to things in the world (in the broadest sense) and say something about them. The illocutionary act, central to both Austin's and Searle's work, describes the intention of the speaker or writer; illocutions describe the use of utterances to fulfill certain functions according to the speaker's intentions (see examples above). Finally, the perlocutionary act is the intended or expected reaction of the listener or reader. The speaker or writer may hope achieve some secondary effect within the hearer or reader, for example to make her/him happy, prevent her/him from doing something, intimidate or encourage her/him or bring her/him to a certain reaction by saying something. A speech act is therefore understood to be the simultaneous occurrence of all four of these 'component' acts. (Searle, 1969, p. 23).

Language philosophers like Wittgenstein, Austin and Searle contributed to philosophers' and linguists' changing view of language. Speech Act Theory in particular influenced the development of linguistics in a direction which increasingly took into consideration the *context* of language use. This eventually led researchers to the assumption that "analysis must begin by treating language as something embedded within contexts of human action…instead of seeking to specify the properties of a single, ideal, formal system, analysis must focus on the variety of ways in which language is deployed to accomplish understanding and action in a multiplicity of situations of use" (Goodwin & Duranti, 1992, p. 16).

1.3.2. Developments in 20th Century Linguistics

The discussion above traces the philosophical path taken by a few key language philosophers and the ways in which their work became relevant to the field of linguistics. Researchers in other fields made indirect contributions to linguistics as well based on their findings regarding aspects of language use. For example, the anthropologist Dell Hymes (1972) contributed to the field of linguistics through his work by coining the term *communicative competence*, which refers to the parameters he puts forth as way of evaluating a person's communicative behavior. A person's degree of communicative competence is assessed according to four parameters of competence: *systematic potential, appropriateness, occurrence, and feasibility*. Hymes' work lent strength to the growing understanding that effective language use is comprised not only of a speaker's knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, but also of his or her knowledge of and ability to respond to the contextual factors which govern speech.

The term *communicativecompetence* would later be borrowed by applied linguists and adapted to describe language learners' ability to communicate in the target language. Researchers Canale and Swain effectively integrated Hymes' term *communicativecompetence* into the field of applied linguistics in their article "Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing" (1980), which appeared in the first issue of the academic journal *Applied Linguistics*. In this article they describe three parameters for the assessment of language learners' communicative competence: *grammatical, sociolinguistic, and*

strategic competences, and in 1983, Canale identified a fourth parameter, *discourse competence*, within this model.

The contributions of Hymes and Canale & Swain will be dealt with in more detail in chapter three, which examines the state of language teaching leading up to and after the communicative turn in applied linguistics. What is important to note here is that the research of linguists in the twentieth century led them to incorporate new understandings of language into their work and to conclude that the study of language needed to include a consideration of the context and purposes of language use. These crucial changes in perspective led to what is referred to as the communicative turn, which would have a direct impact on the practice of language teaching.

1.3.3. Developments in 20th Century Language Teaching

The field of linguistics' evolving understanding of the nature of language can shed some light on twentieth century pedagogy's journey to find the right "method" for teaching languages. The grammar-translation method, popular in the first half of the twentieth century, focused on precisely those two elements of language learning: grammar and translation. Listening and speaking were largely ignored, and the practice of spontaneous, creative language use did not even occur to teachers as a useful exercise in the classroom. The lack of listening and speaking skills displayed by language learners in the grammar-translation method and in light of the growing need for learners to acquire these skills revealed the shortcomings of this method.

The audio-lingual method, following on the heels of the grammar-translation method and reacting to its shortcomings, focused primarily on listening and speaking skills. However, the audio-lingual method also largely failed to produce language speakers who were able to use language spontaneously and creatively. Only since the communicative turn in applied linguistics did educators begin to understand the importance of fostering learners' ability to communicate in a foreign or second language. As can be seen from this progression in language pedagogy, the notion of language as system gradually shifted into an understanding of language as communication. However, as we will see below, this shift in the understanding of the nature of language did not result in an automatic understanding of how to *teach* communication in

language use; rather, this process was just beginning at the communicative turn, and indeed it continues to take place.

The communicative approach to language teaching emerged as a reaction to the audio-lingual method, and this approach continued to evolve as new "communicative methods" came in and out of fashion. CLT's understanding of the role of communication in the classroom is reflected in the various phases of its development. The first phase undergone by CLT was one characterized by an assumption that teaching grammar was not useful and should be avoided. The focus of this phase was on fluency, and communication was defined primarily as a listening/speaking activity rather than as a reading/writing activity. This early phase was largely pre-theoretical and was not based on solid linguistic research, a fact that is evident in Savignon's (1983) writings as well as the Council of Europe's use of the Notional-Functional Syllabus (Matthies, 1982) to promote multilingualism. Although important insights were being gained at this time in the fields of sociolinguistics and pragmatics, these ideas had not yet found their way into the field of language pedagogy.

The second phase in CLT was characterized by the incorporation of linguistic research which eventually led the field of language pedagogy to understand that successful communication is comprised not only of learners' application of linguistic skills, but also of their metalinguistic skills. The work of researchers such as Widdowson (1978), Canale and Swain (1980) and Nunan (1987, 1989, 1991) represents the formation of clearer theoretical underpinnings in the literature on CLT and a growing awareness that teaching practice needed to be driven by research-based theory. These two phases of CLT are by no means chronological; rather, they share a certain degree of overlap as the field struggled to define the basic tenets of communicative language teaching.

During the 1980's and 90's, various teaching methods that fell loosely under the umbrella term of "communicative approaches" were being used in language classrooms. However, a growing dissatisfaction with the results of these method trends culminated in a shift towards a postmethod pedagogy, which could be seen as the third and current phase experienced by CLT. Postmethod pedagogy emphasizes language teaching that retains components of the previous two

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phases of CLT (as well as the best of 'traditional' practices) while discarding others that have proved to be less effective. It aims to draw on the best of the collective knowledge and experience of the past to create, through the parameters of particularity, practicality and possibility, pedagogies that are context-sensitive and to optimize learning opportunities through the implementation of various principles or macrostrategies.

Even as the postmethod era begins to take clearer theoretical shape and finds its way into the classroom, many archaic understandings regarding the nature of language, learners, and language learning remain, to some degree, entrenched in the conceptualization of what it means to teach language as communication. Some of these traditional beliefs, if left unaddressed, will certainly hinder the effectiveness of postmethod pedagogies and CLT's ability to adapt within this paradigm. It is at this juncture that an examination of basic philosophical beliefs is most needed; the postmethod challenge facing CLT requires that researchers and teachers reevaluate its basic assumptions in order to rethink CLT's relevance and flexibility within postmethod pedagogic parameters.

As we have seen in the brief summary above on twentieth century developments in language philosophy, linguistics and language pedagogy, the shift in language philosophy Wittgenstein initiated eventually found its way into the field of applied linguistics and began to have an impact on the ways languages were taught. The subsequent chapters will focus on some key developments in these fields and set the stage for reflection upon the connections between theory and practice that will be the connecting theme throughout the analysis.

1.4. Basic Concepts in Related Fields

For the sake of clarity in the subsequent sections, I will first define some key concepts and terms which will be used throughout the analysis. The first set of definitions below will explore various concepts regarding the nature of language and communication, which will be themes of central importance in the analysis of the literature on language philosophy throughout the twentieth century. The second set of definitions deals with terms and concepts within the fields of linguistics and language pedagogy and establishes other important terminology that will be

employed in the analysis. Not all key terms are discussed here; a few others will be defined in subsequent chapters.

1.4.1. Language in Language Philosophy

Sprachphilosophie(the philosophy of language) is defined by Searle (1969) as "the attempt to give philosophically illuminating descriptions of certain general features of language, such as reference, truth, meaning, and necessity; and it is concerned only incidentally with particular elements in a particular language" (Searle, 1969, p. 4).

The changing definition of language in philosophy was a critical turning point for the field in the early twentieth century. Wittgenstein, in the opening paragraphs of his *Philosophische Untersuchungen,* reflects upon the traditional understanding of language as articulated by Augustine in his work *Confessions.* Augustine explains the process of language learning in children in the following excerpt:

Nannten die Erwachsenen irgendeinen Gegenstand und wandten sie sich dabei ihm zu, so nahm ich das wahr und ich begriff, daß der Gegenstand durch die Laute, die sie aussprachen, bezeichnet wurde, da sie auf *ihn* hinweisen wollten. Dies aber entnahm ich aus ihren Gebärden, der natürlichen Sprache aller Völker, der Sprache, die durch Mienen-und Augenspiel, durch die Bewegungen der Glieder und den Klang der Stimme die Empfindungen der Seele anzeigt, wenn diese irgend etwas begehrt, oder festhält, oder zurückweist, oder flieht. So lernte ich nach und nach verstehen, welche Dinge die Wörter bezeichneten, die ich wieder und wieder, an ihren bestimmten Stellen in verschiedenen Sätzen, aussprechen hörte. Und ich brachte, als nun mein Mund sich an diese Zeichen gewöhnt hatte, durch sie meine Wünsche zum Ausdruck. (Augustinus, Confessiones I/8 in Wittgenstein, 1953, p. 237)

Here, Augustine describes his belief that languages are learned by children through a process of "naming": Adults point to objects and say their names, and through imitation and repetition, children learn the names of everything around them. Wittgenstein refers to this idea later when he writes: "Etwas benennen, das ist etwas Ähnliches, wie einem Ding ein Namenstäfelchen anheften" (p. 244). Wittgenstein's *Spätphilosophie*, however, differs from that of Augustine in

several regards which he deals with in the ensuing sections of the *Philosophische Untersuchungen*. He identifies the core of Augustine's understanding of language as, simply put, a *system* for referential meaning (Wittgenstein, 1953, p. 239), but he also points out that this understanding of language as a referential system is limited, for it does not account for all the instances of language use we observe (p. 239).

Wittgenstein's work articulates an alternate explanation for the nature of language. This explanation is comprised of several individual arguments and observations that are scattered throughout various sections of the *Philosophische Untersuchungen.* One such paragraph illustrates Wittgenstein's reservations about Augustine's explanation for language:

> Die Kinder werden dazu erzogen, *diese* Tätigkeiten zu verrichten, *diese* Wörter dabei zu gebrauchen, und *so* auf die Worte des Anderen zu reagieren... Dieses hinweisende Lehren der Wörter, kann man sagen, schlägt eine assoziative Verbindung zwischen dem Wort und dem Ding: Aber was heißt das? Nun, es kann Verschiedenes heißen; aber man denkt wohl zunächst daran, dass dem Kind das Bild des Dings vor die Seele tritt, wenn es das Wort hört... Wenn aber das das hinweisende Lehren bewirkt,- soll ich sagen, es bewirkt das Verstehen des Worts? Versteht nicht der den Ruf „Platte!", der so und so nach ihm handelt? (Wittgenstein, 1953, p. 240)

Such illustrative examples in Wittgenstein's work reveal that his *Spätphilosophie* includes, but yet goes far beyond, a view of language as system, which was the predominant view in his time. He does not reject the role of "naming" in the language learning process, but he observes that this is not at the core of learning to communicate. Rather, an understanding of how to use language and react appropriately to the language use of others constitutes the greater part of language learning. This view of the nature of language and the view of language learning it implies will be dealt with in subsequent chapters as they relate to language use in the language classroom. If the linguistic activity in language classrooms consists only of naming and mimicking, then the significance of language as a mode of communication is disregarded. Wittgenstein's insights on the nature of language were prophetic of the revolutions in language

philosophy and linguistics that were to occur later in the twentieth century, and as we will see, they continue to be relevant to the field of language pedagogy in the twenty-first century.

The term *Sprachspiel* (language-game) will be of central importance for this work. Wittgenstein uses this term to describe the way in which language is woven into the fabric of everyday activities of a given speech community: "Das Wort 'Sprachspiel' soll hier hervorheben, daß das Sprechen der Sprache ein Teil ist einer Tätigkeit, oder einer Lebensform" (Wittgenstein, 1953, p. 250). In other words, it means that "the use of language [has to be understood] in terms of a rule-governed, self-contained practice, like a game" (Blackburn, 2008).

Kleppin (1980) explores the connections between language learning and games in the language classroom. Kleppin's discussion of the *Sprachlernspiel*, however, is a separate concept from the language-game described by Wittgenstein because it does not examine language as a whole, but rather the "game" of language learning. *Language play* is identified by Cook (2000) as one of the preferred means of passing on information and values in society and which has an intrinsic pedagogic function in many contexts. Language play can therefore take many forms: two of the most common are literary and religious texts (Cook, 62). The popularity and effectiveness of games in education (in the broadest sense) stems from the ability of *play* to teach beliefs and practices non-explicitly. That is, games teach such things indirectly because the focus is on the successful execution of the game and not on the mastery of the content, which has the effect of distracting learners from the learning process. However, this does not mean that learning does not occur; in fact, Kleppin argues that learning to play a game successfully results in the mastery of its underlying content (Kleppin, 1980, pp. 7-8).

Despite the potential confusion of these concepts, it is important to note that Kleppin's and Cook's use of the terms *Sprachlernspiel* and *language play* demonstrate that elements of Wittgenstein's terminology have found their way into the field of language pedagogy. However, in this work, the term *language-game* is understood as it is used by Wittgenstein; it refers to the ways in which language is intertwined with history, culture, politics, and countless other aspects of society. *Sprachlernspiel* and *language play* are therefore not unrelated to Wittgenstein's concept of the language-game, but there are clear boundaries between these terms.

Two other terms will surface frequently in this work: *Lebensform* (forms of life) and *Regelfolgen* (rule following). According to Wittgenstein, learning to play the language-game entails learning *forms of words* as well as *forms of life*, as these two elements of the language-game are inseparable: "Eine Sprache vorstellen heißt, sich eine Lebensform vorstellen" (Wittgenstein, 1953, p. 246). Therefore, *Lebensform* comprises all the activities into which language is woven. *Regelfolgen* can be defined as the process by which language users follow formal rules of grammar as well as the informal rules of speech and interaction that govern language use; however, these are not necessarily explicitly understood by those who follow them. These three terms: *Sprachspiel, Lebensform,* and *Regelfolgen* will be examined further in chapter two, which deals at length with Wittgenstein's use of these concepts in the *Philosophische Untersuchungen (Philosophical Investigations,* henceforth *PU).*

1.4.2. Language in Language Pedagogy

The understandings of language that were prevalent in twentieth century pedagogy fall roughly into three categories: language as system, language as discourse, and language as ideology. *Language as system* sums up the dominant understanding of language that pervaded language pedagogy up until the 1970's; it assumes that "a study of language is basically a study of its systems and subsystems" (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 4). This is the view of language challenged by Wittgenstein, Austin, and Searle which eventually changed linguists' perception of the nature of language. These language philosophers initiated the movement to understand *language asdiscourse,* which for the purposes of this work will be defined as "spoken or written language that has describable internal relationships of form and meaning (e.g., words, structures, cohesion) that relate coherently to an external communicative function or purpose and a given audience/interlocutor" (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000, p. 4).

Finally, *language as ideology* takes into consideration that language is the vehicle for ideology; that is to say, language is the medium through which "broader social, cultural, political, and historical structures…have a bearing on classroom input and interaction" (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 16). These three views of language, and especially the third view,

offer many insights not only into the nature of language, but also into the way languages are taught and the way language learners are viewed.

Some discussion on the definition of "approach", "method", "theories of learning" and other related concepts will be helpful before the analysis gets underway. Due to the varied and overlapping use of these terms in the literature, some clarification is needed to determine how they will be used throughout the rest of this work.

In Richards and Rodgers (2001), the term *approach* is based on Antony's (1963) definition: "An approach is a set of correlative assumptions dealing with the nature of language teaching and learning. An approach is axiomatic. It describes the nature of the subject matter to be taught" (Antony, 1963, pp. 63-67). Antony's definition is described as referring to "theories about the nature of language and language learning that serve as the source of practices and principles in language teaching" (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 20). Other researchers, including Richards and Rodgers themselves, noticed that Antony's categories were inadequate for explaining the various levels of organization within language teaching and therefore developed categories of their own.

In the course of this thesis, the term *approach* will be understood according to Antony's definition because of its simplicity and value within the evolution of language pedagogy. However, for the purposes of the analysis I will more frequently make use of Kumaravadivelu's (2006) distinction between *principles* and *procedures* in which the term *principles* encompasses Antony's concepts of approach and *method*, which he defines as "an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material, no part of which contradicts, and all of which is based upon, the selected approach" (Antony, 1963, pp. 63-67).

Principles will therefore be defined as "a set of insights derived from theoretical and applied linguistics, cognitive psychology, information sciences, and other allied disciplines that provide theoretical bases for the study of language learning, language planning, and language teaching" (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 89). *Procedures*, will be defined as "a set of teaching strategies adopted/adapted by the teacher in order to accomplish the stated and unstated, short- and long-term goals of language learning and teaching in the classroom" (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 89).

This term encompasses, but is not limited to, elements of both Antony's term *technique* and Richards and Rodgers' term *procedure*.

