

BERKELEY AND EARLY WITTGENSTEIN ON SOLIPSISM: A REVIEW

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Abstract

This paper gives an exposition of the conception of solipsism of both Berkeley and early Wittgenstein followed by a critical assessment of the same. Both of them argue that solipsism is not different from realism. The difference lies in their methodological inquiry into the issue of solipsism. Berkeley believes in the epistemological-perceptual method, whereas Wittgenstein considers the method of logico-linguistic analysis to understand the sense of the world and life in his early work Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus. Berkeley's philosophy of 'subjective idealism' is regarded as leading to the problem of the denial of the independent existence of anything beyond the knowing self or 'I'. It is common knowledge that I exist in a world of various types of things and beings. This realistic position can hardly be denied by any philosophical doctrine. Similar is the case with Wittgenstein. His problem is more important than that of Berkeley. Wittgenstein deals with the problem concerning the relationship between language and the world. There is a sense in which Wittgenstein agrees with solipsism. One natural way of expressing the view of solipsism is to say "The world is my world." In this sense, solipsism becomes the same as realism. In another sense, he disagrees with solipsism in so far as the whole of sayability centres on self, which is nowhere found in the world. So it is rather the philosophical self. This cannot be asserted to exist because there would be logical absurdity in doing so. Wittgenstein is right in saying that solipsism is correct in principle, but the difficulty with it is that it cannot be stated in language.

Keywords: Berkeley, Wittgenstein, Solipsism, Self, World

I

This paper gives an exposition of the conception of solipsism of both George Berkeley and early Ludwig Wittgenstein followed by a critical assessment of the same. Both of them argue that solipsism is not different from realism. The difference lies in their methodological inquiry into the issue of solipsism. Berkeley believes in the epistemological-perceptual method, whereas Wittgenstein considers the method of logico-linguistic analysis to understand the sense of the world and life in his early work

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Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus.¹ Berkeley's philosophy of 'subjective idealism' is regarded as leading to the problem of the denial of the independent existence of anything beyond the knowing self or 'I'. It is common knowledge that I exist in a world of various types of things and beings. This realistic position can hardly be denied by any philosophical doctrine. Similar is the case with Wittgenstein. His problem is more important than that of Berkeley. Wittgenstein deals with the problem concerning the relationship between language and the world. There is a sense in which Wittgenstein agrees with solipsism. One natural way of expressing the view of solipsism is to say "The world is my world."² In this sense, solipsism becomes the same as realism. In another sense, he disagrees with solipsism in so far as the whole of sayability centres on self, but is nowhere found in the world. So it is rather the philosophical self which is the precondition of any proposition. This cannot be asserted to exist because there would be logical absurdity in doing so. Wittgenstein is right in saying that solipsism is correct in principle, but the difficulty with it is that it cannot be stated in language.

Commonsense moves in an unorganised way, science in an organised refined way and philosophy moves in the most organised way. Berkeley starts his philosophy by discussing the status of matter, which is the subject matter of common sense and science. His predecessor John Locke left the idea of matter as problematic as he said that matter, that is substance, must exist as the support of qualities, but what that substance is, is not known. The point of view that Berkeley wants to contest is that objects like tables, chairs, houses, plants, rivers, mountains, etc., exist in the world out there on their own independent of being perceived. People in general believe in the outer world because they can see it, touch it, hear it, smell it, and taste it. Are the sensible qualities of things in the world the cause of perception of their existence? Locke believes in such a view. Berkeley rejects the causal theory of perception and the existence of matter too. It seems that if we take away all sensible qualities, then there is nothing left that is sensible. So, things are nothing but a set of sensible qualities. Sensible qualities are but the ideas in the mind of the perceiver. To exist is to be perceived - *esse est percipi*. This is called the doctrine of idealism. As the ideas are ideas in relation to a subject, it is called Subjective Idealism. According to Berkeley, Self or Spirit alone can be the cause of ideas as those are inactive by themselves. Berkeley has been pictured in this way in many books on history of Western philosophy and introductory books on philosophy. They also say that when subjective idealism is pushed to the extreme, as Berkeley does in his *Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous* and his *Principles of Human Knowledge*, it becomes a doctrine of solipsism.³ 'Solipsism' literally means 'I and my ideas alone exist.'

