Knowledge In Terms of *Logos*

In Plato's *Theaetetus*

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Abstract

This thesis concerns the definition "Knowledge is True Belief Accompanied by *Logos*", as discussed in Plato's *Theaetetus* (201c-210d). I aim to show that the discussion between Socrates and Theaetetus progresses coherently and that the aporetic ending of the dialogue should be read as a genuine impasse; neither Plato nor his character Socrates favours an interpretation of *logos* that may render the definition successful.

First, I argue that neither a propositional nor an objectual reading for knowledge in Socrates' Dream (201d-202c) should be dismissed before we reach 206d-e.

Second, I argue in favour of the soundness of the argument at 202d-206c and suggest that this passage constitutes an amendment to Socrates' Dream, not a refutation.

Third, I examine the first meaning for *logos* ("making one's thought plain by means of speech", 206d-e) and argue that its rejection serves as a clarification that *logoi* of concern must in some way be special and that the content of the true belief is different from the content of the *logos*, although both concern the same object.

Fourth, I examine the second meaning for *logos* ("being able, when one is asked what anything is, to provide the questioner with an answer in terms of its elements", 206e-208b). I argue that this is not a simple revisiting of Socrates' Dream, but the amended and mereologically upgraded version Socrates argued for at 202d-206c.

Fifth, I examine the third meaning for *logos* ("being able to state some mark by which the thing one is asked for differs from everything else", 208c-210b). I argue that no such mark can offer the precisification required to meet the strict demands Socrates has set for knowledge. Furthermore, I highlight the issue of the *accompaniment* of *logos* and bolster the view that the final argument refutes the definition, regardless of what meaning we attribute to *logos*.

To Astrid

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Notes on Translation and Notation

English translations used throughout are modified from McDowell (1973). As a general rule, I have opted for 'belief' instead of McDowell's choice of 'judgement' to translate δόξα. Furthermore, I have chosen to retain the original *logos* (λόγος) instead of 'account'.

Neither 'belief' nor 'judgement' are entirely accurate translations for every occurrence of the word δόξα in the text. The problem, described by McDowell as well as other scholars, especially concerns the way Plato uses the verb δοξάζειν. It can mean either 'believing', in the sense of having a belief, or 'judging' that something is the case, for instance, to judge or 'arrive at a conclusion' that the man several yards away is Socrates. In other words, the difference is between a dispositional belief and an act of forming a belief or making a judgement. One may have valid reasons to choose or reject either choice of words. I prefer 'belief' for two main reasons:

i) 'Belief' more accurately captures the meaning of the noun δόξα (and there is no clash with the word πίστις as in the case of the *Republic*, where we usually choose to reserve 'belief' for πίστις and 'opinion' for δόξα).

ii) Plato elsewhere uses the verb κρίνειν (for instance: 150b3, 170d9, 186b8), which carries a clear meaning of 'judgement'; this is especially important in the case of 201b-c, where the judges 'judge' (κρίνοντες, 201c1 - ἔκριναν, 201c2) based on, or having, a 'belief' (δόξαν, 201c1). (It is worth noting that, in this case, κρίνειν is used in a legalist context; generally, it can also mean 'to discern'.)

Regarding *logos*, I agree with McDowell's choice of 'account' for the purpose of translating the entire dialogue. The English word conveys a vagueness in meaning similar to that of *logos* in Greek. However, I have chosen to retain the original Greek word for two reasons. First, one of the goals of this thesis is to gain a better understanding of what *logos* actually means or can mean within the context of the *Theaetetus*. Further, one of the main goals of the *Theaetetus* itself is to find a meaning suitable for *logos* in order to accompany a true belief with the aim of defining knowledge. Therefore, I believe that using a word with a vague meaning to translate a word that also has a vague meaning would add an extra layer of obscurity to an already difficult task. Second, it will become evident in Chapter 1 that the meaning of *logos* of the *Sophist* is discussed and considered as a candidate for the meaning of *logos* in the *Theaetetus*. In the *Sophist*, it seems clearer that *logos* means 'statement' or 'proposition' (not necessarily in all instances, but at least in the technical way *logos* is used at 262-3). However, taking 'account' to mean 'statement' or 'proposition' would not be a good use of English. Furthermore, it might seem that by using 'account', I am assuming that *logos* does not mean 'statement' or 'proposition'. In Chapter 4, it shall become evident that I believe that 'statement' or 'proposition' is not the *logos* Socrates and Theaetetus are looking for in the *Theaetetus*. Nevertheless, I do not rule it out as a candidate earlier on. Therefore, retaining the original Greek word allows for the spectrum of meanings that I believe the dialogue allows.

I use 'compound' instead of 'complex' for συγκείμενα. The difference may be trivial, but I prefer the notion of 'compactness' and 'wholeness' that 'compound' carries, which is more than simple 'complexity'. Furthermore, I take it that 'compound' better reflects the idea of a *thing* that

may be considered on its own (regarding whether it is knowable and whether it possesses a *logos*).

On notation, I adopt the following conventions:

- Inverted commas: (a) when referring to translated words (e.g. I translate κρίνειν as 'to judge'), and (b) when referring to statements/*logoi* as statements (e.g. the statement/*logos* 'Brutus killed Caesar'). I shall not use inverted commas when referring to single words in Greek.

- Italics: when referring to a proposition/the meaning of a proposition (e.g. the proposition *Brutus killed Caesar*). So, we would have: The *logos*-statement 'Brutus killed Caesar' expresses the meaning/proposition *Brutus killed Caesar*. In addition, I use italics for Latinised Greek script (e.g. *logos*). (I shall also conventionally use italics, e.g. to stress a word or phrase within a sentence or when I use Latin expressions.)

- Double quotation marks: when quoting other scholars or the text in translation.

Note that in Chapter 2, there is an unavoidable ambiguity between the compound object of enquiry, the Greek syllable ΣΩ, and how it may appear as part of a *logos* 'ΣΩ is Σ and Ω'; i.e. the object itself or parts of it feature within the *logos*. To clarify, it is not the object itself that features in the *logos* but its name; this is a trivial clarification concerning non-grammatical objects (a car, say, cannot feature in a statement – its name, 'car', does). However, in the case of grammatical objects, confusion may easily arise.

Unless otherwise noted, when I refer to the following scholars, I shall use only their names assuming the convention:

Bostock is Bostock (1988)

Burnyeat is Burnyeat (1990)

Chappell is Chappell (2005)

Cornford is Cornford (2003)

Fine is Fine (2003, Chapter 10)

Harte is Harte (2002)

McDowell is McDowell (1973)

Some of the above scholars' other works are also cited throughout; in these cases, I shall use standard citing conventions (e.g. McDowell (1970)).

I shall often refer to the definition 'Knowledge is True Belief Accompanied by *Logos*" as [TBL] and to the three meanings examined for *Logos* as [M1], [M2], and [M3], accordingly. I shall often use the phrase "meanings for *logos*" instead of "meanings of *logos*", as I assume it more accurately shows that these meanings are examined as suggestions (one might claim the same should apply to "definition of knowledge", but I believe "of" works better in this case).

Each chapter is composed of sections which are uniquely numbered following the convention ChapterNumber.SectionNumber. I shall refer to each section directly via their number. Quoted

texts likewise follow the convention ChapterNumber.TextNumber. When I revisit quoted text, I shall retain its original numbering. All other kinds of numbering/listing/enumerating within a section are meant to hold for that respective section only.

Introduction

In this thesis, I study the definition "Knowledge is True Belief Accompanied by *Logos*", as discussed in Plato's *Theaetetus* (201c-210d). For most scholars, the final part of the Theaetetus, namely, the discussion on the third definition and the conclusion, leaves matters unsettled. Knowledge is not defined; however, (many scholars claim) Plato offers an answer hidden in subtext. The answer usually involves retaining the final definition of knowledge by finding a suitable meaning for *logos* or specifying such objects to which the final definition can apply. I believe there are important lessons to be learned in the last part of the *Theaetetus* that do not involve trying to unravel the putatively mysterious aporetic ending. This view is not entirely original; however, as I shall explain in the last chapter of this thesis, its prominent supporter (Bostock) portrays Plato as one who often does not care to argue convincingly and who is not aware of the full strength of the good arguments he does employ. Hence, part of my motivation for engaging with this topic is to contribute to the literature by offering a reading of the final part of the *Theaetetus* that paints what I take to be a fairer and more accurate portrait of Plato while retaining the view that there is no hidden answer to the aporetic ending.

The overarching idea of my analysis is that the aporia at the end of the dialogue is genuine. In other words, neither Plato nor Socrates (who is sometimes portrayed as Plato's dramatic actor who argues erroneously to guide the reader toward the correct answer) suggests that there is a way to overcome the ending impasse. I aim to support this view by showing that Socrates' investigation progresses coherently and ends with an argument that successfully dismisses the definition. In addition, my interpretation suggests that nowhere in the section of the dialogue I

shall examine do we need to assume that Socrates employs hidden premises in his arguments (this is not to say that Socrates provides answers for everything, only that his claims hold, based on those answers he does provide).

I shall examine the initial exposition of the definition (201c-d) and Socrates' Dream (201d-202c) (Chapter 1), Socrates' criticism of his Dream (202d-206c, Chapter 2), and the following three possible meanings for *logos* (206d-e, Chapter 3; 206e-208c, Chapter 4; 208c-210d, Chapter 5). I shall propose a novel reading of the entire section (that I shall examine) and explain where it stands compared to the most prominent interpretations of the *Theaetetus* in the secondary literature (Chapter 6). Finally (also in Chapter 6), I shall discuss some open-ended questions.

In Chapter 1, I shall examine how Socrates' Dream adheres to the 'Knowledge is True Belief Accompanied by *Logos'* definition and highlight the claims made in the Dream that are important for my inquiry. I shall argue against the views that knowledge in the Dream is purely propositional or purely objectual. I shall claim (a claim that will be supported by evidence offered in Chapters 1-4) that until we reach the first meaning for *logos*, there is no substantial evidence to dismiss either reading. I shall argue against the three main points employed against a propositional reading; that: (i) "*we…and everything else*" (201e2) refers solely to objects, but not facts, (ii) the Dream's Appendix/Coda (202b8-c5) excludes a propositional reading, (iii) the first meaning for *logos* which (I agree) excludes a proposition reading for *logos* should be applied retroactively to the Dream and vindicate an objectual reading of both *logos* and knowledge.

Throughout Chapter 1, there will be an on-going discussion about Ryle's view that the Dream is an early version of Logical Atomism, and I shall attempt to separate Ryle's claims from

McDowell's. I shall argue that many of Ryle's claims in favour of the similarities between the Dream and Logical Atomism are well established. Nevertheless, I do not subscribe to a fully-fledged Logical Atomism reading of the Dream. I shall argue that the Dream does not explain how the weaving/interweaving of elements/names is achieved in order to create a compound/*logos* (respectively). This was a problem that also beset Logical Atomism, and Ryle was correct to highlight it. However, (I argue) Ryle does not correctly interpret the subsequent criticism of the Dream, which allows the discussion to move past that problem. I shall claim that Plato's focus is not to secure the truth of the *logos* but to secure the connection between the *logos* and what it is the knower knows.

In Chapter 2, I shall examine Socrates' criticism of his Dream. Against the standard view that 202d-206c constitutes a refutation of the Dream, I shall claim that it is an amendment. Many scholars support the view that the mereological argument Socrates employs in this passage is faulty because it suggests that a whole is either equal to the plurality of elements that comprise it or is itself an element; Socrates does not mention the possibility that a whole can be a unity made up of elements-parts. Based on my interpretation (in Chapter 1) of how weak the notions of weaving and interweaving appear to be, I shall argue that the two options Socrates mentions are the only options the Dream allows. Thus understood, the first part of Socrates' argument (the theoretical argument) is an *ad hominem* attack on the Dream. Further, I shall claim that the second part (the argument from experience) is Socrates' suggestion on how to amend the Dream, and this amended version is what will be examined at 206e-208b. The amendment involves the introduction of the position(ing) of the elements.

In Chapter 3, I shall discuss the first meaning for *logos*: "*making one's thought plain by means of speech"* (206d-e). I interpret this section as a pivotal moment in the dialogue where *logos* can no longer be assumed to mean 'proposition' (unqualifiedly). Furthermore, I argue that the passage offers an important clarification. Socrates has explained (at 202d-206c) that it is not enough to have names in order to have a *logos*, as it is not enough to simply collect the elements that make up a compound to have a compound; the order of the names and elements (respectively) must be considered. However, now that this has been established, Socrates must clarify that not just any *logos* can serve as the special kind of *logos* we are searching for. In turn, Socrates will go on to examine the amended version of the Dream. However, (I shall argue) the content of the *logos* and the content of the true belief are now necessarily different from each other, and the *logos* must pertain to the object the true belief is about.

In Chapter 4, I shall discuss the second meaning for *logos*: "*being able, when one is asked what anything is, to provide the questioner with an answer in terms of its elements"* (206e-208b). I will offer further evidence for a distinction I draw earlier (Chapter 2) between listing a sum and enumerating, and I shall claim that the first pertains to the Dream and the second to the second meaning for *logos*. I will point out that Socrates offers two examples of *logoi*, only one of which pertains to the meaning that will be examined in the current passage; the other is a *logos* that pertains to true belief. I shall argue that the types of mistakes the interlocutors mention allow for the objects of knowledge to be both particulars and universals. I shall closely follow the spelling example and offer an account of why the correct spelling of a word, which I argue does not occur by chance, cannot satisfy the demands for the *logos* we seek. I shall concede a point

many scholars allude to: for Plato, knowledge is connected to understanding. In turn, I shall argue that a central point Socrates raises is that parrot speech cannot count as knowledge; in other words, the ability to provide a *logos* does not secure the understanding of its content because one may simply be repeating something they heard or learned by rote. I shall also examine an issue that I shall revisit in my concluding chapter: the separation of the terms ἐπιστήμη and ἐπιστήμων. In addition, I shall claim that this section constitutes the end of the inquiry of the Dream, including its amended version.

In Chapter 5, I shall discuss the third meaning for *logos*: "*being able to state some mark by which the thing one is asked for differs from everything else*" (208c-210d). I will begin with a preliminary discussion on the connection between *accompaniment* (as it appears in the definition 'True Belief Accompanied by *Logos'*) and the request that the *logos* (every *logos* examined in the *Theaetetus*) involves some kind of *ability*. I will go on to examine what I take to be four different examples of *logoi* Socrates mentions, two of which exemplify the meaning discussed in this passage. I shall raise the question of whether the remaining two, although they fail to exemplify the current meaning, could serve their intended purpose if we were to know a universal and not a particular (as are the examples of the Sun and Theaetetus). In addition, I shall argue against Burnyeat's suggestion that the current *logos* requires mentioning some feature of the object which is discernible by the senses.

Subsequently, I shall examine Socrates' final argument. I shall argue that the standard approach of many scholars to treat the argument as a dilemma overlooks an important aspect of the argument. Specifically, I shall argue that Socrates' initial objection is that taking *logos* to be a

differentiating mark is a non-starter, as it implies that we cannot even have a belief about a specific object because we assume that at the level of belief, we cannot differentiate the object from others. In turn, I shall return to the issue of accompaniment and claim that the problem lies therein; the second part of Socrates' argument suggests that accompaniment is just a placeholder for another belief or knowledge. Hence, even if we assume that we could find a suitable *logos*, we would not be able to attach it to a true belief, thus succumbing to the standard objection that we are either led to a regress (if 'accompaniment' means 'belief') or circularity (if 'accompaniment' means 'knowledge'). Moreover, I will argue against Bostock and claim that Socrates is aware of the strength of his final argument.

In Chapter 6, I shall explain where my interpretation of the *Theaetetus* (at least of the section of the *Theaetetus* I examine in this thesis) should be placed compared to other secondary literature. I shall claim that my interpretation is the strongest in supporting the view that the aporia at the end of the dialogue is genuine and that Socrates' last argument refutes any 'plus *logos*' attempt to define knowledge. Finally, I shall examine some open-ended questions regarding the difference between ἐπιστήμη and ἐπιστήμων, the difference between active and dispositional knowledge, and a possible interpretation of how strict Socrates' view is on knowledge.

Preamble

Socrates and Theaetetus (accompanied by Theodorus and the silent young Socrates) have been trying to define knowledge (ἐπιστήμη). Socrates first posed his question at 145e-146a:

> Well now, the point that I have difficulty with, and cannot find an adequate grasp of in myself, is just this: what, exactly, knowledge really is. So can we put it into words?

Theaetetus replied by offering examples of knowledge, such as geometry and shoemaking, to which Socrates responded (146e):

> But that was not what you were asked for, Theaetetus. You were not asked which things knowledge is of, nor how many kinds of knowledge there are. We put the question, not because we wanted to count them, but because we wanted to know what, exactly, knowledge itself is.

Following a discussion that aimed to clarify what kind of definition Socrates is asking for and a passage in which he expounded his method of midwifery, Socrates reiterated (151d):

> So start again from the beginning, Theaetetus, and try to say what, exactly, knowledge is.

Theaetetus then offered his first definition (151d-e):

> …it seems to me that a person who knows something is perceiving the thing he knows. The way it looks to me at the moment is that knowledge is nothing but perception.

Socrates associated this definition with Protagorean Relativism and the Heraclitean Doctrine of Flux, and argued against both. In turn, he argued against the definition itself and concluded (186d):

> So knowledge is located, not in our experiences, but in our reasoning about those things we mentioned; because it is possible, apparently, to grasp being and truth in the latter, but impossible in the former.

Theaetetus then went on to offer his second definition (187b):

> I cannot say [knowledge] is belief in general, Socrates, because there is false belief as well; but perhaps true belief is knowledge.

The discussion digressed into an inquiry about false beliefs and the possibility of "other-believing" (or "other-judging", ἀλλοδοξίαν, 189b). Subsequently, the interlocutors attempted to model knowledge as imprints on a wax tablet (194c) and as birds in an aviary (197c), and after these models failed to account for the possibility of false belief, this topic reached a halt (200c-d):

> …we were wrong to leave knowledge on one side and look for false belief first[.]

The definition itself was refuted at 201a-c when the interlocutors agreed that judges (or a jury - δικασταὶ, 201b) might be persuaded into reaching a just verdict; however, this may be a result of true belief, not knowledge.

Before moving on to our main enquiry, two points are worth mentioning. First, throughout most of the discussion up to this point in the dialogue, especially concerning the first definition, knowledge seems to be propositional. However, the Wax Tablet and Aviary models seem to assume that knowledge is objectual (the discussion at 188a-c also conforms to this assumption); it must be things, not facts or propositions, that make imprints on the Tablet or are represented as birds in the Aviary (although the latter case is more complex and debatable).

One might argue that even if knowledge is propositional, it may still be about an object; so, the models (as well as 188a-c) may refer to an object that features in one's belief. This is an important issue and it shall be addressed in different stages in this thesis by inquiring whether the content of the true belief, of the *logos*, and what it is we know, are the same.

The second point concerns the judges/jury passage at 201a-c. It is not immediately evident why the judges/jury are not in a state of knowledge, and trying to offer a concise explanation would lead to a digression beyond the scope of this thesis. It should, however, be clear that there must be a stronger demand for knowledge that true belief does not fulfil. This demand does not concern the truth of who committed the crime; as I shall repeatedly claim throughout this thesis, truth is secured by the definition (*true* belief accompanied by *logos* – false beliefs have been ruled out). The stronger demand concerns the (potential) knower, and *logos* is added to true belief in order to investigate the knower's relation to what it is they know.

Chapter 1: True Belief Accompanied By *Logos* and Socrates' Dream (201c-202c)

Introduction

The majority of scholars agree that starting from this point in the dialogue, knowledge shifts from propositional to objectual. I shall support the less popular view that Socrates' Dream does not provide solid evidence to rule out propositional knowledge.

The strongest reading that suggests knowledge in the Dream is propositional is Ryle's. I shall look closely at this reading, often using it as a platform to explain why knowledge can be propositional. However, before this chapter ends, I shall part ways with Ryle as I do not agree with several of his claims and their outcomes.

In sections 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3, I shall examine Socrates' Dream and Ryle's view that the Dream comprises an early version of Logical Atomism. I shall illustrate how we can understand the comparison between the Dream and Logical Atomism. Subsequently, I shall discuss the differences between the readings of Ryle and McDowell.

In section 1.4, I shall examine how we can understand the terms 'interweaving' and 'names' when they feature in the Dream. I shall argue that it does not make a difference whether we understand 'names' as 'words' or as the subjects of the proposition; the passage allows for either reading. On the other hand, I shall claim that how we understand 'interweaving' is crucial. I shall not agree with the view that the 'concatenation' of Logical Atomism carries out some greater function than 'interweaving' does in the Dream. I shall argue that without the

added sophistication that 'interweaving' has in the *Sophist*, the 'interweaving' of the Dream cannot secure a fixed meaning (given a set of words), especially in the case of non-symmetrical predicates, e.g. it does not differentiate between *Brutus killed Caesar* and *Caesar killed Brutus*. The same argument applies in the case of an objectual reading of the Dream; the *logos* of a compound, say, a car, can be either *a body on wheels* or *wheels on a body* (assuming for simplicity and without damage to generality that a car is made up only of wheels and a body).

In sections 1.5 and 1.6, I shall mention and argue against the main objections to a propositional reading of the Dream. I shall argue that the phrase "*we…and everything else*" does not provide strong enough evidence to assume that a state of affairs cannot be treated as an object (specifically a state of affairs that obtains, i.e. a fact). I shall argue that the request of the Dream's Appendix/Coda is not as trivial as Bostock believes, assuming we do not have the 'interweaving' of the *Sophist* at our disposal. Further, I shall argue that, although indeed the discussion of the first meaning for *logos* examined at 206d-e potentially rejects the propositional readings of ἐπιστήμη, this consequence should not be applied retroactively to the Dream. In addition, I shall argue that we should draw a distinction between Ryle's comparison of the Dream with Logical Atomism and what Ryle takes to be Plato's own views; Ryle does not claim that Plato endorses Logical Atomism. Subsequently, I claim that some of the criticism against Ryle is plausible criticism against Logical Atomism but not against Ryle's interpretation of the Dream.

In sections 1.7 and 1.8, I will examine some of the consequences of Ryle's reading and explain where my own differs. First, I do not rule out the option that knowledge (for the Dream) can be

both propositional and objectual. Second, I criticise the view that ἐπιστήμη should be understood as *savoir* and look at the relations between εἰδέναι, γιγνώσκειν, and ἐπίστασθαι. A consequence of this discussion is that it is not the truth value of the *logos* that Plato is concerned with but how we secure the connection between the *logos* and the object the true belief is about. Further, I argue that one of the implications of Ryle's reading is that the content of the true belief and of the *logos* are necessarily identical (and for Ryle, given that knowledge is propositional, it concerns the same proposition). This will be a recurring issue, but concerning our current discussion, it should become evident that Plato does not hold this view.

1.1 The Definition and the Dream

At 201c, Theaetetus offers his third definition; this is a definition he recalls he has heard of:

> [T1.1, 201c8-d3]
>
> …true belief accompanied by *logos* is knowledge, and the kind without a *logos* falls outside the sphere of knowledge. Things of which there is no *logos* are not knowable, he said [i.e. he who came up with this definition]—indeed, calling them so—whereas things which have a *logos* are knowable.

The definition then claims that "Knowledge is True Belief Accompanied by *Logos*" [TBL]. [T1.1] also offers auxiliary information: apart from accompanying a true belief, which (we must assume) is held by someone, *logos* is also of *things*. For a thing to be knowable, it must have a *logos*, and for it to be known, this *logos* must somehow *accompany* the knower's true belief.

However, not all things have a *logos*, and Socrates' response to what is said in [T1.1] is to ask how things are divided into knowable and unknowable.

Theaetetus cannot answer as he does not remember what else he heard, and Socrates offers to fill in with what he also has heard. The following passage is referred to as Socrates' Dream:[1]

[T1.2, 201d8-c5]

> Listen, then: here is my Dream in return for yours. In my Dream, I seemed to hear some people saying that the primary elements, as it were, of which we and everything else are composed, have no *logos*. Each of them itself, by itself, can only be named, and one cannot go on to say anything else, neither that it is nor that it is not; because in that case, one would be attaching being or not being to it, whereas one ought not add anything if one is going to mention that thing, itself, alone. In fact one should not even add itself, or that, or each, or alone, or this, or any of several other things of that kind; because those things run about and get added to everything, being different from the things they are attached to, whereas if the thing itself could be expressed [in a *logos*] and had a *logos* proper to itself, it would have to be expressed apart from everything else. As things are, it is impossible that any of the primary things should be expressed in a *logos*; because the only thing that is possible for it is to be named, because a name is the only thing it has. But as for the things composed of them, just as the things themselves are woven together, so

[1] Literature is often occupied with whether the Dream was a theory that Socrates or Plato came up with or whether it belonged to someone else (or even "an entire preceding tradition" (Sedley, 2004)), and if in the latter case Plato endorsed it. It is often assumed that the Dream, or a theory very similar to it, was held by Antisthenes. In this case, scholars often refer to Aristotle (*Metaphysics*, especially 1024b on *oikeios logos*, but also 1043b) where we can find more information about Antisthenes' theory and try to interpret the Dream in view of this information. On the other hand, if one assumes that the Dream belonged to either Socrates or Plato, interpretations suggest that this might be an old theory (hence, presented as a dream from the past) which Plato is now ready to dismiss. I shall not engage in this conversation; I shall examine the Dream solely based on what is mentioned in the *Theaetetus* and without further assumptions about its origins. (On this topic, see Burnyeat (1970).)

> their names, woven together, come to be a *logos*; because an interweaving of names is the being of a *logos*. In that way, the elements have no *logos* and are unknowable, but they are perceptible; and the compounds are knowable and expressible and believable in a true belief. Now when someone gets hold of the true belief of something without a *logos*, his mind is in a state of truth about it but does not know it; because someone who cannot give and receive a *logos* of something is not knowledgeable about that thing. But if he gets hold of a *logos* as well, then it is possible not only for all that to happen, but also for him to be in a perfect condition in respect of knowledge.

Socrates and Theaetetus agree that the Dream described in [T1.2] is what they have both heard.

So, to answer Socrates' earlier question, i.e. how *things* are divided between knowable and unknowable, the answer is that "*we…and everything else*" (ἡμεῖς…καὶ τἆλλα) are compounds (συγκείμενα) composed of elements (στοιχεῖα). Compounds have a *logos* and are knowable, whereas elements do not have a *logos* and are unknowable, but they are perceptible (αἰσθητὰ δέ). In agreement with [T1.1], the *logos* of a compound must accompany the knower's true belief about that compound for him to have knowledge. However, the unclear expression in [T1.1] of "*accompanying*" a true belief with a *logos* (μετὰ λόγου) is replaced in [T1.2] by the (perhaps equally unclear) "*ability*" (being able – δυνάμενον) to give (δοῦναί) and receive (δέξασθαι) *logos*, for by grasping (προσλαβόντα) the *logos* one may have knowledge.

Furthermore, a compound is made up of woven (πέπλεκται) elements. Likewise (ὥσπερ), the *logos* of the compound is the interweaving (συμπλοκὴν) of the names of these elements. In

addition, the *logos* of a compound is proper (οἰκεῖον) to it[2], and the being (οὐσίαν) of *logos* is the interweaving of names (ὀνόματα).

The abstract and vague exposition of Socrates' Dream has raised several questions in the secondary literature, most of which try to answer (a) what *logos* means and (b) what are the compound things that possess a *logos*, as well as the elemental things that do not.

How one answers (a) more often than not determines how one answers (b), and *vice versa*. If *logos* is assumed to unqualifiedly mean 'statement', then compounds are taken to be states of affairs. Given that the *logos* accompanies a *true* belief about these states of affairs, they must obtain – i.e. they are facts.[3] In this case, it follows that elements are the fundamental constituents of the fact (we shall see what these may be); this is referred to as a propositional reading. On the other hand, one might assume that compounds are objects and that *logos* is not just any statement but one that says something special about the object – e.g. one that defines or demarcates it (or, as is assumed in the case of the Dream, analyses the object into its constituent elements); this is referred to as an objectual reading.

1.2 *Logos* as 'Statement': Some Historical Context

It is worth clarifying that there is no direct evidence in the text for what *logos* may mean in Socrates' Dream. The meaning of *logos* is indeed unclear, and as I shall claim in Chapter 2, Socrates' examination of his Dream in 202d-206c is a step-by-step testing of hypotheses about

[2] To be precise, this is an inference; the passage suggests, counterfactually, that if an element had a *logos*, it would need to be an *oikeios logos*.
[3] This latter inference is not a necessary one; it is missing the premise that the content of the true belief and of the *logos* is the same; I shall address this issue in 1.8.

what *logos* may mean. Nevertheless, Socrates and Theaetetus nowhere claim that they are at this point examining a specific meaning for *logos*, such as 'statement' or 'definition'.[4] This discussion has been raised in the secondary literature in an effort to understand what the claims of the Dream truly imply and what kind of *logos* Socrates himself might be seeking.

Understanding *logos* as 'statement' has been linked to the interpretation that the Dream is a precursor to Logical Atomism. Historically, this interpretation has been attributed to Ryle, although Cornford had earlier mentioned the possibility that *logos* could be understood as 'statement' in his outline of tentative meanings for the Dream's *logos*. However, I believe Ryle's view has often been misread,[5] most likely due to the fact that his interpretation was presented most clearly in his posthumous *Logical Atomism in Plato's Theaetetus* (1990), which was based on a paper Ryle read out at Magdalen College, Oxford, in 1952. The 1990 text was prepared based on the minutes held by Winifred Hicken and a typescript by John McDowell. To my understanding, what were thought to be Ryle's views were discussed prior to his posthumous paper being published.[6] However, these discussions were often based on his other papers (on the *Parmenides* – 1939, *Letters and Syllables in Plato* – 1960) and the portrayal of his view by McDowell.[7] As we shall see in the following section, McDowell has some views similar to

[4] As they do later on (where *logos* is specifically taken to mean: "making one's thought plain by means of speech" – 206d, "being able, when one is asked what anything is, to provide the questioner with an answer in terms of its elements" – 206de-207a, "being able to state some mark by which the thing one is asked for differs from everything else" – 208c).