Kumaravadivelu's terms *principles* and *procedures* will be helpful for the description of methods as well as for the categorization of the three developmental stages of CLT discussed in the analysis. The rationale for the use of this two-tiered descriptive framework (rather than the three-tiered frameworks put forth by Anthony and Richards and Rodgers) is that in the current postmethod era of language pedagogy, the traditional dichotomies between the activities of researchers, syllabus designers, and teachers are "inadequate in the current pedagogic environment in which the teacher is increasingly playing, at the local level, multiple roles of teacher, researcher, syllabus designer, and materials producer" (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 88). In light of this movement toward more integrated and reflective roles for teachers, the terms *principles* and *procedures* are most appropriate because they underscore the importance of the evolving role of the postmethod teacher (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, pp. 178-181). Kumaravadivelu also distinguishes between *method* and *methodology*. *Method* refers to the various overall prescriptive plans forlanguage teaching that have been "conceptualized and constructed by experts in the field" and *methodology* refers to "what practicing teachers actually do in the classroom in order to achieve their stated or unstated teaching objectives" (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 84).

Some theories of language learning which influenced twentieth century language pedagogy need further explanation as well, as they reveal important connections between principles and procedures. For example, behaviourism, according to Lightbown and Spada, is "a theory of learning that was very influential in the 1940's and 1950's, especially in the United States" (Lightbown & Spada, 2006, p. 10) which "had a powerful influence on second and foreign language teaching… between the 1940's and the 1970's" (Lightbown & Spada, 2006, p. 34). Behaviourists understood language learning to be the successful formation of correct language habits through positive reinforcement of accurate imitation of sounds and patterns (Lightbown & Spada, 2006, p. 10). In foreign language teaching, this view led to an emphasis on drill- and mimicry-focused activities and the memorization of dialogues and sentence patterns (Lightbown

& Spada, 2006, p.34). This theory dominated the discourses on language teaching principles and procedures until the communicative turn in the 1970's.

Communicative Language Teaching is the name given to a dominant approach to language teaching that came into vogue after the advent of the communicative turn. As Brandl points out, "CLT is not a method per se. That is…it is not a method in the sense by which content, a syllabus, and teaching routines are clearly identified" (Brandl, 2008, p. 6). It is also important to note that "CLT does not adhere to one particular theory or method. It draws its theories about learning and teaching from a wide range of areas such as cognitive science, educational psychology and second language acquisition" (Brandl, 2008, p. 6).

Task-based language teaching (TBLT), also called task-based instruction (TBI) could be considered to be an extension of CLT, and is defined as "an approach to the design of language courses in which the point of departure is not an ordered list of linguistic items, but a collection of tasks" (Nunan, 1999, p. 24). The concept 'task' has been defined in several ways by researchers in the field, including Long (1985) and Richards, Platt, and Weber (1986), but for the purposes of this thesis, 'tasks' will be defined according to Nunan's description of pedagogical tasks:

> [A pedagogical task is] a piece of classroom work that involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing, or interacting in the target language while their attention is focused on mobilizing their grammatical knowledge in order to express meaning, and in which the intention is to convey meaning rather than to manipulate form. The task should also have a sense of completeness, being able to stand alone as a communicative act in its own right with a beginning, a middle, and an end. (Nunan, 1989, p. 10)

Despite the differences in competing definitions of *task*, there seems to be some agreement on certain points, perhaps most importantly, a focus on the meaningful use of language. As Brandl observes, "this criterion supports the notion that conveying an intended meaning is the essence of language use" (Brandl, 2008, p. 8).

1.5. Summary

This first chapter has begun by identifying the goals of the present work and by discussing some of the key questions and concepts it will address. In addition, the theory, methodology and categories for the analysis have been named and discussed briefly. In the third and four chapters of this thesis, three evolutionary phases of CLT will be identified based on the development of researchers' beliefs about the nature of language, the language learner, and language learning. These beliefs reflect to a great extent the degree to which research in a variety of fields affected theory and practice in language teaching. In addition, the emergence of a new field of research (SLA) served to expedite the collection and application of research on issues relevant to the teaching and learning of languages. Before the analysis of the emergence and development of CLT commences, chapter two will discuss at length the understanding of the concepts of language, language learners, and language learning implicit in Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Philosophische Untersuchungen*.

Chapter 2: Wittgenstein and Language Philosophy

This chapter will examine the *Spätphilosophie* of Ludwig Wittgenstein based on his work *Philosophische Untersuchungen* (*PU*) and its relevance to the field of SLA. Wittgenstein, a philosopher born in 1889 in Vienna "…gilt als einflussreicher Philosoph des 20. Jahrhunderts und wird im Zusammenhang mit Nietzsche und der Postmoderne als ein bedeutender Kritiker der traditionellen Philosophie bezeichnet" (Wuchterl & Hübner, 2001, p. 126). Many subsequent philosophical movements and schools of thought were influenced by both his early and later philosophy: "Die Ordinary Language Philosophy, die sprachanalytische Philosophie, die Oxford School, die linguistische Philosophie, der Strukturalismus…betrachten Wittgenstein als ihren geistigen Vater" (Wuchterl & Hübner, 2001, p. 126). Wittgenstein's whole work is "dominated by a concern with the nature of language, the way in which it represents the world, and the implications this has for logic and mathematics. In the early work language is treated in relative abstraction from the activities of human beings, but in the late period […]the emphasis shifts dramatically to the actions of people and the role their linguistic activities play in their lives" (Blackburn, 2008).

Wuchterl and Hübner, in their analysis of Wittgenstein's legacy, mention three of his most important contributions. The first is his initiation of the "linguistic turn" in philosophy which led to the development of *analyticalphilosophy*. This philosophical tradition integrates logic, language, and empirical science and is demonstrated in the work of Moore, Frege, Russell, Austin, Searle, and others (Wuchterl & Hübner, 2001, p.127). The second contribution is the inspiration he provided in other areas of research. For example, the field of linguistics owes much of its twentieth century development to the ideas in Wittgenstein's works:

> Die Wende der Sprachwissenschaft von der positivistischen Sprachauffassung einerseits und der hermeneutischen Geistteorie andererseits hin zu einer weniger geheimnisvollen Betrachtung, die das Ganze der kommunikativen Bedingungen einbezieht, ist das Verdienst Wittgensteins. Dabei sieht er Sprache nicht nur als Informationsinstrument, sondern auch und vor allem als zentrale Manifestation mannigfacher menschlicher Lebensformen (Wuchterl & Hübner, 2001, p. 128).

The third contribution is one of a new paradigm: "Wittgenstein wird zum Kronzeugen für die Postmoderne" because his ideas are especially compatible with postmodern thought and have continued to surface in the works of postmodern thinkers, including J.-F. Lyotard (Wuchterl & Hübner, 2001, p. 130). These three key contributions of Wittgenstein's work distinguish him as a brilliant thinker whose ideas continue to be of relevance in many fields.

2.1. Wittgenstein's Sprachphilosophie and the *Philosophische Untersuchungen*

It would be impossible to provide here a complete overview of Wittgenstein's Sprachphilosophie, considering the length, complexity, and possibilities for interpretation and application of his works. This analysis will deal with just one of his works which is considered to be central to his later philosophy: *Philosophische Untersuchungen* (henceforth *PU* in all citations referring to this work; replaces *Wittgenstein, 1953*). The rationale for the inclusion of only this work is that the *PU* are most compatible with the topic of language education. They are particularly relevant to the current discussions surrounding the concept of postmethod pedagogy because they deal with the most basic questions teachers and researchers deal with when they reflect upon the nature of language, learners, and language learning.

The *PU*, a collection of Wittgenstein's notes, was first published posthumously in 1953 and elaborates on some ideas begun in other works of his later philosophy, including the *Blue Book* and the *Brown Book*. Because of the structure of the notes within *Teil 1* (Part One), all citations shall include a number which corresponds with the entry from which the quote was taken; this number allows the reader to look up the quotes in any edition of this work. Also included in the citations is the page number from the edition recorded in the works cited.

Wittgenstein expands upon several ideas in the *PU*, including what is often called the "tyranny of language" (Engel, 1971); that is, language's ability to trap, confuse, and deceive its users. Therefore, this theme underlies much of his arguments and surfaces frequently in his work. In fact, Wittgenstein considers the examination of this concept to be the main aim of philosophy: "Was ist dein Ziel in der Philosophie? –Der Fliege den Ausweg aus dem Fliegenglas zeigen" (PU,309, p.378). That is, he wants to reveal the ways in which language limits our ability to understand and talk about everything in the world, including language. In other words,

in order to talk about language, we must use language, and this can lead to "die Verhexung unsres Verstandes durch die Mittel unserer Sprache" (PU, 109, p. 299). Searle (1969) also commented on this paradox:

> …when I, speaking as a native speaker, make linguistic characterizations…, I am not reporting the behaviour of a group but describing aspects of my mastery of a rule-governed skill. And…since the linguistic characterizations, if made in the same language as the elements characterized, are themselves utterances in accordance with the rules, such characterizations are manifestations of that mastery (Searle, 1969, p. 12).

The PU also investigate several topics that are relevant to the study of second language teaching and learning. These topics will be the focus of this project's analysis and include his discussion of *Sprachspiele, Regelfolgen,*and *Lebensform*. Wittgenstein grapples with these concepts through the use of many illustrative examples, taken both from the "real world" and from hypothetical languages and situations, in order to reveal the possibilities and limitations of language. These examples and Wittgenstein's comments on them slowly reveal a broader picture regarding the nature of language and language learning that is the focus of this project.

In the course of the analysis it will become clear that Wittgenstein's theory of language as it is formulated in the PU was ahead of its time and set the fields of philosophy and linguistics on the paths they took through the second half of the twentieth century. The following sections will provide an outline and brief analysis of some key elements of Wittgenstein's *PU*. The analysis will reveal the relevance of Wittgenstein's conceptualizations of language, the learner, and language learning to the field of SLA within a postmodern perspective.

2.2. Wittgenstein's Concept of Language

Wittgenstein begins his exploration of the nature of language by bringing into question the understanding of language that was dominant in his time. In the introductory paragraphs of the *PU*, he questions the view of language embodied by Augustine's account of how he learned to speak his native language. Wittgenstein's criticism of this explanation does not turn out to be an outright rejection of it, but rather an insistence that Augustine's account is insufficient to explain the complex nature of language and aspects of language learning that are less obvious. While

acknowledging the validity of language as system as described by Augustine, Wittgenstein is not completely satisfied with it.

One fallacy inherent in Augustine's account of language and language learning is that meaning and language are separate entities and that meanings are universal, regardless of the language used to express them. Wittgenstein argues that meaning is constructed *within* language, because one is not able to conceive of meaning without the use of language: „Wenn ich in der Sprache denke, so schweben mir nicht neben dem sprachlichen Ausdruck noch ‚Bedeutungen' vor; sondern die Sprache selbst ist das Vehikel des Denkens" (PU, 329, p. 384).

Thus, the claim that "language is grammar" and the claim that one can understand meaning in language purely through an understanding of its grammar are both dispelled. This rejection of a narrow view of language as system becomes even clearer in the various metaphors and similes Wittgenstein uses to talk about language. Because Wittgenstein's concept of language often emerges in "parable" form, a concise definition of language in the *PU* must be constructed by the reader. For example:

> Denk an die Werkzeuge in einem Werkzeugkasten: es ist da ein Hammer, eine Zange, eine Säge, ein Schraubenzieher, ein Maßstab, ein Leimtopf, Leim, Nägel und Schrauben. –So verschieden die Funktionen dieser Gegenstände, so verschieden sind die Funktionen der Wörter...(aber) ihre *Verwendung* steht nicht so deutlich vor uns. (PU, 11, p. 243).

Here, Wittgenstein compares languagestructures to tools in a toolbox: grammar and vocabulary are the "tools" needed in order to communicate. However, he points out that the uses of linguistic tools are not as clear as those of the carpenter's tools. Wittgenstein sets out in the PU to explain the phenomenon of language use and uses the terms *Sprachspiel, Lebensform,* and *Regelfolgen* to illustrate his conclusions.

2.2.1. Language and *Sprachspiel*

When Wittgenstein discusses language, he places a high degree of emphasis on the *context* of language use: "Ich werde auch das Ganze: der Sprache und der Tätigkeiten, mit denen sie verwoben ist, das „Sprachspiel" nennen" (PU, 7, p. 241). This quote is perhaps the most concise definition of *Sprachspiel* formulated by Wittgenstein in the *PU*. Simple in its expression, it

explains the basic elements of this new concept: a *language-game* is comprised of language and the activities with which it is woven. However, the view of language it comprises has far-reaching implications: Language is no longer considered to be a simple entity that can be studied in isolation. Rather, it is understood as a thoroughly integrated aspect of human activity. Wittgenstein provides an illuminating example of how this is the case:

> Was ist nun der Unterschied zwischen der Meldung, oder Behauptung, "Fünf Platten" und dem Befehl „Fünf Platten!"? – Nun, die Rolle, die das Aussprechen dieser Worte im Sprachspiel spielt. Aber es wird wohl auch der Ton, in dem sie ausgesprochen werden, ein anderer sein, und die Miene, und noch manches andere. Aber wir können uns auch denken, dass der Ton der gleiche ist, – denn ein Befehl und eine Meldung können in *mancherlei* Ton ausgesprochen werden und mit mancherlei Miene- und dass der Unterschied allein in der Verwendung liegt (PU, 21, p. 248).

Here, Wittgenstein points out that it is impossible to assess the meaning of utterances and categorize them as statements, questions or commands based on pure grammatical analysis. It is neither the tone in which an utterance is spoken, nor is it the expression on the speaker's face when he or she speaks that establishes the function of an utterance. Rather, it is the *rolethe utterance plays in a given context* that reveals its function. The centrality of this tenet surfaces frequently and is reiterated in Wittgenstein's subsequent notes on *Sprachspiele*. Throughout the twentieth century, researchers in the field of linguistics have continued to comment on this lack of a one to one relationship between form and function, as well as the importance of context in the interpretation of meaning. As Wilkins (1976) points out: "An individual sentence can be used to perform virtually any function in the language and consequently any function may take a variety of forms" (p. 56).

Wittgenstein laments the lack of attention philosophers had formerly paid to the diversity of possibilities of expression in language, which resulted in simplistic understandings of how grammatical forms relate to the functions of language:

> Wieviele Arten der Sätze gibt es aber? Etwa Behauptung, Frage und Befehl? –Es gibt *unzählige* solcher Arten: unzählige verschiedene Arten der Verwendung alles dessen, was wir

„Zeichen", „Worte", „Sätze" nennen. Und diese Mannigfaltigkeit ist nichts Festes, ein für allemal Gegebenes; sondern neue Typen der Sprache, neue Sprachspiele, wie wir sagen können, entstehen und andre veralten und werden vergessen... Führe dir die Mannigfaltigkeit der Sprachspiele an diesen Beispielen, und anderen, vor Augen: Befehlen, und nach Befehlen handeln; Beschreiben eines Gegenstands nach dem Ansehen, oder nach Messungen; Herstellen eines Gegenstands nach einer Beschreibung (Zeichnung); Berichten eines Hergangs; Über den Hergang Vermutungen anstellen; Eine Hypothese aufstellen und prüfen; Darstellen der Ergebnisse eines Experiments durch Tabellen und Diagramme; Eine Geschichte erfinden, und lesen; Theater spielen; Reigen singen; Rätzel raten; Einen Witz machen, erzählen; Ein angewandtes Rechenexempel lösen; Aus einer Sprache in die andere übersetzen; Bitten, Danken, Fluchen, Grüßen, Beten. – Es ist interessant, die Mannigfaltigkeit der Werkzeuge der Sprache und ihrer Verwendungsweisen, die Mannigfaltigkeit der Wort- und Satzarten, mit dem zu vergleichen, was Logiker über den Bau der Sprache gesagt haben (PU, 23, p. 250).

This long list of *Sprachspiele* provides insight into the variety of ways in which language and specific activities complement each other in human life. It also destroys the notion of traditional, simplistic linguistic categorizations. Wittgenstein's concept seems to provide an over-arching explanation for the way in which language and activity are connected; however, he points out that the possibilities of expression in a specific language will change over time and will be determined by contextual variables. Thus, Wittgenstein never makes the claim that all *Sprachspiele* can be identified. Rather, he draws attention to the basic interconnectedness of human language and activity while recognizing that the specific manifestations of this phenomenon will be unique within a given context. This definition of *Sprachspiel* is very fitting for a postmethod conceptualization of language because it recognizes the structural as well as the social nature of language.

The next section focuses on the concept of *Lebensform*, which reveals a third dimension of language: Ideology.

2.2.2. Language and *Lebensform*

Although the term *Lebensform* appears only occasionally in the *PU*, it is a vital element of Wittgenstein's conception of how language functions. Only within the context of *Lebensformen* can the concepts of *Sprachspiel* and *Regelfolgen* be understood. In other words, language-games and the rules of usage and use which govern them can only be understood within the parameters of a given context.

Wittgenstein's concept of *Lebensform* expresses the understanding that language is connected to and cannot be separated from specific geographical, cultural, political, and historical contexts which govern and are governed by language. This can be understood as the inescapable, ideological nature of language. In fact, Wittgenstein argues, it is impossible to imagine a language without imagining a corresponding way of life: „Und eine Sprache vorstellen heißt, sich eine Lebensform vorstellen" (PU, 19, p. 246).

Thus, Wittgenstein accounts not only for the ways in which *forms of words* and *forms of life* are connected, but also for the ways in which their union results in what might be referred to in different contexts as culture, worldview or ideology. This view of language is one which recognizes the centrality of linguistic consensus in the construction and maintenance of discourses within communities of speakers, as the following two quotes show: „So sagst du also, dass die Übereinstimmung der Menschen entscheide, was richtig und falsch ist? Richtig und falsch ist, was Menschen *sagen*; und in der *Sprache* stimmen die Menschen überein. Dies ist keine Übereinstimmung der Meinungen, sondern der Lebensform" (PU, 241, p. 356). "Was die Menschen als Rechtfertigung gelten lassen, -zeigt, wie sie denken und leben" (PU, 325, p. 383). These two quotes demonstrate Wittgenstein's claim that language is the site where people's thoughts and ways of life are constructed. Since people can only conceptualize and negotiate ideas through language, without an agreement upon certain words, expressions, and modes of discourse, there would be no basis for agreement within communities of speakers.