According to Berkeley, there is no such entity as matter or a physical world, or, in the sense of existing independently. All that we ordinarily call physical objects are a totality of ideas in the mind of the perceiving being. The appearances that are experienced are the very objects. The appearances are sensations or perceptions of a thinking being. According to his '*esse est percipi*' - 'to be is to be perceived' - thesis, all the things surrounding us are nothing but our ideas. Sensible things have no other existence distinct from their being perceived by us. This also applies to human bodies. When we see our bodies or move our limbs, we perceive only certain sensations in our consciousness.

Berkeley argues that since we never perceive anything called 'matter', but only ideas, the view that there is a material substance lying behind and supporting these perceptions is untenable. For him, everything is mind-dependent. If one cannot form an image of a thing in the mind, then that thing cannot be said to exist. It is argued that if there were no material substrate supporting our ideas, how is it that things persist when no one perceives them? Berkeley's response to this is that all our perceptions are ideas produced for us by God. It appears that Berkeley succeeds in his attempt to avoid the allegation that he is a solipsist. However, his thought falls into the category of what could be called Divine Solipsism. The Divine Being and His ideas alone are real ultimately. Only relatively, 'I' and my ideas alone are real. Berkeley's attempt to avoid the label of solipsism is not as successful as he thinks. He is only creating within his own mind an idea of a God within whose mind all things exist as ideas. He makes his God a solipsist and makes him the God of God. As he argues that all things are merely ideas that arise within the mind of the individual, it becomes natural to conclude that Berkeley is indeed a solipsist. But it would be an unfair appraisal of Berkeley.

Berkeley cannot be described like this, not as an idealist, or as a subjective idealist, or as a solipsist in the ordinary sense of these terms. Plato's Ideas are Ideals, but Berkeley's ideas are not Ideals. The Idea of the table, according to Plato, is the Idea of the perfect table to which tables of the empirical world approximate. John Hospers calls Berkeley an 'idea-ist.'⁴ The perceiver, according to Berkeley, admits his own existence by inward feeling or reflection. Besides his own existence, he also admits the existence of other selves by analogical reason. Besides these finite selves, he admits the existence of an infinite self, that is, God. Therefore, it would not be proper to label Berkeley as a subjective idealist or a solipsist. Berkeley could better be known as a critical realist.

II

Ludwig Wittgenstein is a frontline philosopher of the twentieth century. He is a leader in the analytical tradition that began with Frege, Moore, and Russell. His *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus (TLP)*, one can say, is the Bible of this tradition that showed the new path of doing philosophy. He says that this is not a text in philosophy, but claims that this deals with the problems of philosophy. Here he takes up the important problem regarding the relationship of thought with reality in the logical mode and the problem is rephrased as the problem of relationship of language with reality. This involves the further problem of the scope and limits of what could be said in language about reality.

According to Wittgenstein, the structure of reality is the same as the structure of language. By 'language' he does not mean any natural language like German, English, Greek, Latin, Sanskrit, or Hindi. All such different languages are used to talk about the same reality. Hence they must have a common and essential structure. What is that? The task in *TLP* is to discover this structure. Wittgenstein, however, does not start with language to find out its structure. He starts with aphoristic statements about the structure of the world. The reason behind this must be that the world is the common point of reference of any language.

According to Wittgenstein, the world is a totality of facts, not of things. By 'fact' Wittgenstein means facts in their simplest form. Whatever facts are described by propositions need to be analysed into the simplest form, if they are not in that form. This is a logical need. Hence, Wittgenstein asserts that even if the world is infinitely complex, it must ultimately be analysed into the simplest facts. He calls them state of affairs. The world is, therefore, a totality of states of affairs.