[5] This claim concerns literature published before 1990, i.e. before Ryle's posthumous paper was published; it does not concern more recent papers, such as Gaskin (2013) and Brown (2021).

[6] Brown (2021: 271) also suggests that this was the case.

[7] For a full list of who knew about the paper, see Foreword in Ryle (1990). In the foreword of his book, McDowell thanks Ryle for letting him read the, unpublished at the time, paper; so McDowell had both the typescript and the original paper at his disposal.

Ryle's; nevertheless, he holds a different position on some crucial issues. I assume it was not easy, prior to the 1990 paper being published, for one to be sure of where Ryle's view ended and McDowell's began. A quote that strongly illustrates this point is the following (Bostock, p.205):

> The *Theaetetus* therefore [as per Ryle's suggestion] shows Plato *en route* between the very unsatisfactory position of the *Cratylus*, which takes a sentence to *be* a name, and the much better position of the *Sophist*, which gives the true relation between names and sentences.

Ryle (1990) does not take a clear stance on where Plato stood. He indeed believes that the *Theaetetus* and *Sophist* should be read in tandem; the problem expressed in the Dream is solved in the *Sophist*. However, it would not make a difference for Ryle if Plato had a solution already when writing the *Theaetetus*. The crucial matter is that Plato was already clearly opposing the Dream. On the other hand, for McDowell, Plato was in a muddle until he worked out the view described in the *Sophist*, and although he might have had reservations about the Dream, he was probably still favouring it.

If my understanding of the topic (its discussion occupies chapters 1-4) is correct, Plato was definitely not in a muddle when writing the *Theaetetus*. Nevertheless, it will become clear that I do not fully subscribe to Ryle's reading.

Before moving on to examining Ryle's view, an explanation is in order regarding why Ryle shall feature so heavily in Chapters 1 and 3 of this thesis.

The greater part of the secondary literature dismisses readings of the entire third definition (including the Dream) that suggest propositional knowledge. On the other hand, Ryle's view is purely propositional, i.e. it dismisses objectual knowledge. My own view is that we cannot dismiss either until we reach the first meaning for *logos* (where propositional readings for *logos* are ruled out). So, Ryle's view offers a very good outline to start looking into why propositional readings are plausible but also what can go wrong with them.

I shall argue that the main fault of Ryle's reading is the implication that we are after the truth of the *logos*; in my view, this is not the topic. I shall argue that the main issue is ensuring that the *logos* belongs to the object it is about (these two topics are related but not identical).

I believe Ryle was led to the above implication due to his belief that (as I mentioned earlier) the *Theaetetus* and the *Sophist* should be read in tandem; the questions of the *Theaetetus* are answered in the *Sophist*. In the *Sophist*, false statements are discussed greatly because (for Ryle) these must be excluded as statements that express knowledge because knowledge must be of what is/obtains – i.e. true. Ryle's insistence on this overall propositional view of the two dialogues was perhaps why he did not take the discussion on the first meaning for *logos* seriously enough (and as we shall see, this discussion is the main point Bostock employs against propositional readings).[8]

[8] My extended view, which I shall not expand on in this thesis, is that, in the *Theaetetus*, Plato is addressing problems of Epistemology, whereas in the *Sophist* he is dealing with Ontology and Semantics, even though the Dream does raise both ontological and semantic claims. I therefore do not agree with the view that the problems of the *Theaetetus* are answered in the *Sophist*. Rather, the Epistemological problems are laid to rest unsolved in the *Theaetetus*, and in the *Sophist*, assuming that knowledge exists, albeit undefined, Plato goes on to examine how we speak of things that are (and things that are not).

1.3 Ryle's Interpretation and McDowell's Variations

Ryle (p.29-30) (in proper analytic fashion) states that he is not concerned with who came up with the theory described in the Dream but rather what the theory itself purports. He claims one may trace a familiar doctrine in the Dream: Logical Atomism.

The main assumption is that we should understand the division between compounds and elements as an epistemic division between those things that may be objects of knowledge-*savoir* and those that may be objects of knowledge-*connaître*. Knowledge-*savoir* concerns facts, which are expressed in statements, whereas knowledge-*connaître* concerns the parts of the facts (what Russell would refer to as *sense data*) whose names appear in the statements. Statements may be true or false, but names are not truth-apt. For instance, *Theaetetus sits* is something one may know-*savoir*, and the corresponding statement 'Theaetetus sits' is truth-apt, whereas the constituents *Theaetetus* and *sits* can be known-*connaître*, and their names ('Theaetetus' and 'sits'), each taken separately, are not truth-apt. The type of *connaître* knowledge, Ryle suggests, is what Russell (1911) describes as "*knowledge by acquaintance*" and what the Dream intends for us to understand when it claims that elements are *perceptible*.[9]

[9] The "perceptible" claim of the Dream, along with Ryle's interpretation of it, runs deeper than it might seem at first glance. In the case of objectual knowledge, where we assume knowledge *of* an object, as well as in the case of propositional knowledge, where we assume knowledge *about* an object, one can ask what can stand as an object in the sense the Dream intends. Say, hypothetical triangles, as well as truths about them, have no perceptible parts. There is a question then, about what we can say about such objects. Are we to assume that knowledge concerns particular triangles? Or are we to assume that each perceptible triangle stands as an element and is unknowable, and what can be known is only an ideal triangle? (See also discussion in Chapter 6.) But the latter option has the problem of having to explain how exactly an ideal triangle is "composed" of instances of triangles.
Furthermore, it is not uncontroversial to claim (as does Logical Atomism) that, say, actions such as *sitting* are perceptible. We can perceive *Theaetetus sitting*, but what is it to perceive *sitting* on its own?

According to Ryle, one of the problems Plato has seen is the following. How do we start off with two things, in this case, *Theaetetus* and *sits*, of which we have knowledge-*connaître*, and end up with something else, a fact about those things, which we know-*savoir*? The first two are things which have names; the latter is a fact that may be articulated in a statement—*naming* and *stating* are not the same. Plato mentions the answer in the *Theaetetus*, although he fully expounds it in the *Sophist*: the change in the type of knowledge is due to *interweaving* (συμπλοκὴν). However, the interweaving of the *Sophist* includes more than just names (ὀνόματα); it also includes ῥήματα[10], unlike what is stated in the Dream (202b), where only names are mentioned.

The similarities between the Dream and Logical Atomism, especially the refined version we find in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*,[11] should be self-evident and exemplified by the following culminating sentences (4.22):[12]

> The elementary proposition consists of names. It is a connexion, a concatenation, of names.

Ryle then suggests a correspondence between Logical Atomism and the Dream and their fundamental concepts: *connaître/knowledge-by-acquaintance/*αἴσθησις express the same concept,

[10] I reserve the Greek word ῥήματα. I shall later address whether we should translate it as 'verbs'.
[11] Most scholars that endorse a Logical Atomism reading of the Dream (including Ryle and Wittgenstein himself), agree that it is this later version that matches the Dream, and not earlier versions such as Meinong's.
[12] Translation: Ogden-Ramsey.

savoir/knowledge-that/ἐπιστήμη another, and similarly for *Verkettung/concatenation*/συμπλοκὴ and *Satz/statement-proposition*[13]/λόγος.

Having introduced the putative parallel between the Dream and Logical Atomism, it is helpful to further unpack what Ryle believes is one of Plato's intentions when mentioning the Dream. Knowledge understood as *savoir*, which Ryle identifies with ἐπιστήμη, must be of facts and not of states of affairs that do not obtain, but statements can be true or false. Hence, Plato is looking for a way to assign a truth value to statements to classify the content of those that are true as what can potentially be known.[14] The added sophistication of the *Sophist* later allows him to separate true from false statements by introducing the distinction between subjects and predicates. This separation between subjects and predicates is crucial not only in allowing an account of false statements but also an account for the meaning of the statement.[15] If we treat all the parts of the statement as names (indiscriminately), then we either end up with "*lion stag horse*" type examples (*Sophist*, 262b), or we treat statements such as "Brutus killed Caesar" and "Caesar killed Brutus" as expressing meanings between which we cannot discriminate (we shall soon see why). In the first case ("*lion stag horse*"), we assume 'names' (ὀνόματα) refers only to what we would call 'subjects'; in the latter case ("Brutus killed Caesar" or "Caesar killed

[13] I do not claim that *statement* and *proposition* are the same; rather that we may treat them as the same under the context of the Dream, according to Ryle. I have drawn a distinction between *statement* and *proposition* (see Notes on Translation and Notation).

[14] Note that, for Ryle, any true statement counts as something that can be known; for instance, 'Theaetetus sits'. Note also that for Ryle, the content of the true belief and the meaning expressed by the statement must be the same; hence, the statement should be an articulation/expression of the true belief (I shall explain this further in 1.8).

[15] I assume this is the same idea Russell referred to as "actually relat[ing]" (1903:50, Chapter 4, §54) the parts of the proposition.

Brutus"), we assume 'names' should refer to 'words' in general. I shall return to this topic in the following section.

I shall now turn to McDowell (1973). Like Ryle, he discusses the Dream and the remainder of the dialogue via a propositional analysis (without committing himself to a propositional reading), and although he subscribes to several of Ryle's points, he also introduces some key differences.

First, although McDowell adopts the division between *naming* and *stating* in the Dream, he believes that Plato is still unclear about what a statement exactly is and what the difference between the two (*naming* and *stating*) is, but he worked out the solution by the time he wrote the *Sophist*. For Ryle, whether Plato had understood what exactly the difference is in the *Theaetetus* does not matter because he is criticising and not trying to defend the Dream. Plato is aware that naming and stating are distinct.

Second, like Ryle, McDowell mentions the distinction between *savoir* and *connaître.* However, where Ryle suggests that a distinction is drawn by Socrates (or rather his Dream), notably via the claim that elements are *perceptible* – i.e. they are knowable-*connaître*, McDowell seems to think that Plato is still in a muddle on the matter. So, according to McDowell, Plato is unaware of the *savoir-connaître* distinction.

Third, McDowell thinks Ryle gives too much credit to Plato. That is, McDowell also sees similarities between the Dream and the *Tractatus*, and like Ryle, he quotes (albeit not as extensively) the latter. However, on the crucial solution – i.e. *interweaving*, McDowell believes

that it is a word use, which, at best, suggests a tentative solution (in the *Theaetetus*) that Plato worked out later in the *Sophist*. So, in the *Theaetetus,* we should not attribute to *interweaving* the importance *Verkettung* has in the *Tractatus*.[16]

Now, one might ask why these differences between Ryle and McDowell are important. Consider the following: (a) Both Ryle and McDowell agree that the puzzle of the *Theaetetus* is answered in the *Sophist*, but (b) whether Plato had figured out this answer when writing the *Theaetetus* is an open question for Ryle, whereas the answer is 'no' for McDowell. Suppose one assumes that Plato had not yet worked out the solution in the *Theaetetus*. In that case, one can assume that a weak interweaving, one which only includes names, cannot get us any further than a list, similar to the example "*lion stag horse*" the Eleatic Visitor offers at *Sophist* 262b, or it cannot differentiate between *Brutus killed Caesar* and *Caesar killed Brutus* because the Dream's interweaving does not take into account the order of the names. Indeed, this is McDowell's understanding, and it is mirrored in his interpretation of the Dream's so-called refutation (202d-206c) by attributing a faulty argument to Socrates. The problem with the argument is that Socrates assumes a whole must be identical with the sum of its parts, or it must itself be an elemental unity (mereological atom). Socrates does not allow for the option that a whole can be a unified object over and above the sum of its parts. As we shall see in Chapter 2, many scholars claim that Socrates subscribes to this faulty argument; I shall argue that he does not. However, regarding our present discussion, if we assume that Plato is truly in a muddle concerning the

[16] Burnyeat (p.164) also subscribes to the view that *interweaving* does not carry the strength of *Verkettung*. Interestingly, Wittgenstein (1958: §46) himself was of the opinion that "Both Russell's 'individuals' and my 'objects' [in Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus] were such primary elements [those mentioned in the Dream]", and there is a general sense that Wittgenstein agrees that the Dream is a precursor to what he says (there are further references of the *Theaetetus* to be found in Wittgenstein(1958)).

proposition and interweaving, we can further assume that this is why his later (202d-206c) argument is faulty; a proposition must (wrongly) either be a list of names (a sum) or itself a name (an element). If, on the other hand, Plato (already in the *Theaetetus*) has figured out the solution, one must start making assumptions about why he would employ a faulty argument in the refutation[17]; because Plato (already in the *Theaetetus*) knows that a proposition can be a unity made up of parts, and this unity need not be an element.

Despite the differences I mentioned between Ryle and McDowell, Ryle's reading of the so-called refutation is not very different from McDowell's. However, each looks at the refutation from a different angle. For McDowell, Plato is trying to work things out, so to speak, in order to make sense of the Dream and its problems. For Ryle, Plato is deliberately trying to expose the problem of the Dream (the same problem that troubles Logical Atomism): we cannot treat all the building blocks of the proposition as being the same, and likewise, for all sense data (perceptibles).

1.4 Interweaving and Names

It should be evident that how we understand Socrates' talk of weaving and interweaving is important. I shall not assume that we need to add extra weight on the fact that two different words are used, π[λοκὴν] (πέπλεκται) and συμπλοκὴν. It suffices to note that there are clearly

[17] We shall see, in Chapter 2, that some scholars assume Plato is performing midwifery on the reader; that is, he is purposely employing the faulty argument in order to make the reader think of the missing option (that a whole can be a unity consisting of parts).

two types of (inter)weaving,[18] one of the elements and one of their names, and one corresponds in some way to the other, as indicated by the ὥσπερ (202b3). So, on the one hand, we have an ontological claim regarding things (there exist compounds and elements); on the other hand, we have a semantic claim (regarding *logoi* and *onomata*) that links these things to language. Further, we have a claim about a link between reality and semantics: as things are, so we speak of them (when we speak truly).

Before moving forward, we need to address the terms '(inter)weaving' and 'names', and attempt to gain a better understanding of the phrase "*an interweaving of names is the being of a logos*" (202b5-6).

Let us, for now, assume that the putative link between Logical Atomism and the Dream holds. In this case, 'names' are the parts of the statement that correspond to the sense data which make up a fact. For example, 'Theaetetus' and 'sits' are the names of the sense data which feature in the fact *Theaetetus sits*, and when woven/concatenated, form the statement 'Theaetetus sits'. Logical Atomism does not treat the different types of sense data differently; the sense datum *Theaetetus*, which is a person, is simply named ('Theaetetus'), just as the sense datum *sits*, which is an action (or a state of being), is named ('sits'). How the two names concatenate is reflected in their merger, which follows some grammatical rules to aid our understanding. But treating sense data and their names in such a way allows us to concatenate in different ways. Assuming we have a name for *Theaetetus* and a name for *sits* (the act of sitting), and charitably granting grammatical freedom, 'Theaetetus sits' and 'Sitting Theaetetusises' articulate the same meaning,

[18] These are not (necessarily) the two types of interweaving we find in the *Sophist* (i.e. the interweaving of kinds and the interweaving of names with verbs, see also Moravcsik (1960)).

namely, the weaving of the elements or sense data *Theaetetus* and *sits*. However, setting aside the problems this creates for language,[19] we cannot get away with more complex cases, such as *Brutus killed Caesar* where we have non-symmetrical predicates. As Ryle argues, 'Brutus killed Caesar' and 'Caesar killed Brutus' do not articulate the same state of affairs (and the latter is not a fact). What all this should demonstrate is that if Logical Atomism (and the Dream, if the link between them holds) is to stand a chance, it is the *interweaving/concatenation/Verkettung* that must do the heavy lifting, so to speak, and link the names together according to how their corresponding sense data are linked together. The problem is that neither the Dream nor Logical Atomism explains what this metaphorical language of linking involves. Hence, it is unclear wherein the extra power of *Verkettung* lies (compared to *interweaving*), as McDowell suggests. Like the Dream, Wittgenstein refers only to *names* (*Namen*) and the *proposition* (*Satz*), the latter being a *connection* (*Zusammenhang*) of the former, and the tool he offers for us to understand how we go from one to the other is a metaphor; not one of (*inter*)*weaving*, but of *linkage* or *concatenation* (*Ver/con* and *Kette/catena-chain*).[20]

On the other hand, as both McDowell and Ryle agree, the *Sophist* treats (and solves) the problem differently. At least part of the burden of *linking* is bestowed on the words that feature

[19] Imagine a language where the roles of subject and predicate are reversed (as in 'Sitting Theaetetusises'); in order to communicate we would have to know the referents not only of what were previously verbs that stood for a predicate, but also all the "new" verbs that refer to the subjects, i.e. all subjects, which seems impossible. The fact that two people that have never met before can communicate is due to the common understanding of predicates and the ability to apply new subjects (objects) to those predicates. So, for example, one can understand (albeit not necessarily assess regarding truth) the statement 'Theaetetus sits', even if they have never met Theaetetus, simply because they understand the meaning of 'sits' (see also Evans' (1989) Generality Constraint).

[20] Gaskin (2013), following a different argumentation, raises the same question; i.e. he fails to see the difference between *interweaving* and *Verketung* McDowell and Burnyeat allude to.

in the statement, and these words are not all the same, just as sense data are not all the same. The word that corresponds to the action is expressed by the predicate, what is mentioned as the ῥήμα[21], whereas the word that corresponds to the subject is the ὄνομα.

In light of what has been mentioned, let me return now to the Dream. According to McDowell, we are limited by treating all words only as ὀνόματα (and not ῥήματα), and at the same time, we do not have the powerful *Verkettung* at our disposal. Therefore, the final product of interweaving is, as Ryle also suggests, an unordered list of names. It is not clear if McDowell assumes that "*names*" should refer only to what we take to be subjects of the proposition, as in the example of the *Sophist* ("*lion stag horse*" – of course, this example in the *Sophist* is meant to demonstrate how not to construct a proposition), or if actions are also allowed; in either case, the unordered list problem remains (in the former case we have the extra problem of grammatically bad statements). Nevertheless, McDowell clearly believes that Plato (in the *Theaetetus*) has not yet realised that different types of perceptibles (or different types of sense data) must be mentioned using different types of words.[22]

My own view is that it does not matter how we translate ὀνόματα; let me explain. I do not agree with McDowell; I believe Plato is aware of the difference between subject and predicate already in the *Theaetetus*. At 206d-e, Socrates explicitly mentions that to say something, one does so via ὀνόματα and ῥήματα, as we are told in the *Sophist*, so I assume that the distinction is

[21] I take it we need not be too strict as to limit ourselves to 'actions'; states, adjectives (aided by *copula*), etc., can be grouped under ῥήμα as what says something about the subject.

[22] To clarify, different types of words have different semantic functions; one type picks out a verb and another type picks out an object. McDowell's claim is that Plato has not realised this in the *Theaetetus* but becomes aware of it in the *Sophist*. The view I support in this thesis is that the non-differentiation between the types of words is a claim that belongs to the Dream and not one Plato stands by.

apparent. One might object and claim that Plato here uses the two as hendiadys. However, this would be a very odd way of employing the two words because we would have to assume that what Socrates says is that we need "names and words", where 'words' means 'names', so "names and names". Further, it is hard to imagine that a speaker of any language is completely unaware of the subject-predicate distinction; they may not fully grasp the grammatical distinction, but they can correctly employ them to form a grammatically correct statement. An objection to this might be that this is precisely what Logical Atomism supports, but I claim this is not the case. Logical Atomism claims only that we may treat the names of the two as having an equivalent status in the construction of a proposition. That is to say, we need not assume that the perceptions (or sense data) of *Theaetetus* and of *sits* are the same, only that their names play the same role in the statement 'Theaetetus sits'.

The crucial point then is not how we translate ὀνόματα, but how much power interweaving has; and if interweaving in the Dream (and likewise *Verkettung* for Logical Atomism) has no power, then the Dream (and Logical Atomism) fail(s) from the outset.

My analysis so far agrees with Ryle's criticism of Logical Atomism (but note that this is a separate issue from whether Ryle is correct to link the Dream to Logical Atomism), and if it is correct, it also sides with the claim that Wittgenstein's *Verkettung* has no extra sophistication or power over *interweaving* as it appears in the Dream.

Let us now look at how we should treat these matters if we do not subscribe to a propositional reading. Under an objectual reading, the list of names must refer to the elemental constituents of the object we are trying to define. We have two options, assuming that interweaving has no

real power. We either assume that what can count as a perceptible element must be a material constituent of an object,[23] or we assume that relations between the material elements are also parts of the object. In both cases, the problem persists. To clarify, take the following corresponding examples; assume, without damage to generality[24], that a *car* consists of a *body* and *wheels*. In the first case, the possible *logoi* of the car are 'body wheels' or 'wheels body'; in the latter case, some possible *logoi* are 'a body that sits on wheels' and 'wheels that sit on a body'. Let us assume that only one of these *logoi* (from both cases) amounts to a definition of what a car is, 'a body that sits on wheels';[25] however, the Dream does not allow us to discriminate the correct one. As long as all the constituents are mentioned in the *logos*, the Dream does not pay heed to their order or how they are related. Both 'wheels that sit on a body' and 'a body that sits on wheels' include all the names that feature in *a body that sits on wheels*, yet the names of only one are interwoven according to how the elements are woven to form a car.

It is worth noting that the way I describe the problem here applies to objectual readings, regardless of whether we accept as the objects the Dream refers to material/particular objects (as Cornford believes), abstract/universal objects, or both.

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[23] Here, I suppose that a 'material constituent' can be either a particular or a universal element (the same holds for the object); e.g. a specific wheel (element) and a specific car (compound-object), or a wheel (taken to be a universal) and a car (taken to be a universal). I repeat this claim at the end of the current section.

[24] Because the elements I shall mention can be further broken down, and because a car is more than just body and wheels, and because the definition I assume is correct may not be the kind of definition we are looking for. All I wish to demonstrate with the following example is a compound and its (let us assume) elemental constituents, with and without the consideration of the relation between the constituents.

[25] I shall not press on the issue of whether the *logos* must be a grammatically correct statement that includes the name of the object (and copula); i.e. whether we should assume the *logos* has the form 'a body that sits on wheels' or 'a car is a body that sits on wheels'.

1.5 Against a Propositional Reading of the Dream

Having drawn the above clarifications, it is time to step back and address what is perhaps one of the most important questions scholars are concerned with: is knowledge at this point in the dialogue objectual or propositional?

It is relatively uncontroversial to say that we find instances of both objectual and propositional knowledge throughout the *Theaetetus*. We have been concerned with whether 'the wind is cold (or warm)' (152b), and we shall see that we will examine what it is to know an abstract object (a wagon, 207c) or a particular object (the Sun, and Theaetetus, 208d-210b). But the crucial matter that needs to be addressed is what kind of knowledge we are concerned with at this point in the dialogue, i.e. after the definition 'knowledge is true belief accompanied by *logos'* is mentioned.

Many scholars[26] agree that with the last definition, Plato performs a shift. Via the Dream, we should understand that Plato indicates that the discussion concerns objects and no longer facts, as was the case right before the definition was mentioned, where we were concerned with who committed a crime (201b-c). Indications in favour of this view are the aforementioned examples Socrates brings up towards the end of the dialogue, both abstract and particular objects. However, the question at present concerns knowledge at this point in the dialogue; so, in my view, employing examples such as a wagon, the Sun, or Theaetetus, that come up later (where it seems more likely that knowledge concerns objects) does not offer solid evidence for an objectual reading of the Dream.

[26] E.g., see Bostock, Burnyeat.

In Chapter 3, I shall expand on why the view that Plato shifts to objectual knowledge after he introduces the first meaning for *logos* deserves merit. However, the question I wish to raise at present is this: are we correct to draw the line, the shift to purely objectual knowledge, from the Dream onward? I claim that the answer is 'no'. I shall first look at what is commonly accepted as the most robust defence of an objectual reading: the three points raised by Bostock (p.206-8). In the following section, I shall offer my own view on these points.

The first point Bostock raises is the phrase "*we…and everything else"*; he claims that it should be obvious that this phrase does not include propositions or facts as objects of knowledge.[27]

The second point is that the Dream and the subsequent second meaning examined for *logos* at 206e-208b, i.e. *Enumeration*, are not only connected but actually examine the same exact *logos*. It is obvious that a definition of an object is sought in the latter case, so a definition of an object must also be the case in the Dream.

The third point actually raises two issues. First, it refers to the last sentences of the Dream:

> Now when someone gets hold of the true belief of something without a logos, his mind is in a state of truth about it but does not know it; because someone who cannot give and receive a logos of something is not knowledgeable about that thing. But if he gets hold of a logos as well, then it is possible not only for all that to happen, but also for him to be in a perfect condition in respect of knowledge. (208b8-c5)

[27] There is an added obscurity to what "*we*" refers to; the interlocutors, humans in general, both? This, in turn, may raise questions about whether knowledge might concern particulars or universals, tokens or types. But regardless of how we treat the latter questions, "*we*" does not refer to propositions or facts.

This part of the Dream is often understood as epexegetical, an appendix[28] explaining the (prospective) knower's relation to *logos* and how the knower qualifies as one with knowledge. It should be "*absurd*" and "*obviously stupid*" (to quote Bostock) to assume that the Dream would suggest that *logos* should be understood as 'statement'. *Logos* was added to true belief to introduce some substantial difference between knowledge and true belief. Surely, simply articulating just any statement on one's mind cannot count as knowledge. The second issue refers to the subsequent rejection of the first meaning examined for *logos*, i.e. "*making one's thought plain by means of speech*" (206d-e). We should take this latter issue as a vindication of the view that it is absurd to interpret the Dream's appendix in a way that allows for *logos* to mean 'statement'. So, this entire objection actually raises two distinct points: one about the Appendix and one about the meaning of *logos* at 206d-e; nevertheless, the two points are related.

1.6 Why We Should Not (Yet) Dismiss a Propositional Reading

The strength of the reading I shall suggest here depends on the strength of some of my arguments in Chapters 2, 3 and 4 (I shall mention below what these arguments are). But let me first offer an outline of my view in order to aid understanding.

I believe Plato makes the potential shift to objectual knowledge after he clarifies that the first meaning for *logos* (206d-e) cannot be the one we are seeking. Before 206d-e, I cannot find definitive evidence to dismiss either of the two readings, propositional or objectual. Therefore, for the Dream and its subsequent (so-called) refutation, propositional knowledge is still a candidate, as it has been up to this point in the dialogue.

[28] Brown (2021) calls it a Coda.

The points in the previous section were mentioned in the order Bostock mentions them, which, as he claims, are in order of increasing importance. It is interesting to note that the second point draws evidence from the second meaning for *logos* (206e-208b), by which time, I claim, knowledge may be treated as objectual, and the third point is vindicated by the first meaning for *logos* (206d-e), which, I claim, is the pivotal point in the dialogue where the potential shift to objectual knowledge happens.

All this is not to say I fully side with Ryle, even in the case of a propositional reading. I shall argue below that Ryle has made the error of identifying *savoir* with ἐπιστήμη and of assuming that *truth* is what we are after. On the other hand, Bostock is right about requesting *special* (as opposed to just any) statements to stand as *logoi*, just not so early in the dialogue.[29]

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[29] Chappell (p.205-212) defends the view that the Dream presents a version of Logical Atomism. Chappell's defence, for the most part, objects to Bostock's first point (concerning "*we…and everything else*") but tries to reconcile the second (why *logos* understood as Enumeration can work for the Dream). I side with Chappell on the former but disagree on the latter; i.e. Enumeration is not a candidate for the Dream's *logos*. I shall claim, in Chapter 2, that the so-called refutation of the Dream is actually an amendment that introduces the concept of order/structure of the elements; and in Chapter 4, I shall claim that the meaning for *logos* at 206e-208b is the amended version of the Dream's *logos*. Therefore, the *logos* of 206e-208b is not the same as the *logos* of the Dream. In addition, I disagree with Chappell's overall reading, that the *Theaetetus* is an answer to Empiricism, and that the Dream stands in for Empiricism, for Socrates to attack.
One more clarification on Chappell's view; Chappell's central claim is that facts can and should be treated as objects. This claim fits Russell's and Wittgenstein's refined version of Logical Atomism. Chappell's position is summarised in the following quote (p.209):

> For such a theorist [i.e. the one who supports the version of Logical Atomism Chappell argues for], epistemology and semantics alike will rest upon the foundation provided by the simple objects of acquaintance. Both thought and meaning will consist in the construction of complex objects out of those simple objects. Philosophical analysis, meanwhile, will consist in *stating how* the complexes involved in thought and meaning are constructed out of simples. This statement is going to involve, amongst other things, dividing down to and enumerating the (simple) parts of such complexes.
> As I say, such a theorist will reject Burnyeat's and Bostock's opposition of propositional and objectual interpretations of the Dream Theory. For him there is not the slightest incompatibility between those interpretations. To put it simply, he regards the objectual interpretation as a true thesis in epistemology, and the propositional interpretation as true as a thesis in semantics.

Point one: "*we…and everything else*"

Although the least important (according to Bostock's ordering), this point is also the most difficult to dispute. Bostock assumes it is pretty much self-evident that "*we*" are objects, so "*everything else*" must be like *us*, i.e. also objects. In the lack of further argumentation, it is not easy to counter-argue. Nevertheless, some points are worth mentioning.

The main question here is: why are propositions not objects? If we find evidence that Plato treats propositions as things we may know, we may assume that these things may stand as objects of knowledge; however, we will need to argue further, as Bostock would not deny they could, generally, just not at this point in the dialogue. Let me begin by drawing some further clarifications.

The difference between propositional knowledge and objectual knowledge can be seen as equivalent to the difference between accepting that-statements as *logoi* (propositional knowledge), as opposed to just what-statements (objectual knowledge) about the object, the latter seen as a definition or a demarcation or a what-it-is statement regarding the object. Recall that in the discussion of the Aviary model, it was these false that-statements, such as '7 + 5 = 11',

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My own understanding of the Dream agrees with the above, save for the "Philosophical analysis"; we need not argue that the Dream suggests that we "stat[e] how" the simples make up the compound. The Dream only claims that we need to express them (their names) in a *logos*, and it is this point that Socrates attacks (to be precise, Socrates attacks the claim that elements are unknowable and, further, links their knowability to being able to discern their position within a whole, so simply mentioning them is not enough (see Chapter 2) and, as I shall claim, he amends this in subsequent so-called refutation (202d-206c) (even though the amended version also fails)). His amendment, I shall claim, results in the introduction of the position of the elements, thus attributing greater importance to interweaving. So, mentioning the elements and stating "how" exactly they make up the compound is the option discussed at 206e-208b.

that concerned us, and not 12 what-it-is; these false statements were represented by some of the birds in the Aviary (197c), or were the content of ἀλλοδοξία (189b).[30]

Therefore, the aforementioned indicates that (already in the *Theaetetus*)[31] Plato does treat propositions, false ones in the previous cases, as self-standing things[32] we may (or may not) know.[33]

The question now is: can these proposition-objects (expressed in statements) stand as objects of knowledge in the Dream? Because the aforementioned applies to what was mentioned prior to the third definition. Let me offer a reason to at least consider this option.