This understanding of language as the basis of the construction of *Lebensformen* also provides some explanation for the *irregular* characteristics of language. Indeed, a study of a

language's regular and irregular forms reveals the impact of historical developments upon language use. This becomes brilliantly clear through another one of Wittgenstein's metaphors:

> Unsere Sprache kann man ansehen als eine alte Stadt: Ein Gewinkel von Gäßchen und Plätzen, alten und neuen Häusern, und Häusern mit Zubauten aus verschiedenen Zeiten; und dies umgeben von einer Menge neuer Vororte mit geraden und regelmäßigen Straßen und mit einförmigen Häusern (PU, 18, p. 245).

Here, the unstable and dynamic nature of language is brought to the forefront. Languages contain both old and new structures; some of these grammatical elements are seemingly random, while others appear more logical. This is the result of language change, a phenomenon that can be explained only in light of the parallel development of the language's speech community. The connections between *forms of words* and *forms of life* are thus forged through language use, which evolves along historical lines. Thus, the ideological nature of language becomes evident.

The next section focuses on *Regelfolgen*, a concept which deals with the process by which the rules of language usage and use are established.

2.2.3. Language and *Regelfolgen*

The concept of rule following discussed in the PU addresses some important points which are relevant to Wittgenstein's conceptualization of language. This concept provides an explanation for the fact that language users are often not aware of the rules of use and usage which govern their language, but are nonetheless able to recognize and act according to them. One of his notes on the relationship between language and grammar reveals Wittgenstein's skepticism regarding the study of grammar as a sufficient explanation of language use: „Grammatik sagt nicht, wie die Sprache gebaut sein muss, um ihren Zweck zu erfüllen, um so und so auf Menschen zu wirken. Sie beschreibt nur, aber erklärt in keiner Weise, den Gebrauch der Zeichen" (PU, 496, p. 432).

This note reiterates an argument that surfaces repeatedly throughout the PU: That language is not synonymous to grammar. In fact, the descriptions of language *usage* found in grammar books are insufficient to explain language *use*. In addition, such records are incapable of accounting for all the ways in which language is used and thus always lag a step behind the innovations of language use.

In a discussion of Wittgenstein's concept of *Regelfolgen*, it is important to recognize the distinction between the two types of rule following he addresses: „Nennen wir eine solche Tabelle den Ausdruck einer Regel des Sprachspiels, so kann man sagen, dass dem, was wir Regel eines Sprachspiels nennen, sehr verschiedene Rollen im Spiel zukommen können" (PU, 53, p. 270).

The article *Self-conscious Individual versus Social Soul: The Rationale of Wittgenstein's Discussion of Rule Following* (1991), by Eike V. Savigny, sheds some light on this passage: "Wittgenstein…contrasts the *expression of a rule*, which is the same in different uses (for teaching, judging, describing, and constructing), with the *rule* of a language-game which may have very different roles" (Savigny, p. 68).

Expressions of rules that are found in grammar books, and which could be described as *rules of usage*, are very different in nature from the rules of language-games, which could be described as *rules of use*. While both are in some sense prescriptive, the former are written and actively resist change, while the latter are unwritten, socially-constructed customs which are much more responsive to change. Wittgenstein is most interested in the latter type of rule following, and he explains the impetus for the modification of *rules of use* in the following quote: „Die fundamentale Tatsache ist hier: dass wir Regeln, eine Technik, für ein Spiel festlegen, und dass es dann, wenn wir den Regeln folgen, nicht so geht, wie wir angenommen hatten. Das wir uns also gleichsam in unsern eigenen Regeln verfangen" (PU, 125, p. 303).

Wittgenstein points out here that although we might lay down rules and techniques for a particular language-game, when we actually begin to play the game we may then realize that the rules we had originally thought sufficient do not work out as we had imagined. Above all, he argues, the rules of the language-game can only ensure successful communication insofar as a person is, at least implicitly, familiar with them:

Aber wie kann mich eine Regel lehren, was ich an *dieser* Stelle zu tun habe?... Was hat der Ausdruck der Regel – sagen wir, der Wegweiser – mit meinen Handlungen zu tun? Was für eine Verbindung besteht da? – Nun, etwa diese: ich bin zu einem bestimmten Reagieren auf dieses Zeichen abgerichtet worden, und so reagiere ich nun... ich habe auch noch angedeutet,

dass sich Einer nur insofern nach einem Wegweiser richtet, als es einen ständigen Gebrauch, eine Gepflogenheit, gibt (PU, 198, p. 343-344).

Here, Wittgenstein argues that rule-following can only occur when one learns through experience how to "read the signposts" and to react to them in appropriate ways. This kind of "training" is provided by a social context which serves as the forum in which learners learn the connections between the *forms of words* and the *forms of life.*

Savigny (1991) identifies three main ideas that emerge out of Wittgenstein's discussion of rule-following: first, that "awareness of rules is not necessary for following them" (p. 67); second, that "awareness of rules is not sufficient for following them" (p. 73); and third, that "the capacity of following rules is a social capacity; mastering a language…consists in adapting one's utterances to how others are wont to take them" (p. 83). Therefore, an explicit knowledge of grammatical and language-game rules is not necessary for someone to use a language; however, an implicit understanding of them is necessary for successful communication. This implicit understanding of rules is the result of social "training" in the language-game.

The paragraphs above have briefly discussed two ways of understanding rule following: one which could be described as *grammatical* rule-following, and another which refers to the rule-following that takes place in the context of a *Sprachspiel*. The rules of language use are, according to Wittgenstein, socially-constructed norms which must be learned in order for the language use of an individual to be "successful" in various *Sprachspiele*. The argument that rule-following determines language use lends strength to the position that language is not a static system. Rather, language is wrapped up in the ever-evolving rules of language-games, which are also in a constant process of modification and re-negotiation. Therefore, the concept of *Regelfolgen* makes an important contribution to an understanding of the dynamic nature of language through a consideration of people's meaning-making processes.

2.2.4. Language as Use

Language, according to Wittgenstein, can only be understood *as it is used*: within a given context, serving a particular function, inextricable from culture and ideology, and often without language users' explicit awareness of its inner workings. This view of language is highly

complex and contains elements of the three views of language: System, discourse, and ideology. Language is simultaneously an instrument for the expression of meaning, a means by which people communicate, and the medium through which ideology is created and disseminated. A view of language as use cannot ignore the interconnectedness of these three aspects, although the twentieth century's language teaching history reveals a tendency to focus on only one of these aspects. A consideration of Wittgenstein's concepts *Sprachspiel, Regelfolgen, and Lebensform* can serve to slow the pendulum-effect in the field of language pedagogy by conceptualizing language as an integrated entity in which form, meaning, and function are intertwined.

2.3. Wittgenstein's Concept of the Learner

Although the learner is not explicitly defined in the PU, many notes are relevant to this concept. The following sections relate some of Wittgenstein's notes on *Sprachspiel*, *Lebensform,* and *Regelfolgen* to the concept of the language learner and piece together a dynamic profile that takes the learner seriously and identifies some general challenges and opportunities faced by many learners. At the same time, the analysis is not exhaustive, as a consideration of many other factors would be necessary in order to fully understand the situation of each individual learner.

2.3.1. The Learner and *Sprachspiel*

The concept of *Sprachspiel* has some interesting implications for an understanding of the language learner. The very idea that language can be understood as a game implies that all language users can be understood as its players. Therefore, the learner is also an active participant in this game, regardless of the level of her or his linguistic ability. Beginning in the earliest stages of learning, the learner is thrust into the midst of the language-game and must learn to communicate in the midst of a great deal of ambiguity. In the following excerpt, Wittgenstein deals with the question of how it is possible for people to communicate through language despite ambiguities regarding the exact meanings of words:

> Angenommen, es hätte Jeder eine Schachtel, darin wäre etwas, was wir „Käfer" nennen. Niemand kann je in die Schachtel des Andern schaun; und Jeder sagt, er wisse nur vom Anblick *seines* Käfers, was ein Käfer ist. – Da könnte es ja sein, dass Jeder ein anderes Ding in seiner Schachtel hätte. Ja, man könnte sich vorstellen, dass sich ein solches Ding

fortwährend veränderte. – Aber wenn nun das Wort „Käfer" dieser Leute doch einen Gebrauch hätte? – So wäre er nicht der der Bezeichnung eines Dings. Das Ding in der Schachtel gehört überhaupt nicht zum Sprachspiel; auch nicht einmal als ein *Etwas*: denn die Schachtel könnte auch leer sein. – Nein, durch dieses Ding in der Schachtel kann ‚gekürzt werden'; es hebt sich weg, was immer es ist (PU, 293, p. 373).

Here, Wittgenstein makes an interesting point: he argues that the content of a word (that is, the "picture" a particular word evokes in a person's mind) is irrelevant to the way in which the word is used in communication. This has to do with his argument about the nature of meaning: If two people use the word *beetle* in a conversation, it does not matter what either person pictures in their mind as "a beetle", but rather how they *use* the word in their interaction. Although their mental picture of *beetle* will differ, they are still able to communicate because they have some sense of agreement regarding this word. Elsewhere, he provides a more concise explanation for this phenomenon in the famous quote: "Die Bedeutung eines Wortes ist sein Gebrauch in der Sprache" (PU 43, p. 262). Wuchterl and Hübner, in their book on Wittgenstein's work, comment on the significance of this statement:

Wie wir ein Wort innerhalb eines bestimmten Kommunikationskontextes, eines "Sprachspiels", gebrauchen, das bestimmt weitgehend seinen Sinn. Der Sinn bildet sich innerhalb des Sprachspiels; unsere Gedanken sind von der jeweiligen Sprachsituation nicht ablösbar; die Sprache ist das alleinige Medium und Vehikel unseres Denkens (Wuchterl & Hübner, 2001, p. 118).

What do these discussions of meaning and language use imply for a conceptualization of the language learner? Perhaps the most important point is the significance of the individual's interaction with new *Sprachspiele*. Since every language learner brings a certain way of thinking, speaking, and interacting to a learning situation, there will be a certain amount of friction as the learner attempts to reconcile these old patterns with the new paradigm of a foreign language and its language-games. As the learner begins to deal with this new paradigm, her or his repertoire of language-games (and therefore ways of thinking and communicating) will be broadened to include those of a new language.

Learners' understanding of the words they use does not depend on their ability to imagine the same "content" as other language users, but rather on their ability to use words appropriately and to understand what role they play in the target language in a variety of linguistic interactions. As the next section on *Lebensform* will show, this is not merely a question of learning new linguistic forms and patterns of interaction, but also of dealing with different ways of viewing the world.

2.3.2. The Learner and *Lebensform*

The significance of the term *Lebensform* for the language learner is illustrated well by the following quote, in which Wittgenstein makes clear that speaking is only one part of successful communication in the context of the language-game: „Das Wort ‚Sprachspiel' soll hier hervorheben, dass das Sprechen der Sprache ein Teil ist einer Tätigkeit, oder einer Lebensform ist" (PU, 23, p. 250). Learners of a second or foreign language enter into their studies as persons who already speak at least one language. Their ways of thinking and talking about the world around them have been shaped by their first language(s), and their success in mastering another language will depend, in part, upon their ability and willingness to allow a new paradigm to enter into their thought processes. This new paradigm can be conceptualized as an addition to, rather than a replacement of, their previous paradigm, and it consists of that inseparable pair: *forms of words* and *forms of life*. Language learners, as a result of countless individual variables, will have a certain degree of rigidity or flexibility regarding their use of their own language(s) and their use of the target language. In this sense, the concept of *Lebensform* brings to the forefront the fact that learners may feel caught between two worlds as they study another language.

We have already seen that the connections between the *forms of words* familiar to the language learner and the *forms of life* to which he or she is accustomed cannot be ignored. The language learner, in embarking upon a venture of constant interaction with the new *forms of words* and *forms of life* that comprise another language, is constantly confronted by incongruities with her or his familiar ways of thinking, speaking, and interacting. Thus, the ideological dimension of language ensures that learners' linguistic and cultural learning will never reach a final state of completion but will continue indefinitely. Because of this process, the learner also remains in a constant state of transition.

In the context of language teaching, a consideration of Wittgenstein's concept *Lebensform* implies that a high degree of sensitivity to the ideological disparities that exist between learners' L1 and L2 is needed in order to help learners define their perspective within a new speech community. Since language learners are confronted with the need to participate in new language-games in the context of new forms of life, the teacher's task is not only to help learners master the *forms of words* in a given language, but also to reveal how these are related to the *forms of life* that exist within the language's speech community. This daunting task may be rendered surmountable by the insights into the nature of the learner provided by the concept of *Regelfolgen*.

2.3.3. The Learner and *Regelfolgen*

The concept of *Regelfolgen* has far-reaching implications for a definition of the learner. The concepts of *Sprachspiel* and *Lebensform* revealed the learner's identity as a player in the language-game who is in constant interaction with new *forms of words* and *forms of life*. But what role does the learner play in this interaction? Does the learner merely learn to conform to the paradigm of a new language, or does she or he have some kind of influence upon this paradigm? Wittgenstein's concept of rule-following reveals that the learner indeed has an influence upon the rules of language-games. As an active participant in the language-game, the learner may find that "the rules" of usage or use are inadequate in providing clear guidelines in some situations:

> Eine Regel steht da, wie ein Wegweiser. – Läßt er keinen Zweifel offen über den Weg, den ich zu gehen habe? Zeigt er, in welche Richtung ich gehen soll, wenn ich an ihm vorbei bin; ob der Straße nach, oder dem Feldweg, oder querfeldein? Aber wo steht, in welchem Sinne ich ihm zu folgen habe; ob in der Richtung der Hand, oder (z.B.) in der entgegengesetzten? –Und wenn statt eines Wegweisers eine geschlossene Kette von Wegweisern stünde, oder Kreidestriche auf dem Boden liefen, -gibt es für sie nur *eine* Deutung? – Also kann ich sagen, der Wegweiser läßt doch keinen Zweifel offen. Oder vielmehr: er läßt manchmal einen Zweifel offen, manchmal nicht (PU, 85, p. 288).

This note on rule following questions the predictability, reliability, and possibility of accurate interpretations of rules; this discussion could be understood in a variety of ways, two of which will be dealt with here. First, one could interpret this statement to mean that *grammar* serves as the "signposts" within communication, showing the language user the proper forms to use in order to communicate. In this case, the signposts offer linguistic support to the speaker, offering many possibilities for the expression of meaning. However, in some cases, "the rules" are not sufficient in providing clear guidelines regarding how certain forms can or cannot be used; in these situations, the speaker must improvise, implementing existing forms in new ways, or creating new forms to express new meanings.

Second, one could understand *conventions of interaction* as the signposts within the *Sprachspiele* of a given language, showing the speaker how to behave in a given *Sprachspiel* in order to achieve successful communication. Here, the signposts are metalinguistic in nature, but once again they are only sometimes sufficient in providing the necessary tools the speaker needs. This is especially the case when the speaker is attempting to communicate in a new language or in a *Sprachspiel* that is unfamiliar to him or her. However, even when a language or *Sprachspiel* is familiar, some improvisation may be needed when the signposts are not able to provide clear direction for the speaker's communication behaviour.

In light of these limitations of "the rules" in both interpretations of the term, it is clear that language learners must become decision-makers as they interact with a new language. Whether consciously or unconsciously, they decide to follow or break with grammatical as well as language-game rules. They do not blindly follow prescribed rules of usage and use, but rather, by essence of participating in the language-game, actually play a part in shaping these rules. The role of the teacher in this process of decision-making is to make learners aware of this degree of influence they have in participating in and shaping the rules of the language-game.

2.3.4. The Learner as Player

In light of the insights gained from the concepts of *Sprachspiel*, *Lebensform,* and *Regelfolgen*, the learner is conceptualized as a player of the language-game who constantly interacts with the *forms of words* and *forms of life* of a new language. As a player of the language-game, the

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learner is also involved in the creation and negotiation of the rules of language usage and use, even from the earliest stages of language learning.

This view of the learner has much in common with one of the key pillars of postmethod pedagogy in which the learner, moving toward ever higher levels of autonomy, is responsible for monitoring his or her progress in the understanding of a language's forms, meanings, and functions. In addition, the learner is encouraged to be sensitive to the social rules of use that exist in the target language and pay attention to the level of flexibility of formal rules of usage so that she or he can follow or break these rules judiciously. In this way, learners are seen as active participants in the language-game as it exists and as co-shapers of its future development.

2.4. Wittgenstein's Concept of Language Learning

The concept of language learning arises frequently in the PU, often as a topic that is dealt with implicitly in the discussion of related topics. Above all, Wittgenstein brings traditional notions about language learning through drills into question. The following quote represents one of Wittgenstein's more explicit statements about language learning:

> Die Kinder werden dazu erzogen, *diese* Tätigkeiten zu verrichten, *diese* Wörter dabei zu gebrauchen, und *so* auf die Worte des Anderen zu reagieren. Dieses hinweisende Lehren der Wörter, kann man sagen, schlägt eine assoziative Verbindung zwischen dem Wort und dem Ding: Aber was heißt das? Nun, es kann Verschiedenes heißen; aber man denkt wohl zunächst daran, dass dem Kind das Bild des Dings vor die Seele tritt, wenn es das Wort hört...Wenn aber das das hinweisende Lehren bewirkt, - soll ich sagen, es bewirkt das Verstehen des Wortes? Versteht nicht der den Ruf „Platte!", der so und so nach ihm handelt? (PU 6, p. 240).