He then comes to language. The smallest unit of expression is a proposition, not a word. Language consists of propositions. If a proposition is not a simple one, its sense cannot be easily apprehended. Wittgenstein is in search of clarity in thought and expression. So, he searches for the simplest form of proposition that carries thought. According to him, language is ultimately a sum total of the simplest propositions which he calls elementary propositions.

The sameness of the structure of language and the world is now found. An elementary proposition is a representation or picture of a state of affairs. Wittgenstein emphasises the sameness of structure from the point of view of meaning. His view of meaning as the picture has three characteristics: (1) elemental similarity, (2) structural similarity, and (3) rules of projection that make it possible to have the state of affairs

when an elementary proposition is given and have the elementary proposition when the state of affairs is given.

It follows from the above that if all the elementary propositions are given, then all the possible states of affairs are given and that fixes the limit of the world. This is the general position regarding the relationship of language with the world. In respect of any particular user of language, say, Tom, Dick, or Harry, this general position would apply. For anyone, his/ her conception of the world is built and bound by elementary propositions in that resource of language, which he/she could build out of elements, called names. The world for any user of language is a limited whole, because nothing lies outside the limits of his/her language. I cannot conceive of a world outside the one that is bound by the stock of language which I possess. As Wittgenstein puts it, "The limits of my language mean the limits of my World."⁵

In other words, the limits of language are also limits of the reality that can be thought or described. Now, it could be seen that the phrase 'reality that can be described or thought' is an extra thing here for the reasons that we shall now discuss. The above expression does not make sense and needs to be dropped. That which it intends to say can only be shown. One cannot say that the limits of language are the limits of the only reality that can be described or thought. This has the implication that there is another reality beyond the reality depicted by language which is not specified. This is not correct. George Pitcher explains it in a simple manner.⁶ He takes aRb as a symbolic example of a state of affairs. For example, the state of affairs aRb belongs to the reality that can be described or thought. The negation of this statement cannot be significantly stated in language. It turns out to be nonsensical. It appears to say something, but it does not say anything. Wittgenstein says, "Logic pervades the world: the limits of the world are also its limits."⁷ He says further that we cannot say in logic, "The world has this in it, and this, but not that." The world is a limited whole. The world is limited by the logic of language and not by any physical boundary. This leads to the discussion of solipsism. As we discussed earlier, solipsism is the doctrine that I and my ideas alone exist. What of I do not have an idea, including other selves, does not exist. We have pointed out that in the history of philosophy George Berkeley is shown as a philosopher who was a subjective idealist and a solipsist.

III

It appears as if Berkeley and Wittgenstein, who are two centuries apart, are advocating the same doctrine of solipsism. Berkeley is putting it up in terms of ideas, whereas Wittgenstein is putting it up in terms of language. We have contested the claim that Berkeley is a solipsist. Wittgenstein, however, would agree with what solipsism

says. As we discussed above, Wittgenstein says that the world that I refer to and describe is the world that I depict by means of my resources of linguistic implements. This is but natural and real. “The world is my world,” Wittgenstein states.⁸ This statement is quite true and natural. Here, ‘natural’ does not mean that nature dictates what is to be called what. It rather means that when one thinks and speaks about reality, one thinks about it within the limits of one’s language. That is why he says that solipsism coincides with pure realism. The phrase ‘that can be described or thought’ must be dropped and it simply reduces to reality and reality alone. In the same way, ‘my world’ reduces to ‘the world’. ‘My World’ means the language which I only can understand, I only can think, I only can convey, etc., and that limits the world for me. This is what my world is and this is what the world is; both are one and the same. This is the spirit of solipsism and in this sense Wittgenstein says that solipsism is right. The implication of Wittgenstein’s solipsism is that “I am my world”⁹ from the logico-linguistic point of view.