In the following so-called refutation, Plato uses a grammatical example:

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[30] To be precise, the Aviary model actually mentions *beliefs* and not *statements*; I generally assume that beliefs can be stated, as they are qualified as true or false, and it is statements that are truth-apt. In addition, the suggestion that beliefs/judgements are (the result of) an inner dialogue, supports this view.

[31] I mention 'already', because in the *Sophist*, we can speak of the meaning of a statement as something that is self-standing, based on the Eleatic Visitor's account of false statements. 'Theaetetus flies' is a statement that expresses the meaning of *Theaetetus flies*. Likewise, (accordingly) in the case of *Caesar killed Brutus*. Now, still following what is mentioned in the *Sophist*, we may assume infinite meanings that partake in 'not-being' by assuming that *X killed Caesar* and taking for *X* anyone but *Brutus*. One may object that this is hinged on how we interpret the phrase ἕτερα τῶν ὄντων (263b7) (see Brown (2019)); however, my claim does not concern whether by saying 'Theaetetus is not short' we should understand 'Theaetetus is tall'. My claim is simply that things stated in propositions that state ἕτερα τῶν ὄντων not only exist as meanings, but are infinitely many.

[32] A note to avoid a possible conflation. A 'thing' in this case is an object which may be the referent of a proper name, a proposition, etc. (e.g. concepts such as knowledge or justice). Throughout this thesis, we also come across objects of a different kind; real-world items (what Cornford calls concrete things) both as types and as tokens (e.g. wagons or people – Cornford would not agree with the inclusion of types).

[33] The fact that Plato, already in the *Theaetetus*, treats propositions as objects, should raise doubt towards Chappell's view that doing so is an Empiricist/Logical Atomists approach, because Plato does so also in the *Sophist*, where even the strongest Logical Atomist-reading proponent (Ryle) would agree that Plato has dismissed Logical Atomism (that is not to say that Ryle believes that Plato ever embraced it).

[T1.3, 202d6-e9]

S: Yes, actually it does seem plausible that the definition itself is correct: because what knowledge could there be without a *logos* and a correct belief? However, there is one thing in what we have said which I find unsatisfactory.

T: What is that?

S: What actually seems to be its most subtle point, namely that the elements are unknowable but the class of compounds knowable.

T: Is that not right?

S: We must find out; because we have, as hostages for the theory the examples of *logos* [τοῦ λόγου τὰ παραδείγματα] which it used in saying all those things.

T: What are they?

S: Elements and compounds of letters [γραμμάτων]. Or do you think the person who made the statements we are talking about had something else in view when he made them?

T: No.

The *logoi* mentioned in [T1.3] may or may not refer to *logos* in the technical sense, i.e. the kind of *logos* that fits the current definition of knowledge. Either interpretation does not affect my argument. However, how we understand παραδείγματα, i.e. as models, examples, illustrations, or instantiations, may affect my argument.

The παραδείγματα of *logos* that are chosen, following [T1.3], are the syllable ΣΩ and its constituent letters Σ and Ω. In the argument (which we shall examine in Chapter 2) ΣΩ represents a compound, whereas Σ and Ω represent elements. A question often raised is

whether these letters are taken literally as elements or if they are simple placeholders, i.e., they stand in for elements but are not elements themselves. The corresponding question for the syllable ΣΩ is whether it is literally a compound (one of the "*…and everything else*").

The Greek may be confusing, as a συγκείμεν[ον] (as compounds are mentioned in the Dream) and a συλλαβὴ (203a7) are close in meaning. Further, separating the compound and its elements from their names may become confusing when they feature in a *logos*.[34] It is a fact that *ΣΩ consists of Σ and Ω*; it is a statement (*logos*) that 'ΣΩ consists of Σ and Ω'. Perhaps this choice of example was intentional. Nevertheless, these are matters of secondary importance in answering the question at hand.

I cannot locate decisive evidence in the text that may answer whether letters are elements or simply placeholders for elements (likewise for syllables and compounds). One may raise a similar question for musical notes that appear later (206a-b) in the argument. Bostock would allow for syllables to be treated as objects (abstract objects); nevertheless, they must also be placeholders in order to be able to explain cases of non-syllable objects (such as "*we…*").

Assuming that letters (and syllables) are placeholders for elements and compounds, whatever applies to these placeholders throughout 202d-206c applies both to non-fact objects (i.e. objects in Bostock's sense) and propositions. Ryle chooses to focus on the latter, claiming that the problem Plato is pointing to is that a proposition is a unity, but it is different from the unity which characterises a name. A proposition is a complex unity, whereas a name is a mereological atom.

[34] See Notes on Translation and Notation on conventions I follow to separate the two.

Now, consider the following: at 206e-208b, letters, syllables (and whole words) are again examined. There, we see that a word can be broken down into sub-compounds – i.e. syllables, or be properly/completely broken down into its elements – i.e. its letters. A syllable then can be treated as a sub-compound; nevertheless, a sub-compound is still a compound. Therefore, one may assume, albeit not conclusively, that what applies to a sub-compound-syllable applies to a compound-word, and, by extension, to a compound statement. So, in the present case, Socrates may be employing the simplest grammatical example (a syllable, as opposed to a statement) to illustrate his argument. (This is not to say that we are to assume that because grammatical examples are employed at 206e-208b, propositional knowledge applies in that case, too.)

Weak as this argument may be, consider one more point. Everything mentioned in the Dream and its following so-called refutation can apply equally to statements as well as syllables, and the odds of the theory equally applying to two kinds of objects, one of which is not a candidate for the theory itself, are quite low. Metaphors and examples are usually meant to draw limited conclusions of the sort: if A_1 is like A_2, then B_1 is like B_2, and it is not further necessary that C_1 is like C_2.[35] In the case of syllables and statements with regard to the Dream, I fail to locate a corresponding C case. This is not proof, but evidence that we need not rule out statements from the conversation. Therefore, I assume that Socrates is employing the simplest kind of grammatical compound for the purpose of the example and his argument.

There is, however, one more argument in favour of not dismissing a propositional reading just yet. What-statements can also be treated as that-statements (but not all that-statements are

[35] For example, a sparrow (A_1) is like a bat (A_2) for they can both fly, so a sparrow has wings (B_1) and a bat has wings (B_2); we cannot further claim that a sparrow is a bird (C_1) and a bat is a bird (C_2).

what-statements); this is illustrated in the example of the Sun (208d), to know the Sun-what-it-is, is to know that-it-is 'so and so'. Bostock concedes this point but (correctly) clarifies that these are special that-statements. However, they are treated as special statements later in the dialogue, when it has been clarified that not just any statement can count as the kind of *logos* we are looking for (206d-e). So far, Plato has offered no reason to treat what-statements differently (under the context of the Dream – I am not claiming that Plato does not see the difference). The shift at 206d-e, I shall claim in Chapter 3, makes it more probable that we should be concerned with objectual knowledge by decoupling the content of the true belief and the *logos* (I shall first touch upon this issue below, at 1.8).

Point two: Enumeration

Bostock's argument here is straightforward: (a) *logos* at 206e-208b implies Enumeration, (b) Enumeration concerns the elemental parts of (non-fact) objects, (c) the *logos* at 206e-208b is the same as the *logos* of the Dream, hence (d) the *logos* of the Dream should be understood as the Enumeration of the elemental parts of objects. The truth of the conclusion (d) depends on the truth of the premises (a), (b), and (c).

I agree with (a); however, I should clarify that I assume Enumeration implies a 1-1 correspondence between the elements and an ordered subset of the natural numbers. In other words, I assume (and argue for this in Chapters 2 and 4) that the *logos* of 206e-208b includes the position of the elements[36] (whereas the *logos* of the Dream does not). Hence, I disagree with (c).

[36] Or offers further information about "how" the elements, the same ones that were earlier only mentioned, are connected.

So, the strength of my claim against the current point depends on the strength of the arguments I shall expound in Chapters 2 and 4; if there is more to (the meaning of) the *logos* of 206e-208b, then we cannot retroactively apply our assumptions of 206e-208b to the Dream. As I shall argue (against Bostock), at 206e-208b, we have an amended Dream, which, although similar to the original, features key differences.

Point three: The Dream's Appendix

Bostock sees two reasons the end of the Dream should rule out a propositional reading, and he must consider them the most important since he claims that the current objection is the strongest.

First, for Bostock, the Dream cannot be so "*absurd*" and "*stupid*" as to request something so simple, that is, to state something one has on their mind. For instance, take the proposition *Brutus killed Caesar*; all the Appendix requests is that one forms the statement 'Brutus killed Caesar' (I shall not yet try to unpack the difficult language of *giving* and *receiving* – for this, see Chapter 5). This seems "*stupid*" for Bostock, yet I believe it is not. If the problem is the lack of order and structure in the *logos*, this means that we may end up with a statement that does not correspond to the intended proposition. Note that Bostock dismisses as non-important the request that the *logos* be *oikeios* to whatever it is about; however, I take it this is linked to the ὥσπερ (202b3) and is critical in understanding what the Appendix requests. Given three names: 'Brutus', 'killed', and 'Caesar', one might construct the statement 'Caesar killed Brutus', and the latter is definitely not a statement that matches the earlier proposition (*Brutus killed Caesar*). So,

being able to construct a statement that matches a proposition is not necessarily a trivial task. (Similarly to the example of a car and its *logos* I mentioned in 1.4.)

The second reason Bostock raises comes to vindicate the prior one. He claims that in the discussion at 206d-e, it becomes clear that *logos* cannot be a mere articulation of one's thought, confirming that the Dream indeed does not suggest such simple a *logos*. I agree with Bostock that this is the central point 206d-e raises. But here, the argument works both ways, and I believe even stronger against Bostock's suggestion. The fact that Socrates has to clarify, four Stephanus pages after the Dream, that *logos* cannot be an articulation of one's thought most likely means that one may very well assume that it could be (until 206d-e), based on what the Dream tells us. Only after this clarification should we consider containing ourselves to *special* statements.

Two further general points before ending this section. The first is also raised by Chappell but now becomes more important, given the extra arguments I mentioned. Both Bostock and Burnyeat easily dismiss as unimportant the Dream's claim that elements are *perceptible*.[37] Obviously, this affects the entire *connaître* discussion and deprives Ryle's Logical Atomism reading of one of its main arguments. I do not believe we are entitled to so easily forget that elements are perceptible, especially since the δέ (αἰσθητὰ δέ) seems to emphasise this via contrast. It seems that elements are perceptible as opposed to being able to be captured by a *logos*; and because of being *aloga* they are unknowable. So, perhaps perceptibility implies

[37] Note, however, that although Burnyeat dismisses the perceptibility of elements, perception later features as an integral part of his reading of the end of the dialogue (more on this in 6.1).

something like (e.g.) being conceived or experienced or being in one's mind without being able to be judged about or have a *logos*.

The second dismissal on behalf of Bostock is, as mentioned above, the claim (counterfactual, see fn. 2) that the *logos* must be *oikeios* to the compound. This is not a slip of the tongue on behalf of the Dream theorist, especially because it is explicitly mentioned as οἰκεῖον αὑτοῦ λόγον and not just οἰκεῖον λόγον. I take this to mean that it is not simply a *logos* about the object-compound but a *logos* that belongs to the object itself (αὑτοῦ), i.e. it is meant to apply to it, and I do not believe this claim is dropped, even after the Dream is left behind. In fact, I believe that as the dialogue approaches its ending, it becomes clearer that even the meaning of *oikeios* is not strong enough; we should be after something like an *idios logos*. To explain the previous point; 'Theaetetus is human' is a *logos* that is *oikeios* to Theaetetus but it is also *oikeios* to Socrates and every other human. What shall become evident by the end of the dialogue is that the *logos* must be *oikeios* in a way that it cannot apply to anything else apart from the object in question. In my view, this interpretation strengthens Bostock's understanding that a definition (that is proper to the object) is what is sought. However, in the context of the Dream, this plays a special role regarding the relation between proposition and statement. When one assumes a non-fact object, say, a wagon, an *oikeios logos* would be a what-statement that says what a wagon is (however this might be achieved). In the case of a fact, the fact itself is defined by the proper articulation of it, even if it is a that-statement, and as I argued, this task is not as trivial as Bostock claims it is. After I expand on my reading of *oikeios* (at the end of the current chapter and in Chapter 3), it should become apparent that for as long as we do not have sufficient evidence to dismiss that-

statements as objects of knowledge, we must allow for the (not so) "*stupid*" case of articulating one's thought.[38]

1.7 Some Points on Ryle's Reading

I shall mention what I take to be Ryle's main weak point at the end of this section (and further argue against it in Chapter 3). But first, I shall discuss some matters that pertain to what was mentioned in the previous sections.

First, I believe Ryle drew his epistemic/semantic distinction too far, thus barring non-fact objects (e.g. wagons, numbers, musical notes) from the Dream. Just as I suggested that we should not restrict ourselves to non-fact objects and how we speak of them (against a purely objectual reading), we do not need to restrict ourselves to fact-objects and their articulations (as Ryle's propositional reading suggests). The same type of answer that applies to those who favour a purely objectual reading applies to Ryle: we may treat an object as an obtaining state of affairs of the elements that constitute it. This way, we can retain the epistemic/semantic division Ryle refers to without ruling out non-fact objects. We shall see in Chapter 5 that this is a crucial problem; that is, to know an object is to know a fact about it, and trying to restrict the types of facts that can be articulated in a *logos* (to definitions or definite descriptions) does not change this. It is assumed that to know the *Sun* is to know *that* 'it is the brightest of heavenly bodies…'

[38] One might think this argument is circular; Bostock does not accept that-statements as objects of knowledge; that is why he believes the request for a simple articulation would be "*stupid*". If we allowed for that-statements, Bostock need not think so. However, my argument is not circular because it is based on the premise that that-statements are not excluded and I interpret the Appendix accordingly. For Bostock, the Appendix itself is employed as an argument that we should not accept that-statements which presupposes an interpretation that excludes non-propositional objects of knowledge. So, Bostock uses the Appendix as a premise, whereas I doubt the view that it can be used as such.

if we accept that the latter is a definition of the *Sun*; Ryle's insistence that to know that *the Sun is the brightest of heavenly bodies* involves our ability to express in a (true) statement that 'the Sun is the brightest of heavenly bodies', gets us no further.[39]

But does Ryle's link between Logical Atomism and the Dream hold at least in part? That is to say, are Bostock and those who subscribe to the objectual reading justified to reject the similarities between the two theories which Ryle believes are so obvious? I believe not.

Bostock's strongest objection is his last; the Dream's demand cannot be so weak as to simply request an articulation of a (true) belief. I set aside his allusion to 206d-e for vindication. The issue I want to raise here is that this is a significant point Bostock raises; however, it is a point against Logical Atomism. As I argued, the task of coming up with a correct articulation for a proposition is not as trivial as Bostock makes it sound. A Logical Atomist could claim that there is more to *Verkettung* than I attribute to it, and that is what gets the job done. Nevertheless, if Ryle is correct, and I believe he is (on this point), Logical Atomism and *Verkettung* do not get the job done; hence, Bostock's criticism should be addressed toward Logical Atomism, not the connection Ryle attempted to illustrate between Logical Atomism and the Dream. The problem is not that articulating a thought (a belief) is trivial; it is not. The problem is how this articulation forms a unity that corresponds to the desired fact, and this problem, neither the Dream nor Logical Atomism solve.

In my view, Ryle's main fault was to identify knowledge-that/*savoir* with ἐπιστήμη, and thus allow his interpretation to be confined to a discussion about truths. However, the truth of

[39] Even if it seems to introduce a theory for truth similar to that which we find in Tarski (1944).

whatever it is we may know is secured by the definition (knowledge is *true* belief accompanied by *logos*); our candidate beliefs are true, and false ones do not enter the picture (to be continued in Chapter 3).

1.8 On the *Savoir – Connaître* Distinction and a Further Assessment of Ryle's Suggestion

As mentioned earlier, McDowell believes that Plato is not aware of the distinction between *savoir* and *connaître*. On the other hand, Ryle believes that Plato, or rather the Dream, has drawn the distinction between knowing-*connaître* an element and knowing-*savoir* a compound. On this point, it seems that the entire dialogue, let alone the Dream, may create confusion.

To be more precise about Ryle's position, he does locate the distinction in the Dream (based on the claim that elements are perceptible) and interprets the Dream accordingly. However, he also mentions:

> Now it is debatable whether in this dialogue [i.e. the Theaetetus] Plato was alive to this distinction between know (savoir) and know (connaître). It can be argued that some of his troubles were due to his failure to recognise it; or it can be argued that his mode of representing and tackling these troubles shows that he was becoming alive to it. (p.27)

So, although the Dream is refined enough to point out the distinction, Ryle leaves open the possibility that Plato is still working out his own solution in the *Theaetetus*. As I mentioned before, this is not a matter of great importance for Ryle, as he believes that the Dream can be

understood as a(n) (advanced) version of Logical Atomism, and, in turn, Plato rightfully objects to Logical Atomism, even if he does not have his counter-proposal ready.

For my own reading, it is important to credit Plato with the awareness of the solution he presents in the *Sophist*, already in the *Theaetetus*. This would explain why he argues against the Dream in the way he does, i.e. via an argument at 202d-206c that most scholars consider faulty. But back to the present discussion.

One of the reasons Ryle believes Plato is (likely) not in a muddle is Plato's use of the verbs εἰδέναι, γιγνώσκειν, and ἐπίστασθαι. On this, Ryle mentions:

> He [i.e. Plato] uses the verbs *εἰδέναι* and *γιγνώσκειν*, though not, of course, *ἐπίστασθαι*, both for knowing (savoir) that something is the case with something, and for knowing (connaître) people, letters of the alphabet and numbers. (p.27)

Ryle's point here is that where εἰδέναι and γιγνώσκειν are used for both *savoir* and *connaître*, ἐπίστασθαι is reserved solely for *savoir*. It seems then that ἐπίστασθαι carries some special meaning. This holds not only for the *Theaetetus*, but as Lyons (1963) tried to show, there seems to be a link between ἐπιστήμη and τέχνη, and he suggests that ἐπιστήμη refers to some expert knowledge of a body or field.[40]

[40] I shall further discuss possible ways of understanding ἐπιστήμη in Chapters 4 and 6. For now, it is worth mentioning that not all languages agree with the often employed French paradigm. In German, 'savoir' is commonly understood to mean 'wissen'; however, ἐπιστήμη is commonly translated as 'Erkenntnis' which is associated with 'kennen' (which we would translate as 'connaître'). Likewise, in Italian, 'savoir' is linked to 'sapere', while 'connaître' is linked to 'conoscere'; yet ἐπιστήμη is translated as 'conoscenza', i.e. linked to the empirical type of knowledge (even though 'knowledge' itself is sometimes translated as 'scienza' but 'conoscenza' is the standard translation). What I mean to say is that

Apart from Lyons, Burnyeat (2011) also supports the view that ἐπιστήμη must refer to some special, higher-order kind of knowledge. Burnyeat bases his claims on the *Theaetetus*, as well as passages from Aristotle and Alexander of Aphrodisias, in order to reach some conclusions about ἐπιστήμη generally in the Greek language, whereas Lyons was focused specifically on the Platonic corpus. Nevertheless, their results generally agree (Burnyeat makes it clear throughout his paper that he agrees with Lyons (1963) but not with Lyons' later revised position (1979, 1981)).

Lesher (1969) also agrees with these results and with Ryle; treating ἐπιστήμη as a higher kind of knowledge can be applied to the Dream, a claim Burnyeat would not adopt.

But how far can we hold on to the distinction between εἰδέναι, γιγνώσκειν, and ἐπίστασθαι in the *Theaetetus*?

Socrates certainly does have a reserved use for the noun ἐπιστήμη. Throughout the entire dialogue, whenever he asks or re-instates the central question, for example: τί σοι δοκεῖ εἶναι ἐπιστήμη (146c3), ἐπιστήμης λαβεῖν λόγον τί ποτε τυγχάνει ὄν (148d2), he never interchanges ἐπιστήμη with γνῶσις or some other noun. Theaetetus also respects this rule. However, as Ryle also mentions, when they refer to people, they use εἰδέναι and γιγνώσκειν, and in the dialogue's last example, i.e. the question of Socrates having knowledge of Theaetetus, Socrates asks whether he γιγνώσκειν (209a3) Theaetetus, where Theaetetus is the thing of which he may (or may not) be a knower (ἐπιστήμων, 208e4).

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connecting ἐπιστήμη to what, in broad terms, we would call rational/non-empirical knowledge, is not as widely accepted as it might seem from the French paradigm.

A further important point worth noting is the following. Earlier in [T1.1], we saw that Theaetetus claimed that what he heard was that things were divided between knowable and unknowable; the adjective in Greek is ἐπιστητὰ (and οὐκ ἐπιστητὰ). But, when Socrates narrates his Dream, he refers to things, i.e. compounds and elements, as γνωστά and ἄγνωστα. He continues to do so throughout his so-called refutation (202d-206c) and seems to treat the words ἐπιστητὰ and γνωστά (and accordingly οὐκ ἐπιστητὰ and ἄγνωστα) as equivalent. Nevertheless, he is not confused about what he is looking for, namely ἐπιστήμη:

- …δυνατόν τε ταῦτα πάντα γεγονέναι καὶ τελείως πρὸς ἐπιστήμην ἔχειν ("…it is possible not only for all that to happen, but also for him to be in a perfect condition in respect of knowledge", 202c4-5; as part of the Dream),

- Ἀρέσκει οὖν σε καὶ τίθεσαι ταύτη, δόξαν ἀληθῆ μετὰ λόγου ἐπιστήμην εἶναι; ("And are you satisfied with it? Are you prepared to lay it down, on those lines, that true belief accompanied by *logos* is knowledge?", 202c8-9; right after the Dream),

- Ἀλλὰ δὴ τούτου μὲν ἔτι κἂν ἄλλαι φανεῖεν ἀποδείξεις, ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ· τὸ δὲ προκείμενον μὴ ἐπιλαθώμεθα δι᾽ αὐτὰ ἰδεῖν, ὅτι δή ποτε καὶ λέγεται τὸ μετὰ δόξης ἀληθοῦς λόγον προσγενόμενον τὴν τελεωτάτην ἐπιστήμην γεγονέναι ("What is more, I think other proofs of that point might well come to light. But let us not, on their account, forget to look into the question before us: what, exactly, is meant by saying that a *logos*, if added to a true belief, becomes the most perfect of knowledge", 206c1-5; to conclude his so-called refutation of the Dream).

So, one option is to assume that Plato is in a muddle or even completely ignorant of the possibility that knowledge can be of different types. On the other hand, one may claim that

Plato is aware that what he is searching for are things that we may know-*savoir*, and it is solely the Dream's claim (not Plato's) that these may potentially be based on things that we may know-*connaître*, as Ryle suggests.

Another alternative, the one I choose, is that Plato is aware of the issue but does not care about it. That is, whether or not there are things that we need to know-*connaître*, in order to know-*savoir* other things, the question concerns ἐπιστήμη. Trying to break down knowledge into different pieces or kinds is like kicking the can further down the road, so to speak, if we cannot answer the original question.[41]

Earlier, Socrates said:

> [T1.4, 196d1-197a5]
>
> S: You seem not to be bearing in mind that our whole discussion, from the beginning, has been a search after knowledge (ἐπιστήμης), on the assumption that we do not know what it is.
>
> T: No, I am bearing it in mind.
>
> S: In that case, does it not seem shameless to make pronouncements about what knowing (τὸ ἐπίστασθαι) is like, when we do not know knowledge (μὴ εἰδότας ἐπιστήμην)? But in fact, Theaetetus, we have been infected, for a long time, with an impure way of carrying on our discussion. Countless times we have said 'we know' (γιγνώσκομεν), 'we do not know' (οὐ γιγνώσκομεν), 'we have knowledge' (ἐπιστάμεθα), 'we do not have knowledge' (οὐκ ἐπιστάμεθα), as if we could understand each other at all, while we are still ignorant of

[41] It may be the case that we cannot give a philosophical or explanatory definition of knowledge; e.g., it is 'said in many ways'; or by analogy; or it is a very abstract/generic notion; or a basic/primitive notion.

knowledge (ἐπιστήμην). Even at this very moment, if you do not mind, we have used 'be ignorant' (ἀγνοεῖν) and 'understand' (συνιέναι) again, as if it were proper for us to use them when we are bereft of knowledge.

T: But, Socrates, how are you going to carry on the discussion, if you keep off those words?

S: Since I am what I am, I am not going to, though I would if I were a logic-chopper (ἀντιλογικός). If a gentleman of that kind were here now, he would have professed to keep off those words, and he would tell us off emphatically for what I am saying. Well now, since we are not clever people, would you like me to overcome my scruples and say what knowing (τὸ ἐπίστασθαι) is like? Because it seems to me that it might prove helpful.

In [T1.4], we see that Socrates is aware that different words are utilised in the discussion. These words may have a meaning that, if not similar, is undoubtedly connected to what they are looking for. However, what they are looking for is unmistakably ἐπιστήμη; Socrates simply will not act as a "logic-chopper" and refrain from using the other words in question. Nevertheless, he appears to be in no muddle; it is ἐπιστήμη they are trying to define.

Finally, even if we accept that ἐπιστήμη is a special kind of knowledge, it nevertheless continues to be knowledge. If the Dream's claims are in terms of things being γνωστά or ἄγνωστα, these claims and their implications should apply to any special type of knowledge if we accept that ἐπίστασθαι is reserved for special cases of εἰδέναι and γιγνώσκειν, as Ryle

claims. So what applies to γιγνώσκειν should apply to ἐπίστασθαι, but not the other way around.[42]

Let us now turn to a different issue: "knowing the thing that is not".[43] The way Ryle sees it, *naming* and *saying* must be distinct – and therefore, a statement cannot act as a name – because something one knows-*savoir* must be true, whereas a name is not truth-apt. But why is this distinction between naming and saying/stating so important for Ryle? In his view, 'Theaetetus flies' is not something we can know-*savoir* because it is false. This seems correct, but is Ryle correct in what he deduces from it? I believe not.

Ryle may have fallen into a trap he set himself by insisting on the knowledge of truth. For Ryle, knowing a statement means knowing that the statement is true. So, of course, it would be a problem if one claimed they knew that 'Theaetetus flies'. However, there is an alternative way to understand this. One may know-*connaître Theaetetus* and *flies*, and also know-*savoir* the meaning of 'Theaetetus flies', namely *Theaetetus flies*, without knowing the truth-value of the statement. *Theaetetus flies* exists as the meaning of 'Theaetetus flies'.[44] This existence does imply truth.

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[42] I shall not attempt to fully address the matter, but this is linked to the discussion of whether compounds can have names, like elements. I believe that the answer is 'yes'. One can be acquainted with a *wagon*, and know its name, i.e. 'wagon', the same way one might know one of the elemental timbers that make it up. At the same time, the same person may not have a wagon-maker's knowledge of what a wagon is. So, we may claim that the person knows-*connaître* the wagon, but not *savoir*. However, if one knows-*savoir* the wagon, they should certainly know it *connaître*.

[43] In order to properly explore this topic, one would have to look deeper into the discussion of the second definition, and, perhaps, the *Sophist*; however, this would lead to an unnecessarily long digression. Instead, I shall address some main points that concern Ryle's view and offer my alternative.

[44] As Gaskin (2013: 861) puts it, when raising a similar point: "Being in the world is one thing; being factual is quite another."

The line of thought in the previous paragraph raises an issue. Namely, it implies that knowledge-*savoir* can be of non-facts. Consequently, one may claim that ἐπιστήμη can be of non-facts, and this does not sound correct. This is true, as long as we adhere to the link that knowledge-*savoir* is equivalent to ἐπιστήμη; but this is a link we need not hold on to. As I have tried to show, Socrates (outside the Dream) does not seem to distinguish between *savoir* and *connaître*, although, as I claim, he is aware of the difference and how the Dream employs it. Further, knowledge-*savoir* of a meaning and of its truth value are two separate things; the hypothesis that *savoir* and ἐπιστήμη are linked is not one suggested by Plato himself. It is ἐπιστήμη, not *savoir* that Plato tries to define in the *Theaetetus*. Most importantly, *savoir* is linked to the *logos*, not to ἐπιστήμη. Ryle demands that we know-*savoir* the *logos,* which acts as the compound, and this would mean that its truth value must be true.

However, even if we accept that ἐπιστήμη must be true, nowhere do we find the demand that the *logos* must be true, only that it must be *oikeios* (202a). This point is crucial for the reading I shall suggest in Chapter 3. Of course, being the *logos* of something that is "*always of what is* (or, *of what obtains*), *and infallible*" (τοῦ ὄντος ἀεί ἐστιν καὶ ἀψευδὲς, 152c5-6), it will be true; but that is a separate matter (I shall return to this phrase in Chapters 5 and 6).

So, is Ryle completely wrong? The short answer is: "I believe not." Ryle managed to touch upon a crucial point: how we go from not knowing separate things (if we accept that *connaître* is not the kind of knowledge we are after) to knowing them *jointly*. In my view, dividing knowledge

into different kinds does not solve the problem Plato tries to answer in the *Theaetetus*, and my understanding is that Ryle would agree with this view.[45]

Let me further unpack the above. It seems to me that Ryle has made an important error that does not pertain to the object-statement debate (in the way) the literature has focused on. To locate the error, we must go back to the definition: 'Knowledge is True Belief Accompanied by *Logos*'. According to what follows the (definitional) 'is', knowledge consists either of three things: truth, belief, and *logos*, or of two things: true belief and *logos* (for now, I refrain from counting 'accompaniment' as a separate part – see Chapter 5). The distinction between two or three components is not important in our current setting, as it is not controversial what truth qualifies, namely the belief. Hence, I will treat true belief as one component.