Based on Wittgenstein's claim that a true understanding of a word entails an understanding of how to use it and interpret its use, it can be concluded that he views language learning as a process of learning the connections between the language's *forms of words* and *forms of life*. In other words, an understanding of the meaning of words and utterances emerges out of an understanding of how these elements interact, and one cannot understand the meaning of a word apart from the way it is used in a given context. If the aim of language learning is for learners to

be able to use a language in its written and spoken forms, the assertion that this can be achieved through a process of language drilling is not difficult to reject.

Having stated what language learning is *not*, Wittgenstein offers some interesting insights into what it might *be*; however, the reader is at pains to derive any clearly defined "theory of language learning" from the *PU*. That is, the text does not provide the rationale for any *process-oriented theory of language learning* (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 22). Instead, one finds that the fragments in the text, when pieced together, are congruent with a *condition-oriented theory of language learning*, which emphasises "the nature of the human and physical context in which language learning takes place" (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 22). Indeed, the discussion below reveals that Wittgenstein's "theory" of language learning focuses on the ways in which *context* plays a role in the language learning process.

2.4.1. Language Learning and *Sprachspiel*

In den Sprachen…gab es ein Fragen nach der Benennung…Dies und sein Korrelat, die hinweisende Erklärung ist, wie wir sagen könnten, ein eigenes Sprachspiel. Das heißt eigentlich: wir werden erzogen, abgerichtet dazu, zu fragen: „Wie heißt das?" –worauf dann das Benennen erfolgt. Und es gibt auch ein Sprachspiel: Für etwas einen Namen erfinden. Also, zu sagen: „Das heißt...", und nun den neuen Namen zu verwenden" (PU, 27, p. 252).

In this quote, Wittgenstein comments on the language-game of naming which had previously been offered as an explanation of language learning and even language itself. Wittgenstein wants to put "naming" back into its proper place: as just one of many language-games people play. He sees naming as a necessary skill one must have *before* one is able to participate in language-games:

Benennen und Beschreiben stehen ja nicht auf *einer* Ebene: Das Benennen ist eine Vorbereitung zur Beschreibung. Das Benennen ist noch gar kein Zug im Sprachspiel, -so wenig, wie das Aufstellen einer Schachfigur ein Zug im Schachspiel. Man kann sagen: Mit dem Benennen eines Dings ist noch *nichts* getan. Es *hat* auch keinen Namen, außer im Spiel (PU, 49, 267).

Therefore, naming can be considered in some cases to be a *Sprachspiel*, while in others, it is merely a preparatory step towards participation in a *Sprachspiel*. It is clear in the PU that Wittgenstein considers the goal of language learning to be the successful participation in language-games in which naming usually plays only a minor role. The myriad linguistic and metalinguistic skills which are needed in order to play the language-game comprise a much more complex set of competencies which cannot be acquired through drilling. What is required, rather, is an understanding of the target language's *forms of words* in connection with the *forms of life* that characterize the target culture. For example, knowing the L2 words for a direct translation of a greeting in one's L1 is worthless unless one understands the conventions according to which greetings are formed and used in the L2.

2.4.2. Language Learning and *Lebensform*

Wittgenstein not only emphasizes the fact that meaning is found within language-games, but also that it is *learned* through these games. Because the meaning of a word depends on how it is used in a given context, it is essential that language learning occurs through observation of and participation in language-games: „Frage dich in dieser Schwierigkeit immer: Wie haben wir denn die Bedeutung dieses Wortes (,gut' z.B.) *gelernt*? An was für Beispielen; in welchen Sprachspielen? (Du wirst dann leichter sehen, dass das Wort eine Familie von Bedeutungen haben muss.)" (PU, 77, p. 283).

The meaning of the word "gut" (good) cannot be learned except in the context of language-games which reveal the ways in which this word can be used and understood. This assertion recognizes the importance of *contextualized* language learning; without a frame of reference, an understanding of the connections between language forms and their possible meanings and functions is lost. In the example of forming appropriate greetings, it is important that one not only learns what the words "hello", "good morning" and "hey dude" mean in the L2, but also how these words and phrases *function* in the context of an authentic L2 interaction. This consideration of the role *Lebensformen* play in language use is essential to successful language learning, for it is most likely that such words and phrases will have a variety of meanings and

functions that differ from the meanings and functions with which a learner initially associates them.

2.4.3. Language Learning and *Regelfolgen*

Wittgenstein makes a strong case for the fact that rule-following is a vital element of language learning. Through observation, trial, error, and restructuring of previous assumptions, language learners are able to participate in language-games as they follow the rules of usage and use that they observe in others' behaviour:

> Denken wir doch daran, in was für Fällen wir sagen, ein Spiel werde nach einer bestimmten Regel gespielt! Die Regel kann ein Behelf des Unterrichts im Spiel sein. Sie wird dem Lernenden mitgeteilt und ihre Anwendung eingeübt. – Oder sie ist ein Werkzeug des Spieles selbst. – Oder: Eine Regel findet weder im Unterricht noch im Spiel selbst Verwendung; noch ist sie in einem Regelverzeichnis niedergelegt. Man lernt das Spiel, indem man zusieht, wie Andere es spielen. Aber wir sagen, es werde nach den und den Regeln gespielt, weil ein Beobachter diese Regeln aus der Praxis des Spiels ablesen kann,... – Wie aber unterscheidet der Beobachter in diesem Fall zwischen einem Fehler der Spielenden und einer richtigen Spielhandlung? – Es gibt dafür Merkmale im Benehmen der Spieler. Denke an das charakteristische Benehmen dessen, der ein Versprechen korrigiert. Es wäre möglich, zu erkennen, dass Einer dies tut, auch wenn wir seine Sprache nicht verstehen (PU, 54, pp. 270-271).

Wittgenstein draws attention to the intuition of rule following; although some rules may be learned deductively (that is, through explanation by another), other types of rules can only be learned inductively (that is, through observation and experimentation). Players of a particular game may never be able to explicitly state the rules they learned inductively, but observers would describe them as rules nonetheless because the players' behaviour shows them to be the norm within a particular game. This is often the case among native speakers of a language: they often cannot explain the rules by which they are playing the language-game:

> Was nenne ich 'die Regel, nach der er vorgeht?' –Die Hypothese, die seinen Gebrauch der Worte, den wir beobachten, zufriedenstellend beschreibt; oder Die Regel, die er beim

Gebrauch der Zeichen nachschlägt; oder, die er uns zur Antwort gibt, wenn wir ihn nach seiner Regel fragen? –Wie aber, wenn die Beobachtung keine Regel klar erkennen lässt ...- Denn er gab mir zwar auf meine Frage, was er unter „N" verstehe, eine Erklärung, war aber bereit, diese Erklärung zu widerrufen und abzuändern. –Wie soll ich also die Regel bestimmen, nach der er spielt? Er weiß sie selbst nicht. (PU, 82, p. 286-287).

This lends strength to Wittgenstein's overall argument about rule-following, namely that „there may be rule following activities without expressions of the rules being available for the people who are following them" (Savigny, 1991, p.71). This aspect of rule-following described by Wittgenstein is what the literature on SLA refers to as implicit (vs. explicit) knowledge of a language. Native speakers, for example, most often have only an implicit knowledge of the rules of usage and use which govern their linguistic behaviour because they have learned to follow these rules without being able to explain how or why they do so. In addition, there are many cases in which people make up the rules of the language-game as they go along:

Steckt uns da nicht die Analogie der Sprache mit dem Spiel ein Licht auf? ...gibt es nicht auch den Fall, wo wir spielen und- ‚make up the rules as we go along'? Ja auch den, in welchem wir sie abändern- as we go along (PU, 83, p. 287).

After making his point that both playing and speaking are to some extent rule-governed activities, here Wittgenstein concedes that these rules do not govern *every* aspect of games (and language use) and that language-game players, despite established conventions of usage and use, sometimes decide to deviate from these norms and thus establish new alternatives.

Wittgenstein's discussion of *Regelfolgen* contributes much to an understanding of how learners learn to participate in the language-game. It is through the learner's observation of others' use of *forms of words* in connection with *forms of life* and through her or his active experimentation with these elements that the learner is able to figure out which L2 forms to use and how and when to use them. The degree to which a language learner is aware of the rules she or he follows and is able to state them will vary and is to a great extent irrelevant to the learner's ability to participate in the language-game. What is important, however, is the learner's ability to

improvise when the rules of the language-game are insufficient; she or he must learn to deal with the shifting demands of the language-game and be able to adapt her or his "tactics" as necessary.

2.4.4. Language Learning as Game

Wittgenstein's *PU* has many potential contributions to an understanding of language learning. When one considers that language use in the language classroom most often does not resemble language as it is actually used, it becomes clear that this type of language training will be insufficient to prepare learners to participate in the language-game and deal with the new forms of life within the target language culture. Since the view that language learning occurs through drilling in a de-contextualized setting has been thus discredited, one can use the key concepts in the *PU* to argue that language learning can only occur as the result of participation in the language-game through a process of rule-following. This requires that learners interact with the *forms of words* and *forms of life* that comprise the target language while simultaneously learning how to judiciously follow or break the target language's rules of use and usage.

2.5. Summary

This chapter has provided a description of the concepts of language, the learner, and language learning that can be derived from an analysis of Wittgenstein's *PU*. His concepts of *Sprachspiel*, *Lebensform,* and *Regelfolgen* have shed light on the nature of these concepts in the context of language learning. These key terms will resurface in chapter five, where the significance of their application within postmethod pedagogies will be discussed. The next two chapters will set the stage for that discussion by tracing the development of language pedagogy in the late twentieth century, focusing on the emergence of CLT as well as the field of language pedagogy's transition to a postmethod paradigm towards the end of the century.

Chapter 3: A Brief History of Communicative Language Teaching

3.1. Beginnings of the Communicative Approach

This chapter briefly examines some major developments in language pedagogy and other related fields which led up to and comprise the first two phases of CLT. Two works by D.A. Wilkins, *Linguistics in Language Teaching* (1972) and *Notional Syllabuses* (1976), will be considered central to defining the key ideas embodied in phase one. A third work, the article "The Threshold Level: A Notional-Functional Syllabus" (Matthies, 1982), will also be employed in the discussion of phase one because it outlines the practical applications of the concepts outlined by Wilkins (and others) within the Council of Europe's *T-Level Syllabus*, which will be discussed in the following sections.

For the analysis of phase two, four works will be considered: *The Communicative Approach to Language Teaching* (Brumfit & Johnson, 1979), *Perspectives in Communicative Language Teaching* (Johnson & Porter, 1983), *Communicative Language Teaching: An Introduction* (Littlewood, 1981) and "Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing" (Canale & Swain, 1980), an article which appeared in the first issue of the journal *Applied Linguistics*.

These works were chosen because they have proved to be core references which were used in many subsequent discussions of a definition of CLT; for example, Littlewood (1981) and Richards and Rodgers (2001) cite these works. They were also chosen because they illustrate researchers' developing understanding of the concepts of language and communication, language learners, and language learning. The following sections will deal with phase one and two in turn and will delve into each phase's use of these key concepts. The analysis will reveal important insights into the development of the concepts themselves and will show how theory affected practice during each phase.

3.2. Phase One: Reaction to the Audio-Lingual Method

The emergence of the "communicative turn" in the 1970's can be understood as the result of increasing disillusionment with the audio-lingual method (ALM), which had been the predominant language teaching method in the United States since the 1950's and later in Europe

as well. On the one hand, the ALM was criticized for not being based on sound language theory or learning theory and on the other hand it was criticized for not producing desired results in learners. "Students were often found to be unable to transfer skills acquired through Audiolingualism to real communication outside the classroom, and many found the experience of studying through audiolingual procedures to be boring and unsatisfying" (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 65).

This sentiment was not only a North American phenomenon, but was shared by many in Europe as well: In 1971, the Council of Europe's *Council for Cultural Co-operation* contributed to the movement towards a more communicative approach to language teaching by holding a symposium on "Linguistic content, means of evaluation, and their interaction in the teaching and learning of modern languages in adult education" (Matthies, 1982, p. 2). The work of D.A. Wilkins, though later criticized for its lack of empirical support, was considered at that time to be a positive alternative to the models for syllabus design previously used for language teaching. In his work *Notional Syllabuses* (1976), Wilkins provides some insights into the limitations of what he calls *grammatical syllabuses* and *situational syllabuses*, the former being typical within the ALM:

> The grammatical syllabus seeks to teach the language by taking the learner progressively through the forms of the target language. The situational syllabus does so by recreating the situations in which native speakers use the language. While in neither case would it be denied that languages are learned for the purposes of communication, both leave the learner short of adequate communicative capacity (p. 18).

Wilkins' work on the concept of Notional Syllabuses was influential in the growing body of ideas that culminated in the communicative turn, which refers to the shifting of focus that occurred within the fields of linguistics and language pedagogy. Researchers in these fields were beginning to recognize the importance of also studying language *use* as opposed to only language *form* in the context of language learning. In an attempt to integrate this idea into the language classroom, Wilkins focused on the *communicative capacity* he mentions in the above quote. As Wilkins pointed out in his earlier book, *Linguistics in Language Teaching* (1972):

However fluent one's mastery of a language - fluent in the sense of the ease with which grammatically acceptable sentences can be constructed and produced - it will serve as nothing if one cannot use it to achieve the desired communication effects. Language teaching therefore must be concerned with effective communication (p. 146).

This quote represents an important shift in the goals of language instruction: Learners should not only master a language's forms, but should also be able to communicate through language. Wilkins proposed basing syllabuses not on discrete grammatical and lexical items, but rather around *semantic notions* (concepts of entities in time and space) and *communicative functions* (what a speaker is trying to do by means of language) (Matthies, 1982, pp. 4-6). Based on Wilkins' ideas and Matthies' article on the proceedings of the Council for Cultural Co-operation, the following sections identify and discuss the implicit assumptions about language and communication, language learners, and language learning which informed the development of the Threshold-level (T-level) syllabus as a notional-functional syllabus.

3.2.1. Concept of Language

The theory of language behind the notional-functional syllabus is one of *language in use* or *language as a means of communication*. Wilkins (1972) makes this clear as he discusses the importance of considering both form and meaning in the study of language:

A second characteristic of linguistic study of language is that it makes a clear distinction between statements about the use to which we put language (its meaning) and the actual shape which units of language have and the relationship which exists between them (its form) … there is a good deal concerned in our use of language that is not accounted for when we describe the forms. If the description of a language makes any claim to be comprehensive, it must account for both the forms and the meanings of that language (Wilkins, 1972, p. 15).

Such discussions on form and meaning lead up to an answer to the question: What is language? Indeed, the answer to this question affects the way one goes about teaching a language (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 14) and in this case, Wilkins answers that "language is a social activity" and that "language teaching must provide the learner with means to select language which is suitable for the circumstances in which it is used" (1972, p. 159). At this point, Wilkins

is merely "attempting to describe the very complex structure that is the ultimate goal of the learner" (1972, p. 9). Although he claims that he is not interested in "discovering the most efficient means by which a foreign language might be acquired", he went on to publish *Notional Syllabuses* in 1976, showing that he did in fact have some practical ideas to contribute to the field of language pedagogy.

In this later work, his concepts of *notions* and *functions*, which were defined in section 3.2., played a central role in his proposal for a restructuring of language syllabuses. The interaction of these two concepts seems straightforward: in order to fulfill various communicative functions, students will learn to use the appropriate semantic notions for those functions. "The goal…is appropriate sociolinguistic behaviour- using a limited repertoire of lexical and syntactic elements to express one's intentions adequately" (Matthies, 1982, p. 6). This stated goal of language instruction may be the best definition available for the "communicative capacity" Wilkins describes in his works. However, questions were soon raised about the ability of the notional-functional model to achieve this goal; it was argued that lists of notions and functions may not be more helpful than the lists of vocabulary and grammar drills that were popular within the ALM (Matthies, 1982, p. 8).

How these ideas about language and communication directly affected language teaching practice is perhaps most visible in the way language ability is viewed "as a skill rather than knowledge" (Matthies, 1982, p. 6). This implies that language ability is something that must be taught and learned in authentic practice rather than through language drills. In this way, the model markedly departs from the ALM in that it focuses on what students will be able to *do* with a language rather than on their mastery of particular *language forms*. In addition, more focus than ever before was given to the *context* of language use (Wilkins, 1976, p. 80).

In addition, textbooks based on a notional-functional syllabus are organized differently than those under the ALM: while the latter were organized according to discrete grammatical and lexical items, the former are organized according to various language functions, such as "Saying what you feel" or "Getting people to do things" (Andrews, 1977 in Matthies, 1982, p. 10). The stated emphasis within such textbooks is on successful communication with regard to these

functions, whereas grammatical syllabuses had focused on the successful production of certain sentence patterns and vocabulary *outside* of their authentic functions.

Though this particular discussion has focused on the development of the T-level syllabus in Europe, language textbooks with a notional-functional orientation were published in the United States as well. The widespread interest in notional-functional syllabuses represented a shift within language pedagogy away "from the word or sentence to the level of connected, contextualized discourse" (Matthies, 1982, p. 10). This concept was highly influential in international language education programs and research.