My language and my world are equipollent. For Wittgenstein, my world exists as far as my language goes. But, the only problem here is the thesis of solipsism cannot be stated in language. It is only shown in the way one uses language to talk about the world within the framework of logic. Leaving the self aside, solipsism wants to say: (1) what I experience exists and (2) whatever I do not experience does not exist. But, neither (1) nor (2) is a proposition having sense. Following Wittgenstein’s search for simples, we find that both (1) and (2) denote complexes and complexes are to be analysed into propositions containing only particulars. What I experience is the state of affairs aRb. Its linguistic expression is the proposition aRb. This complex aRb containing names and relations appears to be the symbolic form of a simple proposition. When it is broken up into simple propositions, we get “‘a’ exists” and “‘b’ exists”. These utterances “a exists” and “b exists” are not genuine propositions as their negations are self-contradictory and senseless. a and b are objects of the world and they must exist to make sense of any proposition possible.

Therefore, “My experiences are my experiences” and “My world is my world” lack sense. I cannot *say* that my world is all there is, but that is so can readily be seen. I cannot say that there is another world that lies outside me. It does not make any sense to say so. But, it is a correct viewpoint. So, what solipsism wants to say is correct, but it cannot be said in meaningful terms. “For what the solipsist *means* is quite correct; only it cannot be *said*, but makes itself manifest. The world is *my* World: this is manifest in the fact that the limits of language (of that language which alone I understand) mean the limits of *my* world.”¹⁰

The thesis of solipsism underlies a dualism. There is the thinking, knowing, or experiencing self; it is a thing that has experiences. Then there must be an experiencing self, but it cannot be the object of experience. Whenever there is experience, there is an experience. But, the experiencer is not within the domain of experience. The experiencer is not the object of experience. There is no such entity as thinking, knowing self - a metaphysical self. Such a thing as appears to be there in epistemological analysis cannot be logically supported. Here, the thinker is the thought; the experiencer and the experience are non-different. Berkeley maintains the duality between I and my ideas. This is so from the point of view of empirical psychology. Wittgenstein maintains that my statements are alone there. This is from the logico-linguistic point of view. The self is nothing but the sum total of episodes like thinking, knowing, willing, etc., which shows itself forth in the meaning-bearing statements.

“The ‘I’ is not an object.”¹¹ What Wittgenstein means by saying that there is no such entity as self in the world is that ‘I’ in “I see ___”, “I think ___”, “I feel ___”, and so on, is not the name of an object. Here the remaining part is the ‘see ___’, ‘feel ___’, ‘think ___’ and so on could be meaningfully expressed with the prefix of an impersonal subject like ‘it’. “I think” is only an accidental grammatical form that misleads us to suppose that ‘I’ must be there as an object in the world. Instead of saying “I think”, we can very well say “It thinks”. In this form of expression the confusion does not occur.¹²

IV

Jaakko Hintikka’s explanation of what Wittgenstein understands by ‘metaphysical subject’ is worth our attention. He says that Wittgenstein’s solipsism identifies the metaphysical subject with the sum-total of one’s language. To be more clear, Wittgenstein identifies the limits of one’s language with the limits of one’s self. Here, he is not concerned with the empirical subject, but the ‘metaphysical’ subject discussed in history of philosophy. There is no part of the world of which it can be said that it necessarily is. “No part of experience is . . . a priori.”¹³ Hence, “in an important sense, there is no subject”; the ‘thinking, imagining subject’ does not do as the metaphysical subject.¹⁴ The ‘metaphysical’ subject is the totality of propositions. It cannot, therefore, refer to itself, for it follows from the other doctrines of the *TLP* that no propositions can refer to itself.¹⁵ The metaphysical subject being the totality of propositions is identified with the totality of thoughts for “the thought is the significant proposition”. Therefore, nothing is private and psychological about Wittgenstein’s notion of thought.¹⁶

Marie McGinn makes the same point in a different language. He says that the subject does not create the world. Which states of affairs exist or do not exist is independent of the subject and established only *a posteriori*.