Let me now attempt to schematise the definition so that knowledge pertains to some specific X. We then have:[46]

Knowledge (X) = True Belief (X) + *Logos* (X)

It seems the question we must ask is this: is the content of the true belief identical to that of the *logos* (and we can accept that in the case the content is different, it must still concern the same object)? (In other words, are we entitled to use the same X-variable in all the above cases?) I claim that this question will ultimately, at the end of the dialogue, throw the discussion off the rails, and I shall inevitably return to it.

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[45] This has also been the way out for many philosophers, all the way up to Descartes and Russell – see Fine (p.232-234).

[46] Note that 'True Belief (X)' can be understood as 'True Belief *about* X', or 'True Belief *Of* X', depending on how one understands δόξα. My analysis applies to either reading (see also fn.48).

However, how does this connect to Ryle's claim in our present context? In Ryle's reading, the content of the true belief and of the *logos* are identical; they both refer to some (the same) fact. Therefore, X can be a statement such as 'Theaetetus sits', and to have knowledge of X, one must have the true belief that *Theaetetus sits*, and the ability to "*give*" and "*receive*", i.e. arguably to 'articulate' and to 'understand', the statement 'Theaetetus sits'. Ryle's worry, or at least what he assumed was Plato's worry (because the suggestion of the Dream did not satisfy Plato), is how we know that *Theaetetus sits* from having some acquaintance with *Theaetetus* and *sits*. In other words, how do we know that 'Theaetetus sits' is true?[47]

I claim that the problem, at present, is different: how do we know that the *logos* of X *pertains* to the true belief about X? The truth value of the *logos* is nowhere requested or mentioned, and in any case, the belief has been qualified as true by the definition – false beliefs have been ruled out. So, if we manage to secure that the *logos* is *oikeios* to the true belief, it itself (i.e. the *logos*) will be true.

Scholars who oppose a propositional reading cannot avoid the question either. Given that they believe X is an object, they have two options. One option is to claim that the content of the true belief and of the *logos* of X are the same, and it is some special articulation that defines X. This option is similar to Ryle's sole option, with the exception that X is here a (non-fact) object, not a statement. So, for example, knowledge of Theaetetus is to have a true belief that 'Theaetetus is so-and-so' (for instance, in terms of his constituents, say, 'Y and Z') accompanied by the *logos* that 'Theaetetus is so-and-so' (some kind of definition). Notice that the belief must be truth-apt

[47] Bostock's criticism of Ryle vindicates my claim that this is Ryle's view; i.e. this is why Bostock argues that Ryle's view is vulnerable to the criticism of the first meaning for *logos*.

(because it is qualified as true), so we must assume it can be articulated in a statement. In turn, the *logos* will be the same articulation. Of course, in this case, what we claim to know is different from the statement 'Theaetetus is so-and-so'; it is the object *Theaetetus* himself. This is the problem mentioned earlier; to know an object, in this case, is to know something else, namely, its definition.

The second option is to assume that the content of the true belief is different from the content of the *logos* (although both, together with knowledge, may concern the same object). For instance, knowledge of Theaetetus is a true belief about Theaetetus, say, 'Theaetetus sits', plus the *logos* of Theaetetus, say, the previously assumed definition of him, that 'Theaetetus is so-and-so'.[48]

The three aforementioned cases (one propositional and two objectual) are clearly distinct. However, they seem to share something: whatever the belief, be it the content that is articulated in any statement about X or a special statement about X, it must be a statement, for beliefs must be (able to be) articulated/stated to obtain a truth value. Let us now focus on what Ryle has missed.

It seems that Ryle has gone from the demand that knowledge must be about something true to the demand that the *logos* must be true and that it is the responsibility of the knower to justify its truth; hence, we must care about the truth value of the *logos*.[49] However, as I claim, what is

[48] One might assume a special reading of this option, that requires a special understanding of what it means to δοξάζειν an object (like that we find in Rowett (2018)). I δοξάζω (that the man if front of me is) *Theaetetus* and I accompany this δόξα with a *logos* (*oikeios* to *Theaetetus*). (This reading would interpret δόξα very much as a judgement concerning identity.)

[49] One might associate this view to the division between internalist and externalist views in epistemology. I shall not engage in such a discussion here.

requested of the knower is that the *logos pertains*/is *oikeios* to the thing, not that the knower knows their belief is true. The belief is true by definition.

To summarise, I believe that Ryle made the mistake of turning to states of affairs while searching for facts to stand for what may be known. The discussion then shifted to knowing that these states of affairs actually obtain, i.e. knowing that they are facts. However, this was never a question.

Under Ryle's interpretation, it seems that our focus should be on whether the statement 'Theaetetus sits' is true.[50] My suggestion is that the focus should be on whether the that-statement 'Theaetetus sits' corresponds to the state of affairs *Theaetetus sits* or whether the what-statement 'Theaetetus is so and so' corresponds to the object *Theaetetus*. In other words, whether what we say about something is really *oikeion* to the thing. This suggestion applies not only to the Dream discussion but runs through to the end of the dialogue.[51]

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[50] One can claim that this is one of the things that *is* on Plato's mind in the *Sophist*, which Ryle uses to support his interpretation.

[51] There is another point I disagree with, but it is not directly linked to the discussion, so I mention it here in a footnote. Ryle has made an often-overlooked concession:

> [The Dream] is not meant to be a sort of physical theory, e.g. an hypothesis about the composition of matter. It is a logician's theory, namely a theory about the composition of truths and falsehoods. (p.30)

Ryle provides strong evidence to convince us of the similarities between the Dream and Logical Atomism, yet he provides no evidence to support this claim. Assumedly, the claim is self-evident for Ryle if the Dream really is a first iteration of Logical Atomism. However, both the Dream and Logical Atomism do not dismiss the "physical world" nor ignore its connection to how we speak of it. Either via perceptibles or via sense data, both theories make claims about the world, and the Dream even suggests that these perceptibles are woven together to form compounds, and the way we speak of these compounds (how we interweave the names of the perceptibles) is linked to the way its constituents are woven. The Dream, of course, also mentions the cognitive states of belief and knowledge, and how these link to the aforementioned claims; so, it is clearly also concerned with epistemology.

Nevertheless, as I claimed, Ryle did locate a crucial problem; namely, moving to knowledge of a whole from knowledge of unknown or unknowable parts. Whether we are talking about statements and the names/words that make them up or whether we want to include (or restrict ourselves to) compound objects and their elemental constituents, the problem is the same. If a name is not a *logos*, how can a string of names be a *logos*? Likewise, if an element is not an object that can be known, how can a collection of elements be known?

Chapter 2: Amending Socrates' Dream (202d-206c)

Introduction

The passage following the Dream is commonly understood as a refutation of the Dream. Socrates expresses his reservation about the Dream's claim of asymmetry in knowledge between compounds and elements, specifically, that the first are knowable while the latter are unknowable (202d10-e1). However, as I shall try to show, after Socrates rebukes this claim, he does not necessarily refute the entire Dream. Instead, he excludes the claim in question and continues to investigate the Dream under the new premise that elements *are* knowable. We shall see that this introduces the notion of θέσις (206a7); however, as we shall see in Chapter 4, despite how promising θέσις seems in solving the (unordered) list problem (described in the previous chapter), it will not solve the central problem. That is to say, having the names of the elements, and having their θέσις, and therefore having a *structured* list, does result in a *logos* but not in such a *logos* that can salvage the definition.

Secondary literature has addressed one of the issues I mention: whether we should adhere to the claim that elements are knowable after 206c (after the so-called refutation where Socrates expresses this claim). For instance, Gill (2012) believes that we should not, whereas Cornford believes we should. As I noted in Chapter 1, the Dream is mentioned again at 206e-208b after its refutation. But most scholars see this as a way to simply reference a candidate meaning for *logos* and suggest that Socrates revisits the Dream's suggestion that *logos* is the ability to say what a thing is in terms of its elements. However, this often raises a question about the overall

structure of *Theaetetus* 201c-210d; namely, why does Socrates revisit the same meaning for *logos* after he has (supposedly) refuted it? Bostock goes so far as to speculate (but not endorse the idea) that this is a result of bad editing. That is, Plato had possibly already a thought-out ending for the *Theaetetus*; however, he later decided to address the theory described in the Dream. So, after he had written 201c (where the third definition is expounded) and 206e-210d (where the interlocutors examine the possible meanings for *logos* and conclude the dialogue), he decided to insert 201d-206c to expound and address the Dream. This view does not pay much credit to Plato's writing skills. Bostock chooses to endorse another option for why the Dream and its so-called refutation are positioned as they are. That is, Plato has already figured out the circularity problem he will expose at 209d-210b, regarding the 'true belief plus *logos*' definition. Through the Dream's so-called refutation, Plato is preparing the reader for the idea that perhaps they must accept other ways of coming to know things, ways that do not include *logos*. This view seems more consistent and probable than the bad editing assumption; however, I believe it overlooks the importance of 202d-206c, which, I take it, is more than a buttress for the argument of circularity at 209d-210b.

Fine understands the greater part of the so-called refutation not as a buttress for the circularity argument of 209d-210b and, therefore, the view that the dialogue's aporetic ending is genuine. Rather, she believes that it indicates a hidden (sub-textual) solution that points to a meaning for

logos that is not discussed in the dialogue, a meaning that actually answers the question of knowledge and, therefore, suggests that the aporia at the end of the dialogue is not genuine.[52]

Based on my interpretation of 202d-206c, the reading I shall put forward claims that the so-called refutation is the first step in Plato's effort to determine what *logos* can be. In 202d-206c, he shows that mentioning the names of the elements that make up a compound is not enough (for us to assume we have stated the *logos*). He then suggests that we must also have their order, i.e. the position (θέσις, 206a7) of each. After excluding the possibility that any ordered set of names will suffice (M1, 206d-e), he will revisit the Dream (M2, 206e-208b), this time without the claim that elements are unknowable, and with the assumption that we have the aforementioned order. Nevertheless, we shall see in Chapter 4 that even if we manage to produce some *special logos* (and this *special logos* consists not only of the elements but also their θέσις), there must be something more in our conception of knowledge.

In section 2.1, I shall look at two readings of Socrates' criticism of the Dream; a negative and a positive reading. The negative suggests that Socrates' argumentation is faulty, whereas the positive suggests that it is an *ad hominem* attack against the Dream. I shall side with the latter claim.

In section 2.2, I shall examine the first part of Socrates' argumentation (the theoretical argument), where the scholars that support a negative reading locate the bulk of Socrates'

[52] Fine believes that Plato is (sub-textually) suggesting a coherency theory for knowledge in the *Theaetetus*, where "Knowledge of x is correct belief about x with the ability to produce accounts properly relating x to other suitably interrelated objects in the same field." (p.249) So, she interprets θέσις (in the argument from experience) as an indication that the position of each element relative to the others exemplifies Plato's (hidden) solution. I shall further discuss Fine's view in Chapter 6.

erroneous claims. I shall agree with the textual evidence these scholars offer; however, in section 2.3, I shall provide evidence that Socrates is not endorsing these claims. I will argue that all the erroneous claims result from what the "*current logos*" (i.e. the Dream) suggests and that Socrates makes this explicitly clear in the text.

In Section 2.4, I shall examine the second part of Socrates' argumentation (the argument from experience), and I shall argue for the importance of the θέσις of the element(s).

In section 2.5, I shall explain the upshots of my reading in interpreting Socrates' criticism of the Dream and how we understand what follows, specifically, how we interpret the two subsequent meanings for *logos*.

Preliminaries

In the literature, a string of names is often referred to as a *list*, and this is the word I shall also use. But first, let me clarify that by *list*, I do not assume a *numbered* or *ordered list*. So, if (a list-like) compound C is made up of elements A and B, we may also say it is made up of B and A. In turn, the name of C is assumed to be 'C', and the names of A and B are 'A' and 'B', accordingly. This means that the *logos* of (a list-like) C may be either 'A B' or 'B A'.

I shall also refer to a list as a *sum* in order to closely follow Socrates' argument in the text. I use the term 'sum' instead of the commonly used 'enumeration'. 'Enumeration' may imply a bijective function between the parts we enumerate and an ordered subset of the natural numbers (which may again imply an *ordered list* – an option I want to avoid currently). By contrast, all we need to assume for a *sum* is that the commutative property holds, i.e. X Y is the

same as Y X, and this is enough to describe the problem that I shall claim Socrates shall highlight.[53]

According to what has been mentioned, and regardless of how one understands what *logos* means in the Dream, *logos* is expected (at least by Socrates, I shall argue) to be something over and above the names that comprise it (as is also the case with a compound and the elements that make it up). Nevertheless, a *logos* is also a list. To clarify, let us return to the example 'Theaetetus sits'. 'Theaetetus' is the name of *Theaetetus*, and 'sits' is the name of *sits* or (the act of) *sitting*. When we interweave the two names, we get a *logos*; however, this *logos* also qualifies as a list of two names, namely 'Theaetetus' and 'sits'. The question is, what makes 'Theaetetus sits' a unified whole? As I claimed in the previous chapter, the same would apply if we considered objects as the things we may know. The question would be: what makes the elements that make up, say, a car, a unified whole? In other words, what makes a car different from all the parts of a car lying in a pile?

In the *Sophist,* we get a basic set of rules for putting together a *logos* and how *interweaving* works. That is, we need an ὄνομα and a ῥήμα to actually say something, and not all words interweave with every other. According to Ryle, this is how the problem is solved. But I claim that the problem in the *Theaetetus* is of a different nature. Given that we have a *logos*, the question is how does this qualify as something more than a *list*, but also as something that is *oikeion* to that for which one has a true belief?

[53] Further, I choose to reserve the term 'enumeration' for the meaning for *logos* discussed in 206e-208b. As already mentioned in Chapter 1 and the Introduction of the current chapter, many scholars see no difference between the *logos* of the Dream and the *logos* of 206e-208b.

2.1 Two Readings of *Theaetetus* 202d-206c

Following the exposition of his Dream, Socrates chooses to address a "most subtle"[54] point it mentions: "namely that the elements are unknowable but the class of compounds knowable" (202d10-e1).

In 202d-206c, we find two main arguments. The first (203a-205e) is a theoretical argument that aims to counter the Dream's claim that we can know compounds but not elements. The second (206a-b) is an argument based on experience that aims to show that elements are actually knowable.

There is a broad consensus among scholars that the first argument is faulty. This is so because Socrates, they claim, takes a whole either to be identical to the parts that comprise it or to be some indivisible thing, a mereological atom that is either an element or a whole without parts. However, there is a third option Socrates does not mention: that a whole may be a unity which consists of parts but is not identical to their mere sum, and this unity is not itself an element. This option is mentioned (directly or indirectly) in other dialogues (including but not limited to *Parmenides*, *Sophist*, and *Philebus*).[55]

Scholars further agree (almost unanimously) that Plato is aware that the argument is faulty. However, there are two different interpretations as to why he employs it:

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[54] As McDowell translates "[λέγεσθαι] κομψότατα" (202d10).

[55] The most obvious passage to locate the "missing" option directly in the text is arguably *Parmenides* 157c-158b. Harte traces this reading also in the *Sophist*, *Philebus*, and *Timaeus*; however, in these cases, one might argue it is a matter of interpretation (in my view, Harte is not wrong in that one may trace the "missing" option in these dialogues).

Negative Reading [NR]: According to this reading, Plato may be guiding the reader toward a correct answer. He employs faulty premises, and at the same time, he alerts us through the voice of Theaetetus, who is hesitant to accept them. The entire process may be understood as an exercise of midwifery performed by Plato on the reader. Nevertheless, this interpretation treats the theoretical argument as faulty. Harte follows a strong version of this reading, where the second argument (that from experience) is "*similarly culpable*" (p.34) as it continues to abide by the same faulty premises. A weaker reading, such as Bostock's, suggests that the second argument is void of any new mereological claims.[56]

Positive Reading [PR]: This reading suggests that although the theoretical argument may seem faulty from a mereological point of view, it succeeds in its purpose to counter the Dream's claim that there is an asymmetry in knowledge between elements and compounds. We should understand the two available options, namely that a whole is either identical to its parts or is a mereological atom, as the only options the Dream itself allows for. Hence, Socrates argues *ad hominem* from the Dream's premises in order to demonstrate its inconsistency and refute it. Fine supports this view and further claims that the argument from experience demonstrates (or at least points to) Plato's overall answer to the question of what knowledge is.[57]

I shall argue for a modified version of [PR]. I shall claim that if we are to trace a midwife-like exercise (as [NR] suggests), this exercise is performed by Socrates directly on Theaetetus in the

[56] Bostock would not necessarily agree that an act of midwifery takes place. Nevertheless, he clearly takes the argument to be faulty.

[57] The view that Socrates is arguing *ad hominem* against the Dream is also presented by McDowell. However, McDowell offers it as a tentative explanation, whereas Fine subscribes to it. Chappell also supports this view.

text and not by Plato indirectly on the reader, via the dramatic setting. The exercise illustrates the *ad hominem* attack, which does not aim to counter the Dream entirely, but only the claim that elements are unknowable, implying that compounds and *logoi* are to be treated as mere sums. Furthermore, I shall argue against Harte that the argument from experience is not similarly culpable; rather, it is Socrates' tentative answer regarding the missing part that could potentially turn a sum into a whole. So understood, the second argument is an amendment to the Dream that takes elements to be knowable and a whole to be a unified entity that is neither identical to the sum of its parts nor is itself an element.

The advantage of the reading I suggest is that it addresses two important issues Bostock (p. 216-219) raises against Fine and [PR]; namely, that (a) Socrates seems to be voicing his own opinion in the theoretical argument, and (b) a supporter of the Dream could easily amend it to accommodate the alleged criticism of the *ad hominem* attack.

In Section 2.3, I aim to counter (a). I shall claim that Socrates does not endorse the premises that lead to the faulty mereological conclusion. By claiming that the act of midwifery is performed directly by Socrates (and not Plato as [NR] suggests), we do not have to assume that Socrates is in error, which, in turn, would require us to revert to hidden sub-textual answers as to why this is so.

In Section 2.4, I aim to counter (b). By taking the argument from experience to be an amendment to the Dream, as I suggest, we can understand Socrates not just as arguing *ad hominem*. He also amends the Dream in order to give it a fighting chance.

2.2 The Theoretical Argument

Socrates begins with the aforementioned "most subtle" point "that the elements are unknowable but the class of compounds knowable." To examine this claim, Socrates proposes that they carry out their investigation via letters and syllables.[58] He first secures Theaetetus' agreement that letters and syllables properly illustrate what was mentioned in the Dream, namely, that syllables have a *logos* while letters do not (203a3-4). He does so by using the first syllable of his name: ΣΩ.[59]

At this point, I would like to remind the reader of an important distinction I draw. Socrates' use of letters and syllables may create confusion if not followed carefully. Despite being "*paradeigmata*" of *logos*[60], in this case, letters and syllables are also to be treated as the objects of (potential) knowledge. Hence, they themselves have (or lack) a *logos*. I will try to make this distinction clear throughout by using capital Greek letters/syllables to refer to the objects, and inverted commas when referring to names and/or *logos*. So, when, say, Σ appears outside

[58] Confusion often rises from the fact that στοιχεῖα and συλλαβαὶ may mean either 'elements' and 'compounds', or, 'letters' and 'syllables'. Letters and syllables are referred to as *paradeigmata* (ὁμήρους ἔχομεν τοῦ λόγου τὰ παραδείγματα, 202e3-4). There is a question of how we are to understand *paradeigmata*; are they 'examples', 'illustrations', something else? (For more on this matter, see 1.6.) For the first argument it does not seem to matter, as it would work regardless. Harte (p.33) mentions they here play the role of "place-holders" for the part-whole relationship Socrates is describing (Bostock would agree with this view). However, it seems that the second argument treats letters and notes literally as elements.

[59] A note that is both interesting and important: Theaetetus' answer to what ΣΩ consists of is "Ὅτι σῖγμα καὶ ὦ" (203a9), where σῖγμα and ὦ are the names of Σ and Ω. The name of the letter Ω is Ω itself. This is clarified in the Cratylus: "For instance, when we speak of the letters of the alphabet, you know, we speak their names, not merely the letters themselves, except in the case of four, ε, υ, ο, ω." (393d) (Translation: Fowler) Fowler offers a footnote to further explain: "In Plato's time the names epsilon, ypsilon, omicron, and omega were not yet in vogue. The names used were εἶ, ὖ, οὖ, and ὦ."

[60] *Logos* here need not carry the technical meaning we have been discussing and looking for. However, it is a convenient literary way to bestow extra weight on the statement.

inverted commas, it is to be taken as an element, whereas when it appears within inverted commas as part of a *logos* (e.g. 'ΣΩ is Σ and Ω'), it is to be understood as the name of the element; i.e. 'Σ' is the name of Σ.

Arguably, at 203a9, Theaetetus provides a *logos* for ΣΩ that matches the Dream's requirements: 'it is Σ and Ω'. Further, although things can be said of the letters, like "*Σ is one of the unvoiced consonants, only a noise, which occurs when the tongue hisses, as it were*" (203b3-4), the interlocutors do not seem to note that this may count as *logos*, at least not the kind they are looking for.[61] Hence, they have shown that ΣΩ is knowable while each Σ and Ω separately is not; or have they: "*But have we shown that a letter is not knowable but a syllable is?*" (203c1-2) As we shall see, the answer to this question, according to Socrates, is a blatant 'no'.

Socrates begins by posing a dilemma:

> (D): *S: Well now, look here: do we say that a syllable is* (a) *both its letters, or all of them if there are more than two? Or that it is* (b) *some one kind of thing (ἰδέαν) which has come into being when they are put together?* (203c4-6)

This dilemma summarises the two options Socrates will discuss in the theoretical argument. (D-a) supposes that a whole (in this case, the syllable) is a plurality, a sum of its parts. (D-b) assumes that a whole is some unity, which, although currently left unexplained, by the end of the argument, is taken to be (a new) indivisible (ἀμέριστον, 205d2).

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[61] It appears that although Theaetetus has managed to demarcate Σ, this demarcation cannot count as a *logos*, presumably because according to the Dream these features cannot count as elements. At this point, elements seem to necessarily be constituents and not attributes (and attributes cannot count as constituents).

The First Horn

Theaetetus first opts for horn (D-a). Therefore, Socrates claims that to know ΣΩ is to know Σ and Ω, for 'ΣΩ *is* Σ and Ω'. A question here is how one understands the appearance of the verb in 'ΣΩ *is* Σ and Ω'.

On the one hand, *is* may signify identity and therefore, 'ΣΩ' and 'Σ and Ω' are identical. However, the fallacy here is that composition is not taken into account. As Harte summarises it (p.36), the fallacy is to infer, or request, knowledge of Σ and Ω separately on the grounds that we may know them "*jointly*", i.e. in a syllable. In other words, one may know what water is without having to know what hydrogen and oxygen are.

On the other hand, Bostock (p.212) suggests (what I label) a predicative reading. This reading assumes that 'ΣΩ is *like* Σ and Ω', but they are not necessarily identical. By *like*, in Bostock's predicative reading, we should understand that knowledge of the compound is based on the ability to break it down into two elements. In turn, elements are *like* the compound, so they should be able to be broken down as well. The fact that elements cannot be broken down leads the interlocutors to abandon this horn of the dilemma.

Both readings, I claim, lead to the same problem. To make the matter more transparent, consider the following example. Many languages use diphthongs. So, for instance, in German, the letter *e* in the word 'Erkenntnis' is pronounced differently than its first instance in the word 'euer' due to the letter 'u' that follows it in the latter. In the first case, the sound is an 'e' as in the English word 'get', whereas the second sound of an 'e' and 'u' together is an 'oi' as in 'point'.

One who knows how to pronounce 'e' and 'u' separately does not necessarily know how to pronounce 'eu'; likewise, one who knows how to pronounce 'eu' does not necessarily know how to pronounce 'e' and 'u' separately. The difference between the identity reading, which assumes that the letters and syllable are identical, and the predicative reading, is that the former assumes direct knowledge of the letters and of the syllable (i.e. knowledge of the elements and compound themselves – not things about them, such as them being/not being able to be broken down). In contrast, the latter assumes knowledge of their pronunciation (as per my example), or in other words, some kind of knowledge *that* they are so and so. In both cases, the problem is that of transitioning from one to the other, i.e. from letters to syllable or vice versa. The transition refers either to knowledge *of* the things in question or *about* them. The fundamental question here is that which Ryle asks (see Chapter 1): how do we start with the lack of knowledge of (or about – in the predicative reading) two separate things and end up with the knowledge of (or about) the two things taken together?[62] In the present context, the question is reversed: how can we assume that we know two things taken together but not know them when we take them separately?

I believe the identity reading better mirrors the text, as the possibility that ΣΩ is different from (i.e. not identical with) Σ and Ω seems to be the case for the opposing option (D-b) where the syllable "comes into being" from the union of the letters. The syllable in (D-b) is a new *thing*[63] which is not identical to the previous elements-components. So, overall, the question is one of identity between a compound and its elemental constituents.

[62] To clarify, by "knowledge of" I refer to knowledge of the object itself, and by "knowledge about" I refer to knowledge of some truth about the object, say, that 'it is divisible'.
[63] One may claim here that 'thing' under-translates *ἰδέαν*.

At this point, Bostock criticises Fine (and the identity reading). He argues that following a non-predicative reading leads us to adopt a principle not present in the text: "knowledge is based upon knowledge" [KBK]. In this case, knowledge of ΣΩ is based on knowledge of Σ and knowledge of Ω.[64] One may claim that Socrates introduces this premise when he mentions that one must προγιγνώσκειν (203d8) the letters in order to know the syllable. However, I take it that this need not be taken as a prerequisite or a premise but rather as a conclusion, an outcome of choosing option (D-a). In other words, I suggest that προγιγνώσκειν does not mean that Socrates demands that one must already-temporally know something(s) in order to know something else; rather, this is an epistemic or logical necessity if we assume that the letters are identical to the syllable. So, when one claims to know ΣΩ, they are claiming to know Σ and Ω separately since ΣΩ and Σ and Ω (taken together) are identical.

I shall schematically break down the argument for clarity:

> Premise: ΣΩ is identical to Σ and Ω.
>
> Hypothesis: A knows ΣΩ.
>
> Conclusion: A knows Σ and Ω.

One may immediately notice an error of substitution in an opaque context (see Burnyeat p.195). Chappell (p.220) answers this by assuming that knowledge in this example is objectual and claims that "propositional knowledge creates opaque contexts, [objectual knowledge] does

[64] Even if Fine does subscribe to KBK, I am not sure she employs/needs to employ it in this case, as Bostock claims. Fine does not claim that Socrates is endorsing this option, so he would not employ KBK to support it.

not[.]" I believe there is a simpler and safer reading of this argument. Socrates will directly challenge the premise. We do not have a case of ΣΩ = ΣΩ (X = X) but of ΣΩ = Σ and Ω (X = Y). Socrates will show that in cases of composition, we cannot assume the premise: ΣΩ is identical to Σ and Ω.[65] Furthermore, this shows why we need not assume KBK. If the premise were true, knowledge of one thing would not be based on knowledge of something else but on knowledge of itself; we would end up with the trivial claim that 'knowledge of X is based on knowledge of X'. So, Socrates would be employing KBK if he was endorsing the premise: ΣΩ is identical to Σ and Ω (Bostock believes Socrates is endorsing this premise). In the reading I shall argue for in the current chapter, Socrates is testing the premise and rejects it. Therefore, if my reading is correct, Bostock's point becomes moot.

Hence, to summarise, προγιγνώσκειν in this context means that, based on the premise, the hypothesis can stand as the conclusion (and *vice versa*). If ΣΩ and Σ and Ω are identical, we do not need the extra premise that "knowledge must be based upon knowledge". Knowledge of ΣΩ is not "based" on knowledge of Σ and Ω; it is identical to it. But this assumption is false, and the paradox Socrates highlights is that ΣΩ and Σ and Ω (the two elements taken together) cannot be identical while, at the same time, we claim that we can only know one of the two (ΣΩ and not Σ and Ω); hence, we go on to assume (D-b), that the syllable "comes into being", i.e. it was not a syllable – i.e. a unity – while the letters were apart.

[65] One may claim that this is just a(n) (re)iteration of the problem of substitution in opaque context. If it is, it is certainly a simpler version than what we find in Frege's *Über Sinn und Bedeutung*. We are not here discussing *descriptions* of the same object (as in the example of Morning Star/Evening Star, or Russell's (1905) A. Scott/author of Waverley). Rather, we are discussing about the objects themselves, and examining whether Σ Ω (separately) and ΣΩ (jointly) are identical.

The Second Horn

Consequently, Theaetetus steps back and opts for (D-b). So, according to Socrates: "a compound is one kind of thing (ἰδέα) which comes into being out of each set of elements that fit together, and that goes for letters and everything else alike." (204a1-3) The subsequent section draws the most substantial criticism from scholars.

As (D-b) suggests, a compound is one *thing* that comes into being when its parts are put together. So ΣΩ is not identical to Σ and Ω. The problem scholars raise is about the conclusion Socrates reaches, which does not allow for this new *thing* to be some unified entity that has parts; that is, he claims it is indivisible (ἰδέα ἀμέριστος, 205c2/ ἀμέριστον, 205d2).[66] Socrates reaches this conclusion based on two (strongly correlated) lines of argument.

First, Socrates makes a series of claims in his attempt to show that if a whole is not a plurality, it must be indivisible. Initially, he identifies 'all of it' (τὸ πᾶν) with 'all of them' (τὰ πάντα),[67] viz., a sum is equal to the parts that make it up. Subsequently, he identifies 'all of it' with 'the whole' (τὸ ὅλον); he does so by claiming that they are both "*that from which nothing at all is missing*" (205a4-5). Hence, 'all of it', 'all of them', and 'a whole', all refer to the same thing. Socrates' second equation, however, is an alleged predicative fallacy. To say that *a* is *F* and *b* is *F* is not to say that *a* is identical to *b*.[68]

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[66] Contrast with *Parmenides* 157c-e.