3.2.2. Concept of the Learner

What is perhaps most radical about the Notional-Functional Syllabus is "the priority it gives to the semantic content of language learning" (Wilkins, 1976, p. 55). This shift in focus has the potential to position the learner's needs at the starting point of syllabus design: Students must acquire the appropriate linguistic tools to communicate the meanings they need on a regular basis. As Matthies (1982) points out, "Curriculum developers have been given a challenge to consider approaching foreign language course design from the learner's perspective of language use rather than from the teacher's perspective of structure" (p. 6).

To what extent these intentions were successful is debatable, but they certainly represent a movement towards a learner-centered classroom where learners' goals, needs, and abilities are considered in the development of curricula. The following are just a few of the questions Wilkins feels should be considered when designing a syllabus: "Are the learners aiming for a general or a specialized language competence?... Is the ultimate goal some limited proficiency in the language or is it intended to proceed until native-like proficiency is achieved? Will the language be required for use during the period of learning or only at the terminal point?... Are the learners adults or children?" (1976, p. 57). The answers to these questions will inform the content of the syllabus, the pace at which it will be taught and the methodologies that will be employed in teaching it.

In the early stages of the development of the T-level syllabus, a committee of the Council for Cultural Co-operation (an agency of the Council of Europe) began to investigate some of the

answers to the above questions by "surveying European adults about how they use, or could use, foreign languages in their businesses, social contacts, educational settings, etc." (Matthies, 1982, p. 3). The results of these surveys were analysed and compiled to produce learner profiles in which "a typical learner's occupational or vocational purpose for using the foreign language, the general situations in which the language would probably be used, and the most common communicative acts that would need to be performed by such a person in that language" (Matthies,1982, p. 3) were listed, with the intention of using these factors to construct appropriate syllabuses for the learners in various learner categories. The lists of notions and functions proposed by Wilkins were meant to address the "communicative needs of adult foreign language learners" (Matthies, 1982, p. 5).

This focus on the learner as the starting point in constructing a syllabus was one of the most important ways the Notional-Functional syllabus departed significantly from the practices of the ALM. However, it must be said that at this point, the learner remained an abstract concept, and that their "needs" and "interests" were largely assumed by researchers: Real learners were never asked about their linguistic and social needs, so the Notional-Functional syllabus cannot be considered a truly learner-centered pedagogy. Despite this, determining learner's needs and shaping curriculum content based on their language learning goals would become an increasingly important concept as communicative approaches to language teaching became more popular.

3.2.3. Concept of Language Learning

In *Linguistics in Language Teaching* (1972), Wilkins argues that linguists should not only concern themselves with descriptions of individual languages, but also with "the explanation of our language use" (Wilkins, 1972, p. 160). He discusses the ways in which some general theories of language acquisition have influenced the development of language teaching methods and the inadequacies of these theories in explaining all aspects of language learning. He argues that behaviourist methods are incapable of preparing learners for real communication in a language and he predicts that mentalist methods, if they would be developed, would be inadequate for adult learners who are learning a second or foreign language. In this discussion it becomes clear

that Wilkins believes that taking a strictly "nature" or "nurture" stance on the understanding of language learning is not helpful for the language teacher. He argues that both nature and nurture certainly play a role in language learning, though a fully-informed position on this issue will not be possible "until much more is known about the psychology of second language learning itself" (Wilkins, 1972, p. 176).

In light of this, the working definition of learning that informed the creation of the T-level syllabus was based on Speech Act Theory and information processing theory (Matthies, 1982, p. 4) and the T-level syllabus itself was said to have "shed new light on the pedagogical implications of developments in the fields of socio- and psycholinguistics" (p. 6). Clearly, the field of language pedagogy was at this point attempting to base its practice on a conglomeration of the most current theories of learning, a process that had been initiated at the advent of the methods era in the early part of the twentieth century and which has continued into the present.

The creators of the Notional-Functional syllabus assumed that learning how to participate in the appropriate speech acts for everyday interaction was a key goal of language instruction. This has already been mentioned in the discussion of textbook organization: Notional-Functional syllabuses arranged language material into units or chapters that focused on language functions and provided some structure for learning to communicate through various semantic notions. This was an important step towards the "communicative approach" to language teaching, which increasingly defined language learning as learning to express oneself in interaction with others.

The increased emphasis on role play in the language learning classroom showed how this concept was rendered into practice by many language teachers using Notional-Functional syllabuses. Students were "encouraged to take on various social roles and generate discourse that is appropriate in a realistic situation" (Matthies, 1982, p. 10). The idea behind this is *contextualized language learning*: Through interaction with other learners in the target language in the context of a role-play, the learners' language use is embedded in an authentic (although fictional) setting, and language *learning* becomes the desired result of language *use*.

3.2.4. Summary of Phase One

What perhaps best characterizes this first phase of CLT is its rejection of the traditional goals and methods of language instruction as well as its initial disjointedness in theory and practice. While Wilkins was building his theories based on his observations of practice, other researchers were challenging his notional-functional model because they felt that it did not provide more effective instruction for students than previous syllabus models (Widdowson, 1979). In addition, some felt that the various manifestations of the Notional-Functional Syllabus that emerged provided too little guidance for language teachers attempting to restructure their language courses (Matthies, 1982, p. 7). Wilkins himself admits this weakness of his model readily: "It would be premature to suggest that we are already in a position to put forward a coherent and adequate account of the methods and techniques to be used with a notional syllabus" (Wilkins, 1976, p. 78).

Meanwhile, researchers in other fields were developing theories which did not formally enter into the discussions on Communicative Language Teaching until phase two. One of these researchers was Dell Hymes, an anthropologist and sociolinguist who was interested in the social role of language and communication: some of his work was adapted only later by Canale & Swain (1980) and will therefore be considered part of phase two, although much of his work was published in the 1970's. Phase one can perhaps be seen as a first, unsteady step away from teaching methods informed by the ALM and as the first link in a chain of research that would later culminate in the communicative turn. At this point, the formal establishment of Communicative Language Teaching as a dominant language teaching method still lay in the future, but through the work of Wilkins and the Council of Europe's Council for Cultural Co-operation, much important groundwork was laid for its development.

3.3. Phase Two: Integration of Research-Based Theory

As the initial reaction to the ALM began to subside, CLT as an approach to language teachinggradually took its place as the predominant paradigm for teaching in the field of language pedagogy. Even as researchers and teachers adapted to this shift and the goals and methodologies of language instruction moved towards a more "communicative" focus, the

definition of this term and the most effective form of its application were still ambiguous in the literature on CLT in the 1980's. In particular, there were numerous discussions, as well as books and articles, on the concept of communicative competence. This term has applications for the following sections on the understandings of language, language learners, and language learning that predominated the second phase of CLT. Most striking about this phase is the intentional integration of linguistic research into the field of language pedagogy: insights were borrowed and adapted from discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, and even anthropology. These insights would serve to strengthen the theoretical base of CLT and initiate further theoretical and practical developments in the field. The following sections highlight the integration of some of this research as it applies to the concepts of language and communication, the language learner, and language learning.

3.3.1. Concept of Language

By the time CLT had established itself as a dominant language teaching method, the concept of language shared commonly by researchers and teachers had undergone a shift: Language was no longer treated as merely a system comprised of phonological, semantic, and syntactic systems. Rather, language was increasingly understood as a means of communication; that is, a view of language as discourse had come into vogue. Already in 1973, Halliday concluded that language is a means of functioning in society (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 8). In 1979, excerpts from Halliday's article, 'Towards a Sociological Semantics' served as an introduction to essays from other scholars in the field of applied linguistics in the book *The Communicative Approach to Language Teaching*, edited by C.J. Brumfit and K. Johnson. Here, Halliday's definition of language as "meaning potential" implies that meaning is not fixed, but is constructed within interaction (Brumfit & Johnson, 1979, p. 27). This view of meaning as a product of contextualized language use is supported by the subsequent essays in the book as the contributors reevaluate language teaching methodology within the communicative approach.

Excerpts from Hymes' 1972 article 'On Communicative Competence' comprise the other half of the book's introduction, and its inclusion in this book of essays on the Communicative Approach reveals the growing focus on the word *communicative* in the literature on language

pedagogy. Hymes' development of the term "communicative competence" in the late sixties and early seventies reflects his research as an anthropologist and ethnographer. He seeks to explain the role of language in social interaction that had previously been ignored in linguistics:

> We break irrevocably with the model that restricts the design of language to one face toward referential meaning, one toward sound, and that defines organization of language as solely consisting of rules for linking the two…A model of language must design it with a face toward communicative conduct and social life…there are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless. (Hymes, 1972, p. 278).

Here, Hymes does not outright reject the understanding of language as system; rather, he modifies it to include other 'sectors' of what he calls *communicative competence* (p. 281). In an attempt to develop an "adequate theory of language users and language use" and integrate linguistic theory with theories of communication and culture (p. 281), Hymes defines communicative competence through a discussion of the following four-fold distinction:

1) Whether (and to what degree) something is formally possible;

2) Whether (and to what degree) something is feasible in virtue of the means of implementation available;

3) Whether (and to what degree) something is appropriate (adequate, happy, successful) in relation to a context in which it is used and evaluated;

4) Whether (and to what degree) something is in fact done, actually performed, and what its doing entails. (Hymes, 1972, p. 281)

Hymes also provides an example to illustrate how these four distinctions would serve to describe and evaluate a given statement: "a sentence may be grammatical, awkward, tactful, and rare" (Hymes, 1972, pp. 281-282). These parameters are helpful in assessing not only whether a learner is able to produce grammatically-correct sentences, but also whether he or she is able to use them appropriately and effectively in various contexts.

However, Hymes' paper on communicative competence was only the beginning of many discussions on this topic in the field of applied linguistics. Since the publication of his article, other researchers have offered variations of this definition of communicative competence to the

growing literature on this subject. These definitions served to deepen an understanding of language as communication and at the same time, to create ambiguity regarding how language as communication can and should be taught.

Researchers Canale & Swain addressed this ambiguity to some degree in their 1980 article 'Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing'. In this influential article published on the first pages of the first issue of the journal *Applied Linguistics*, they modify Hymes' concept in order to establish "a clear statement of the content and boundaries of communicative competence - one that will lead to more useful and effective second language teaching and allow more valid and reliable measurement of second language communication skills" (Canale & Swain, 1980, p. 1).

Canale and Swain identified three components of communicative competence that could be used to assess learners' language use: These are grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence. In 1983, Canale revised these findings to include a fourth component: Discourse competence. For Canale and Swain, *grammatical competence* refers to "knowledge of lexical items and the rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar semantics, and phonology" (Canale & Swain, 1980, p. 29). *Sociolinguistic competence* has to do with the appropriate use of language according to sociolinguistic contexts (Canale, 1983, p. 7). *Strategic competence* encompasses the various communication strategies one can employ in order to avoid or recover from breakdowns in communication (Canale & Swain, 1980, p. 30). Finally, *discourse competence* relates to the concept of language as discourse and describes cohesion and coherence in written and spoken texts: It accounts for "how a series of sentences or utterances are connected into a whole text, spoken or written" (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 17).

As Kumaravadivelu points out, "the Canale/Swain framework is perhaps the first one to make use of the prevailing understanding of language as system and language as discourse in order to derive a comprehensive theoretical framework of language competence with pedagogic application in mind" (2006, pp. 19-20). However, according to many language teaching experts, this framework did not live up to its claim to provide clear direction for the teaching and assessment of communicative competence. Other frameworks for assessing language

competence have since been created based on the Canale/Swain model, but it seems that all of these models have all shared some common weaknesses, including the fact that they attempt to "analyse a complex process into a static set of components, and as such cannot account for the dynamic interrelationships which are engaged in communication itself" (Widdowson, 2003, pp. 169-170).

Despite the inadequacies of these models of communicative competence, the theoretical discussions mentioned above paved the way for discussions on the practical implications of teaching language as communication. These discussions raised numerous other practical questions, for much confusion remained as to what the term *communicative* actually meant.

3.3.2. Concept of the Learner

Within the second phase of CLT, the learner was increasingly perceived as central to the language learning process. This learner-centeredness was most visible in the way teachers "presented and helped learners practice and produce grammatical as well as notional/functional categories of language" (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 125), which in some ways was no different from the role assigned to learners under previous approaches to language teaching. However, researchers like Littlewood (1981) did advocate for more learner-directed activities in the classroom and asserted that teachers should not interfere unnecessarily with the communication involved in classroom activities.

In practice, this manifested itself in various learner-centered activities in language learning classrooms, including "pair work, group work, role-play, simulation games, scenarios, and debates that ensured a communicative flavor to their interactional activities" (Kumaravadivelu, p. 125). Therefore, it is reasonable to say that phase two did see an increased sense of learner-centeredness, although this concept often took on traditional practical forms in the classroom.

3.3.3. Concept of Language Learning

It is worth noting that no immediate theory of language learning follows from the theory of language implicit in the parameters of communicative competence put forth by Hymes. Within the second phase of CLT, however, the adaptation of this term by Canale and Swain and the work of subsequent researchers led to the widespread belief that "teaching communicatively"

was the best pedagogic principle for teaching students to communicate through language. However, this seemingly simple concept continued to puzzle teachers in practice. The question was raised by many: What does communicative teaching entail? Littlewood's 1981 book, *Communicative Language Teaching*, attempts to address some of the confusion and proposes certain practical applications of CLT as a language teaching method.

Littlewood states that an activity is *communicative* when "the learner has to activate and integrate his pre-communicative knowledge and skills in order to use them for the communication of meanings" (Littlewood, 1981, p. 86). He also describes two categories of communicative activities: functional activities and social interaction activities. *Functional activities* are those in which "the learner…must perform a task by communicating as best he can, with whatever resources he has available" (p. 86) and *social interaction activities* are those in which "the learner is encouraged to take account of the social context in which communication takes place" (p.86). The use of "functional and social interaction activities" represents an effort to make the concepts associated with communicative competence applicable to the practice of language teaching and to some degree echo the tenets of the Notional-Functional syllabus. These activities are intended to help students "develop strategies for relating…structures to their communicative functions in real situations and real time" with the ultimate goal of helping learners to develop an "ability to take part in the *process of communicating* through language" (p. ix, [emphasis in original]).

Despite the shift in pedagogic mentality the above statement represents, the fact remained that the communicative concept remained elusive, with the result that individual teachers understood and applied this concept in very different ways, each of them claiming to teach communicatively. Allwright (in Brumfit & Johnson, 1979) provides the following explanation for the failure of language syllabuses to produce communicative results in learners: "…'communication' has become fully accepted as an essential and major component of the 'product' of language teaching, but it has not yet been given more than a token place…as an essential and major component of the 'process'" (p. 167). The work of Littlewood and others served to move the field in the direction of teaching *language as communication*, but due to the

ambiguity of the term "communicative" and the difficulty of its application in traditional classroom models, Allwright's observation continued to ring true throughout CLT's second phase.

3.3.4. Summary of Phase Two

Phase two of CLT's development is characterized above all by the field's attempt to integrate findings from linguistic research and from other fields into the practice of language teaching. The integration of concepts like communicative competence and meaning potential, an increased focus on the learner, and the appeal for language learning through language use reflect the emergence of CLT as a dominant language teaching paradigm. It has also been shown that CLT's widespread popularity in fact raised more questions than it answered, particularly around the word "communicative" in its application to classroom procedures.

3.4. Summary

This chapter has traced the emergence of CLT, which arose out of growing discontent with the results of the ALM. It has been shown that this shift was neither unilateral nor instantaneous, but rather a gradual piecing together of research from numerous fields that culminated in the emergence of various language teaching methods that fell under the broad heading of CLT. Indeed, the interpretation of CLT by individual teachers and teacher educators resulted in a variety of classroom practices; however, many ambiguities persisted in both theory and practice. The following important insights and new practices can be said to have emerged during the first two phases of CLT:

1) Language was viewed for the first time as contextualized discourse as well as a system for the expression of meaning. The *uses* of language became the focus of classroom activities, while language *forms* received less attention.

2) The language learner was given greater attention than ever before, and although "the learner" remained to a great extent an abstract concept, an increasing attempt was made to consider learners' needs and goals.

3) The idea of "learning language by using language" gained considerable popularity after the emergence of CLT, and through this, the field of language pedagogy took a decisive step away from behaviourism in favour of multiple explanations for language learning.

In conclusion, the following questions remained open as the limitations of these insights and practices became apparent:

1) What does "communicative" actually mean in the context of language teaching?

2) To what degree can a theory of "language as communication" translate into the practice "communicative" teaching, and to what degree does this expedite the learning process?

3) How can the core principles of CLT be maintained in ways that allow for context-sensitive interpretation while demanding theoretical soundness?

4) In what ways do traditional understandings of language, language learners, and language learning persist within CLT, and how do these serve to hinder the effectiveness of the approach?

The next chapter examines the third and current phase in which CLT finds itself, one which is characterized by a paradigm shift from *method* to *postmethod*. Within this phase, CLT is undergoing further changes as the concept of language teaching methods itself has been brought into question. The postmethod paradigm, finding the methods paradigm to be lacking in credibility and effectiveness, seeks to address the shortcomings listed above and provide a more theoretically-sound and adaptable foundation upon which to construct language pedagogies.