However, the world is not conceivable other than in propositions that belong to a system of representation that stands in a projective relation to reality. Moreover, the idea of the projection of language onto reality contains the idea of a subject who makes the projection. Wherever there is a representation of the world in propositions, there is a subject who is in a position to say 'I think ...'.¹⁷

The 'experience' that we need to understand logic is not that something or other is the state of things. That goes on changing and falls under the scope of science which enquires into the 'how' of states. But the state of things that does not change is the 'what', which is the concern of logical philosophy. Hence, Wittgenstein observes that logic is prior to the question 'How', not prior to the question 'What'. Thus, logic is in between 'How' and 'What'. It is prior to the world, but not independent of the world. This is well explained by G.E.M. Anscombe. Everything logical about a significant proposition is understood before it is known whether the proposition is true or false. But logic cannot be thought of as something independent of the world. If logical truths were there without there being any world, then when a world comes to be, it cannot apply to the world.¹⁸We cannot say of that world that such and such a thing cannot be, because there exists a logical fact which is inconsistent with it. It is a logical riddle. "If there would be such a thing as logic, even if there were no world, then how can there be such a thing as logic, when there is a world?"¹⁹ Although logic is prior to every representation of how the world is, its limits can, in this special sense, be said to coincide with the limits of the world.

I am a solipsist if I think "I am the only *I* and the world including all the people in it, is *my* experience." In a sense, this is all right. But how can I put it in language which is only intersubjectively used and understood? It is natural to think that where there is consciousness, there is an *I*. How do we speak of *an I*? There is a consideration 'from inside' and there is a consideration 'from outside'. In order to locate *an I* from the inside, one perceives the contents of consciousness like the pain, the image, the visual field, and the like, whereas, from the outside, one perceives manifestations of them in verbal and physical behaviour. Explaining Wittgenstein's position, Anscombe points out that it is illegitimate to speak of '*an I*'. 'From inside' means only 'as *I* know things' and I describe those things. However, there remains something I cannot communicate or express, that is about the *I* behind descriptions. I try to do so by saying that I speak 'from an inside point of view'. But the trouble is that there is no other *point*

of view. If others speak also ‘from an inside point of view’, that would be *my* experience.²⁰ In the words of Wittgenstein, “what the solipsist *means* is quite correct; only it cannot be *said*, but makes itself manifest.”²¹ The ‘I’, taken in this sense, cannot be found as a mind or a soul or as a subject of consciousness. All that can be found is the content of consciousness. In this sense, “I am my world” and “The world and life are one”.²² The ‘I’ refers to a point from which everything is seen.²³

V

There is a type of proposition which gives the impression the self is correlated as an object with facts, such as, “A judges that *p*”, “A believes that *p*”, “A has the thought *p*”, and “A says *p*”. These are called intentional propositions. This is a misunderstanding according to Wittgenstein. He tries to dispel it by bringing out the logical form of such propositions in a unique way. According to Wittgenstein, the mind cannot be explained as a thinking subject or a judging subject. “A judges *p*” is really of the form “‘*p*’ says *p*”. For him, what we do have is not a simple object but a complex here. The composite self cannot be a simple object. The self that appears to be here as an object is nothing but a bundle of psychological elements. It is not an object which can be found in this world. There is no such thing as a subject that is the seat of activities like thinking or entertaining ideas.²⁴

“A believes that *p*”, “A has the thought *p*” and “A says *p*” are all of the form “‘*p*’ says *p*”. (*TLP*, 5.542) Any one of the above three does not involve a correlation of a fact with an object. It involves the correlation of facts by means of the correlation of their objects. Now the question arises, what is the difference between the correlation of fact with an object and the correlation of facts by means of the correlation of their objects? The point is that it is denied that a fact is not coordinated with the self as an object. But, it is affirmed that a propositional sign as a fact is coordinated with a proposition and the sense of the proposition, that is, a state of affairs of the world involves a correlation of objects. This becomes clear when we take the following aphorisms together.