[67] Here I adopt Harte's (p.40, fn.77) rendition of τὸ πᾶν/τὰ πάντα, which she attributes to Denyer.

[68] To be clear, if Socrates identifies τὸ ὅλον with τὸ πᾶν/τὰ πάντα, he does not commit the predicative fallacy but assumes a false premise. If he starts from the predicative premisses that τὸ ὅλον is 'that from which nothing is missing' and τὸ πᾶν/τὰ πάντα is 'that from which nothing is missing' and concludes that τὸ ὅλον is the same as τὸ πᾶν/τὰ πάντα, then he commits the predicative fallacy. The view I shall

Second, and linked to the previous point, both Harte and Bostock agree that we may raise an even stronger objection. A sum *is* missing something, specifically any reference to order/structure/positioning. Hence, the claim Socrates bases his second equation on is false. Arguably, its falsity is obscured by how Socrates employs his examples throughout 204b10-d12.

[T2.1, 204b10-d12]

S: And what about this: is a sum at all different from all the things? For instance, when we say 'one, two, three, four, five, six', or 'twice three', or 'three times two', or 'four plus two', or 'three plus two plus one', are we talking about the same thing in all these cases, or something different?

T: The same thing.

S: Namely six?

T: Yes.

S: Now in each utterance we have spoken of six in all?

T: Yes.

S: And is there no sum that we speak of when we speak of all of them?

T: There must be one.

S: Namely the six?

T: Yes.

S: So in the case of anything which consists of a number of things, it is the same thing that we are referring to when we speak of the sum and when we speak of all the things?

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support is that Socrates assumes the false premise as the Dream's claim, without however endorsing it; i.e. Socrates is aware that it is a predicative fallacy (see2.3).

T: Evidently.

S: So let us speak about them in the following way. The number in an acre and the acre are the same thing, are they not?

T: Yes.

S: And similarly with the number in a mile.

T: Yes.

S: And the same goes for the number in an army and the army, and everything of that kind? Because in each case the number, in sum, is what the thing, in sum, is.

T: Yes.

Socrates begins with claims about numbers. We may use different combinations of different numbers that are equal to *six* to refer to *six*. However, in every case, the referent remains the same. This suffices, as it seems, to show that the whole is identical not only to its parts but also to their different arrangements. Obviously, scholars claim, the example is biased, for even if one accepts such a claim for numbers,[69] this claim need not hold for other *structured* wholes. Yet, from this example, Socrates generalises to other things, namely, acres, miles, and armies.[70] Now, one might accept that whether we say '1 mile' or '1760 yards', we are referring to the same distance; however, to claim that an army is merely a sum of soldiers is more controversial. For,

[69] There is a deeper question about whether we should accept that an equation such as 7+5=12 signifies more than equality of quantities; that is, if we should accept that 7+5 expresses what 12 really *is*. It is also questionable whether Socrates would accept this view. However, this matter goes beyond the main focus of what currently concerns us.

[70] I follow McDowell's modernised translations of ἀριθμὸς, πλέθρον, στάδιον, στρατόπεδον, which do not alter the meaning of the argument, or the reasons Harte and Bostock have to attack it. Further, I assume an 'army' refers to a measurement unit (in this instance), such as a 'battalion' (300 soldiers); however, as I shall claim, in the end it must be more than just a measurement unit.

while an army involves a number of soldiers, it also has a chain of command (i.e. soldiers carry different ranks), an arrangement, a strategy, etc., which the mere number of soldiers cannot capture.

One may suggest (as does Harte) that these strange claims and examples are Plato's way of alerting us that something is wrong. In the dramatic setting, he uses Socrates as an actor to convey these obscure claims that lead to a faulty argument, and opposite him, we have Theaetetus, who tries to resist them. First, when he is asked if a whole and a sum are the same or different, his initial answer is: "[…] I'll take a risk and say they are different." (204b4) Second, when asked if there is anything a part is a part of, other than a whole, he answers: "Yes, a sum." (204e13) Even Socrates points out that: "You are putting up a brave fight, Theaetetus." (205a1) One may add to the previous two points Theaetetus' response when asked if we should accept the conclusion of the argument at hand: "[…] if we are convinced by this argument" (205e8)[71], i.e. we can accept the conclusion under the condition that the argument is convincing (which most likely is not due to all its questionable premises).

In the following section, I shall attempt to show that we need not rely solely on Theaetetus in order to detect the faults of the aforementioned claims and examples. Instead, it is Socrates himself who alerts us of their shortcomings.

[71] See 2.3 on how we should understand 'argument' (λόγος) here.

2.3 Socrates' Position on the Theoretical Argument

Bostock suggests that "Socrates is giving his *own* reasons for the claim that whatever has parts just is all its parts." (p.216, emphasis by Bostock) However, I claim that this is not the case. Socrates does not endorse the argument; rather, he appears to be testing a hypothesis.

The hypothesis has been revealed to us in [T2.1]:

(a) *So in the case of anything which consists of a number of things, it is the same thing that we are referring to when we speak of the sum and when we speak of all the things?* (204d1-2)

(b) *And the same goes for the number in an army and the army, and everything of that kind? Because in each case the number, in sum, is what the thing, in sum, is.* (204d9-11)

In (a), we find the important question, and in (b) its answer. That is, we are to treat "*anything which consists of a number of things* as a *sum, because in each case the number… is what the thing… is*."

Thus understood, the claim that both the sum and the whole are "*that from which nothing at all is missing"* (205a4-5), hence, a sum and a whole are the same, is not necessarily a predicative fallacy. For, if we are simply dealing with numbers (more precisely, the numerical aspect of a thing), as the above hypothesis suggests, the claim that 2 times 3 is 6, and 3 plus 3 is six, therefore, 2 times 3 is 3 plus 3, is true. Because, in all the cases, *is* signifies identity (or, in the case of numbers, equality), not a predicative assertion. It is a fallacy if a compound can be more than a mere sum (something the narrow view of the Dream does not allow), and, as I shall

attempt to show, the subsequent argument from experience aims to highlight that this is actually the case (i.e. that a whole is not just a sum – see 2.4).

To spell out this point, let us assume, for the sake of argument, that Socrates' name is a mere sum of letters. If so, however, we may claim that Ω Κ Σ Σ Ρ Τ Η Α is a correct spelling of his name because we managed to sum up the correct letters – eight in number.

This line of thought clearly follows the *list* interpretation for the Dream's *logos*. So, we may understand the theoretical argument as an inquiry into, and a test of, the hypothesis that the *being of logos* (*λόγου οὐσίαν*, 202b5-6), i.e. 'interweaving', offers nothing more than a list, and likewise, that a plurality of elements themselves is just a heap of things that form a compound.

Let me now turn to my main argument in favour of the claim that the hypothesis (answer (b) to question (a)), namely that anything that consists of a number of things can only be a sum, is not endorsed by Socrates but is put forward to be tested and rejected.

Socrates reminds us throughout the discussion that what is being said is not his own belief, as Bostock suggests, but what is in accordance with the "current argument" or "what has been said."[72] We find evidence of this in the following instances:

[72] I should note that λόγος/λόγον, as they appear at 204b7-8 and 205c1, need not carry a loaded meaning of *argument* as in 'giving an account', etc. Rather they may simply refer to 'what has been said', 'what we have assumed', 'the *legomena/eiremena*', 'the claim', etc. Cornford here translates λόγος/λόγον as "present view/present showing."

Instance (I):

[T2.2, 203e8-9]

S: We should better look into it, and not betray a great and imposing *theory* (*λόγον*) in that cowardly way.

Here, Socrates makes it clear that what will be examined is what was mentioned earlier, i.e. the Dream. He will remind us of this in the following instances (II and III).

Instance (II):

[T2.3, 204b7-11]

S: Well now, according to the *current argument* (*λόγος*),[73] a whole would be different from a sum?

T: Yes.

S: And what about this: is a sum at all different from all the things? For instance… [the subsequent passage is [T2.1]]

Arguably, an affirmative response to the initial question in [T2.3] could allow for a whole to not be identical to its parts. However, it is not Socrates himself who refrains from answering positively. He is bound, so to speak, by the "*current argument"* (204b7-8). Thus understood,

[73] In this case, as also in the following passage [T2.4], although the Greek reads: "ὡς ὁ νῦν λόγος" (204b7-8) and "κατὰ τὸν νῦν λόγον" (205c1), respectively, McDowell translates: "according to what you've just said" and "according to what you're saying now", respectively. At these points, McDowell's translation is misleading as we should not necessarily infer that Socrates is referring to (setting the blame on) Theaetetus. However, more importantly, it obscures Socrates' inquisitive tone toward the argument itself. Cornford's translation (see previous fn.) seems more accurate in this case.
Further, one may treat λόγος as referring directly to the *logos* of the Dream (i.e. the meaning for *logos* the Dream suggests), and which is also the one we are currently investigating. However, this reading might be too strong, and although it would greatly support the position I advocate for, I do not assume it.

Socrates' following phrase, "And what about this" (followed in the Greek text by a question mark), may be seen as an objection to the correct view (that a whole is not the same as a sum) raised by a proponent of the "current argument", not necessarily by Socrates himself.

Instance (III):

> [T2.4, 205b8-c3]
>
> S: But if it is not the elements that are parts of a compound, can you tell us any other things which are parts of a compound, but not elements of it?
>
> T: Certainly not. If I conceded that it had any parts, Socrates, it would surely be absurd to leave its elements on one side and resort to something else.
>
> S: So according to the *current argument* (*λόγον*), Theaetetus, a compound would be some absolutely single kind of thing, not divisible into parts.
>
> T: Apparently.

Here, Socrates again claims that it is the "current argument" (205c1) that leads us to the conclusion that "a compound would be some absolutely single kind of thing, not divisible into parts."

One may object that the "current argument" makes use of the examples that refer solely to number(s) (without any mention of order/structure/positioning); therefore, the "current argument" is based on the examples and not the examples on the argument. However, the first time Socrates refers to the "current argument" is before the examples, and the examples (or

rather the case that the examples aim to illustrate) are offered *according* (ὡς, 204b7) to it. Therefore, this objection does not hold.

We may further assume that this is the "argument" that Theaetetus referred to at 205e8 (εἴπερ τῷ λόγῳ πειθόμεθα) (which, as mentioned in 2.2, he seemed hesitant to accept).[74]

In addition to the above, Socrates makes a very odd choice of words at 204a2:

> [T2.5, 204a1-3]
>
> Well then, let us suppose it is as we are saying now: a compound is one kind of thing which comes into being out of each set of elements that *fit together*, and that goes for letters and everything else alike.

Throughout the theoretical argument, the interlocutors refer to a compound as a *sullaben* (συλλαβὴν). This term is neutral regarding the conception of a compound deployed in the present context. *Sun* and *labein* suggest we *take* the parts (the elements in this case) *together*. To assume that elements *fit together* (συναρμοττόντων, 204a2) requires something additional. We are certainly not *fitting together* the letters when we spell Socrates' name as Ω K Σ Σ P T H A (for one thing, so many consecutive consonants certainly do not *fit together*). *Sun* and *harmozein* seem more appropriate to describe the *fitting together* of stones or bricks that make up a wall rather

[74] The Greek exhibits a continuing pattern: Socrates at 204b7-8/ 205c1 (λόγος/λόγον) and Theaetetus at 205e8 (τῷ λόγῳ).

than a *pile* of stones or bricks. Presumably, Socrates shows awareness that something is missing and will soon let us know what that is.[75]

Still, one may side with Bostock and Harte and assume that the evidence presented so far requires a reading that is too charitable and perhaps too nuanced. However, it was on Socrates' failure to make any reference to order/structure/position on which Bostock and Harte based their claim that Socrates speaks in *propria persona* (i.e. is voicing his own belief). Yet, *position* (θέσις, 206a7) is what Socrates shall introduce in the argument from experience. I shall discuss this point in the following section.

2.4 The Argument from Experience

The theoretical argument is allegedly a bad one, not only because of its faulty mereological claims but also because, due to these faulty claims, it does not meet its purpose, which is to counter the Dream.

However, we need not assume that Socrates intends to refute the Dream entirely. So far, he has expressed his discontent and argued against the single "subtle" point, namely the asymmetry in knowability between elements and compounds. In my view, he will discard the Dream later on: "Then our wealth was apparently only a Dream, when we thought we had the truest possible

[75] On the meaning of the verb *harmozein*, see also Hussey (2010: 43-44). To summarise the point, I quote from Hussey: "The basic notion [of the verb *harmozein*] seems to be that of the mutual adjustment of two or more different components to form a structure which is more than the mere sum of its parts."

account[76] of knowledge." (208b11-12) We may then assume that the theoretical argument has only rejected the Dream's claim of asymmetry in knowledge between elements and compounds.

Now, as Bostock claims (p.216-7), a supporter of the Dream could amend it in order to allow for compounds and *logos* to be something over and above the mere sums of their constituents. The amendment, as Bostock suggests, should include the addition of some kind of reference to the order/structure/positioning of the parts that make up a whole. I claim that this is what Socrates does (in order to give the Dream a fighting chance); however, to be able to support this new position, he must alter one premise, namely the unknowability of elements.

Socrates continues from the "*subtle*" point he raised earlier. Now, he will not only attack the Dream's claim that there is an asymmetry in knowledge but also claim that elements are knowable.

> [T2.6, 205e6-206a3]
>
> S: So if anyone says that a compound is knowable and expressible in a *logos*, and an element the opposite, let us not accept it.
>
> T: No, not if we are convinced by this argument.
>
> S: Moreover, would you not be more inclined to accept a statement of the opposite position, because of what you noticed in yourself, in the course of your learning of your letters?

[76] I here refrain from transliterating λόγος as *logos*, as I do not want to necessarily attribute the same technically-loaded meaning the word carries throughout the overall discussion. It suffices to mention here that what we are seeking is an *account*, or a *definition*, of knowledge (ἐπιστήμη).

It is debatable if the *opposite* position is to accept that elements are simply knowable or that they also have a *logos*.[77] From the conclusion of the argument at 205b6-11, I shall assume that Socrates refers solely to the former claim.

The argument goes as follows:

> [T2.7, 206a5-b12]
>
> S: …when you were learning, you spent your time doing nothing but trying to tell the letters apart, each one just by itself, both when it was a matter of seeing them and when it was a matter of hearing them, in order that you would not be confused by the position (θέσις) of those [things] spoken or written.
>
> T: Yes, that is quite true.
>
> S: And at the music teacher's, to have learnt perfectly was nothing but being able to follow each note and say which sort of string it belonged to; and everyone would agree that notes are the elements of music?
>
> T: Yes.
>
> S: So if we may argue from the elements and compounds that we are familiar with ourselves to the rest, we will say that the class of elements admits of knowledge that is far clearer, and more important for the perfect grasp of every branch of learning, than the compound; and if anyone says that it is in the nature of a compound to be knowable and of an element to be unknowable, we will take him to be making a joke, whether on purpose or not.
>
> T: Definitely.

[77] See also Fine (who supports the view that elements do have a *logos*).

According to [T2.7], elements are knowable and actually offer a *clearer* (ἐναργεστέραν, 206b7) and more *important* (κυριωτέραν, 206b8) knowledge than compounds.[78]

According to our experience while learning letters and music/guitar, in order to have reached the state of having learned (μεμαθηκέναι, 206a10), one must not get confused by the *position* (θέσις, 206a7) of each letter, spoken (λεγομένων, 206a7-8) or written (γραφομένων, 206a8). Likewise, for notes, the goal was to be able to follow (ἐπακολουθεῖν, 206b1) each note on each string.[79] The latter, that is, the ability to follow a note on a string – i.e., to match a note to its corresponding string implies a specific sequence: notes are not positioned randomly in a piece of music or on a string. It also implies a skill on behalf of the (aspiring) musician. It is not enough to claim that the introduction to Beethoven's 5th Symphony is a collection of notes: G, Eflat, F, and D, eight in total (three Gs, one Eflat, three Fs, and one D). One must specify (perhaps also including note timing) that it is three Gs, followed by an Eflat, followed by three Fs, followed by a D. (Arguably, by knowing which string each note belongs to, we also get the specific pitch/octave and not some other.) The same applies, of course, in the case of letters. Our problem thus far was that having the necessary letters to write Socrates' name (or its first

[78] Harte claims that by saying that elements offer a clearer and more important knowledge than compounds, Socrates brings up a new asymmetry between them; therefore, the conclusions of the two arguments are mutually exclusive (first conclusion: elements and compounds are equally knowable, second conclusion: elements are more knowable than compounds). I believe this reading is too strong. I take it that the first conclusion is that either both elements and compounds are knowable, or they are both unknowable. The second tells us that elements are knowable; hence, from the two we may assume that both are knowable. (Even if elements are more knowable (in some sense) than the compounds, this does not change the fact that both elements and compounds are taken to be knowable.)

[79] Clearly, θέσις is mentioned in referenced to elements, not as the structure of the compound. This is why Harte does not make much of it (see below) and why one might think that perhaps I bestow too much importance on it. I shall soon argue why we cannot ignore it.

syllable) was not enough. We also needed to know how to place them; we needed to know their *position* (θέσις).[80]

At this point, it is unclear what the connection is between knowing an element and not being confused by its position within a whole; however, it seems that these two must go together. The knower, one who has completed learning, is not confused by the element's position.

What is important in the context of the current discussion is that scholars in favour of [NR] claim that order/structure/position(ing) is exactly what was missing all along. Nevertheless, they do not seem to attribute any significance to the mentioning of θέσις here. Why so?

Despite following different readings, Bostock ([NR]) and Fine ([PR]) agree that the argument from experience points to the end of the dialogue. Specifically, they claim that Socrates is hinting at the possibility that there may be other things which may accompany a true belief in order to account for knowledge besides *logos* (Bostock) or that there may be other *logoi* that could fit the current definition of knowledge, which are not discussed in the dialogue (Fine). However, the conclusions they draw are opposite. Bostock believes that this strengthens the view that the aporia at the end of the dialogue is genuine, whereas Fine suggests a suitable, in her view, *logos*. Overall, it suffices to mention that many scholars take the argument from experience to be void of any new mereological claims.

[80] Socrates apparently makes an even stronger claim: to know the position of an element, or to be able to follow it in a sequence, is to know the element itself. For instance, to know that the *first* letter in Σ Ω is a Σ, is to know Σ. For now, it suffices to say that the relation does not seem to be bi-directional. That is, knowing where to place Σ, say in this case before Ω, means that one knows Σ. However, knowing Σ does not imply that one knows every instance (syllable or word) where it may be placed. (See also 6.3.)

Harte's reading[81] suggests that θέσις is mentioned in correlation with the elements and used as an argument to show that we must know elements. It does not indicate a shift from Socrates' earlier alleged endorsement (albeit provocatively placed by Plato and intended to make us think for the answer ourselves) of the view that a whole is identical to the sum of its parts.

One cannot deny that the text suggests that Socrates' chief concern here is to show that elements are knowable and that his claims do not make direct reference to compounds. However, this is compatible with the point that Socrates, by putting forward this view, claims that there is more to a whole than being a mere sum and that wholes are not identical to (the sum of) their parts.

We cannot ignore the role θέσις plays in the entire argument. Let us assume, for the sake of argument, that we still adhere to the view that a whole is identical to its parts. Now, these parts carry extra baggage when they are part of a whole, namely, their position. Take the element-letter A; for it to have a θέσις as part of a whole means it functions as something more than a simple letter. If it appears at the beginning of a word as a prefix, it may indicate privation (for instance ἀ-μέριστον), whereas, at the end of a word as a suffix, it may indicate gender or singular/plural form in a noun or adjective (μεριστ-ά). To offer another example, assume A at the beginning of a word with two different roles: one as privative (as in the earlier example of ἀ-μέριστον), another as collective (as in ἀ-δελφός).[82] Here, apart from position, it also invokes the structural relations with other elements (or an entire compound). These ideas cannot be reconciled with the claim that a whole and a sum are the same (i.e. "*that from which nothing at all is missing"*). Therefore, although Harte is correct in noting that Socrates' claim concerns

[81] (p.147-fn.244) - Harte claims to follow Burnyeat's (1990) view and personal communications with him.
[82] One might assume that here we are moving from letters/phonemes to semantic units.

elements, the implications of this claim demonstrate that he does not endorse the faulty mereological claims mentioned in the theoretical argument.

Likewise, we may support corresponding implications for non-grammatical objects: a mere sum or heap of elements does not necessarily constitute a compound. What was earlier an identity statement ('all of them' = "*that from which nothing at all is missing*" = the whole) has now truly turned into a predicative fallacy, but one the Dream committed – not Socrates.

The fact then that Socrates mentions *position* in the argument from experience makes it difficult to assume that (as Harte claims) the readers are left lingering on a faulty argument and stranded, so to speak, in the *Theaetetus*, in order to figure the answer for themselves. More importantly, it strengthens my claim in Section 2.3 that Socrates is aware that something is missing, namely *position*. It was the missing order/structure/positioning that prevented us from realising that a whole is different from a sum.

2.5 What Follows a Positive Reading

According to the reading I propose, in the two horns of the theoretical argument, Socrates examines the possibility of a compound being a mere sum of elements and of being something new that comes into existence that does not have parts. The Dream does not provide evidence for any other possibility, i.e. for a compound to arise as a unity out of the elements that make it up but still have these elements as parts. This is so because the Dream does not mention any order or structure of the elements when they are part of a compound, and despite its talk of weaving and interweaving, it does not mention anything about how this might be achieved.

In the argument from experience, Socrates then goes ahead to amend the Dream and alludes to the fact that another component must be considered, namely the position of each element that is part of a compound.

Arguably, there appears to be a relation between knowing an element and knowing its position within a whole (compound). So, assuming that a car consists of five elements and their structure (a body that sits on four wheels), to know what a wheel is, is to know where a wheel fits within the compound-car. And now, it becomes evident that the *logos* of the car involves not only its constituent elements but also their position.

Now, bring back to mind one of the questions addressed in Chapter 1: is knowledge here objectual or propositional? Obviously, the previous example with the car illustrates how 202d-206c addresses the objectual reading, but the same applies to the propositional reading. Having the three elements, *Brutus*, *killed*, and *Caesar*, it should now be clear that the relation between these elements matters as much as the elements themselves. If what we claim to know is that *Brutus killed Caesar*, we cannot say that 'Caesar killed Brutus'. But now, having clarified that we need to consider the order of the elements, it seems like a loose demand indeed, what the Dream's Appendix tells us; assuming I have the true belief *Brutus killed Caesar*, can the ability to (properly) articulate this belief demonstrate knowledge? Despite this ability not being trivial, it still is not enough, and Plato, as one would expect if my claims hold, proceeds to make a note of this at 206d-e (see following Chapter).

Chapter 3: The 1st Meaning for *Logos* (206d-e)

Introduction

In this Chapter, I shall discuss 206d-e, where Socrates and Theaetetus examine the first of three meanings for *logos* [M1]: "*making one's thought plain by means of speech, with verbs and names*." All three meanings are rejected, but the discussion and refutation of the present option are quite short, and most secondary literature, scholarly debate or commentaries, are equally short. The common understanding aligns with the text: this option cannot separate true belief from knowledge. This is the problem with the following meaning for *logos*, too (206e-208b); however, in the current case, scholars consider this problem self-evident and do not have much to say about it. As we saw in 1.5, M1 plays an important role in Bostock's argumentation (p.207-8), where he utilises this section to argue against a propositional reading of the Dream.

The current passage makes it more plausible that knowledge must involve knowing an object. However, the pivotal shift that suggests (albeit not definitively) that knowledge is objectual takes place from this point onwards and not earlier. I shall claim that the interlocutors, having left the original version of the Dream behind, clarify that the content of the true belief and of the *logos* cannot be the same (although it is about the same object) and having separated the true belief from the *logos*, it becomes evident that the latter must be some *special* proposition; we can assume, one that explains the what-it-is of the object for which we have a (true) belief. In other words, because M1 would have us assume that the *logos* is the expression of the true belief in words, and it is made clear that this cannot be knowledge, propositions *tout court* (i.e. those that

simply express one's true belief) cannot be what we know. So, objectual knowledge is more likely the case after this point, and although *logos* may still be a proposition, it must be special in that it expresses the what-it-is of an object. Nevertheless, the passage does not definitively conclude the issue of what exactly it is we (assumedly) know (i.e. the object itself, its *logos*, or even the true belief about it, given that now the content of the *logos* is different from the content of the true belief).

3.1 A Pivotal Move

Socrates finalises the previous discussion with the claim that "other proofs of that point might well come to light" (206c1-2), i.e. of the point that elements are knowable. His subsequent step is to introduce the next stage of the inquiry; that is, given that (a) we are still investigating the definition: knowledge is true belief accompanied by *logos*, and (b) knowledge of elements is possible (although it is unclear if they possess a *logos*) and linked to the ability to discern their θέσις within a compound, what then is *logos*?

[T3.1, 206d1-6]

> S: […] making one's thought plain by means of speech, with verbs (ῥημάτων) and names (ὀνομάτων): reflecting it in what flows through one's mouth, as if in a mirror or water. Or do you not think that sort of thing is a *logos*?
>
> T: No, I do. At any rate, we do say that someone who does that is giving a *logos* of something.

According to [T3.1], the first candidate meaning for *logos* is "*making one's thought plain by means of speech, with verbs and names*." This candidate is swiftly dismissed because it cannot separate true belief from knowledge:

> [T3.2, 206d7-e2]
>
> S: […] that is something which anyone can do more or less quickly—I mean, indicating what he thinks about something—if he is not deaf or dumb from birth. On those lines, all those who have some correct belief will turn out to have it with a *logos*, and there will no longer be any room for correct belief to occur apart from knowledge.

The dismissal is relatively straightforward and brief. If *logos* is simply the expression of one's thought, then any true belief would count as knowledge. The scholarly commentary on this part of the dialogue (206d1-e3) is usually as brief as the passage itself, and it consists of two points. First, we have the direct and obvious conclusion we find in the text, i.e. that (*mutatis mutandis*) the articulation of one's (true) belief cannot count as knowledge because then every true belief would count as knowledge, as long as the possessor of the belief has the ability to speak. Second, this passage often serves as an argument against a propositional reading of the Dream, i.e. the view that *logos* means 'statement' (unqualifiedly); it does not, and Socrates tells us so in a direct way. As I claim at 1.6, the fact that Socrates needs to make this clarification, four Stephanus pages after the Dream, should indicate that until this point, the propositional reading was still a possibility.

But let us now further look at the language used in the current passage. Here, one says something "μετὰ ῥημάτων τε καὶ ὀνομάτων", not just ὀνόματα, which was the case in the

Dream. In 1.4 I argued against the idea the ὀνόματα and ῥήματα might be used here as hendiadys. I believe that Plato here is stating the standard view (or at least his own view) of how one speaks, relieved of the peculiar claims of the Dream that would have us treat ὀνόματα and ῥήματα as words that feature in a statement without discernible roles.

Further clarification about how these ὀνόματα and ῥήματα function and what their role in a statement is is offered in the *Sophist*. At present, Plato's primary concern is not how to construct a true or false statement or how the unity of either is achieved. Through the Dream's amendment (according to my reading in Chapter 2), he sided with the view that a proposition (and a statement), like any compound, is a unified whole that consists of parts. One of the questions in Chapter 1 was whether what secures this unity was the interweaving alone (as in the case of Logical Atomism) or the different words, i.e. the ὀνόματα and ῥήματα (or both, or perhaps interweaving is the result of putting together ὀνόματα and ῥήματα). This question is not answered in the *Theaetetus,* and we have no further mentioning of weaving or interweaving until we reach the *Sophist*. Nevertheless, the knowability of elements and the unity of the compound have been secured (or at least assumed), and that is enough to continue the discussion.

So, assuming now that *logos* is some sort of statement constructed according to common understanding and not the peculiar claims of the Dream, what does the current passage tell us? Recall the discussion in 1.8 and the analysis of the definition:

Knowledge (X) = True Belief (X) + Logos (X)

The current passage clarifies that the content of the true belief and of the *logos* cannot be the same (and that which we claim to know). Therefore, Ryle's, as well as any propositional reading which claims that the content of knowledge, the true belief, and the *logos*, are the same, are no longer candidates.

Having drawn the above distinction, questions that were previously left unanswered will need to be addressed, and as I shall claim, they inevitably show up before the end of the dialogue. Before I spell out these questions, let me first illustrate what option has been dismissed and what options we are left with.

What is now dismissed, and what was (in part) Ryle's interpretation, is that, suppose I have the true belief that *Theaetetus sits*. The *logos* we would be looking for would be 'Theaetetus sits', and what I would claim I have knowledge of is (the fact) that *Theaetetus sits*. What the current passage tells us is that, assuming I have the true belief *Theaetetus sits*, my ability to articulate this (correctly now that order[83] is taken into account) is not sufficient to claim that I have knowledge in addition to true belief. The problem Ryle believes Plato is trying to highlight (let me repeat the clarification: Ryle does not claim that Plato endorses this idea) and was demonstrated in more complex cases where we have non-symmetrical predicates, like in *Brutus killed Caesar*, is no longer a problem; it was left behind with the introduction of θέσις. We now suppose that we do also have the information "who killed who".[84]

[83] In this example order does not really matter, apart for the sake of grammatical correctness; the point is that I can now properly articulate any true belief I might have, even those that feature non-symmetrical predicates.

[84] Even if one is not yet convinced of the importance (or my reading) of θέσις (further evidence shall be presented in the following chapter), my argument here should remain valid. The point here is not that the

In Ryle's view, the other problem was knowing that or why *Theaetetus sits* or *Brutus killed Caesar* is true. As I claimed in 1.8, we find no trace of this demand in the *Theaetetus*, and in fact, we should assume that the beliefs we are discussing are true to begin with. Our focus should be on the connection between the belief and the *logos*.