Chapter 4: Reinterpreting CLT

4.1. Phase Three: CLT and Postmethod Pedagogy

As language teachers and SLA researchers grew increasingly disillusioned with the concept of method, it was finally declared that "method is dead" (Allwright, 1991, p. 1) and ever since that time, CLT has found itself positioned within a significant paradigm shift that is currently shaping trends in language teaching research and practice. Although CLT is not a method per se, many of the practices associated with it can be said to resemble the narrow perspective of a methods paradigm. Thus, a re-evaluation of CLT theory and practice is imperative in order to address the weaknesses of the approach raised at the end of the previous chapter.

In retrospect, it may seem that the recent postmethod turn was long overdue. According to Richards & Rodgers, a critical view of the methods-paradigm existed even in the first half of the twentieth century: "A study begun in 1923 on the state of foreign language teaching concluded that no single method could guarantee successful results" (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 13). Indeed, it seems that the field of language pedagogy has only recently realized the wisdom of that study in acknowledging that language learning is a complex process, and that the language teaching profession must operate with this in mind.

This chapter explores some recent developments within CLT and discusses how these relate to current attempts to construct *postmethod pedagogies*. It also highlights some of the complexities involved in the application of postmethod principles in teaching practice. A brief discussion of postmethod pedagogy's understandings of language, learners, and language learning is also included in order to reveal the degree to which CLT principles stand up to the "postmethod challenge" and to identify areas that need further revision if CLT is to remain a relevant approach after the postmethod turn.

4.1.1. CLT after the Postmethod Turn

Within the postmethod paradigm, CLT continues to be a popular frame of reference for teachers as they employ various methodologies in the language classroom. Perhaps due to its flexible nature as an approach, CLT has persisted and has had a certain degree of influence in the beginning stages of postmethod pedagogy. CLT has also continued to experience growth: some

recent developments within CLT have become separate entities, including Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), also known as Task-Based Instruction (TBI) or Task-Based Language Learning (TBLL), which is based on the belief that "it is not the text one reads or the grammar one studies but the tasks that are presented that provide learners a purpose to use the grammar in a meaningful context. This gives task design and its use a pivotal role in shaping the language learning process" (Brandl, 2008, p. 8). Brandl explains the emergence of TBLL as a solution to the problems of syllabus design faced by those working within CLT.

The concept of *task* has contributed greatly to the understanding of what it means to teach language as communication in the classroom. In addition, the learner and the learning process are understood differently in the context of tasks whose completion requires collaboration and use of the target language. Nunan's (1999) work on task design is worth noting here because it reveals many insights into the basic assumptions of the most recent developments within CLT. TBLL's focus on learning by doing is strongly connected to the notion of experiential learning which is also assumed by most CLT models; indeed, the two share the following core belief: "If the aim of language teaching is to help learners develop skills for expressing different communicative meanings, then surely these ought to be reflected in classroom tasks and activities" (Nunan, 1999, p. 10). As an extension of CLT, TBLL shares a great deal of theoretical overlap with CLT regarding how best to facilitate the learning process in the language classroom. However, TBLL provides more concrete direction for language teachers regarding how to achieve this aim: Through the construction and implementation of *tasks*.

Nunan discusses three principles that are important for the development of tasks: theauthenticity principle, theform-function principle, and thetaskdependency principle (Nunan, 1999, pp. 26-31). The *authenticityprinciple* asserts that using samples of spoken and written language in the classroom that have not been developed specifically for pedagogical purposes is a more effective way for students to encounter and interpret language as it occurs "in interaction with other closely related grammatical and discourse elements" (p. 27). Nunan justifies the use of authentic data by pointing out that "learners encounter target language items… in the kinds of

contexts where they naturally occur, rather than in contexts that have been concocted by a textbook writer" (p. 27).

The *form-functionprinciple* promotes ways of teaching language that make transparent the connections between form and function. This principle stresses designing tasks "that require learners to use inductive and deductive reasoning to develop their own understanding of the relationship between form and function" (p. 28). Nunan stresses that accurate understandings of the functions of various forms in the target language are the result of a long process that often takes learners many years to achieve. However, he argues that the language classroom is the place to activate and foster this process.

Finally, the *task dependency principle*, put forth by Nunan himself, outlines "an instructional sequence in which tasks flow logically from one to the next" (p. 30). Based on this principle, each sequence of a lesson develops out of the previous one. This process is intended to guide learners from receptive tasks to productive ones, from reproductive tasks to creative ones, and from simple tasks to more complex ones. The ultimate goal of this principle is for students to arrive at a stage in their learning where they are able to "come up with language for which they have not been specifically cued" (Nunan, 1999, p. 30).

4.1.2. The Construction of Postmethod Pedagogies

TBLL finds itself overlapping with the era of *postmethod pedagogy*, a term which was first coined by Pennycook (1989) and which was later taken up by others, including Prabhu (1990), Allwright (1991), Stern (1992) and Kumaravadivelu (2001, 2003). Postmethod pedagogy brings into question the very concept of method by debunking several myths about its legitimacy and usefulness. One major flaw of the methods paradigm is the assumption that the various language teaching methods that have thus far been proposed are fundamentally different from one another: Upon closer examination, these differences often reveal themselves to be no more than differences of terminology, while their fundamental assumptions remain the same (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 163). This fact renders the search for the "ultimate language teaching method" a delusory endeavour. Furthermore, the concept of method is not sufficiently flexible to accommodate the contextual variables of educational settings, nor does it address the needs

and goals of individual teachers and students. The notion that one method can be appropriate for every teacher and every learner in every time and every place is absurd when one considers the myriad factors that comprise a given language classroom.

The concept of method is also highly ideological in the sense that it supports a transmission model of education in which researchers transfer knowledge to teacher educators, who transfer their knowledge to teachers, who then transfer this knowledge to learners by means of the particular method they have been trained to employ. This type of educational model discourages both teacher and learner autonomy, thus preventing fruitful interplay between theory and practice as well as the development of self-reflective practices. In doing so, the methods paradigm serves to reinforce hierarchies between researchers, teacher educators, teachers and learners in ways which often impede successful language learning.

In light of these extensive shortcomings, the concept of method has been discredited by those seeking to transcend its limitations. These criticisms apply to both CLT and TBLL to the degree to which they are treated as exclusive, self-contained methods. The question proposed by Beale (2002): "Is communicative language teaching a thing of the past?" can only be answered through an assessment of CLT's compatibility (as an approach) within the postmethod era. The question is not whether CLT (and, by extension, TBLL) is an effective or ineffective approach to teaching languages, but rather to what degree it can be adapted in order to accommodate diverse settings and individual factors. This is, in essence, the postmethod spirit: One of plurality, flexibility, and relevance.

One way to overcome the limitations of the methods paradigm would be to simply allow teachers to choose from a variety of methods: Instead of teaching according to only one method, they would be encouraged to draw on many methodologies in order to construct their own repertoire of teaching practices appropriate for their context and the goals of their learners. However, such a purely 'eclectic approach' to language teaching has many pitfalls, as it lacks both credibility in theory and reliability in practice. In order to guide the way toward best practices, Kumaravadivelu (2001, 2006) has suggested that the pedagogic parameters of *particularity*, *practicality,* and *possibility* should serve as the guiding principles for the

construction of postmethod pedagogies. These pedagogic parameters are intended to aid language teachers as they piece together their own theories of practice.

The parameter of *particularity* demands that postmethod pedagogies are "sensitive to a particular group of teachers teaching a particular group of learners pursuing a particular set of goals within a particular institutional context embedded in a particular sociocultural milieu" (Kumaravadivelu, 2001, p. 538). Postmethod pedagogies must, therefore, be sensitive to the contexts in which they operate on every level and take into consideration the teacher, the learner, and institutional and sociocultural factors. This parameter seeks to eradicate the ideological pitfalls of the methods era, in which blanket solutions were proposed as appropriate for every language learning situation. According to the parameter of particularity, each setting will require the use of a unique combination of principles and procedures that are appropriate for the situational variables it comprises.

The parameter of *practicality* has to do with the connections between theory and practice and with teachers' intuitive sense of what works and what does not work in the classroom. Postmethod pedagogies need to allow room for teachers to "develop the knowledge and skill, attitude, and autonomy necessary to construct their own context-sensitive theory of practice" (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 173). This kind of pedagogical thoughtfulness on the part of language teachers can only be achieved when they are "enabled to theorize from their practice and practice what they theorize" (p. 173).

Within the methods era, this type of synthesis was not possible due to the transmission model of knowledge in which learners received knowledge from teachers, teachers received knowledge from teacher educators, and teacher educators received knowledge from researchers. The idea that teachers also contribute to the construction of the theories they make use of is essential to the success of postmethod pedagogy. One of the aims of postmethod pedagogy is to empower teachers to "understand and identify problems, analyze and assess information, consider and evaluate alternatives, and then choose the best available alternative that is then subjected to further critical evaluation" (p. 173).

The parameter of *possibility* is closely linked with the parameters of particularity and practicality because it requires that postmethod pedagogies recognize the fact that "the experiences participants bring to the pedagogical setting are shaped, not just by what they experience in the classroom, but also by a broader social, economic, and political environment in which they grow up" (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 174). In doing so, this parameter takes into consideration the influences of language ideology and learner identity upon the process of language learning. In short, postmethod language teaching needs to deal with the "sociocultural reality that influences identity formation in the classroom" (p. 174) and the ways in which learners' linguistic needs are wrapped up with their social needs.

The methods paradigm largely ignored this fact and treated the language classroom as a space devoid of the influences of politics, economics, and culture that exist in the "real world". In contrast to this compartmentalized approach, postmethod pedagogy seeks, through the parameter of possibility, to encourage learners to understand their sociocultural reality and to empower them to alter it.

Kumaravadivelu (2003) uses the pedagogic parameters of particularity, practicality, and possibility as the basis for a postmethod *macrostrategic framework* for language teaching. The framework outlines ten macrostrategies which are "general plans derived from currently available theoretical, empirical, and pedagogic knowledge related to L2 learning and teaching" (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 201). They are "theory- and method-neutral" because they do not adhere to a specific understanding of language teaching and learning (p. 201). The ten macrostrategies are taken from Kumaravadivelu (2006, p. 201) and are as follows: *1) Maximize learning opportunities; 2) facilitate negotiated interaction; 3) minimize perceptual mismatches; 4) activate intuitive heuristics; 5) foster language awareness; 6) contextualize linguistic input; 7) integrate language skills; 8) promote learner autonomy; 9) ensure social relevance; and 10) raise cultural awareness.*

These macrostrategies are realized through the implementation of microstrategies that are devised by the teacher and dependent upon situational variables in the pedagogic setting. The framework described above is one way in which the basic tenets of postmethod pedagogy can be

used to construct concrete guidelines by which curriculum developers and teachers can determine the best organizational and procedural practices in the absence of a single language teaching method. In essence, frameworks like Kumaravadivelu's assist the translation of theory into practice.

Although this framework serves to bridge the gap between what Kumaravadivelu (2006) calls *theoretical assumptions* and *organizational patterns* within postmethod pedagogy, what it lacks is an explicit means by which language teachers can reflect upon how to best bridge the gap between *organizational patterns* and *classroom procedures*. Without such an internal impetus for reflection, the microstrategies mentioned by Kumaravadivelu (2003) may end up being eclecticism by another name. The weakness of this framework is in its integration of the pedagogic parameter of practicality: it is devoid of any impetus for teachers to reflect on how their basic assumptions will affect their selection of microstrategies. Before this issue is addressed in more detail, it will be helpful to consider the assumptions about language, the learner, and language learning implicit in the tenets of postmethod pedagogy. An examination of these concepts will reveal the difficulties of translating theoretical assumptions into classroom procedures in the postmethod era.

4.2. Concept of Language

Postmethod pedagogy has the luxury of drawing on all three views of language that have been prevalent throughout the twentieth century: Language is understood in one sense as a structured *system* with unique phonological, syntactic, and semantic features, in another sense as a contextualized means of communication (*discourse*), and in another sense as the means by which *ideology* and power relations are acted out.

The postmethod perspective on language has emerged out of these three perspectives and reflects certain elements of each. One aim of postmethod pedagogy is to account for language use and uncover the ways in which it is connected to political, historical, and sociocultural forces, which raises interesting questions about how such a perspective can be integrated into the organizational patterns and classroom procedures of a language course. Questions regarding the former may be answered by the ninth and tenth macrostragies proposed by Kumaravadivelu (see

previous section), but the latter can only be dealt with when teachers reflect upon the ways in which their assumptions about language affect their application of these macrostrategies.

4.3. Concept of the Learner

The postmethod conceptualization of the learner can perhaps be best understood by first defining the teacher's role in the postmethod language classroom. Before the communicative turn in language teaching, the teacher's role was generally considered to be that of presenter and evaluator. Within CLT, however, the teacher's role is constantly in flux. The various phases of a given lesson require the teacher to play the role of presenter, designer, organizer, guide, discussion leader, resource provider, needs analyst, and facilitator in order to lead the students "along the sequence of different learning tasks in order to meet the different pedagogical goals of the lesson" (Brandl, p. 181).

After the postmethod turn, teacher autonomy became one of the essential pillars of postmethod teaching. Instead of having their roles dictated to them, teachers are encouraged to "acquire and assert a fair degree of autonomy in pedagogic decision making" in that they "know how to act autonomously within the academic and administrative constraints imposed by institutions, curricula, and textbooks" (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 178). This requires that teachers constantly strive for self-development as they gain teaching experience and theorize about their teaching.

Just as teacher autonomy is central to the realization of postmethod pedagogies, the autonomous learner plays an equally crucial role. In the postmethod era, the learner is no longer understood as a recipient of knowledge who passively fulfills the requirements of a language course. Rather, she or he is encouraged to also actively take part in pedagogic decision making. Two types of learner autonomy are discussed in the literature and summarized by Kumaravadivelu (2006), who defines *academic autonomy* as enabling learners to be effective learners and *liberatory autonomy* as the empowerment of the learner to critical thinking (p. 176).

The term *learner-centered* often appears in discussions on learner roles within CLT and TBLL and has often been misunderstood within those approaches. The postmethod paradigm, with its revaluing of the teacher and learner, seems to clarify the misconceptions that for some

time surrounded the term. In 1999, Nunan offered a definition of learner-centeredness that is compatible with the postmethod pedagogic parameter of possibility: "key decisions about what will be taught, how it will be taught, when it will be taught, and how it will be assessed will be made with reference to the learner" (p. 11). However, learners will usually have to first undergo a process of learning how to learn, which will hopefully lead them to the academic autonomy and eventual liberatory autonomy discussed above.

This type of learner-centeredness can only be achieved through the efforts of the learner and the assistance of autonomous teachers who reflect upon the many variables that compose their unique pedagogical setting and also consider the needs and goals of learners as they design classroom procedures. Within the postmethod paradigm, teachers and learners must both collaborate in the classroom and continually reflect and self-develop in order to move to higher levels of autonomy.

4.4. Concept of Language Learning

While it can be said that postmethod pedagogy does not adhere to any one understanding of language learning, any attempt to apply postmethod principles in the classroom will operate according to assumptions about the nature of language learning. Recent developments in CLT have led teachers and researchers to consider the use of *tasks* (discussed in section 4.1.1. of this chapter) as a way to maximize learning potential in the classroom. Quoting researchers Long (1989) and Prabhu (1987), Brandl (2008) explains that "the rationale for the employment of communicative tasks is based on contemporary theories of language learning and acquisition, which claim that language use is the driving force for language development" (p. 7). The idea of learning language through language use is not contradictory to the parameters of particularity, practicality, and possibility, although the specific manifestations of this concept will vary from setting to setting based on teachers' interpretation of this concept.

It is perhaps worth noting that the phrase "language learning through language use" echoes some of the ambiguity surrounding the term "communicative" in the methods era. With that said, the use of communicative tasks to carry out the overall objectives of postmethod pedagogy may be the best solution yet proposed for those teachers familiar with CLT. Although postmethod

frameworks have thus far excluded discussion on how an understanding of the processes of language learning will affect the application of its principles, any postmethod conceptualization of CLT must also consider this factor in justification of its focus on "communicative classroom procedures".

4.5. CLT and the Postmethod Challenge

In the context of postmethod pedagogy, it is clear that some theoretical assumptions, organizational principles, and practical implications of CLT need to be refined. To some degree, the ways in which the parameters of particularity, practicality, and possibility can be realized in the communicative classroom continue to elude teachers, teacher educators, and researchers alike. The postmethod challenge currently facing CLT is one of relevance. Is CLT able to cope with the contextual complexities of diverse pedagogical settings? Can CLT accommodate the changing roles of teachers and learners? And finally, can CLT foster awareness of the political, historical, and sociocultural forces that are intertwined with language?

A strong case could be made against CLT due to its ideological and cultural bias. However, Nunan (1999) argues that "contemporary practice represents an evolution, and that the best practice incorporates the best of 'traditional' practice rather than rejecting it" (p. 2). Even as the postmethod state of the literature on language teaching rejects the notion of methods, it acknowledges that it would be unwise to discard the successful practices of the past. This lends support to the claim that CLT can continue to be a helpful frame of reference within postmethod pedagogy as long as it continues to develop in a direction which recognizes the importance of the parameters of particularity, practicality, and possibility. Below is a short discussion of the ways in which CLT is compatible with postmethod pedagogy as well as the ways in which some CLT principles are brought into question by the postmethod paradigm.

The argument has been made that many of CLT's implicit assumptions are acceptable within the tenets of postmethod pedagogy. CLT's premise that language is communication and the goal of language instruction is the development of learners' communicative competence, although not unchallenged, does not stand in contradiction to the postmethod movement. "Language as communication" can be interpreted as incorporating elements from the three views of language

as system, discourse, and ideology. This view recognizes the many ways in which language can be understood and interpreted in pedagogical settings, and could be advocated without prescribing which should be the dominant view. In this way, CLT's treatment of language, with some clarification of terms, has the potential to fulfill the pedagogic parameter of particularity.