“We use the perceptible sign of a proposition (spoken or written, etc.) as a projection of a possible situation.”²⁵

“A proposition is a propositional sign in its projective relation to the world.”²⁶

“Instead of, ‘This proposition has such and such a sense’, we can simply say, ‘This proposition represents such and such a situation’.”²⁷

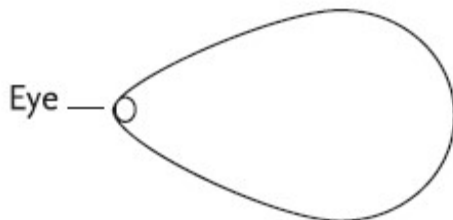
The sense of a proposition is objective and it does not need a psychological-empirical self to manifest it. Marie McGinn explains,

The proposition that I use to express this recognition ‘A judges that p ’ – identifies the subject to whom I attribute the thought by means of reference to an empirical subject: the human being denoted by ‘A’. However, in recognising the other as expressing a thought, I implicitly recognise that the other is not merely a constituent of my world, but that he, like me, has an orientation towards it.²⁸

According to Wittgenstein, a proposition is also a fact. The proposition “A has the thought p ” does not involve a correlation of fact with an object; rather it involves a correlation between a propositional fact with the fact of the world. The propositional fact is concatenated with the name and the world fact is concatenated with the object. A fact can picture a fact; a non-fact cannot picture a fact. So, if we take a concrete example, it would be like this: the propositional fact “Cuttack is to the north of Bhubaneswar” states a fact of the world that Cuttack is to the north of Bhubaneswar. “A believes p ” is equivalent to “A utters ‘S’ and ‘S’ says that p .” (‘S’ stands for statement) Here, the supposed thinker does not exist as an object. It is rather like that the thought is there without a thinker. We know that for Wittgenstein, thought is propositional. In the psychological sense, we say that there is a thinker very much as Descartes does, but in the logical sense, there is no need for it.

V

At 5.632, Wittgenstein's notion of a subject is that it does not belong to the empirical-psychological world or a transcendent metaphysical world. It exists in the domain of philosophical logic as a formal concept. It is said to constitute the limits of the world. It is the transcendental ‘I’ which is not part of the world, nor apart from the world. To explain this, he gives the analogy of the eye and the visual field in *TLP*, 5.6331:



He means to say that although the visual field is for the eye, the eye is not inside the visual field and the eye is not completely outside the visual field either. It is the limit of the visual field. Particular cases of representation of the world show that there is a conscious subject. The existence of the visual field shows the existence of the eye.

Here, we take ‘visual field’ as the consciousness of the world or representation of the world, and ‘I’ as the conscious subject. As ‘I’ is not in the consciousness in the visual field, that consciousness is not there as one of the representations of the world. Representation of the world *shows* that there is consciousness that represents. We cannot *say* that in so many words. There are representations of the world, but no representation of consciousness. That would be a contradiction. The existence of the visual field shows the existence of the eye. Similarly, the self does not itself appear in the representations of the world, simply because consciousness is coordinated with it already. As H.O. Mounce puts it, Wittgenstein seems to suggest that philosophy can bring out, though not state, a sense of the self, which has not been captured in what has been said about the empirical self.”²⁹ At *TLP*, 5.62, Wittgenstein says, “For what the solipsist means is quite correct; only it cannot be said but makes itself manifest.” As explained already, there is nothing, which is the neighbour of the visual field in contrast with which the given visual field would be provided a boundary to differentiate it from the supposed other. There is no other area. It is not that the conception of solipsism is right and when we express it, it becomes confused. It is not like that. What then is the point in saying that what solipsism means is quite correct? His point, according to Mounce, is that solipsism is a confused attempt to say important something else. Solipsism is not true, but there is something behind what is called solipsism. This Wittgenstein wanted to say which cannot be said in language. Therefore, it shows itself. The truth is not that ‘I’ alone is real. It is rather that I have a point of view on the world which is without neighbours.³⁰ The so-called doctrine of solipsism, according to him, is that there cannot be any doctrine called solipsism. But, there is a doctrine that cannot be said.