So, the current passage performs the following two steps. First, it assumes that we do have a belief that can be articulated in an *oikeios logos*, i.e. we have the true belief that *Brutus killed Caesar*, and we can articulate the *oikeios logos* 'Brutus killed Caesar' (and not 'Caesar killed Brutus'). This was the demand that had to be met; the demand was not that the *logos* is true (as is Ryle's view). Truth is arbitrated by the definition and applies to the belief; if the *logos* is *oikeios* to the belief – i.e. it is a proper articulation/expression of the belief – it will also be true. But now that we have assumed we can satisfy this demand, how does this secure the superior cognitive state of knowledge (as opposed to belief)? It obviously does not. Finding an *oikeios logos* for that-statements is not that hard after dropping the Dream's peculiar claims and the introduction of θέσις. In fact, one can come up with many *oikeioi logoi* (e.g. 'Brutus murdered Caesar' or 'Caesar was killed by Brutus'); the demand that the *logos* cannot just be *oikeios* but *idios* shall rise under the discussion of the third meaning for *logos* (see Chapter 5).

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introduction of θέσις solved the problem of how to construct proper statements; the ability to properly construct statements was not challenged. The introduction of θέσις clarified why or how proper statements are constructed and shall play a role in the discussion that follows (for the second meaning for *logos*). At this point, the important issue is the correspondence between what the *logos* expresses, the content of the (true) belief, and what it is we know. The truth of the *logos*, and by extension the correct θέσις of the words that make it up, are assumed because we assume that the *logos* really is the expression of the *true* belief (this is not questioned).

The above implies the important second step performed here. Having separated the content of the true belief and the *logos*, one asks: what then is it that we claim to know? The content of the belief, of the *logos*, something else? Take the previous example. Suppose I have the true belief that *Theaetetus sits*, and it has now become clear that 'Theaetetus sits' is not the *logos* we are looking for; the *logos* must be a special statement about the object for which I have a belief, namely, Theaetetus. Note, however, that the object (which itself is a prime candidate for what it is we know), whose name features both in the true belief and in the *logos*, is the same, but the content of the true belief and of the *logos* is different. For instance, true belief about Theaetetus: that he sits; *logos* about Theaetetus: what/who he is. The discussion that unfolds in the remainder of the dialogue addresses these matters (amongst others). In the second meaning for *logos*, we see that the content of the true belief is demonstrated as a break-down of a word into syllables, whereas the content of the *logos* would be a break-down all the way down to the letters. In any case, it is evident that knowledge concerns the word itself. In the third (final) meaning for *logos*, although knowledge is of the object the content of the *logos* is about (as we may assume is the case also in the second meaning), we end up having to assume knowledge of the content of the *logos* which is different from the object we claim to know. That is, knowledge of the Sun implies I have a true belief *about* the Sun accompanied by a *logos*, and the *logos* is a special that-statement which explains how the Sun differs from every other object. We shall see that we there face other challenges.[85]

[85] A short note moving forward. It seems that an important issue is the latching on, so to speak, of the *logos* to the object it is about. A *logos*, we shall see, has two ways in which it does not latch; either it is a *logos* of something else, or it latches onto more things than we would want. The first case is demonstrated in the discussion of M2; 'T-E' is not the logos of ΘE. The latter case is demonstrated in the discussion of

3.2 Connecting the Dots

At this point, it is helpful to recapitulate, starting from the beginning.

Following the second definition of knowledge (i.e. knowledge is true belief), *logos* was added to true belief in order to narrow down the scope of what exactly it is we know or can know. The Dream introduced several claims, one of which (a subtle one) caught Socrates' attention, namely, the asymmetry in knowledge between elements and compounds. In arguing against the unknowability of elements, Socrates claims that knowing the position of an element within/as part of a compound is connected to knowing the element. Since the names of the elements are interwoven in the *logos* as (ὥσπερ, 202b3) the elements are woven to form the compound, the position of the names-words within the *logos* matters too.

However, now that the previous point has been settled, i.e., to form the *logos* we need not only the names but also their order, Socrates needs to make a necessary clarification. Just because we can form a *logos*, one that corresponds to the true belief, this does not mean that just any *logos* can get the job done. There must be something special about the *logos*; nevertheless, it must still be about the object for which we have the (true) belief, and it is not an articulation of the belief itself.

M3; the articulation "a human with prominent eyes and a snub nose" can be a *logos* of both Socrates and Theaetetus (in this case, we cannot say that the *logos* is false, rather it is just not precise enough). So, assuming we have found an *oikeios logos* for the object of our belief, when we reach M3, we shall see that *oikeios* is not good enough – it must be *idios* (i.e. it must not belong to anything else). Yet, as Socrates' final argument (in the dialogue) shall demonstrate, that is not the greatest of our worries (our main worry, it shall be argued, is the cognitive connection of the knower to the *logos*).

As was the assumption in the Dream, the ability to mention all the elements that make up a compound may not have been so bad a candidate. Perhaps now that the Dream has been amended and Socrates introduced the order of the elements (and this inevitably introduces the structure of the compound), it is worth revisiting this option. This is what Socrates will do with the subsequent meaning for *logos*.

Finally, to support the view that objects/things are what we are enquiring about hereafter, notice what M2 and M3 are answers to:

> M2: …τὸ ἐρωτηθέντα τί ἕκαστον δυνατὸν εἶναι τὴν ἀπόκρισιν… (206e6-7)

> M3: …τὸ ἔχειν τι σημεῖον εἰπεῖν ᾧ τῶν ἁπάντων διαφέρει τὸ ἐρωτηθέν (208c7-8)

In these cases, what one is asked to answer about (τὸ ἐρωτηθέν) clearly refers to an object. Even if one chooses to treat propositions as objects, as do I, the discussion up to this point has shown that finding *logoi* for proposition-objects is trivial and does not amount to knowledge but belief.[86]

[86] Nevertheless, even if we assume that knowledge is more likely to concern objects from now on, we should not exclude the option that the content of knowledge may still be a proposition about the object in question.

Chapter 4: The 2nd Meaning for *Logos* (206e-208b)

Introduction

Many scholars treat this section of the dialogue as a discussion that revisits the Dream. Hence, they also draw evidence from this section for their arguments and claims regarding the Dream. As I have noted repeatedly since Chapter 1, I believe this leads to several misconceptions.

If my argumentation is correct, this is indeed part of a larger discussion that started with the Dream. Nevertheless, much has changed since. The Dream has been amended; thus, the elements are now knowable, and their position plays a role we must consider in forming a compound, likewise for the names of these elements when they feature in a *logos*. In addition, the discussion on the first meaning for *logos* has made it clear that the contents of the true belief and of the *logos* must be different.

Therefore, the discussion of the current meaning for *logos* does not only add to the overall discussion of the definition of knowledge and the *logos* of the Dream; it also allows for the discussion to move forward and for Socrates to consider a different approach in the third meaning for *logos*. We shall see that looking at an object internally (its constituents and their positioning) in isolation allows for parrot speech (i.e. simply spouting out a sequence of words one might have learned by heart or by rote) to count as *logos* and therefore assumes we have

knowledge;[87] this cannot be right. Hence, Socrates' next step, in the final meaning for *logos*, shall be to look at how the object differs from other objects outside of it.

In section 4.1, I shall examine the two examples of *logoi* Socrates offers, and I shall claim that these vindicate the reading I have so far suggested; in this case, we shall see that the content of the true belief is different from that of the *logos* (despite both being about the same object).

In section 4.2, I shall argue for the distinction I drew in Chapter 2 and bolster it in the current chapter: the difference between *sum* and *enumeration*, and the claim that the latter applies to the current meaning for *logos*.

In section 4.3, I shall examine the types of mistakes the interlocutors agree one makes when lacking knowledge. I shall claim that these types of mistakes apply both to object-types and object-tokens.

In section 4.4., I shall examine the spelling example. Drawing on what is mentioned in 4.3, I shall support the view that the point of the example is not that the correct spelling of the name ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ was achieved by chance.

Assuming that chance is not the case, a more substantive explanation is required as to why the correct spelling of ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ cannot count as the *logos* we are looking for. In section 4.5, I shall support the view that Socrates alludes to stricter demands, what some scholars refer to as some kind of understanding or an ability to classify the object of knowledge within a theory or a body of knowledge. I shall draw an initial distinction (one I shall return to in Chapter 6)

[87] I assume the argument of parrot speech applies also to the final (as well as any) meaning for *logos*. It is first raised under the discussion for the current meaning.

between ἐπιστήμη and ἐπιστήμων, and I shall claim that the focus lies on the ἐπιστήμων knowing an, or a part of an, ἐπιστήμη. Hence, the reason the current meaning for *logos* is rejected is because it does not secure a cognitive relation between the ἐπιστήμων and the ἐπιστήμη. In other words, the current meaning allows for parrot speech to count as *logos*, and, therefore, knowledge (when applied to TBL). The ability to enumerate (the parts of an object) appears to be a necessary but not sufficient condition for knowledge.

In section 4.6, I draw some conclusions that support the view that the discussion is progressing in a coherent manner; Socrates has shown that *logos* cannot be something said of an object in isolation in terms of its constituents. Therefore, he shall change the mode of investigation to viewing the object externally and in relation to other objects in the following meaning for *logos*.

4.1 Introducing the Second Meaning for *Logos*

Socrates wastes no time and swiftly introduces a new meaning for *logos* that might fit the definition of 'True Belief accompanied by Logos'. He offers two examples of *logoi*, and clarifies that only one of the two fits the meaning we wish to examine. We shall begin by looking at two passages; in the first ([T4.1]), Socrates introduces the new meaning, and in the second ([T4.2]), he offers the two examples of *logoi* and clarifies.

> [T4.1, 206e6-a1]
>
> S: Perhaps he did not mean that [i.e that *logos* means "making one's thought plain by means of speech, with rhemata and onomata: reflecting it in what flows through one's mouth, as if in a

mirror or water" (206d1-4)]; perhaps what he meant was being able, when one is asked what anything is, to provide the questioner with an answer through its elements.

According to [T4.1], the new candidate meaning for *logos* is [M2]: "*being able, when one is asked what anything is, to provide the questioner with an answer through its elements*." Many scholars believe that this is a reiteration of the Dream's *logos*. However, in the subsequent section, I shall argue that this is not a simple reiteration of the Dream. Nevertheless, it is doubtlessly connected to the Dream, as Socrates' last sentence and Theaetetus' agreement in the following passage ([T4.2]) can confirm. Additional confirmation that this meaning for *logos* is connected to the Dream is offered at 208b11-12: "Then our wealth was apparently only a dream, when we thought we had the truest possible account of knowledge."[88]

In addition to the second suggestion of what *logos* can mean, Socrates offers clarification, a counter-example of what the *logos* they are examining is not, and an example of what it is:

[T4.2, 207a3-b7]

S: Well, Hesiod, for example, says, about a wagon, 'A hundred are a wagon's timbers'. Now I would not be able say them, and I do not suppose you would either. But if we were asked what a wagon is, we would be quite content if we could say 'Wheels, axle, body, rails, yoke'.

T: Certainly.

S: Our man, though, might well think us absurd, just as if we had been asked about your name and answered by syllables: we would be correct in believing and saying what we did, but we

[88] One might choose to interpret this phrase as no more than an expression (that indicates that they did not find a suitable *logos*); the mentioning of the word 'dream' need not be referring to Socrates' Dream. However, this seems highly unlikely, especially due to the similarities the two *logoi* have.

would be absurd if we thought that we were like grammarians, and that we had and were stating the *logos* of Theaetetus' name in a grammarian's manner. The fact is that it is impossible, he would think, to give a *logos* of anything in a knowledgeable way until, as well as one's true belief, one can go through each thing element by element. That is something that was actually said earlier in our discussion.

T: Yes, it was.

In [T4.2], we have two examples of *logoi*, only one of which fits the meaning currently examined. The first acts as a counter-example of what the *logos* we shall examine is not. Nevertheless, it is still a type of *logos*; one that indicates true belief. This *logos* is an answer/statement in terms of constituents that are themselves compounds. These sub-compounds are things like the body of a wagon or the syllable of a word, each of which can be further analysed. However, further analysis into elemental constituents is not part of this *logos*.

The second type of *logos* mentioned exemplifies the meaning currently examined. It is an answer/statement through (διὰ, 206e7 and 207b4) elements, not sub-compounds. Therefore, the wagon is analysed directly into its timbers and a word directly into its letters.

Let $logos_K$ be a statement in terms of elements (hence, the candidate *logos* we currently wish to examine), and let $logos_{TB}$ be a statement in terms of sub-compounds (hence, the *logos* we have taken to express true belief, not knowledge).

Let me highlight two implications of what has been said so far. First, in 1.8 I mentioned an implicit (still) issue, namely, the option of taking the 'true belief' part of the definition of knowledge to refer to something different from the '*logos*' part (their content might be different

even if it is about the same object). The mentioning of *logos*$_K$ and *logos*$_{TB}$ seems to now make this matter explicit. For example, take Theaetetus' name: ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ. A true belief about ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ (how the name is spelled) is expressed in *logos*$_{TB}$ (ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ): '(ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ is) ΘΕ-ΑΙ-ΤΗ-ΤΟΣ', and the *logos* we are looking for is *logos*$_K$ (ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ): '(ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ is) Θ-Ε-Α-Ι-Τ-Η-Τ-Ο-Σ'. Both *logoi* are about ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ; however, their content is different. Hence, under TBL, we have that knowledge of (the spelling of the word/name) ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ can be the true belief expressed in *logos*$_{TB}$ (ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ), accompanied by *logos*$_K$ (ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ).[89] I shall return to the difference between the content of the 'true belief' and the content of the '*logos*' in Chapter 5, where in the discussion of the third meaning for *logos* Socrates drives this point home.

Now, the second point is an affirmation that beliefs, true beliefs, in this case, can be articulated/stated. This is not to say that Plato necessarily suggests that beliefs are held or expressed solely as articulations. Assume I see a mountaintop covered in snow, and when I turn my head, the image remains in my mind. I have the belief that the mountaintop is covered with snow, without utilizing the words 'mountaintop', 'snow', etc. Nevertheless, if I am to communicate a belief, this *can* be done via articulating.[90] The important point is that an articulation may correspond to a belief that is not knowledge; in fact, if the belief is false, the articulation will never correspond to knowledge. Furthermore, if we assume beliefs are truth-

[89] Note that I am not assuming that the true belief mentioned here need be the only true belief that can accompany the *logos* in order to have knowledge.

[90] As mentioned, we expect that the belief is able to be articulated/expressed in a proposition, since it is truth-apt. Furthermore, this is also compatible with 189e-190a where a belief is taken to be the conclusion of an inner dialogue (say, I ask myself: is the mountaintop covered with snow?).

apt, as we are (we are discussing *true* beliefs), then regardless of how the belief is present in our minds (as a statement, image, etc.), we must assume it can be articulated.[91]

So, a distinction has been drawn (in my view already in M1, M2 just brings it to the surface); *logoi* can express beliefs, but (we assume) they can also express something special that can accompany true beliefs, and all together amount to knowledge. The reader would be right to raise the question: how do we know that this "something special" does not also just correspond to a belief? As we shall see by the end of this chapter, we do not.

To conclude on [T4.1] and [T4.2], one would not be speaking as a knower/one with knowledge (ἐπιστημόνως οὐδὲν λέγειν, 207b4) if they could only offer a *logos*$_{TB}$. Under the current meaning, the *logos,* which is meant to *accompany* the true belief (μετὰ τῆς ἀληθοῦς δόξης, 207b5), is *logos*$_{K}$.

4.2 Sum VS Enumeration

In Chapters 1 through 3, we saw that some scholars assume there is no difference between the *logos* of the Dream and the *logos* currently discussed. Speculative explanations for why Plato supposedly discusses the same *logos* twice include bad editing or his attempt to raise a different point.

[91] Remember, in the case of Ryle's interpretation of the Dream, we saw that one of Ryle's concerns was how we know whether an articulation is true and can count as a *logos*, which in turn could count as knowledge (knowledge of what is articulated in the *logos*). The articulation corresponded to the true belief, and for Ryle it was not a question of why or how the correspondence held, but rather, why the articulation was true, if it was true at all.

On the other hand, one can assume (e.g. Cornford) that something has changed; the former assumption that elements are unknowable. So, elements are now knowable, and the argument from experience (206a-b) connected this knowledge of elements to the ability to discern their position (θέσις) in different arrangements. In passage [T4.3] and at 208a9-10 (see below), we shall find evidence that the position of the elements plays a crucial role in the current meaning. So, if my claim is correct, the current *logos* is indeed different from the *logos* of the Dream.

[T4.3, 207b8-d2]

S: Well now, in the same way, he would think we have a correct belief about a wagon, too; whereas someone who is able to traverse through its being by way of those hundred timbers has, in getting hold of that, got hold of *logos* in addition to his true belief, and, instead of possessing belief, has come to possess expertise and knowledge about a wagon's being, having gone through the whole thing element by element.

T: And do you not think that is a good suggestion, Socrates?

S: Tell me if you do, and if you accept that to traverse through anything element by element is to give a *logos* of it, whereas to go through it compound by compound or in some still larger units leaves it without *logos*.[92] Then we can look into it.

T: Well, I do accept it.

I have strongly edited McDowell's translation in [T4.3] because the language is now much more revealing. One is not expected to just mention each element, as was the case in the Dream. Rather, one is expected to be able to traverse through (δυνάμενον διελθεῖν, 207b9) the being

[92] Here, *ἀλογίαν* confirms that indeed *logos*$_{TB}$ is not the kind of *logos* that fits the current meaning.

(οὐσίαν, 207c1) of the thing via (διὰ, 207b9) its elements. Socrates connects his clarifying statement to what he said just before in [T4.2] by using the same verb: "one can go through (περαίνῃ) each thing element by element" (earlier at 207b4-6), and "having gone through (περάναντα) the whole thing element by element" (here at 207c3-4) (I assume διέξοδον at 207c7 has the same implication).

But now, *going through* cannot be done in just any way; it involves a specific path one must *traverse* (διελθεῖν). This clarification is essential and exemplified through the use of the verbs Socrates chooses. Περαίνω can have a meaning that fits both the Dream and the current meaning for *logos*; that is, it carries a meaning of completing, of reaching a limit or end. On the other hand, διέρχομαι has a meaning of traversing or passing through. Therefore, I can offer a complete list of constituents of the syllable ΣΩ when I claim that Ω and Σ make up ΣΩ. However, I am traversing through the syllable only if I go through each letter, one by one, in the order it appears in the syllable. Socrates is now examining his amended version of the Dream, not the original version. In the original version, the compound was treated as a heap of elements, whereas in the amended version, the position of each element plays a role in the *being* (οὐσίαν, 207c1) of the compound. This will soon be vindicated by the request to spell out Theaetetus' name. Spelling is definitely carried out in a specific sequence, whereas earlier (202d-206c), the interlocutors treated the letters of the syllable ΣΩ simply as a sum/heap that needed to be mentioned/listed.

There is one more piece of evidence that vindicates my claim. One might object to my understanding of the verb διελθεῖν and claim that the verb may carry the weaker meaning of

the Dream, so to *traverse* may be to simply go through all the elements in no specific order (as long as all of them are mentioned). However, Socrates leaves no doubt about how he understands/uses διελθεῖν when he explains at 208a9-10: "διὰ στοιχείου διέξοδον ἔχων γράψει "Θεαίτητον" μετὰ ὀρθῆς δόξης, *ὅταν ἐξῆς γράφῃ*" (McDowell translates "ὅταν ἐξῆς γράφῃ" as "putting the letters in order"). Clearly, in spelling, the order of the words matters.[93]

The change of the verb from simply περαίνω to διέρχομαι and the vindication of my understanding of the latter through the spelling example that shall follow show why I find it implausible that we are re-examining the *logos* of the Dream, and why, in Chapters 1 and 2, I chose to refer to the Dream's *logos* as a *sum* rather than an *enumeration*. Spelling involves the act of choosing the correct element and putting it in, or identifying its, correct position (θέσις), as 206a-b suggests. Hence, to *enumerate* the letters of ΣΩ is to say that the letter Σ goes in the first position, and the letter Ω goes in the second position.[94] However, we shall see that having knowledge implies correct spelling, but correct spelling does not (necessarily) imply knowledge.

[93] Perhaps a clarification is needed here. In the case of spelling, the order of the letters is one-dimensional, whereas in the case of objects such as a wagon we must consider three dimensions. This should not be a problem; we would simply need to do more (than just mention each letter in the correct sequence). We would need to specify the position of, say, a wheel, via some adjective, phrase etc. As long as the structure is clear, we can consider the *logos* as satisfying the current meaning.

[94] In articulating a *logos*, we may assume that one need not use such a technical vocabulary. It would suffice to say something on the lines of 'ΣΩ is Σ *followed* by Ω'; the order/structure is made clear through the use of the word *followed*.

4.3 Mistakes When Lacking Knowledge

Before moving forward, it is worth making some remarks on a passage where Socrates and Theaetetus mention the kinds of mistakes one can make when lacking knowledge. These remarks will also address an issue raised by Cornford. It is Cornford's belief, and this belief is crucial to his overall reading of the *Theaetetus*, that Plato is concerned solely with knowledge of "concrete material objects" in the *Theaetetus*. As Bostock also mentions, the letters and syllables in the so-called Dream's refutation (202d-206c), as well as the "being of a wagon" (207c), must refer to types and not tokens (of letters/syllables/wagon(s)), and thus demonstrate that Cornford's view on this issue cannot be correct. In this section, I shall offer one more piece of evidence that suggests Plato did indeed include what we would call types as objects of knowledge (in addition to tokens that would correspond to Cornford's "concrete material objects").

Before the interlocutors further look into the meaning for *logos* at hand, Socrates first secures Theaetetus' agreement on what cannot be knowledge:

> [T4.4, 207d3-e6]
>
> S: And do you do so [i.e. agree to look into the current meaning for *logos*] in the belief that anyone has knowledge of anything when the same thing seems to him sometimes to belong to one thing and sometimes to belong to another, or when he believes that the same thing sometimes has one thing belonging to it and sometimes another?
>
> T: No, certainly not.

S: Well, have you forgotten that in the course of your learning of your letters, at first, you and everyone else did just that?

T: You mean we believed that the same syllable sometimes had one letter belonging to it and sometimes another, and we put the same letter sometimes in the appropriate syllable and sometimes in another?

S: Yes.

T: Well, I certainly have not forgotten; and I do not think people in that condition have knowledge yet.

Theaetetus then agrees that (1) *when the same thing seems to him* [i.e. "anyone", mentioned in [T4.4]] *sometimes to belong to one thing and sometimes to belong to another, or* (2) *when he judges that the same thing sometimes has one thing belonging to it and sometimes another*, he is not in a state of knowledge. The Greek reads:

Πότερον ἡγούμενος ἐπιστήμονα εἶναι όντινοῦν ὁτουοῦν, ὅταν τὸ αὐτὸ τοτὲ μὲν τοῦ αὐτοῦ δοκῇ αὐτῷ εἶναι, τοτὲ δὲ ἑτέρου, ἢ καὶ ὅταν τοῦ αὐτοῦ τοτὲ μὲν ἕτερον, τοτὲ δὲ ἕτερον δοξάζῃ; (207d3-6).

There seem to be different ways to understand the above passage. Much depends on how we choose to translate ἕτερον. Say our (compound) object of knowledge is A, and one of its constituents is a. In the first case of making a mistake (*the same thing seems to him sometimes to belong to one thing and sometimes to belong to another*), we can have two possible readings:

(1i) a is part of A and a is part of B, and A is different from B

(1ii) a is part of A and a is not part of A

So, in (1i), ἕτερον should be understood as referring to some other specific thing (in this case B) a belongs to, whereas, in case (1ii), ἕτερον should mean 'other than A' or 'not A'. Why is this distinction important, and how does it affect the reading of our text?

If we assume that Plato is solely concerned with concrete material things (as does Cornford), (1i) tells us that timber$_0$ belongs to (wagon) body$_0$, timber$_0$ belongs to body$_1$, and body$_0$ ≠ body$_1$. This can only be taken as a temporal confusion if we assume that one has sufficient intelligence to not believe that the same piece of timber can occupy two different places simultaneously. Similarly, in the case of letters and syllables, if letters are treated as specific tokens, one cannot use the same token-letter to write two different words (at the same time).[95] However, as we shall see from how the discussion evolves, the confusion is not meant to be taken as temporal in the sense that someone used the letter-token to write a word and later used (or did not use) the same letter-token when writing another. The point Socrates shall raise is that one misspells a syllable in one word while at the same time he spells the same syllable correctly in another word. If we choose option (1ii), all ἕτερον says is that timber$_0$ belongs to body$_0$, or it does not. This reading may apply to types as well as tokens, and we need not make any further assumptions. In addition, temporal readings would need further argumentation; one can misspell a syllable because of lack of knowledge and later spell it correctly because the

[95] The objection that we might treat the letters as, say, refrigerator magnets, and write in crosswords, does not damage my argument. There is a finite space around the token-letter in which one can 'write' words, and once we *assume* further words that would not fit, the letter is treated as a type.

necessary knowledge was acquired (the example would then have to further specify that no extra knowledge was gained, etc.).

Let us now look at the other case of making a mistake (*he believes that the same thing sometimes has one thing belonging to it and sometimes another*). We again have two possible readings:

(2i) a is part of A and b is part of A

(2ii) A is made up of a and b only, and A is made up of a and c only, and b is different from c

It seems that there is nothing wrong with (2i). Timber$_0$ can belong to body$_0$, and timber$_1$ can also belong to body$_0$. One may see the different pieces of timber and assume both cases to be true.

The absurdity Socrates points to (which would demonstrate that one is in error) is more easily understood under case (2ii). One believes that body$_0$ is made up of timber$_0$ and timber$_1$ and no other, and at another time, he believes that body$_0$ is made up of timber$_0$ and timber$_2$ and no other. Timber$_1$ and timber$_2$ are not identical, so body$_0$ is not self-identical; hence, contradiction. This line of thought is also vindicated by the example the interlocutors shall use in what follows: a child thinks that the first syllable of ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ, namely ΘΕ, is spelled Θ-Ε, but in other instances (when it appears in another word), the child thinks it is spelled Τ-Ε (while still thinking the previous syllable is spelled Θ-Ε).

Given the lack of necessity for extra assumptions and distinctions, for case (1), I believe option (1ii) is best. This option is also optimal since it accommodates both types and tokens, and this is important as it seems that the current assumption is that the thing in question (regarding

knowledge) is not a specific wagon but the *being* (οὐσίαν) of a wagon.[96] Likewise, in the example the interlocutors shall use in what follows, namely, Theaetetus' name and the first syllable of his name, they are not examining a specific instance of ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ or ΘΕ, but they instead treat the compounds (syllables) as types (as opposed to tokens).[97] This can be contrasted with the discussion at 208c-210b, where specific things, namely, the Sun and Theaetetus, are the objects of (potential) knowledge. So (1ii) works in all cases.

For case (2), I believe option (2ii) is best as it makes the absurdity clear, and it fits well with the example of Theaetetus' name that follows.

4.4 The Example

At [T4.4], we saw two types of mistakes one can make when one lacks knowledge. However, we are offered one example. It is not immediately clear whether this example is intended to cover both cases. The example goes as follows:[98]

[96] Things become more complicated if we assume that οὐσίαν can refer to a trope-like essence, peculiar to the specific wagon, a token of the relevant type essence.

[97] It is worth noting here that the potential knower's (lack of) knowledge is demonstrated via specific tokens-instantiations of the letters in question; nevertheless, the knowledge itself must concern the letter-types, otherwise the example makes no sense. Even if the child got the syllable ΘΕ correct in both instances, the Θ-tokens used in each word are obviously different from each other.

[98] In the translation of the following passage, and throughout, I shall use capital Greek letters to depict the words (names) that are used for the sake of the example. This will help to avoid confusion as the two-letter syllable ΘΕ would have to become a three-letter syllable in English (THE), but would remain two-lettered in the case of misspelling (TE). Further, the point is the use of another, wrong, consonant (a T instead of a Θ), not the addition or omission of a letter (H).

[T4.5, 207e7-208a8]

S: Well now, when someone at that sort of stage is writing ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ[99], and thinks he ought to write Θ and E, and does so; and then again, when setting out to write ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ, he thinks he ought to write T and E, and does so; shall we say he knows the first syllable of your names?

T: No, we have just agreed that someone in that condition does not have knowledge yet.

S: And is there anything to stop the same person being in that condition with respect to the second syllable, too; and the third, and the fourth?

T: No.

We are once again back to Theaetetus' early school years when he did not yet know how to spell. He was able to spell his own name, ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ, but if he tried to spell ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ, he might have used a T instead of a Θ. There is obviously something wrong going on; however, it is not clear what it is, besides, of course, the misspelling of ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ.

First, let us look at the question I mentioned above: whether this example depicts both cases of mistakes we saw earlier. If we accept option (1ii), the point of the example is to show that sometimes the child spells the syllable ΘΕ as Θ-E, and others not as Θ-E. We can also more clearly see why option (1i) does not serve the example. The point is not to collect the letter-tokens from the word ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ and then use the necessary (common) letters to spell ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ (one might again bring refrigerator magnet letters to mind – see fn.95). The argument allows and actually highlights the case that the two words can be written (or vocally

[99] In both this case (ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ) and the latter (ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ), I have chosen to change the accusative form of the names to nominative, to more easily fit the translation. This change has no impact on the meaning or understanding of the argument.

spelled out), one next to (or after) the other.[100] This is what exhibits the confusion, or lack of knowledge, on behalf of the child; he spells ΤΕ-ΟΔΩΡΟΣ (wrongly) while he can spell ΘΕ-ΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ (correctly). The letters and syllables are treated as types.

So, mistake (1) can be instantiated by the example. Furthermore, mistake (2) can be instantiated by the example. We see that the child erroneously believes that the syllable ΘΕ can be spelled both as Θ-Ε, as well as Τ-Ε. So, the child believes that the same syllable is (or can be) made up of different letters, once again exhibiting confusion or lack of knowledge.[101] Hence, we can assume that the example can depict both cases of mistakes.[102]

Note that although we are discussing spelling, Socrates' example (the syllable ΘΕ) and the argument at hand remain valid, even without alluding to the order of the letters. Therefore, the current argument applies also in the case of the Dream's *logos*, i.e. if we treat the elements as forming a heap instead of a structured whole. The (unordered) set {Θ, Ε} is different from the set {Τ, Ε}, and that is enough to prove Socrates' point.[103] Nevertheless, order shall play a role in Socrates' further line of argument.

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[100] Again, to clarify, this can be done using the same letter-tokens twice in different instantiations (one to spell ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ and one to spell ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ). However, the point is not the instantiation but the lack of knowledge the child has regarding the syllable ΘΕ and the syllable must be viewed as a type to be able to feature in both words.