Furthermore, CLT's understandings of learner and teacher roles, as well as the nature of language learning, can be interpreted in a way appropriate for the postmethod era. In particular, the notions of the autonomous teacher and learner, as well as the attempt to foster learner-centered classrooms reflect a movement toward a pedagogy that takes seriously the parameters of practicality and possibility. The proposed use of tasks in the language classroom can be used as opportunities for teachers and learners to become more autonomous and to increase their awareness of the ways in which language is connected with various ideological forces.

Some of the principles in CLT, however, need more drastic adjustment. One area that needs to be developed lies in finding ways to encourage reflective thinking on the part of teachers; indeed, this may be one of the most significant challenges to the field of language teaching in the postmethod era. Although the field has taken a decisive step away from the concept of method, the fact remains that as long as languages are taught in classroom settings where time and resources are limited, teachers will employ a variety of methodologies to achieve their goals as efficiently as possible. In doing so, they adhere to the underlying assumptions about language, learners, and language learning that have been present in the myriad methods of the twentieth century.

If language teaching is to be anything other than purely eclectic and theoretically unsound, research and teaching have to become parallel pursuits. As Richards & Rodgers (2001) point out: "…there is much more to teacher development than learning how to use different approaches or methods of teaching" (p. 252). However, there are barriers to the realization of this goal. As Kumaravadivelu (2006) aptly observed: "there is a harmful dichotomy between theory and practice, between the theorist's role and the teacher's role in education" (p. 172).

If the transmission model of teaching languages is to disappear from the classroom, then it must also disappear in the relationships between researchers, curriculum developers, teacher

educators, and teachers. Only when the entrenched lines between these professions begin to fade can postmethod pedagogies be effective, for they are based on the belief that teacher autonomy is central to the construction and application of postmethod pedagogies, as well as to the nurturing of autonomous learners.

In the course of their teacher training, while setting course goals and developing lesson plans, and while interacting with students, teacher's beliefs about the nature of language, the learner, and the process of language learning affect practice on every level. If teachers are to teach effectively according to the postmethod parameters of particularity, practicality, and possibility, they must constantly revaluate their teaching context and resources as well as the needs of those whom they are teaching. This, admittedly, is no small task. It could be argued that the postmethod pedagogue has more responsibility than ever before in understanding and dealing with the reciprocal relationship between theory and practice.

Therefore, if CLT is to remain a relevant frame of reference for teachers within the postmethod era, the following questions need to be addressed: Can CLT be conceptualized in a way that is compatible with diverse pedagogical settings that are composed of teachers with varied resources, learners with specific sets of goals, and unique cultural and institutional variables? How can CLT address the need to develop autonomous teachers who constantly reflect on theory and practice and who develop context-sensitive ways of teaching? And finally: In what ways can CLT be a platform for addressing all aspects of language and language use, including the social as well as the linguistic needs of learners?

4.6. Summary

The rise of postmethod pedagogy shows a significant shift in the conceptualization of what it means to teach and learn a language. The previous sections of this chapter have shown some ways in which SLA research is dealing with this shift as it relates to the theoretical understandings of language, the learner, and language learning. In addition, some of the difficulties in applying the postmethod pedagogic parameters of particularity, practicality, and possibility have been highlighted.

In light of the postmethod attitude toward teaching languages, it is clear that progress has been made toward pedagogies that increasingly take the context of language teaching and learning into consideration. More than ever, the goals and methodologies of language instruction are being informed by learners' needs, the pedagogic setting, and the type of content being taught. One of the main weaknesses of the postmethod frameworks thus far proposed is an explicit means by which language teachers can reflect on how their basic assumptions about language, learners, and language learning will inform their application of the parameters of particularity, practicality, and possibility.

Chapter five, therefore, deals with the questions posed in chapter four by examining the connections between Wittgenstein's *PU* and the tenets of language teaching that have become popular after the "death of method". The aim of this comparison is to create a model that clarifies and states simply the ways in which theoretical assumptions affect organizational patterns and classroom procedures in the context of a postmethod conceptualization of CLT.

Chapter 5: Postmethod Communicative Language Teaching

"The *postmethod condition* is a sustainable state of affairs that compels us to fundamentally restructure our view of language teaching and teacher education. It urges us to review the character and content of classroom teaching in all its pedagogical and ideological perspectives" (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p.170 [emphasis in original]).

As the postmethod era of language teaching gets underway, it is crucial that a stronger connection is forged between research, curriculum development, and teaching. If CLT is to continue to be a relevant approach within the postmethod paradigm, it needs to become theoretically compatible with the parameters of particularity, practicality, and possibility. It is precisely this contribution that Wittgenstein's *PU* can make to the theoretical underpinnings of a postmethod conceptualization of CLT.

This chapter is concerned with identifying the relevance of Wittgenstein's *PU* to CLT in terms of the parallels the two already share and in terms of the ways the former can foster successful implementation of the latter. It integrates key concepts from the *PU* and the literature on SLA research and postmethod pedagogy in order to create a model that identifies the implicit assumptions about language, the learner, and language learning that teachers must consider in order to bridge the current postmethod gap between theory and practice. A section on what an understanding of "language as game" might mean for the language classroom concludes the discussion.

5.1. Return to the Beginning

The reader may wonder why Wittgenstein's *PU* was chosen as the key text to inform the construction of a postmethod conceptualization of CLT. One reason has already been described in chapter one of this project, namely that the understanding of language inherent in Wittgenstein's later philosophy was one of the first twentieth century criticisms of the "language as exclusively system" position in philosophy. His groundbreaking work led other language philosophers, including J.L. Austin and R.L. Searle, to continue this criticism and to elaborate on the notion of language as contextualized discourse.

By the time this idea infiltrated linguistics, researchers in other, related fields had also begun to treat language as a social phenomenon. This shift in the collective philosophical understanding of language led to the communicative turn in linguistics, where "language as communication" became the new paradigm for research and the teaching of languages. The postmethod turn that has more recently arrived in the field of language pedagogy has broadened this perspective further; language is understood to also fulfill an ideological function amidst historical, economic, political, and sociolinguistic influences.

After a century of change and several paradigm shifts, Wittgenstein's *PU* still contains valuable insights into the nature of language and language learning. The following sections discuss the concepts of language, the learner, and language learning that result from an integration of Wittgenstein's *PU* into the principles of CLT within a postmethod paradigm. The integration of these concepts culminates in the creation of a model outlining a postmethod conceptualization of CLT.

5.2. "Wittgenstein's" Philosophy of Postmethod CLT

Table 1 (found at the end of this section) outlines a teaching philosophy that is compatible with the tenets of postmethod pedagogy. It is designed with language teachers in mind who are familiar with CLT or TBLL and who seek to implement the principles of postmethod pedagogy in their everyday teaching practice. The table integrates some core concepts from the third phase of CLT and from Wittgenstein's *PU* to create a clear link between theoretical assumptions, organizational patterns, and classroom procedures. In adhering to the postmethod pedagogic parameters of particularity, practicality, and possibility, this model seeks to transcend the limitations of the concept of method. This table is my creation; however, it is based on Kumaravadivelu's (2006, p. 93) table for the categorization of language teaching methods.

It must be noted that this model may not be applicable to all contexts due to constraints that are either inherent in certain pedagogical settings or imposed upon them. Therefore, it will be most relevant to instructional settings in which learners are encouraged to be as autonomous as their maturity allows and where teachers are involved in the process of setting course goals and selecting materials.

Table 1: "Wittgenstein's" Philosophy of Postmethod CLT

(based on Kumaravadivelu's (2006, p. 93) categorization of teaching methods)

	Theoretical Assumptions	Organizational Patterns		Classroom Procedures
Concept of Language	- system, discourse and ideology - written and spoken communication - *Sprachspiel* (language-game) - meaning = form + function	- content is chosen with forms, meanings and uses of language in mind - content focuses on the communicative functions of language while recognizing the structural and ideological dimensions of language		- content is taught in ways appropriate to its written and spoken uses - attention is drawn to the connections between form, meaning and function in the L2
Concept of the Learner	- active participant - negotiator of meaning - player of the language-game - interacts with new *Lebensformen* (forms of life)	- content is relevant to the needs and goals of the learner - learners are involved in the selection of content - learners are responsible for their learning		- learners contribute to the creation of tasks and activities - learners are required to self-evaluate regarding their progress toward language learning goals
Concept of Language Learning	- occurs through language play and participation in the language-game - requires openness and flexibility in the face of ambiguities - the process of *Regelfolgen* (rule following) reveals the interaction of forms, meanings and functions in language	- creative language use is encouraged - opportunities for interaction in and through the L2 are maximized - tasks that require learners to interact with others in the TL are given priority - a variety of authentic texts are used to expose learners to multiple language-games		- learners work together on tasks in the TL as often as possible to maximize interaction with the language - L1 is used in order to discuss the rules of usage and use in the TL - content determines the use of inductive or deductive teaching

5.2.1. Concept of Language

In this model, language is conceptualized as a threefold entity: as a system with unique structural characteristics, as a means of communication, and as a means of transmitting culture and ideology. It is also congruent with CLT's basic assumption that language is communication and is best taught and learned by using written and spoken language to communicate meaning. The model assumes that meaning in language emerges out of the interaction between language forms and their function in a given context. This understanding of the nature of meaning reflects the philosophical stance inherent in Wittgenstein's concept of the *Sprachspiel*, in which forms of words and forms of life are intertwined and inseparable.

Therefore, the incorporation of Wittgenstein's *Sprachspiel* into postmethod CLT treats language as a complex entity; it is a system for the expression of meaning in human discourse, which shapes and is shaped by historical and ideological forces. The connections between form, meaning and function in language are brought together in a way that offers a unique perspective on the nature of communication. Communication is understood as the successful participation in the language-game, in which linguistic forms are used in socially-constructed ways in order to communicate specific meanings.

This understanding of communication has implications for the much-contested term *communicative*, whose vagueness in the methods era caused it to become nothing more than a buzzword. However, a re-evaluation of the term in light of Wittgenstein's *Sprachspiel* concept may succeed in redeeming it as a useful concept. As it relates to linguistic interaction in the language classroom, *communicative* can be defined as learners' target language use for the purposes of expressing meaning, exchanging ideas, or collaborating on tasks. Therefore, all exchanges of thoughts, opinions, and information in the target language are legitimate communicative practices for the purposes of language learning. This definition of communicative may provide little or no more clarity in reference to teaching methodologies. However, when it is understood in the context of language-games, communicative can be understood as the description of a learner's interaction with the target language and with other participants in the language-game. In order to be "communicative", learners must participate in

the language-game by means of written or spoken language. This interpretation of the term may require a certain shift in focus from Communicative Language *Teaching* to Communicative Language *Learning*.

These theoretical understandings of language, communication, and communicative imply that language course content will need to be selected with reference to the ways language is used in various contexts to communicate meaning. However, this must be done while recognizing that it will not be possible to teach *all* possible ways of communicating *all* meanings in *all* situations. One way of dealing with this issue in organizational patterns is discussed later in this chapter.

Classroom procedures that take the concept of *Sprachspiel* into consideration will focus on teaching language content in ways that are appropriate to the many written and spoken uses of language. In addition, they will draw attention to the connections between form and function in the L2. Teachers may find it helpful to consider the following questions: Does this task reveal the connections between language forms, functions, and meaning in the L2? Does this task create a situation in which learners have to participate in the language-games of the L2? Does this task force learners to make use of both their linguistic and metalinguistic resources?

5.2.2. Concept of the Learner

The learner in the postmethod era has perhaps the most responsibility ever for her or his own language learning. Since the transmission model of language teaching is considered no longer valid, learners must assume the role of active contributors to the negotiation of meaning in the classroom. They must be treated as legitimate "players of the language-game", even as they struggle with a new language's forms and the ways in which they can be used in communication.

The concept of *Lebensform* expresses a central aspect of language learning: forms of words are not completely comprehensible without an understanding of the forms of life with which they are entwined. The learner is simultaneously a student of language and culture, and progress in both of these interrelated areas is necessary for successful language learning to take place. Learners are therefore perceived as individuals who are already members of a given speech community and who interact with a new language and culture, thereby shaping and being shaped by both of these sets of *forms of words* and *forms of life*.

The concept of the learner in this model has a direct influence upon organizational patterns. Course content will be selected based on the needs and goals of the particular group of learners in a given class and some organizational patterns will need revision in the course of their learning process in order to ensure that the content is relevant to the linguistic and social needs of the students. That is, learners must learn about the rules of use and usage in order to decide how they will choose to follow or break them.

In addition, learners are expected to contribute to the life of the classroom to a much greater degree than in the methods era by helping to decide what will be taught, how it will be taught and how it will be tested. The goal of such learner involvement in the language classroom is to foster the development of their academic autonomy with the end goal of their achievement of liberatory autonomy. As teachers set course goals and plan individual lessons, they should keep in mind the following questions: Are these language learning goals relevant to learners? Which skills does this particular group of learners need in order to achieve their goals? Which unforeseen situations and ambiguities might they have to deal with and how can the process of language learning help them develop the flexibility and openness to deal with such situations? Does this lesson cover aspects of language usage and use that will encourage learners to become more autonomous in their studies/lives?

5.2.3. Concept of Language Learning

This model asserts that the connection between the forms, meanings, and functions of language become transparent only through experimentation and application. Language learning is understood as a creative process, one that can only take place through interaction with others and with the language itself. Wittgenstein's notion of *Regelfolgen* (rule following) is a helpful way of conceptualizing this process, in which the grammatical rules of language usage and the sociolinguistic rules of language use are learned through participation in the language-game. Language learning is therefore understood as a cyclical process of trial, error, and success.

Since the complexities of language learning are not fully understood, this model proposes that understanding language learning as a process of rule following adds value to current SLA theories of language learning. It assumes that learners' ultimate goal is successful participation in

the language-game and that the best way for them to learn the game is to participate in it, even while they struggle to learn the structural and social rules that govern its usage and use.

This understanding of language learning has broad implications for organizational patterns, as the language classroom itself is understood as one place where this struggle takes place. It provides a forum and appropriate scaffolding for the creative use of the target language with the assumption that through language use, learning will occur. Therefore, ample opportunities for L2 interaction are built into the organizational patterns of the language classroom.

Classroom procedures, too, will shift significantly with an understanding of language use as a key element of language learning. The concept of task is therefore a helpful way of creating situations in which learners must interact with one another in the target language in order to successfully complete the task. However, whether content is taught inductively or deductively and whether the L1 or the L2 is used will depend upon the nature of the subject matter and on the phase of the lesson. Some questions teachers should keep in mind when making such pedagogic decisions include: Is this concept new or familiar to learners? Does the material first require theoretical discussion, or can the learners deal with immediate experimentation? Does this task foster L2 collaboration between learners?

5.2.4. Particularity, Practicality, and Possibility

The reader may wonder how the above discussion relates to the pedagogic parameters of particularity, practicality, and possibility. In short: what contributions does an integration of Wittgenstein's *PU* make to a *postmethod* perspective on language teaching? After all, it subscribes to certain views of language, the learner, and language learning, ideas which are certainly not shared by all language teachers around the world. Indeed, one of the historical weaknesses of CLT is that it has largely ignored the uniqueness of each pedagogical setting, the dichotomous nature of teaching and research, and learners' potential in shaping their sociolinguistic realities.

The hope is that the integration of Wittgenstein's *PU* into the theoretical assumptions of CLT will serve to amend some of these oversights of the historical approach, clear up some ambiguity of concepts and broaden its appeal to a larger group of language teachers. While it will never be

possible to fully eradicate ideology from a postmethod conceptualization of CLT, the consideration of Wittgenstein's concepts has served to increase its relevancy and applicability in diverse pedagogical settings. Therefore, the parameter of particularity is served to this extent.

While the concept of postmethod pedagogy itself is also ideological in nature, postmethod pedagogies do allow for a great deal of ideological variation within flexible boundaries. It has been the aim of this paper to examine how the theoretical assumptions underlying CLT could be interpreted within a postmethod paradigm and how its ideas about the nature of language, the learner, and language learning could be translated into practice. It is not the intention of this work to argue that postmethod CLT will be appropriate for *every* pedagogical setting. This is the limitation of this model's particularity.

The model adheres to the parameter of practicality because it is specifically designed to foster teachers' and researchers' reflection upon their underlying assumptions about language, the learner, and language learning, which are the starting point of their research and teaching. It encourages teaching and research to become joint efforts in bringing to light new connections between theory and practice. Wittgenstein's concepts *Sprachspiel*, *Lebensform,* and *Regelfolgen* have provided some structure for this reflection through their unique expression of a philosophical view of language that is compatible with current SLA research. This contribution is only the beginning; new ways of reflecting upon the connections between theory and practice will play a key role in re-evaluating the principles of CLT.

The model upholds the parameter of possibility in that learners are considered to be active participants in language learning and are treated as co-creators of meaning, even from the outset of their language learning. This means that throughout the course of their learning, learners will have ample opportunity to reflect upon their historical, political, economic, and sociolinguistic realities and the ways in which they can alter them. This results from the view that language and culture are not two separate entities, but rather form together an integrated whole. Learners, therefore, do not embody culture, but rather interact with culture by means of language.

