Wittgenstein began the rule-following considerations at the heart of PI.
The considerations begin as potential objections to meaning as use.
First, doesn’t use sometimes fit a mental picture? (Cube example).
Second, over an infinite range, we cannot display understanding through use (counting).
Wittgenstein refuted these objections.
Talk outline

The Doodle Argument

The rule-following paradox
We imagine that a feeling enables us to perceive, as it were, a connecting mechanism between the look of the word and the sound that we utter. For when I speak of the experiences of being influenced, of causation, of being guided, that is really supposed to mean that I, so to say, feel the movement of the levers which connect the appearance of the letters with speaking. (170)
We are considering the question: is there a feeling associated with reading?

Consider someone who can speak but not read. They look at the word ‘PHILOSOPHY’ and just happen to say it.

Compare to someone who reads the word ‘PHILOSOPHY’.

In the latter case, there seems to be causal connection or guidance.

Let’s take the possibilities in turn.
Wittgenstein objects that there is any causal influence:

*But why do you say that we felt a causing? Causation is surely something established by experiments, by observing a regular concurrence of events, for example. So how could I say that I feel something which is found out by experiment?* (169)

- Can’t something be found out by experiment and still have a feeling?
- This assumes a Humean view of causation: causation concerns the regularity of events.
- Causal connections are established between *physical* events through experiment.
- But our feelings are not of this sort.
Causation

- Is this argument convincing?
- Consider the word ‘PHILOSOPHY’ again.
- When you read it, you see that it has 10 letters.
- But you also see that the *type* of word has 10 letters.
- In this way, something non-physical can be experienced in regularity with something physical.
- So why can’t a *feeling* be similarly conjoined to a word.
The Doodle Argument

Make some arbitrary doodle on a bit of paper. – And now make a copy next to it, let yourself be guided by it. – I’d like to say: “Sure enough, I let myself be guided here. But what was characteristic in what happened? – If I say what happened, it no longer seems to me to be characteristic.”

But now notice this: while I let myself be guided, everything is quite simple, I notice nothing special; but afterwards, when I ask myself what it was that happened, it seems to have been something indescribable.

Afterwards no description satisfies me. It’s as if I couldn’t believe that I merely looked, made such-and-such a face, and drew a line. But do I remember anything else? No; and yet I feel as if there must have been something else; in particular when I say “guidance”, “influence”, and other such words to myself. (175)
The Doodle Argument

- This argument – always called the *doodle* argument – is crucial to PI.
- Look very closely at what you do when you copy the doodle.
- No matter how close we look, we find no *experience of guidance*.
- This is another argument from *introspection*.
- It has Humean echoes, again.
The Doodle Argument

- As you copy the doodle, nothing surprising occurs.
- It is in retrospect that we think something more *must* have been occurring.
- This again supports the idea that the will is not a *phenomenon*.
- If it were, surely we could experience it in some way.
- Again: ‘The human body is the best picture of the human soul’ (PPF).
The Doodle Argument

- Some also find a Kantian dimension to this argument.
- Why do we think there is an experience of guidance?
  
  I’d like to say, “I experience the because”. Not because I remember such an experience, but because when I reflect on what I experience in such a case, I look at it through the medium of the concept ‘because’ (or ‘influence’ or ‘cause’ or ‘connection’).

(177)

- Perhaps we impose guidance on experience.
- And then we experience through this concept.
- This has echoes of idealism.
The Doodle Argument

- It doesn’t have to be read as idealist.
- Rather, we might think of experience through the concept as another family resemblance notion.
- Then it’s akin to guidance or influence.
- And these can have different properties each time, but nevertheless share a resemblance.
Reading and understanding

- What justifies a claim about someone’s understanding is *behavioural*:
  
  *for us it is the circumstances under which he had such an experience that warrant him saying in such a case that he understands, that he knows how to go on.* (155)

- And the same is true for reading.

- What justifies a claim that someone is reading is their behaviour.
Talk outline

The Doodle Argument

The rule-following paradox
At §179, Wittgenstein returns to the arithmetic example.

The characteristic expression of having grasped a formula is ‘Now I know how to go on’.

Does it report a mental state? No: as with reading, there may be nothing before the mind.