Wittgenstein asserts, “The world is *my* World.”³¹ This is not stated in language, but shown by what is stated in language. As per Wittgenstein’s philosophical logic, non-elementary propositions are truth-functions of elementary propositions and an elementary proposition is a truth-function of itself. So, when we analyse any proposition to get its sense, we ultimately reach elementary propositions. The sense of a non-elementary proposition can be derived by analysing the same into elementary proposition. When the sense of elementary propositions is known, the sense of the given non-elementary propositions is known. Non-elementary propositions are constructed out of elementary propositions and logical connectives. If someone has a list of all elementary propositions and all the propositional connectives, then (s)he has all the propositions about the world and thereby knows the whole world, or (s)he can describe the world completely. But, none of the users of language have at their command the whole list of propositions because they do not have at their command all the elementary propositions. Suppose that I am given all elementary propositions: then

I can simply ask what propositions I can construct out of them. And there I have all propositions and that fixes their limits.³² A proposition is a truth-function of elementary propositions.³³ If we know all the elementary propositions, then the totality shows the 'limits' of the world. Any proposition, which is not truth-functional is not a description of the world. A complete description of the world is given by listing all elementary propositions and then listing which of them are true and which is false.³⁴

The truth about the world would be explained by different propositions or a set of propositions and if we know this set of propositions, then we know the whole truth about the world. According to the *TLP*, we are confined to the language in which we use to speak about the world. Our world expands or shrinks according to our capability to construct elementary propositions and non-elementary propositions out of them. Therefore, the limits of language fix the limits of reality. My language fixes limits on my take of reality. Here, the word 'my' used in the sentence gives the impression of solipsism as if the existence of the world depends upon *my* knowing the world. But, 'my' is not confined to me only; it is open to each and every user of language. Everybody describes the world using the word 'I' and 'my.' The meaning of reality is the same as the phrase 'that can be described or thought'. So, we cannot use meaningfully the expression 'the reality that cannot be described nor thought'. There is no world beyond this world, which could not possibly be described or thought. There is no such neighbour, there is no such world in a neighbourhood that is described or thought of. One cannot say either (1) the limits of the only reality that can be described or thought, or (2) there may be some other reality beyond this limited reality, which can be described or thought in language. So, the second proposition is self-contradictory, because we cannot say that there is a reality that cannot be described in language. If the opposite of a given proposition is not significant, then the given proposition is not significant. Instead of saying that the limits of reality that can be described or thought, we must say that the limits of language are the limits of reality of the world. So, the phrase 'limits of my language' means that we know the limited part of the ideal whole or know only a limited portion of the elementary propositions. Therefore, my language is a limited part of my language at my command.

Here, Wittgenstein's point is not that there is a language that I alone understand, but that it is the only language that I understand. My conception of the world shows itself only in what I say about the world. The conception of the world, which is given to me in language that I know, does not mean that I have considered other possibilities. So, my conception about the world is, like my visual field, without neighbours.

In conclusion, it may be pointed out that Berkeley's solipsism is not different from realism and Wittgenstein's solipsism is also not different from realism. But, there is a methodological difference between them. Berkeley's method is epistemological-perceptual, whereas Wittgenstein's method is logico-linguistic. In the epistemological-perceptual method, ideas are the smallest units of significance, and in the logico-linguistic method propositions are the smallest units of meaningfulness. For Berkeley, "I and my ideas exist, and my thought is my world". For Wittgenstein, my world extends so far as my language goes. "Logic pervades the world", he says. Hence, for Wittgenstein, "I am my world". "I am my world" is the same for both Berkeley and Wittgenstein only realistically. We can see that realism is the root of Berkeley's 'solipsism' and realism is the fruit of Wittgenstein's 'solipsism'.

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