Since language is conceptualized as a game, each language comprises unique forms of expression that are connected with the activities of its speech community. When learners begin

to learn a language, they enter into membership of this community. As they learn to follow and bend the various rules of usage and use in the target language, they truly become co-creators of meaning within that speech community. When they become academically autonomous in their language learning, they move toward a state of liberatory autonomy in which they perceive themselves as co-creators of reality. In this way, this model of postmethod CLT integrates the pedagogic parameter of possibility.

5.3. "Language as Game" and Language Play

In light of the above discussions on language, the language learner and language learning within postmethod CLT, more questions arise: How can "language as game" have a meaningful impact on language teaching and learning? In what ways can Wittgenstein's concepts of *Sprachspiel*, *Lebensform,* and *Regelfolgen* be used to teach language in classroom settings? The answers to these questions may arise out of a consideration of *language play* as a key element of language learning. The concept of language learning through language play is highlighted in the book *Language Play, Language Learning* (Cook, 2000), in which the author contends that play is a key element of any kind of learning and of language learning in particular.

Cook's concept of language play is reminiscent of the language-game described by Wittgenstein's *Sprachspiel* concept, with a few important differences: While Cook understands language play as one aspect of language learning and use, Wittgenstein understands language *itself* to be a game (or conglomeration of games). What these two concepts have in common is an understanding that language forms, meanings, and functions are entwined and inseparable in language use. In addition, they both support an understanding of language learning as the process of a learner's creative interaction with the target language and with other people by means of language.

Cook brings into question some of the current orthodoxies regarding language teaching and learning within SLA. One of these orthodoxies is the often unquestioned belief regarding language learning "that causes can be isolated, controlled, and replicated, and that there is a simple relation between cause and effect, which has so extensively influenced second language acquisition theory, and through it teaching and learning practice" (Cook, 2000, p. 177). Cook

believes that exclusive explanations for language acquisition like Universal Grammar, comprehensible input and interaction, even when considered together, are inadequate to explain all the processes by which learners learn.

SLA, therefore, needs to find ways of dealing with "unpredictability and the creative power of random permutation" that has already been recognized by contemporary science (Cook, 2000, p. 202) and which Cook considers to be a characteristic of language learning. He advocates for approaches in SLA that "stress the social and pragmatic aspects of language acquisition, viewing the acquisition of formal systems as inseparable from the social context of their use" (Cook, 2000, p. 174). This call for an integration of formal systems and the social contexts in which they are used is addressed by Wittgenstein's concept of *Sprachspiel,* which makes transparent the connections between language forms and the activities and social contexts in which they are used. An understanding of "language as game" makes clear that language cannot be understood outside of its contextualized use, and thus answers Cook's plea for the integration of increased contextual considerations in language learning theory.

Cook makes a strong case for the inclusion of a "play element" in language teaching. He argues that play provides the learner with a context in which to practice language use "with appropriate scaffolding and support" (Cook, 2000, p. 175). In addition, language play serves to reveal the connections between the forms, meanings, and functions of language and fosters language learning in ways that both structural and communicative approaches have been incapable of. However, Wittgenstein's concept of *Sprachspiel* can present an even stronger case for the significance of language play: his understanding of "language as game" not only provides learners with a unique framework with which to discover the connections between the forms, meanings, and functions of language, but it also implies that active participation in the language-game is an essential part of the language learning process. Only by playing the game of language can learners, through a process of rule-following, piece together the forms, meanings, and functions of language in connection with culture-specific forms of life. The inclusion of a "play element" in the language classroom would provide the forum needed for this process to take place, and as Cook (2000) argues, it would provide unique opportunities for learners to

experiment with the possible uses of language through their interaction with various genres of communication. He presents five advantages of making use of language play in the language classroom:

"**Advantage 1**: *A play element would validate the explicit deductive teaching of rules (where possible in the students' first language) and frequent subsequent discussion of them by teachers and students in the light of practice*" (Cook, 2000, p. 194).

Cook makes a good case for the use of learners' L1 as well as the target language in the language classroom. He points out that language learners may benefit from the explicit discussion of rules before the commencement of certain classroom activities conducted in the L2 because language-games, like other types of games, require some sort of discussion or explanation before the players begin playing for the first time. This is not an argument for exclusive deductive teaching in the learners' mother tongue, but rather a reminder that learners may, on occasion, require explanations of rules of usage and use in their L1 in order to more successfully participate in target language-games (Cook, 2000, 195). From the perspective of Wittgenstein's *PU*, it makes sense that the rules of language-games, as well as the forms of life which have an influence upon them, should be explained and discussed in learners' L1 from time to time. Despite the importance of learners' inductive discovery of rules, formal, deductive explanations may provide important scaffolding to learners and should not be lightly dismissed, even within courses that emphasize experiential learning.

"**Advantage 2a**: *A play element would help to remedy the apparent dilemma of needing to choose between an emphasis on structure or an emphasis on use.*

Advantage 2b: *The need for authentic, varied, and motivating examples in which particular forms are foregrounded could be partly remedied by giving more prominence to literature, even in language courses for specific purposes*" (Cook, 2000, p. 195).

In pointing out these two sub-advantages of incorporating a play element into the practices of the language classroom, Cook addresses two issues: whether classroom activities should focus on form or function, and to what degree a variety of authentic texts should be employed in language teaching. Cook argues that the use of multiple genres in the language classroom can

serve to remedy both of these issues, as the use of rhymes, puns, jokes, advertisements headlines, and insults in the language classroom bring out unique form-function connections that cannot be found elsewhere (Cook, 2000, p. 195). In addition, the inclusion of such genres fosters learner involvement in the life of the classroom and presents a solution to the shortcomings of polarized approaches to language teaching:

> The rehearsal and performance of an appropriate play combines the best of both structural and communicative syllabuses: rote learning and repetition of a model, attention to exact wording, practice in all four skills, motivating and authentic language and activity, instances of culturally and contextually appropriate pragmatic use, and integration of linguistic with paralinguistic communication. (Cook, 2000, p. 196)

According to Wittgenstein's theory, each of the activities mentioned above is a different *Sprachspiel* and provides the language learner with opportunities to explore a broad variety of different language-games which interact with forms of life in the target language. The use of varied authentic material, as Cook proposes, can offer deep insights into the *Lebensformen* of the target language and culture. Furthermore, by interacting with literary or pop culture genres, the language learner is forced to deal with the possible uses of language structures as they occur in a greater variety of *Sprachspiele*.

"**Advantage 3a**: *A play element would license the treatment of the classroom as an 'artificial' rather than a 'real' environment.*

Advantage 3b: *A play element would legitimate the use of invented examples focusing upon particular forms*" (Cook, 2000, p. 196).

"**Advantage 3c**: *A play element would encourage the use of illustrative examples of a quasi-literary nature as mnemonics- the more bizarre in meaning, the better.*

Advantage 3d: *A play element would reinstate rote learning, repetition and recitation as enjoyable learning strategies*" (Cook, 2000, p. 197).

This four-fold advantage addresses the question as to whether and to what degree "authentic" language should comprise the content of language course material. While there are numerous advantages to focusing on "real" language for the "real world", Cook argues that incorporating

an element of play into the language classroom may actually better prepare students for the "real world". He points out that "the language in many socially and personally significant genres is constrained as much by the need to use a particular form – in order to achieve rhyme, rhythm, parallelism, or pun – as by particular meaning" (Cook, 2000, p. 198). Thus, Cook argues that the use of language that has previously been considered to be "unauthentic" may actually play an essential role in the learning process: The creative process of playing with language brings learners into interaction with memorable instances of language use and forces them to become more aware of the learning process. An understanding of the language classroom as an artificial setting, therefore, does not stand in contradiction to its goal of preparing language learners for linguistic activity in the real world; rather, its 'artificial' nature actually reflects the artificiality of much of the linguistic activity for which learners are preparing themselves. Indeed, "many jobs have elements of performance and role play built into them" (Cook, 2000, p. 197).

This is an area where Wittgenstein's concepts are highly relevant: an understanding of *language as game* and language learning as a process of learning to play it serves to blur the boundaries between "the artificial" and "the real". It has already been established that the patterns of language use in the "real world" are socially-constructed games; therefore, there is no point in trying to deny this fact in the context of language instruction. In fact, it is necessary that learners become aware that even the most pragmatic of linguistic interactions are in some sense games which adhere to rules of usage and use. The language classroom must, therefore, not only teach students what they "need to know" in order to communicate certain meanings, but it must also provide opportunities for learners to develop other, less tangible "skills" that will serve their interests as they navigate new language-games they encounter in the target language. For example, learners need to develop a degree of openness to the cultural ambiguities they will encounter in the L2, and they need to become flexible in their thinking in order to pick up the rules of new L2 language-games. A consideration of Wittgenstein's concepts of *Sprachspiel*, *Lebensform*, and *Regelfolgen* gives priority to the development of learners' creativity, flexibility, and ability to deal with new, unforeseen situations, even in the context of pragmatically-driven language courses.

"**Advantage 4**: *A play element would broaden the range of permitted interactional patterns within the classroom*" (Cook, 2000, p.199).

This fourth advantage seeks to remedy the tendency of language pedagogies to focus either on individual language study or on group work and to follow either authoritarian or egalitarian patterns of interaction. In order to foster a variety of linguistic and pragmatic interactions in the language classroom, Cook argues that a play element in language teaching enables a full range of interactions to take place. In the context of a game, "all combinations of players, from solitude to mass gatherings, are possible and authentic and we find all types of relationships from the most intimate to the most public, from those with clear differentials of power, to those in which participants meet on equal terms" (Cook, 2000, p. 200).

Arguing from the perspective of Wittgenstein's *PU*, the range of permitted interactional patterns within a classroom should not be limited to either individual or group work because every interaction with and by means of the target language can be considered to be participation in the language-game. Therefore, the use of a variety of interactional patterns in the language classroom offers multifaceted opportunities to learn and practice language-games. Since interactional patterns outside the classroom are not predictable, classroom procedures should make use of as many kinds of interaction as possible in order to expose learners to as many kinds of *Sprachspiele* as possible and to prepare them to adapt to new interactional situations.

"**Advantage 5**: *A play element allows the forces of change and tradition to coexist, and the teacher to move freely and as necessary between the exercise and the abdication of authority*" (Cook, 2000, p. 200).

This final advantage of incorporating a play element into language instruction is perhaps the most straightforward. In the context of a game (whether a language-game or a game of another sort) the players are both constrained and liberated:

Often they must remain within fixed boundaries. Their actions, speech, relationships, purposes, and even their dress, may not be of their own choosing, but dictated by the game. Yet at the same time, games promote individual expression, and create a sense of creativity and infinite possibility. Each playing of a game is at the same time a repetition, and unique…

thus, just as students are attempting to push themselves forward into an understanding and acceptance of new ways and conventions, they are also likely to feel themselves impelled backwards towards the values and habits of mind in their own culture and language…for these reasons, the union of freedom and tradition found in games is very suitable to language learning, as is an ethos in which the authority of the teacher is sometimes asserted, sometimes put aside (Cook, 2000, p. 201).

For the purposes of language teaching, an understanding of "language as game" can provide learners with an ideal forum in which to experiment with the new forms of words and forms of life of the target language. When learners are able to view their language learning experience as a game, they are free to discover the possibilities and limitations of language in the context of their linguistic and cultural vacillation. Thus, playing with language allows learners to constantly re-evaluate their shifting identities. The process of rule-following described by Wittgenstein further accounts for the processes by which learners observe and experiment with linguistic behavior in the context of various language-games. Therefore, language play in the language classroom can serve to foster learners' awareness of the *Lebensformen* they encounter and can provide them with the forum in which to adhere to or break with rules of usage and use in the target language.

Admittedly, the degree to which language play is accepted as a useful language learning tool will vary greatly depending upon each pedagogical setting. However, this concept is flexible enough to allow for differing understandings of the connections between work, play, and learning, and it provides some useful insights into how an understanding of "language as game" can be transformed into organizational patterns and classroom procedures. A play element in the language classroom also allows teachers and learners to revaluate their roles and discover what works and what does not in the strategies they employ in teaching and learning. Finally, an element of play draws attention to the ways in which language can be manipulated in order to create meaning, mediate various forms of communication and transmit ideology, just as Wittgenstein's *Sprachspiel* concept implies. In these ways, acknowledging language play as a

valuable teaching and learning tool can assist the application of the postmethod pedgagogic parameters of particularity, practicality, and possibility.

5.4. Summary

Chapter five has focused on an integration of the concepts *Sprachspiel*, *Lebensform,* and *Regelfolgen* into a postmethod conceptualization of CLT. The resulting model has outlined theoretical assumptions about language, the learner, and language learning that reflect combined insights from Wittgenstein's *PU*, current SLA research, and some shared principles of CLT and TBLL. This model's understandings of language, the learner, and language learning have been discussed in detail and a strong case for their relevance to postmethod pedagogy has been presented. In addition, the concept of language play has been put forth as one way in which to apply an understanding of "language as game" to the development of organizational patterns and classroom procedures. The concept of language-game takes the notion of language play further by asserting that *all* linguistic behaviour can be likened to rule-bound games within which language-game participants negotiate meaning. It implies that even everyday interactions require sensitivity, openness, and flexibility on the part of its participants, and it opens up new possibilities for the development of classroom procedures by treating instances of both "real" and "artificial" language use as equally valuable resources for the language classroom. Through playing the language-game, learners not only have the opportunity to experiment with their own position within it, but also to explore the interplay between target language *forms of words* and *forms of life* and to discover the connections between target language forms, meanings, and functions.

Chapter 6: Thesis Conclusion and Questions for Further Research

This work has been primarily theoretical, and its chief aim has been to contribute a unique philosophical perspective to the current reflections and discussions on CLT within a postmethod paradigm. It has traced the emergence of CLT and the ways in which theory has influenced practice throughout the three stages of its development. Finally, it has shown some ways in which Ludwig Wittgenstein's *PU* contributes to a postmethod understanding of language, the learner, and language learning. The postmethod perspective can be understood as a paradigm for reflecting upon and refining the concept of method, in which the best of theory and practice are retained as they are tested against current research. In this way, the advantages and limitations of the concept of method are dealt with and are constantly subject to reflection and revision.

This thesis has shown thata consideration of language philosophy can assist the field of language pedagogy as it comes to terms with the future development of CLT. Indeed, the flexible nature of CLT not only allows for, but in fact deserves this level of reflection if it is to remain a relevant approach to language teaching. This work has served to further clarify and reflect upon some formerly unquestioned concepts that prevailed in the methods era and it has sought to establish a theoretically-sound basis for the future development of CLT.

It has not been the aim of this project to reinvent the wheel or to create a new fad in language teaching; rather, its goal has been to explore one possible interpretation of the postmethod pedagogic parameters within CLT through the theoretical lens of the *PU*. It is hoped, therefore, that a consideration of the *PU* will serve to ease the transition from the methods paradigm to the postmethod paradigm for both the theorist and practitioner. However, this paradigm shift is by no means complete; the contributions of researchers, teacher educators, teachers, and learners will determine the success of the transition to a postmethod paradigm in language teaching and learning. Indeed, its success will depend on the willingness of these individuals to reflect upon theory and practice in new ways.

Introducing Wittgenstein into theories of language learning and teaching may, to some extent, be regarded as a rather subjective approach and selection; however, I would maintain that this work's aim of clarifying theoretical assumptions within a postmethod conceptualization of CLT

could only be achieved by drawing on research outside of the conventional resources in SLA.In order to re-conceptualize language teaching, it is necessary to first re-examine the assumptions and beliefs that underlie both theory and practice in this field.This project has analysed certain assumptions that underlie CLT, postmethod pedagogy and Wittgenstein's *PU*, but an examination of other areas of language philosophy may prove equally fruitful for aspects of language pedagogy that have not been discussed in this work. Subsequent research on this topic might investigate how practical concerns in language teaching can provide the basis for a bottom-up construction of language teaching philosophies.

Regarding the main themes in this project, there is still much work to be done regarding the specific ways a conceptualization of "language as game" can assist the practical application of the postmethod pedagogic parameters of particularity, practicality, and possibility in the language classroom. Further studies on this topic might include the creation of materials to assist teachers and future teachers as they reflect upon the nature of language, the learner, and language learning, and as they re-evaluate their own roles. It would also be worthwhile to explore the reactions of teachers from a variety of cultural and educational settings to the concept of "language as game" in order to determine its accessibility and adaptability in a variety of contexts.

The notion of Communicative Language *Learning*also requiresfurther scholarly investigation: to what degree does the concept of language-games affect the ways in which the processes of language learning are understood, and to what degree is the notion of Communicative Language *Teaching*still relevant within postmethod pedagogies?In addition, a re-evaluation of the "needs" of the postmethod learner must take into consideration the intangible skills that are as essential to successful language learning as are the pragmatic language skills usually emphasized in SLA. It would therefore be advantageous to explore the ways in which the concept of language-games challenges the current pragmatic focus in language teaching. Finally, a study on the ways language and culture are currently taught in language classrooms could reveal the degree to which language and culture are (or are not) perceived as intrinsically connected entities in the context of language teaching and learning.

There are, therefore, many possibilities for further research on the ways in which language philosophy can have an impact in language pedagogy and foster the interplay between theory and practice. This work has dealt with just some of these. Most importantly, this work has shown that language learning and teaching, though these are often considered to be primarily concerned with practical issues, is well worth reflecting in light of the philosophical dimensions that underlie even the theoretical assumptions of theorists and practitioners. After all, what one must keep in mind is that every practical issue involved in the learning and teaching of languages is always part of a larger picture; in this way, language philosophy can provide the means by which to re-conceptualizesolutions to practical issues.

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