The utterance needn’t be seen as a report of anything. Rather, one could here call them a “signal”; and we judge whether it was rightly applied by what he goes on to do. (180)
Arithmetic rules

- It *seems* as though we have mastered the whole sequence: 
  *that in meaning it, your mind, as it were, flew ahead and took all the steps before you physically arrived at this or that one.* (188)

- But we cannot have every step in mind.
- Rather, we grasp the principle behind the formula.
- And see that it should be applied in the same way each time.
The recalcitrant learner

- Imagine we have successfully taught a pupil the natural number sequence.
- We have then attempted to teach them the ‘+2’ sequence: 0, 2, 4, 6, ...
- They have never made a mistake.
- But they have never extended the sequence beyond 1000.
- We ask them to carry on beyond 1000 and they write ‘1000, 1004, 1008, 1012’.
The recalcitrant learner

- We want to say that the pupil has gone wrong.
- This implies that there was something in virtue of which we meant ‘+2’ when we gave the instruction.
- But there may have been nothing that made this clear to the pupil.
- They could still say, ‘I thought this is what you meant’.
- We may say, ‘You’re supposed to do the same thing at each step’.
- The pupil may believe that they were.
The recalcitrant learner

- We could produce a table showing what number should come next at each step.
- But, as we’ve seen, this is open to misinterpretation.
- We could add arrows.
- But *these* could be misinterpreted.
- These are lessons from the cube argument.
The recalcitrant learner

- The point generalises: there will be a limit to our application of ‘+2’.
- It generalises beyond numerical rules: our application of ‘cube’ could at some point shift to spheres.
- Or ‘blue’ to suddenly shift application to green things (consider ‘grue’).
- For any use of any word, there could be someone with the same training as us who used the word differently.
- And, when we try to find something in our training to point to, we may find nothing.
The recalcitrant learner

We were wrong to think that our rule somehow contained all future applications.

“So is whatever I do compatible with the rule?” – Let me ask this: what has the expression of a rule – say a signpost – got to do with my actions? What sort of connection obtains here? – Well, this one, for example: I have been trained to react in a particular way to this sign, and now I do so react to it. But with this you have pointed out only a causal connection; only explained how it has come about that we now go on by the signpost; not what this following-the-sign really consists in. Not so; I have further indicated that a person goes by a signpost only in so far as there is an established usage, a custom. (198)
The recalcitrant learner

- This example has greatly threatened the picture that meaning and understanding are mental states that contain patterns of use.
- But some have read it as threatening more: are meaning and understanding illusions?
- When the pupil continues ‘+2’ incorrectly, we reflect on our own usage.
- In what sense have we ever been applying a rule?
The recalcitrant learner

“What you are saying, then, comes to this: a new insight – intuition – is needed at every step to carry out the order ‘+n’ correctly.” – To carry it out correctly! How is it decided what is the right step to take at any particular point? – “The right step is the one that is in accordance with the order – as it was meant.” – So when you gave the order “+2”, you meant that he was to write 1002 after 1000 – and did you then also mean that he should write 1868 after 1866, and 10036 after 10034, and so on – an infinite sequence of such sentences? – “No; what I meant was, that he write the next but one number after every number that he wrote; and from this, stage by stage, all those sentences follow.” – But that is just what is in question: what, at any stage, does follow from that sentence. (186)
This line of thought leads to the rule-following paradox:

“But how can a rule teach me what I have to do at this point? After all, whatever I do can, in some interpretation be made compatible with a rule.” (198)

This is the radical conclusion that Kripke reaches.

We will turn to his reading next week.
Meaning is use

- The rule following considerations began with some cases that threatened meaning as use.
- The conflict was between grasping meaning *at a stroke* and meaning as use.
- The resolution seems to be that your mental states do not determine use.
- If grasping a rule is having an interpretation in mind, then meaning is not use.
- But then you also have to say that any action fits just as well the grasp.
The argument from last week was:

1. The pupil has grasped the meanings of number-words.
2. This grasp cannot be manifest in their *use*.

∴ 3. Meaning is not use.

The response seems to be that *if* the pupil has a grasp that transcends use, then they could have grasped *anything*.

Better to maintain that meaning is use.
This was our paradox: no course of action could be determined by a rule, because every course of action can be brought into accord with the rule. The answer was: if every course of action can be brought into accord with the rule, then it can also be brought into conflict with it. And so there would be neither accord not conflict there. (201)