[101] One might assume there is another reading here; the child does not believe or understand that in both cases it is the same syllable. The child might think that it is spelling two different syllables, hence the different letters. Assumedly, therein lays the child's error in this case, and once again it would be an obvious case of not having knowledge.

[102] My view here goes against Burnyeat (p.213, fn.96) who believes that "the only one illustrated is spelling the same syllable differently." In 6.3 I shall further examine the importance of this example.

[103] This may be what (or one of the things) Socrates was alluding to at 206c1-2: "*What is more, I think other proofs of that point might well come to light.*"

Most scholars that have worked on this part of the *Theaetetus* have engaged in the debate on whether the correct spelling of ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ can be considered an act of chance.[104] For my own reading, it is important to show that the correct spelling is not an act of chance because the point Socrates is trying to make is that we have collected the correct elements (letters), we can put them in the correct order (as the Dream's amendment suggested), yet we cannot (necessarily) claim that we have knowledge.[105]

Let me begin by pointing out that Socrates uses another name (ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ) to demonstrate the misspelling. If he intended for us to consider the correct spelling simply as a case of chance, he would most likely have used the same name in his example (because, ultimately, the point he is trying to raise is about the word, not the syllable). Further, if we presume that the correct spelling was accomplished simply by chance, we must admit that Socrates employs a weak argument. One might say the child would resemble a schoolboy who got away with spelling ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ correctly and will not admit lack of knowledge (perhaps in fear of getting a bad mark in school) when he does not spell the same name correctly again. If that were the case, we would have an obvious case of lack of knowledge and not much else to discuss. The point Socrates is trying to raise here is that we have a case that very well looks like knowledge; the child can spell ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ correctly and consistently. However, there seems to be something wrong because the child makes mistakes in other words with the same first syllable.

[104] Burnyeat and McDowell believe it cannot be chance, while others, such as Cornford suppose that it may be the case. For a list of scholars on each side, see Burnyeat (p.214, fn.97).
[105] This is not to say that we need to exclude the option of chance; it is just a trivial case that does not fully demonstrate the point Socrates raises.

At this point, one might claim that maybe there are degrees of knowledge or that the child is at the stage of learning. This would not change the argument. Perhaps a schoolboy has a better chance at spelling a word correctly when compared to an infant playing with refrigerator magnet letters. Nevertheless, even the schoolboy is not at the stage of "*having fully learned*" (τελέως μεμαθηκέναι, 206a10); so, the schoolboy is not a knower, he simply has a better chance of getting it right – but it is still chance nonetheless. Yet, the point of the current example is that even the schoolboy, who might make spelling mistakes, can at least spell his own name. The question is not the schoolboy's ability to spell his name; that, we can assume he can do (hence, the demands of the current meaning for *logos* have been met). The question is whether this correct spelling means that the boy has knowledge.

But let me offer further support on why we are meant to assume that the example instantiates more than chance. The mistakes the interlocutors discussed (see 4.3) cannot be directly applied if we treat parts as sub-compounds instead of elements, regardless of whether one accepts my readings of the mistakes ((1ii) and (2ii)). In the case of mistake (1) (*the same thing* (x) *seems to him sometimes to belong to one thing* (Y) *and sometimes to belong to another*), it is crucial to assume that there is some system of reference that remains unchanged; the way the example is set up, that system of reference is the child's correct spelling of the name ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ. What changes is the sub-compound ΘΕ (=Y above), which it has (or should have, if the child would get it right) in common with ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ, due to replacing Θ (=x above) with T. If we do not have an unchanging reference, we cannot obtain a standard Y in order to compare it to what should be Y in other words. If we assume that the system of reference is a specific instance of correct

spelling (as opposed to a consistently correct-spelled word), the point becomes moot because Socrates would be able to compare ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ to (another instance of) itself, not some other word; hence, we would not assume that the child has knowledge to begin with (as also mentioned earlier). In that case, Y (=ΘΕ) would be different from Z (=ΤΕ, from ΤΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ), so even the initial belief (that ΘΕ is Τ-Ε) would be false, and, by definition (*true* belief plus *logos*), we are outside knowledge *ab initio*. Now, if we treat the part as a sub-compound instead of an element, x becomes ΘΕ, and Y becomes ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ. However, now, the argument cannot be applied because the only Y we may assume in order to look for a spelling error is again ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ, which we have already assumed is spelled correctly. So, the Ys must be sub-compounds of the compound we are considering, not the compound itself, in order to be able to find other words with which they have a sub-compound in common.[106]

The implication of mistake (1), that we cannot treat elements and sub-compounds as interchangeable in the cases of the mistakes described, has two further implications. First, it means that mistake (1) should not be applied to *logoi* that express belief(s) because those *logoi* deal with sub-compounds (according to 207a-c) and sub-compounds are not interchangeable with elements (as shown above). Second, and most important for the present discussion, the implication of mistake (1) bolsters the position that we should treat the correct spelling of ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ as something more than just chance. The child must be able to consistently spell ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ correctly for the argument to make sense because we need a system of reference

[106] We may assume extreme cases of sub-compounds of sub-compounds, or of words that appear whole in other words (like *cat* and *cat*astrophe), and say that the argument could apply. However, this would not damage the case I make, that we cannot (universally) treat elements and sub-compounds as interchangeable in this argument.

from which to obtain a Y, and this system of reference cannot be the correct spelling of the word itself (as one might find it in a dictionary). The system must refer to the potential knower's spelling in order to be able to say whether they have knowledge or not.

The same reasoning as above does not apply to mistake (2) (*he believes that the same thing* (X) *sometimes has one thing* (y) *belonging to it and sometimes another* (z)). Here, we may assume a case where the child does not consistently spell ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ correctly. So taking ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ to be X, and ΘΕ to be y, i.e. the compound to be a whole word and the part to be a sub-compound instead of an element, it is possible to assume that the child uses the wrong syllable z (=ΤΕ) for the same word in which he had previously used the correct syllable. This would allow us to treat the instance of correct spelling as an act of chance because it allows us to assume the same word as the system of reference (the word itself now, not the child's spelling of it); therefore, we may assume that mistakes happen with the same word.

Based on the stronger implications of the first type of mistake, we should assume that the correct spelling was more than an act of chance. Nevertheless, we have a misspelling in the case the child tries to spell ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ. The main question then is: why does this demonstrate a lack of knowledge on behalf of the child? If the child gets it right every time with ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ, can we not say it knows the word ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ? The answer, according to Socrates, is 'no'. We shall see this is because spelling the word correctly is a necessary but not sufficient condition, and it is why we must dismiss the meaning for *logos* we are currently investigating.

4.5 Why Is the Second Meaning Rejected?

We shall now continue with the main question, i.e. why the ability to go through each element cannot be the meaning for *logos* we are looking for.

[T4.6, 208a9-b10]

S: Well then, whenever, in those circumstances, he writes down ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ, putting the letters in order, he will be writing it in a condition in which he has the way to go through it element by element, together with a correct belief?

T: Yes, that is clear.

S: But in a condition in which he still does not have knowledge, though what he believes is correct: that is what we are saying?

T: Yes.

S: And in a condition in which he does have a logos as well as a correct belief. Because he was writing in a condition in which he has the way to go through it element by element, and we agreed that that is a logos.

T: Yes, that is true.

S: So there is such a thing as correct belief accompanied by *logos* which should not yet to be called knowledge.

T: It looks as if there is.

Socrates' first statement in [T4.6] is a re-iteration of the requirements the interlocutors agreed upon for the current meaning for *logos*, and an affirmation that they have been met. Specifically,

logos was the ability to produce (in this case, write[107]) the elements of the object and (now – after the Dream) do so in their correct sequence. This was to accompany a true belief, and all together, these would amount to knowledge. The child satisfied all the requirements yet lacks knowledge. So, there can be true belief accompanied by *logos* that is not knowledge ("Ἔστιν ἄρα, ὦ ἑταῖρε, μετὰ λόγου ὀρθὴ δόξα, ἣν οὔπω δεῖ ἐπιστήμην καλεῖν", 208b8-9).

I shall first try to explain why the current meaning for *logos* is not satisfactory. Subsequently, I shall explore some implications of rejecting this meaning.

The main point of the passage seems to be that parrot speech, so to speak, cannot count as knowledge.[108] One might claim that in the *Theaetetus,* we find the first instance of (a version – see the following paragraph) Searle's (1980) *Chinese room argument*. In short, we are meant to understand this passage as a claim that reproducing a sequence of letters we experience through vision or hearing cannot count as knowledge. At this point, one might ask: knowledge of what exactly? Spelling in general, spelling of the specific word (ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ), something else? I shall try to address these questions in part in the current section, and I shall expand on them in 6.2 and 6.3.

What the child seems to be missing is an understanding of why the specific letters were chosen and why they were ordered in the way they were. Note, however, that *understanding* does not necessarily refer to what the ordered letters refer to (and this is perhaps a difference compared

[107] Plato seems to shift from spoken to written language without making much of the difference, although he clarifies at points throughout (e.g. λεγομένων, 206a7-8, and γραφομένων, 206a8). My upcoming argument regarding parrot speech applies to both cases.

[108] To continue from the previous fn., parrot speech in spoken language would be uttering something as one has heard it (perhaps repeatedly), and in written language it would be copying the symbols-letters in the sequence one saw them.

to the *Chinese room argument*), i.e. what they mean or to whom the name belongs. What the child seems to be lacking is the ability to explain 'why' the word he spelled correctly is spelled the way it is.

Many scholars would agree with this explanation. McDowell suggests that knowledge here might be the understanding of "why" the word is spelled the way it is, and knowledge, in this case of a syllable, "ranks as knowledge because of its relation to the grasp of some systematic body of theory" (p.254). Burnyeat (p.216-7) directly links knowledge to understanding:

> Platonic claims about knowledge often become more palatable when they are reexpressed as claims about understanding. Try these:
>
> (1) Someone who spells 'Theaetetus' right but gets 'Theodorus' wrong does not understand the spelling of 'Theaetetus'.
>
> (2) It is impossible to judge either that something one actively understands is something else one understands or that something one actively understands is something one does not understand.
>
> (3) Understanding an object *o* is being able to elucidate the relationships of elements and complexes in the domain of *o*.
>
> (4) No-one fully understands anything unless they understand everything in the light of the Good/ the ultimate elements of the universe.
>
> […] The essential clue here is the connection between understanding and explanation.

This move from Burnyeat is well argued for, drawing evidence from several other dialogues; however, it does not really solve the problem. But let us look a bit closer because Burnyeat has more to say on understanding.

Burnyeat mentions (p.216) that Plato has shown elsewhere (*Timaeus*, *Statesman*, *Republic*) that he is sympathetic to a "strict" view of knowledge. Burnyeat contrasts this "strict" view with a more contemporary and "democratic" view that would allow someone who knows something to make mistakes about that thing. Now, regardless of how strict we assume Plato is with regards to knowledge, Burnyeat admits that the kind of knowledge we are discussing in the *Theaetetus*, namely ἐπιστήμη, is special in some ways. In fact, in Chapter 1, we saw Burnyeat (2011) aligned with Lyons (1963) regarding what is special about ἐπιστήμη. Let us look further into this.

For Lyons, ἐπιστήμη is tightly connected to τέχνη, and for Burnyeat, one who is an ἐπιστήμων, a master of his craft/τέχνη, means he is an expert at it. However, as Burnyeat mentions (p.212):

> It is one thing to say that expertise is a matter of having knowledge that most people do not have […], quite another to say that knowledge is a matter of expertise, which most people do not have.

Let us unpack the above. To claim that "expertise requires knowledge" is assumedly uncontroversial; if one is an expert weapon smith, one knows what a weapon is. A claim that goes the other way around is not so easily held. That is, it is harder to claim that in order to know what a weapon is, one needs to be an expert weapon smith. Or is that what Plato is trying to say? Can someone know what a weapon is if they are not an expert in weapons (i.e. a weapon smith, as assumed)?[109]

[109] For simplicity, and without damage to generality, I shall not enter the *Republic* Book X debate about whether it is the craftsman or the user that is the master or true knower of the object. I simply assume the craftsman here. I also take the craftsman to be both an ἐπιστήμων and a τεχνίτης, an assumption that is not necessarily correct. I shall look further into this issue below and in 6.2.

According to Burnyeat, if we attribute the strict view to Plato, we should assume that, yes, only experts have knowledge, and that restricts knowledge to a very small group of people. Further, if we accept Burnyeat's view of the *Republic* (on 508e-509a, 511a-d, 531c-d, 533b-534d), who claims that "the only knowledge worthy of the name is that enjoyed by someone who has attained a synoptic grasp of all the sciences in the light of their connection with the Good" (p.216), we inevitably narrow down the group, so to speak, to an even smaller number, if not zero. Because, for someone to be an expert in, say, weapon making, they must also be an expert in all other τέχναι, and there are not many da Vincis.

But let us take a step back and not adopt the latter strict assumption that seems to lead to the impossibility of knowledge (although not necessarily; see 6.2 and 6.3). Let us assume that an ἐπιστήμων has knowledge of his τέχνη and not all τέχναι. This is a claim Lyons (1963) and Burnyeat (2011) would subscribe to.[110] But Lyons' account has given rise to another view among scholars: that ἐπιστήμη and τέχνη can be treated as interchangeable.[111] Hulme (2022) argues against the latter claim. Further, she argues that "*episteme* and *techne* differ in both denotation and expressive content: in particular, *techne* implies an ability to teach, and *episteme* does not."

Hulme's further claim can be challenged, especially from an Aristotelian viewpoint (although our focus here is on Plato).[112] However, I wish to introduce a new argument to the ἐπιστήμη versus τέχνη debate.

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[110] This is perhaps what Burnyeat has in mind in his option (3) (see Burnyeat quote above).
[111] See Hulme (2022, fn.4) for a list of scholars engaged.
[112] "ὅλως τε σημεῖον τοῦ εἰδότος καὶ μὴ εἰδότος τὸ δύνασθαι διδάσκειν ἐστίν, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τὴν τέχνην τῆς ἐμπειρίας ἡγούμεθα μᾶλλον ἐπιστήμην εἶναι: δύνανται γάρ, οἱ δὲ οὐ δύνανται διδάσκειν." (*Metaphysics*, 981b7-9)

Ἐπιστήμη and τέχνη are indeed interchangeable in many cases, but not all. Likewise, the ἐπιστήμων/ἐπιστάμενος is interchangeable in many cases (but not all – see next paragraph) with the τεχνίτης/τεχνικός. However, in the case of ἐπιστήμη, there is an underlying ambiguity; where a τέχνη necessarily corresponds to a "systematic body of theory" (in the way mentioned by McDowell), ἐπιστήμη does not necessarily do so, and therein lays their crucial difference.

Theaetetus' early examples of ἐπιστήμαι (146c-d) can also be characterised as τέχναι; they were all (each individually) a systematic body of a kind of knowledge. However, ἐπιστήμη can also carry a sense that τέχνη cannot, namely, a cognitive state.[113] So, although we may interchange ἐπιστήμη and τέχνη in cases such as cobblery or medicine, it would be nonsensical (as opposed to simply wrong) to claim that τέχνη is Perception or True Belief or True Belief Accompanied by *Logos*. There is also a difference between the ἐπιστήμων and the τεχνικός. One difference has already been highlighted at 207b: the τεχνικός can offer a *logos* based on belief, whereas the ἐπιστήμων has some more profound knowledge that allows him to produce a different *logos* (one that can go all the way to the elements).

And in general it is a sign of the man who knows and of the man who does not know, that the former can teach, and therefore we think art more truly knowledge than experience is; for artists can teach, and men of mere experience cannot. (Translation: Ross)

In general the sign of knowledge or ignorance is the ability to teach, and for this reason we hold that art rather than experience is scientific knowledge; for the artists can teach, but the others cannot. (Translation: Tredennick)

[113] A subtle clarification: if we/Plato are willing to say that one or one's soul/mind grasps (a) τέχνη, and so they are a τεχνίτης, then their soul/mind has/possesses (the/a) τέχνη. The difference I am trying to highlight is that in this case one is in the state of having τέχνη, whereas knowledge is assumed to be the (cognitive/mental) state itself.

The question I am trying to raise is this: take one of the γραμματικοὺς mentioned at 207b2. The γραμματικός is an ἐπιστήμων of the ἐπιστήμη/τέχνη of grammar (or language, if you prefer);[114] here ἐπιστήμη and τέχνη can be used interchangeably. The γραμματικός is also an ἐπιστήμων of the word ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ and (so) can spell it correctly and can offer a *logos* in accordance to what the current meaning asks for. So, the question is: the child can also offer a *logos* in accordance with what the current meaning asks for; does that make him an ἐπιστήμων? The answer is obviously (according to the text) 'no'.

It seems the explanation is that the child is not an ἐπιστήμων of the ἐπιστήμη/τέχνη of grammar, so it cannot be an ἐπιστήμων of something that pertains to grammar, such as the spelling of a word. Yet, that is not to say that he cannot spell. Rather, it means that he can do so in some other way because he has a true belief (perhaps by rote) that goes deeper than the belief that can produce a *logos* that reaches the level of syllables. This belief, though, is not knowledge.

We can find traces of this line of thought when we look back at the discussion of the Aviary Model:

> [T4.7, 198a4-b11]
>
> S: […] You say there is such a thing as an art (τέχνην) of arithmetic?
>
> T: Yes.

[114] It may be the case that γραμματικός refers to 'literacy'/'someone who is literate', and not necessarily an ἐπιστήμων (of the ἐπιστήμη/τέχνη of grammar). In this case, we simply take literacy to be a capacity someone has (in addition to being a mathematician, cobbler, etc.), and it is because of this capacity that one can offer a *logos*κ. My argument applies to either interpretation. (We can also assume that one may be an ἐπιστήμων of more than one ἐπιστήμη, see 6.2.)

S: Well, you must think of it as a hunt for pieces of knowledge (ἐπιστημῶν) of everything odd and even.

T: Very well.

S: It is by this art, I imagine, that one has subject to oneself pieces of knowledge (ἐπιστήμας) of the numbers, and that those who pass them on to others do so.

T: Yes.

S: If someone passes them on, we call it teaching, and if someone receives them, we call it learning. And if someone has them, by possessing them in that aviary, we call it knowing (ἐπίστασθαι).

T: Certainly.

S: Pay attention, now, to this next point. If someone is completely versed in arithmetic, he knows (ἐπίσταται) all numbers, does he not? Because there are pieces of knowledge (ἐπιστήμαι) of all numbers in his mind.

T: Of course.

Someone "completely versed in arithmetic", say, the mathematician/arithmetician-teacher, is the one who possesses knowledge-ἐπιστήμη[115] of numbers; on the other hand, the student is the receiver of knowledge. Yet, we should assume that only the teacher is the true master of the "art of numbers." Until the student is at the level of "having fully learned" (τελέως μεμαθηκέναι, 206α10), we must assume that these pieces of knowledge are still beliefs for him. So, the student

[115] Also here, the Lyons-Burnyeat view of linking ἐπιστήμη and τέχνη so tightly together seems problematic – each number on its own is not a τέχνη (although one may think that there is a τέχνη of each and every number).

is neither an ἐπιστήμων of arithmetic nor an ἐπιστήμων of or about the objects of arithmetic, i.e. numbers. Nevertheless, due to his teacher's teachings, the student has beliefs that allow him to reach the same results as his teacher, in a way similar to how one who has a true belief (and not knowledge) about the way to Larissa shall reach Larissa.

At this point, I shall pause because what has been mentioned suffices as a possible explanation of why we cannot assume the child has knowledge. However, what has been mentioned requires further investigation as it might help us to better understand how Plato sees ἐπιστήμη. I shall continue this discussion in 6.3, where I shall look at the possibility of dispositional knowledge versus occurrent/active knowledge (we cannot assume that the teacher actively knows *all* the numbers) and the possibility of error on behalf of an ἐπιστήμων. I shall also return to the issue of taking ἐπιστήμη as a cognitive state versus a body of knowledge.

4.6 Conclusions

> "Then our wealth was apparently only a dream, when we thought we had the truest possible account of knowledge." (208b11-12)

The above phrase marks the end of the examination of the Dream, also in its amended version. It does not mark the end of exploring TBL; there is one more meaning for *logos* that is left to be studied.

In addition, this passage also concludes the mereological approach to what *logos* can potentially mean. The Dream allowed for a (crude) version of *logos* where the parts of a whole were merely mentioned. The second meaning for *logos* suggested a more sophisticated version where the

order or position of the parts was also required. The remaining *logos* will shift from trying to describe the object internally to how it relates to everything else outside of it.

The brief clarification, i.e. the first meaning for *logos* (206d-e), that something *special* must be mentioned in the *logos* (as opposed to simply mentioning one's true belief), does continue to apply; it is just something else that is considered as *special*.

The issue concerning the knowability of elements has not been addressed so far. That is, Socrates clarified that elements must be knowable; however, he did not explore or even mention how (apart from the connection to their θέσις and being able to tell them apart in arrangements). The second meaning for *logos*, like the Dream, assumed *logos* was a break-down, albeit ordered, of a compound, but an element (still) cannot be broken down, regardless of order. Nevertheless, in the following chapter, we shall see that there is something wrong with TBL; regardless of the element-compound division, there is no way of making TBL work for compounds or elements. Perhaps that is why Plato does not (care to) mention anything further on the topic at this point.

Chapter 5: The Third Meaning for *Logos* and Ending (208c-210d)

Introduction

In this chapter, I shall examine the final part of the dialogue. One can deduce a pattern in the discussions for the previous two definitions of knowledge. Each discussion follows a long path on topics related to the definition[116] and ends with a brief rejection of the definition itself. If my reading of the section I examine in this thesis is correct, we can trace a similar pattern for the third definition. Following the suggestion that Knowledge is True Belief Accompanied by *Logos*, we have a lengthy discussion regarding an interpretation of or theory underlying the suggested definition (the Dream), followed by a discussion of the possible meanings *logos* might carry, examining if there is one that can fit the definition. Under the reading I suggest, at the end of this section, Socrates offers a brief rejection that applies directly to the definition itself. My reading agrees with Bostock's on this; however, in sections 5.4 and 5.5, I shall explain how it differs overall.

I shall begin this chapter with a preliminary discussion in 5.1. The aim of this discussion is to highlight that all along, *logos* has been connected to some ability of the knower. On the one hand, this vindicates my reading in the previous chapter; i.e. parrot speech or writing on a piece of paper cannot count as the *logos* we seek. There must be something special about how the content of the *logos* relates to the knower. In 5.5, I shall claim that this is the issue Socrates

[116] I am referring to the discussions on Protagorean Relativism and the Heraclitean Doctrine of Flux under the definition 'Knowledge is Perception', and the discussions on false belief and the Wax Tablet and Aviary models under the definition 'Knowledge is True Belief'.

highlights and cannot overcome, i.e. how we are to understand *accompaniment* when it features in TBL. This is a problem that applies to TBL regardless of what assumptions we make or what theory (say, the Dream) we might choose to interpret TBL.[117]

In section 5.2, I shall claim that Socrates offers us four examples of *logoi*. Two of the four do not fit the current meaning, but the other two do. I will explore the possibility that the current meaning for *logos* can be understood as a genus-differentia type of definition and that this option could stand a chance if Socrates claimed that we could only know universals and not particulars. Under this assumption, the two examples of *logoi* that do not fit the current meaning (because they fail to pick out a particular) could succeed in picking out a group/set of things or a universal. Nevertheless, even under this assumption, I shall claim that we cannot overcome Socrates' final argument.

In section 5.3, I shall examine a different division of *logoi* suggested by Burnyeat. I shall argue that Burnyeat's suggestion is unnecessary.

In section 5.4, I shall examine Socrates' final argument. I will try to clarify what exactly the "dilemma" interpretation often found in secondary literature refers to. I shall argue that there is more than a dilemma at play. I shall claim that the final argument first rejects the current meaning for *logos* on its own. It then goes on to reject TBL, regardless of what meaning we choose for *logos*.

[117] These assumptions include the division between objectual and propositional knowledge, the ontological claims of the Dream, and the different meanings for *logos*.

In section 5.5, I shall address *accompaniment* (as part of TBL). I shall argue that Socrates discusses a strict view for knowledge and that under this view, we cannot define knowledge in a way that does not lead to a regress or is circular. Further, I shall argue (*contra* Bostock) that Socrates is aware of the problem and the strength of his final argument, thus bolstering the view that he does not leave room for interpretations that suggest Plato sub-textually favours some of the discussed definitions or that he supports a meaning for *logos* (that would fit the final definition) that he does not mention.

5.1 The Final Attempt: A New Meaning for *Logos* – Preliminary Discussion

At 208b11-12, Socrates finalises the previous mode of investigation, i.e. we are no longer examining – as I suggest, different versions of – the Dream: "Then our wealth was apparently only a dream, when we thought we had the truest possible account of knowledge." Theaetetus recapitulates the previous two possible meanings for *logos* that were examined, "[o]ne was a sort of image of thought in speech, and one, which we have just discussed, was the way to go through the thing, element by element, until one has gone through the whole." (208c4-6)

Socrates then offers the final candidate meaning for *logos* [M3]: "[It is what] most people would say: being able to state some mark by which the thing one is asked for differs from everything else." (208c9-11)

Let us begin our enquiry with a remark that applies to all three candidate *logoi*. Regardless of what *logos* means, or can mean, all the *logoi* mentioned are linked to some kind of ability. Recall:

- M1: "…making one's thought plain…" (…τὴν αὑτοῦ διάνοιαν ἐμφανῆ ποιεῖν…, 206d1-2)
- M2: "…being able, when one is asked what anything is, to provide the questioner with an answer…" (…τὸ ἐρωτηθέντα τί ἕκαστον δυνατὸν εἶναι τὴν ἀπόκρισιν […] ἀποδοῦναι τῷ ἐρομένῳ…, 206e6-207a1)
- M3: "…being able to state…" (…τὸ ἔχειν […] εἰπεῖν…, 208c7-8)

A crucial difference between the first *logos* and the latter two is that the first simply required that one has the ability to articulate his true belief, whereas the latter two suggest that this articulation be special (in one way or the other) and that it is an answer to a question about some object and not just any belief one holds, albeit true.

First, the above point vindicates the reading I suggest; until the first *logos*, the content of the *logos* could have been the articulation of a true – i.e. truth-apt – belief (and, of course, this belief may have been the definition of the object itself). The latter two *logoi* are answers regarding an object – what-it-is, something that does not necessarily apply to the belief.

Second, and this is the crucial point that concerns us now, *logos* is linked not only to the content of what is being said but also to the *ability* to possess (τὸ ἔχειν) and say it. This means that *logos* is not simply the articulation (be it a statement, definition, description, special statement, or whatever else) because, in this case, *logos* could be parrot speech. In the discussion on the second meaning for *logos* (Chapter 4), we saw that parrot speech cannot be what we are looking for. *Logos* must involve some ability on the knower's side, which involves more than the ability to reproduce a series of sounds or symbols (letters/words).

It seems that we, at no point, have been freed of what was mentioned at 202c2-3: τὸν γὰρ μὴ δυνάμενον δοῦναί τε καὶ δέξασθαι λόγον ἀνεπιστήμονα εἶναι περὶ τούτου. Whether or not this phrase is part of the Dream or a point stressed by Socrates himself is a subordinate question. The important point is that *logos* is tied to the *ability* to *give* and *receive* it (the *logos*), and the vocabulary throughout the discussion that has followed has respected this point. The verbs used under the different meanings for *logos* are connected to the aforementioned *ability*: *make/produce* (ποιεῖν), *render/convey* (ἀποδοῦναι), *have/be able to say* (ἔχειν […] εἰπεῖν), *get hold* (λαμβάνης). It looks like the use of these words is well thought through and carefully selected. This dormant issue will soon be made explicit and undermine any possibility of defining knowledge in terms of true belief plus *logos*.

I will inevitably return to the previous issue before the end of this chapter. But before moving forward, a clarification is in order. The problem I am pointing to, which I claim will be the demise of TBL, is that any '+ X' addition to true belief cannot get the job done (we shall see why). However, there are two ways of interpreting this problem. On the one hand, we can assume that 'X' (in this case *logos*) is something independent of the ability, e.g. the statement/definition itself (as we would see it written on a piece of paper or hear it), and the problem lies with '+', i.e. the *accompaniment* (of the *logos*) which must refer to some ability that is linked to the cognitive state on behalf of the knower. On the other hand, one might assume that there is an ambiguity between *logos* as an independent item and *logos* itself as a faculty/ability/capacity. Either interpretation leads to the same results (regarding my argumentation), and I believe that the problem has appeared in both ways in the text. In the

Dream, *logos* was an independent item the knower had to be able to *give* and *receive*. In the subsequent meanings, the *logos* itself involves the ability to give/produce a certain statement. The important matter is that in either case, this ability is connected to the knower, and, as the discussion in Chapter 4 demonstrated, this connection must go deeper than the ability of parrot speech.

One final remark before moving on to the next section. The second meaning for *logos*: the ability to enumerate a thing's elementary parts, is certainly more technical and demanding than a mere mentioning of anything on one's mind regarding that thing (i.e. the first meaning). So, to say (answer) that a wagon is a construction of wheels, axle, body, etc. (as a common person would do), or to be able to enumerate every piece of timber that makes it up (in a way presumably a professional wagon maker could), is more technical than saying just anything about a wagon. Under our current meaning, to suggest that a *logos* is the ability to provide a mark that differentiates the thing we are looking for from everything else suggests even more strongly that the *logos* must be in some way very special. It can no longer be some simple description of the thing in question; this point will soon be made clear (see *logoi* (L2) and (L3) below). It must be a definition, or at least a demarcation, that can uniquely pick out the thing. On this point, I agree with Bostock (p.225) that the second meaning was presumably meant to achieve the same; i.e. enumerating the thing's parts was meant to perform the same task of at least demarcating. However, for reasons we saw in Chapter 4, trying to describe an object uniquely in terms of its constituents, even if we include their arrangement, cannot differentiate between knowledge and (true) belief. Hence, the discussion has shifted from looking at the thing internally or

compositionally, i.e. in terms of its constituents (and their relations/relative positions), to seeing how it differentiates from everything else by means of peculiar features (although one might claim that these features compose the thing). One might notice that another problem arises: how can we know that the features are peculiar (i.e. they are not shared with anything else)?

5.2 Four Different *Logoi*

Let us now focus on the text. Socrates will offer us four examples of *logos*. Although none of the four can get us as far as knowledge, for reasons we shall see at the end of the dialogue (regarding (L1) and (L4)), two of them ((L1) and (L4)) actually fit the requirements of the current meaning for *logos*. The remaining two ((L2) and (L3)) are not of the kind of *logos* we are currently examining and produce statements that correspond to true beliefs. Recall this was also the pattern we saw in Chapter 4 when discussing the second meaning for *logos*. That is, Socrates provided an example of a kind of *logos* we are not looking for because it would only get us as far as true belief (enumerating a compound in terms of sub-compounds). He then gave an example of a *logos* that did fit the meaning being examined (enumerating a compound in terms of elements) and in turn rejected the meaning.

Let us look at the first *logos*:

> [T5.1, 208c9-d4]
>
> T: Can you give me a logos of something as an example?
>
> S: Well, about the sun, if you like to take that as an example, I imagine you would accept as adequate that it is the brightest of the heavenly bodies that go round the earth.

T: Certainly.

So, the first example of *logos* is:

(L1) The Sun [is] the brightest of the heavenly bodies that go round the earth.

A few notes on technicalities. First, I take the copula '[is]' to signify (at least) a *weak* notion of identity (I say *weak* in order to contrast with an 'is' which may imply a definition based on essence).[118] It suffices to assume that what follows the copula is the 'something *special*' we say about what it is we know. Of course, we must be cautious about what our object of knowledge is, i.e. the Sun, not the *logos* about the Sun. Second, a technicality that we have come across since Chapter 1: whether our *logos* should include both sides of the copula (so: 'The Sun [is] the brightest of the heavenly bodies that go round the earth') or only what follows it (so: 'the brightest of the heavenly bodies that go round the earth'). I shall again not try to answer this question; choosing either option should not affect our overall discussion.

Now, (L1) is grammatically special; that is because it contains a superlative, namely, the word 'brightest' (*λαμπρότατόν*).[119] This makes things quite straightforward. I put aside, for now, the issue of how or why we know that the Sun is the brightest celestial body; the statement itself successfully picks out a unique object. I also set aside pedantic issue of having two bodies of

[118] Bostock (p.235-6) offers a long and comprehensive discussion about whether the *logos* Socrates is searching for must be a definition which comprises the *essence* of what is defined (if we accept that we are in search of a definition). In short, I agree with Bostock that this does not seem to be a necessity for Socrates here.

[119] This is not to say that only a superlative can achieve the results I shall mention. Similarly, a specification, say, "Earth is the *third* planet from the Sun" would achieve the same type of result.

equal brightness; this issue will inevitably soon cross our path when we discuss the subsequent *logoi*.

There are two ways of understanding (L1). The first is to assume that it is a successful demarcating sentence. It mentions an attribute only the Sun has, namely, that it is the brightest of the celestial bodies, which can differentiate it from everything else. The second way to understand (L1) is to assume that Socrates offers a definition based on *genus* and *differentia*. Cornford (p.159, fn.1, and p.161-3) believes that this cannot be the case, and that is why Plato uses the term διαφορότης instead of διαφορά, so as to not lead the reader to assume that this is a genus-differentia definition. I am hesitant to adopt Cornford's view, as Plato also uses the verb διαφέρει (208d7) literally to explain whether or not the object in question differs from other objects (of the same type). Further, in the coming example (concerning Theaetetus), he mentions both the verb (διαφέρει, 209d5) and noun to explain that the chosen mark does not separate Theaetetus from other humans, and 'humans' can very plausibly stand for the genus from which we must pick out – via differentiating mark – Theaetetus. We shall see why this discussion is important.

In the following text, we get more evidence regarding how we can understand the current *logos*. Based on (L1), Socrates continues with the following remarks:

> [T5.2, 208d5-e6]
>
> S: Well, let me tell you why I said that. It was to bring out what we were saying just now: that if you get hold of the differentiation of anything, by which it differs from everything else, then

some people say you will have got hold of a logos; whereas, as long as you grasp something common, your logos will be about those things to which the common quality belongs.

T: I understand; and it seems to me that it is right to call something of that sort a logos.

S: And anyone who, along with a correct belief about any of the things which are, gets hold of its differentiation from everything else as well, will have come to have knowledge of that thing, of which he previously was a believer.

T: Yes, that is what we are saying.

Socrates here further elaborates on how the *logos* functions. We may have a *logos* without a differentiating mark; this *logos* [L*] falls short of the *logos* we are looking for in our definition of knowledge. It falls short because while we are looking for a *logos* of, say, O_1, L* gives us a *logos* of *O*, where *O* is a set of things O_1 belongs to. In other words, L* gives us a common feature, not one that is peculiar or exclusive to O_1. This vindicates my suggestion that we are moving from the *oikeion* demand of the Dream to the (stricter) demand that the *logos* is *idios* to the object in question. In our current Sun example, imagine saying that 'the Sun is a celestial body'. Without the differentiating mark that it is the *brightest* of those bodies, we might well be talking about the Moon. Notice, however, that the mark on its own cannot do the job either. To say that the Sun is the brightest body (let us charitably assume that we can provide the word 'body' or 'object') without qualifying out of which bodies I am to choose, I can assume it is the brightest of all the light bulbs in my house, or the brightest of all bodies *simpliciter*, and we know that that is not a fact (i.e. there are brighter suns in the universe). The Sun is the brightest of the bodies

that go around the Earth.[120] This very much looks like a *genus* and *differentia* way of sorting things.

However, this may raise the following issue. L* does seem to succeed at picking out sets or groups of things or universals. A standard view, supported by Aristotle (for instance, *Metaphysics* 1039b27-30 through to 1040a7, and elsewhere), suggests that this is what a definition should and can do: define universals and not particulars. In our current case, the superlative makes the point a bit obscure, but in the following examples, the point becomes more explicit. The *logoi* we shall examine would presumably work if we were inquiring about something different; if instead of knowledge of Theaetetus, we enquire about knowledge of snubnosed people, a *logos* on the lines of 'a snubnosed person is a human that has a snub nose', can be deemed satisfactory (albeit less informative than 'human is a rational animal/biped' because the word snubnosed literally means to have a snub nose).

One might assume that this is why Plato fails to define knowledge, i.e. because he is trying to define particulars. If he had stuck to universals, he might have had a chance. This is loosely Cornford's view on the matter (replace *universals* with *Forms* to obtain Cornford's view). Arguably, Cornford could have used this argument in his favour had he allowed for the reading that we are discussing genus-differentia definitions. That is, he could have claimed that L* *logoi* are attainable, and they get the job done for universals.[121] But because Plato asks solely about

[120] Again, for simplicity, I assume that the Sun goes around the Earth (and not the other way around), and that other stars do not. This is meant as a hypothetical example, not a scientifically correct statement.
[121] I am obviously assuming without arguing for the view that Platonic Forms (which in Cornford's view are the only objects of knowledge) can stand for universals. There is extensive secondary literature on the matter, but I believe that what Aristotle had to say on this suffices. At *Metaphysics* 1078b12-32, he clearly

particulars (in Cornford's view), we end up without an answer. However, I shall claim that, even in the case of defining universals, the argument Socrates raises at the end of the dialogue is detrimental to TBL (regardless of the *logos* we choose and regardless of whether we are speaking of universals or particulars).[122]

The second issue that arises from [T5.2] is strongly connected to the grammatical distinctions regarding δοξάζειν I raise in Notes on Translation and Notation. Socrates says: "And anyone who, along with a correct belief about any of the things which are, gets hold of its differentiation from everything else as well, will have come to have knowledge of that thing, of which he previously was a believer."

Let us try to unpack what Socrates says with the help of the current Sun example. I take it that the word 'previously' (πρότερον) implies some sort of succession or order (not necessarily endorsed, but at least assumed by Socrates); I will not make strict assumptions about whether this should be taken temporally or epistemically. However, without damage to generality, let us assume a temporal example. At t_1, I δοξάζω (about) the Sun without knowing it, and at t_2, I know it. We have two variables in this case: belief and knowledge. Let us start with the latter. What can the phrase 'I know the Sun' mean? We may assume that I can recognise it and identify it when I see it, or we can start making stronger assumptions, such as that I know everything there is to know about it. This question is not easily answered, and it is arguably strongly linked, if not identical to, the main question of the dialogue (what is knowledge?). Let us now

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mentions that Platonic (rather, he mentions 'Socratic') Forms are what he refers to as universals (καθόλου), but Socrates made the error of not differentiating them from definitions (ὁρισμούς).

[122] For further reading on the matter of genus-differentia definitions and Aristotle, see Bostock: p.232-4, and Burnyeat: p.232.

look at the belief. The way Plato uses the word, having a δόξα regarding the Sun, can mean either of two things:

(i) I can identify the Sun (similar to the previous case of knowledge as the ability to identify – see fn. 48 on this reading).

(ii) I can have a belief about the Sun, say, that it is bright.

Again, one might see where the discussion is leading. If identification is reserved for the case when we have knowledge, how can we assume that my belief is about the Sun if this belief does not involve identifying it, and identifying involves knowledge, which I have not assumed I have? To demonstrate these points, Socrates will now shift the object of example to Theaetetus himself.

Socrates first expresses his reservations about the meaning for *logos* currently discussed (208e8-10). He then goes on to unpack his reservations about whether there can possibly be a *logos* that differentiates a thing from everything else (209a1-b1), and he demonstrates these reservations using Theaetetus as an example.

> [T5.3, 209b3-c11]
>
> S:[…] Suppose my thought was that Theaetetus is the one who is a human, and has a nose, eyes, a mouth, and so on with each part of the body. Now, could that thought make it Theaetetus that I have in my thought, any more than Theodorus, or, as one might say, the last of the Mysians?
>
> T: No, how could it?

S: And if I have in my thought not merely the one who has a nose and eyes, but the one with a snub nose and prominent eyes, it still will not be you that I have in my belief any more than myself or anyone else who is like that, will it?

T: No.

S: In fact it will not, I think, be Theaetetus who figures in a belief in me until precisely that snubness has imprinted and deposited in me a memory trace different from those of the other snubnesses I have seen, and similarly with the other things you are composed of. Then if I meet you tomorrow, that snubness will remind me and make me believe correctly about you.

This passage is dense with information and offers us three *logoi*, of which only one, we may assume, fits the meaning currently under discussion.

The first two are similar in that they fail to pick out Theaetetus specifically because they can refer to many things, presumably things that belong to the same genus as Theaetetus.

(L2) Theaetetus is (the one who is) a human and has a nose, eyes, a mouth, and so on with each part of the body.

(L3) [Theaetetus is (the one who is) a human] with a snub nose and prominent eyes.

Clearly, L2 picks out more things than L3. Arguably, L2 is a basic example of a *logos* that falls short of the kind of *logos* we are looking for because it does not offer a differentiating mark, for we may presume that all humans have a nose, eyes, mouth, etc. In other words, L2 is an example of an L* *logos*; so, L2 is meant to demonstrate the case where Socrates has a correct belief about Theaetetus (209a1-3), namely that he is a human, but he lacks a *logos* for Theaetetus.

In turn, L3 takes us a step further. It offers a differentiating mark (two actually: a snub nose and prominent eyes); however, these do not succeed in picking out Theaetetus. Now, this is an interesting case. L3 has definitely narrowed down the list of things from 'human' to 'human with some specific characteristics'. Furthermore, it has defined a set of things by conjunction. So, first, we are offered the genus from which to pick out our object: human. Arguably, there are also some animals with snub noses and/or prominent eyes, so we have to know where to look. Then, 'human with snub nose' narrows down the list, yet it contains those who have prominent eyes and those who do not. The conjunction shows that we can further narrow down our list to those humans that have not only a snub nose but also prominent eyes. Socrates puts forth the apparent objection that he himself has these characteristics,[123] so this *logos* can be as much of himself as it is of Theaetetus. Hence, L3 is also a type of L*, albeit an improvement on L2.

Let us pause at this point to consider two things. First, recall what the Dream mentioned: the *logos* of what we know must be *oikeion* (202a6) to it (or at least we are meant to assume this – see fn.2). Of course, the Dream supposes that what we (potentially) know must be a compound, but leaving this demand aside, the *oikeion* demand does not look out of place in the current discussion; it has just become stricter, as I suggest it must be *idion* (I shall return to this below). The *special*, as I have rendered it, *logos*, must belong to the thing we (assumedly) know, and it cannot belong to anything else. This matter is exactly what we must confront again. Throughout the discussion about Dreams (i.e. the original Dream and its amendment, 202d-208b), we assumed that this *oikeios logos* might be obtained by listing (with or without order) the

[123] Theodorus has early on mentioned that Socrates and Theaetetus both have a snub nose and prominent eyes, though the latter not as much as the former (…προσέοικε δὲ σοὶ τήν τε σιμότητα καὶ τὸ ἔξω τῶν ὀμμάτων· ἧττον δὲ ἢ σὺ ταῦτ' ἔχει, 143e8-144a1).

constitutive elements of the thing we know. The conjunction in the current discussion looks like an effort to do a similar thing via a list of characteristics or traits the thing has. But instead of looking internally at what makes up the object in terms of constituents (elements), the current option looks at the object from the outside, so to speak, and how one may characterise it or speak of it.

However, a question arises. The conjunction only lists two traits, and it fails. Presumably, Socrates could have continued in order to narrow the list even further to the point where the intersection of all the listed traits uniquely picked out Theaetetus. For instance: 'Theaetetus is the human with a snub nose, and prominent eyes, and red hair, and is 5 feet 10 inches tall, etc.', to the point where no other human could simultaneously satisfy all the characteristics in the conjunction.

Presumably, the aforementioned thought could work if we came across all objects in existence, at least all humans (from which we pick out Theaetetus), and then we were able to affirm that the *logos* we have for Theaetetus is truly unique to him. At this point, we see that the earlier demand (of the Dream) that the *logos* be *oikeios* to the object is not strong enough. The *logos* may be *oikeios* to the object but also other objects; hence, by requesting that the *logos* is unique to the object, we must assume that *oikeios* must be replaced by something stronger, such as *idios*.

The first objection to the above is that we would need to see all humans, and this seems impossible to do, even if we charitably do not include those who are deceased in the list of

humans we need to come across.[124] But even if we assume the previous task is achievable, the next objection arises: how can we know that the *logos* we have taken to be unique to Theaetetus will continue to be so in the future? In other words, there might be some human in the future who, although not Theaetetus himself, may fit what we previously assumed was a *logos* unique only to Theaetetus. I take it that these types of objections are addressed by Socrates when he assumes that L2 could fit 'the last of the Mysians', who, for all we know (because we have not met him), can share all the characteristics we can list for Theaetetus. The same would hold for L3 and any L* type of *logos*.

The second point I wish to mention is linked to the first. Instead of exploring the aforementioned option of assuming that the *logos* can be a conjunction of characteristics, Socrates jumps to his last example of *logos*:

> (L4) [Theaetetus is (the one who is) a human] with snub nose X, where X is the specific snubnosedness of Theaetetus' nose.[125]

Does Socrates' jump to L4 leave open the option that the list-of-characteristics solution could have worked, at least in theory? I claim not. The objection that follows (fully examined in 5.4) applies equally to L4, as well as the assumed list solution. But first, let me say a few words about L4.

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[124] This would cover one (of two options – the other is to accept uncertainty) we find in of Sextus Empiricus (*Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, Book II, Chapter 15, Section 204).

[125] By this point, it is not clear, or even necessary, that this *logos* needs to be expressed in words. I shall claim below that even a mental image can stand in for *logos* and Socrates allows this to show that the main problem lies with *accompaniment*.

The majority of scholars suggest that L4 is meant to make the reader think of the Wax Tablet model (191c). This assumption is crucial for Burnyeat as it fits in with his overall reading of the dialogue; this reading has grown popular amongst scholars, e.g. Gill (2012) supports a similar version. This reading suggests that the Theaetetus sub-textually favours a model where knowledge is an amalgam of the definitions discussed in the dialogue, i.e. perception, true belief, and *logos*. In this case, L4 demonstrates this amalgam.[126] Socrates perceives Theaetetus and forms an imprint of him in his Wax memory Tablet; more specifically, he has an imprint of his nose and its specific snubness. He has then formed a true belief about Theaetetus, and the next time he sees him, he will recognise him based on the imprint.[127]

The strongest objection against this view has yet to come, and it is the same that applies to any potential meaning for *logos*. However, let us address the invocation of the Wax Tablet. It is evident that memory has to somehow come into play. That was one of the main reasons the Wax Tablet model was introduced in the first place. Furthermore, all the options the interlocutors have been examining presuppose that we are dealing with a knower who has at least some basic memory function in order to speak (206d-e), in order to enumerate and recite the parts of something (206e-208d), in order to remember some differentiating mark (current discussion), or even earlier, to remember, say, what happened at a crime scene (201b-c). So, memory is not a novel component introduced in the current discussion. Furthermore, the Wax

[126] I shall clarify in 6.1 that by this point in the dialogue, Burnyeat believes that Plato is discussing knowledge of particulars. One can claim that the view Burnyeat puts forward here is that the way to secure reference to a particular object involves both a descriptive and a causal element.
[127] In this case recognition is a correct fitting/matching of a memory imprint with a perception, as per the Wax Tablet model.

Tablet model was just that, a model. I do not see a reason to further expand on it, even if Plato alludes to it here.

I suggest that Plato employs L4 as a final, broadly encompassing, and charitable option. That is, let us assume that we do not need a list of characteristics – let us accept that we can make do with just one trait (the specific snubness of Theaetetus' nose). Let us further assume that we have a (mental) image of the trait that makes the thing we know different from everything else. Even more, let us assume that this image itself can act as the *logos*, i.e. we do not need to express the picture in words.[128] Even with such loose demands, the pressing question will persist. How can I *know* that the *logos* I have chosen (be it a list, picture, or description) does not fit anything outside the set of things we have chosen to examine? At this point, one might invoke causal theories for knowledge; however, if knowledge is to be ἀψευδὲς (152c5), causal theories cannot work. A causal relationship with the object of knowledge would work in the case of finite sets described above (putting problems that concern perception aside), where we can assume that the set of things we consider is the set of all things I have encountered ("seen" – ἑώρακα, 209c7), at best – given that I actually remember everything I have seen; otherwise, the set is even smaller. But if knowledge is to be ἀψευδής (ἀψευδὲς, 152c5), this cannot work because what I claim to know will not necessarily be true outside the set of things I have seen. Causal theories suggest a weaker view of knowledge, which Socrates does not seem to adopt. If we are to know an object, we must unerringly know its differentiating mark that can help us pick it out. The request to *know* that this truly is a uniquely differentiating mark (i.e. the mark we claim can get

[128] One might even assume that memory (imprints) is(/are) introduced to show the weakness of relying on *logos* for particulars and their differentiating mark(s).

the job done) shall be the stepping stone that Socrates will use to drive his point home and conclude the dialogue.[129]

We have reached this point, i.e. the end of the dialogue, without having to address this issue because we allowed for the aforementioned verbs (*make/produce* (ποιεῖν), *render/convey* (ἀποδοῦναι), *have* (ἔχειν), *get hold* (λαμβάνης)) to stand in as our relation to the sought *logos*. It shall soon become apparent that these verbs simply stood as placeholders for what we are trying to define: knowledge.

5.3 On Burnyeat's Division of *Logoi*

Before examining Socrates' final argument, it is worth addressing Burnyeat's view about the kind of *logos* that might, in his view, get the job done.

Burnyeat examines two separate, as he suggests, kinds of *logoi*:[130]

> L_r: *Logos* is the ability to say how to recognise *o*
>
> L_u: *Logos* is the ability to cite a uniquely individuating description of *o*

An example of L_r would be the one Socrates offers: "The Sun [is] the brightest of the heavenly bodies that go round the earth." An example of L_u would be: "Theaetetus is the son of Euphronius."

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[129] There are actually two questions here: how I know that the *logos* is correct (i.e. it really picks out the object) and how do I grasp the *logos*. I shall return to this issue below.

[130] I have derived these *logoi* from the types of definitions Burnyeat claims we should consider (p.220-1):

> $K_{o(r)}$: Knowing *o* is having true judgement concerning *o* with the ability to say how to recognize *o*
> $K_{o(u)}$: Knowing *o* is having true judgement concerning *o* with the ability to cite a uniquely individuating description of *o*.

Burnyeat points out that L_r offers a basis for recognising or identifying an object, whereas L_u does not, despite being a (we may assume) successful demarcation. Each picks out a unique object; however, L_u demarcates without offering any characteristic that can be identified via perception. This is important for Burnyeat, as he believes that knowledge is an amalgam of perception and true belief (or 'judgement', as he chooses to translate δόξα).[131] Hence, he favours L_r, which offers a basis for recognition that depends on the senses. This is a distinction that one can possibly draw from the two examples of *logoi* Burnyeat offers, and this reading strongly depends on Socrates' mentioning of "having seen" (ἑώρακα, 209c7) Theaetetus' snub nose. Burnyeat believes that Socrates here invokes the Wax Tablet model and interprets what Socrates says accordingly.

If we unpack Burnyeat's view, we have two acts linked to perception. The first is seeing Theaetetus and his snub nose for the first time and making a memory imprint. The second is seeing Theaetetus for the second time, comparing (or fitting/matching) the sense impression with the already existing memory imprint, and recognising him as the same person.

Like Bostock (VI.3), Burnyeat discusses contemporary causal theories for knowledge at this point. However, I do not believe that this discussion aids Burnyeat's view.

The first issue is whether Socrates thinks it is necessary to have an initial perceptual experience when he refers to *seeing*. I believe not. I suggest that he is simply broadening the sense of *logos*; i.e. we are no longer assuming just statements/articulations. We can assume anything we want

[131] I shall examine Burnyeat's view in more depth in 6.1. Here, I should mention again that Burnyeat views knowledge in this way when it comes to particulars, for which, he believes, Plato (sub-textually) allows knowledge of.

at this point because it becomes obvious that *logos* is no longer the problem. The problem is what we mean by saying that the *logos* 'accompanies' the true belief. But, I shall leave my suggestion aside for now and argue for it later.

Another issue is that if we adhere to Burnyeat's view, how can we explain knowledge of non-perceptible/abstract objects? To this, Burnyeat, like many other scholars, can object and claim that, at this point, Socrates is not discussing abstract objects (or 'non-concrete' as Cornford would call them). Let us assume that the discussion really has shifted solely to perceptible objects. It is not at all necessary that I need to have an initial experience of perception before I am able to recognise something (if the ability to recognise is really what Socrates is now after). As Bostock also mentions (p.232, and references Kripke (1980)), I might 'inherit' a proper name from someone else, and (I add) I might also inherit a demarcating description. Assume I have never seen Big Ben, not even in a picture. Surely, when I visit London, I will know when I see it if I have a good enough description of it (and giving a sufficient description to recognise Big Ben seems easy enough).[132]

Now, one may object in the following way. Someone who has a(n) (inherited) demarcating description of this sort is in a state of true belief rather than knowledge, similar to having a true belief about the way to Larissa without ever having been to Larissa. This might seem like a valid objection, save that Burnyeat has allowed for a looser view of what knowledge is (i.e. no

[132] The point I am trying to raise, and should soon become clearer, is not that true belief might count as knowledge but that one can assume that true belief can meet Burnyeat's demands for knowledge.
Also, one might ask whether this means recognising Big Ben or recognising it as (the) Big Ben or just correctly applying a name and a description to an object. For all we know, we could have made a similar application had we encountered a (not the) Big Ben in (e.g.) Las Vegas. For a discussion on this topic, see 6.2.

longer infallible) by assuming the initial perception (and perception is not infallible[133]); so under his view, it is hard to discern knowledge from true belief. Therefore, I fail to see where Burnyeat draws the line, so to speak, between true belief and knowledge.[134]

The second issue is whether Socrates thinks that it is necessary to have a second perceptual experience, even if we accept my previous point and consider the second as actually the first one. Let me explain. In my previous Big Ben example or the *Meno's* way to Larissa, is one who sees/experiences them in any better position regarding recognition than one who has not but has sufficient descriptions? Of course, one who sees Big Ben might be able to offer more descriptions (or have more memory-imprints); however, if the objective is the ability to recognise, as Burnyeat suggests, both qualify. The only difference is that the one who has seen Big Ben (and recognised it) has also proved their ability to recognise it. Proof and ability, however, are two different things. Burnyeat might claim that all this is correct; still, the person who has seen Big Ben has a more reliable ability. This is true; however, the moment we start discussing degrees of reliability/ability, we have left behind the infallible, hit-or-miss kind of

[133] One might hold the view that perception is simply factive, so infallibility is not an issue here. However, as Socrates mentions, knowledge is *infallible* and of *what is* (I shall return to this issue below). So, perception, at least according to the previous, can be correct or false, based on how accurately it captures *what is*. I shall not expand on this discussion as it requires a broad examination of the first definition (Knowledge is Perception).

[134] Perhaps Burnyeat's suggestion can unfold in the following way. I have a true belief about the way to Larissa. I then walk to Larissa, see it, and confirm my true belief. The next time I walk to Larissa, I re-affirm what I previously experienced (the way to Larissa), and this could count as knowledge. Two objections here: i) How can we be certain that one perceptual experience (one walk to Larissa) is enough for the next time to count as knowledge – remember the boy in the *Meno* had to do more than just come up with the solution once; ii) The 'last of the Mysians' argument applies in this case: how do we know that the way to Larissa is not identical to some other road that does not have Larissa at its end? (The latter objection can perhaps lead to a regressive argumentation; "if it is identical, it must be the same" – "if it is the same, what makes it so?"… The latter is in effect the question we are seeking an answer to.)

knowledge Socrates has described (and that Burnyeat believed Socrates held earlier in the dialogue, see 4.5).

Finally, let me offer a counterexample to Burnyeat's view. The assumption was that we need some basis for recognition that will utilise one of, or some of, the senses. For instance, the sense of sight will be used in the case of 'the Sun is the brightest of heavenly bodies that go around the earth'. Let us assume that I have the same cognitive grasp (whatever this may be) of 'the Sun is the brightest of heavenly bodies that go round the earth' and of 'Theaetetus is the son of Euphronius'. Burnyeat argues that I do not have a way to recognise Theaetetus by way of perception. I do not believe this is entirely accurate. Under certain circumstances, I could, just like it is under certain circumstances that I would recognise the Sun. For instance, given that I can see and that I must be able to see the Sun and not live in a cave from which I emerge only during the night. So, assume that I am in Athens and I see Euphronius, with whom I have been acquainted. He, in turn, yells toward a crowd: 'my son, come here'. Given my grasp of the aforementioned *logos*, I can identify the young man who turns and walks toward Euphronius as Theaetetus. As Burnyeat requests, I have used my senses, hearing and seeing, to recognise Theaetetus based on the *logos* I had of/about him. All of Burnyeat's demands have been met.[135] One might object and claim that, in my example, one must assume stronger cognitive processes, such as inferences, assumptions about the person approaching, and perception of an object that is not the object in question, i.e. not Theaetetus but his father. This is all correct. But the same

[135] In order to answer the possible objection that Euphornius might have two sons, we can simply amend the *logos* to 'Theaetetus is the *only* son of Euphronius' or 'Theaetetus is the *eldest* son of Euphronius' (according to whether we choose to amend the example or the *logos* – in the latter case we can assume an amended example of Euphronius calling Theaetetus that fits the new *logos*); these would still count as an L_u type of *logos*.

holds for the cases corresponding to Burnyeat's view. That is, when I first see Theaetetus, I must assume that he is not wearing a prosthetic nose, I evaluate the accuracy of my senses and the impact of environmental conditions on my perception, etc. So, I take it that the two cases are equivalent (at least based on the criteria Socrates has provided) and that Burnyeat's division is not a necessary one.

Throughout this section, there are two separate (nevertheless, related) issues: (a) Is the assumed *logos* (or what it expresses) the differentiating mark of the thing in question? and (b) How is it that one grasps this mark? I take it that Burnyeat's suggestion attempts to answer both; he suggests a (kind of) *logos* that can stand as a differentiating mark, and he suggests how one grasps it (via imprint on the Wax Tablet, following perception). My disagreement has been with the first issue. Burnyeat's view on the latter issue is a plausible interpretation of the passage (i.e. the allusion to the Wax Tablet, which most scholars would agree with); however, I do not agree with Burnyeat that it can feature as part of a solution that would allow for the definition of knowledge to hold. Even if Socrates is alluding to the Wax Tablet, what he will soon say (see the following section) cannot be reconciled with holding onto the model.

5.4 The Final Argument

At this late stage in the dialogue, Socrates delivers the decisive blow, not only to the current meaning for *logos*, but to the definition of knowledge itself.

> [T5.4, 209d1-210b3]
>
> S: So correct belief about anything, too, would seem to be about its differentness.

T: Evidently.

S: Well then, what about getting hold of a logos in addition to one's correct belief: what is left for it to be? Because if, on the one hand, it means adding a belief as to how the thing differs from everything else, the instructions turn out to be quite absurd.

T: In what way?

S: When we already have a correct belief as to how something differs from everything else, those instructions tell us to add a correct belief as to how that same thing differs from everything else. On those lines, 'the turning of a treadmill' would be nowhere near right as a description of them; they might more justly be called a case of a blind man telling one the way. Because telling us to add something we already have in order to get to know what we have in our belief looks like the behaviour of someone who is well and truly in darkness.

T: And if, on the other hand … ? You put forward a hypothesis just now as if you were going to state another: what was it going to be?

S: If, oh child, when it tells us to add a logos, it is telling us to get to know, rather than believe, the differentness, then we will have an amusing thing in this most admirable of our accounts of knowledge. Because to get to know is surely to get hold of knowledge, is it not?

T: Yes.

S: So when one is asked what knowledge is, it appears that he will answer that it is correct belief together with knowledge of differentness. Because that is what adding a logos would be, according to it.

T: Apparently.

S: And when we are investigating knowledge, it is folly to say it is correct belief together with knowledge, whether of differentness or of anything else. So it would seem, Theaetetus, that knowledge is neither perception, nor true belief, nor a logos added to true belief.

T: Apparently not.

A great volume of information is packed in [T5.4], where, I shall claim, Socrates raises three questions.

At the beginning of [T5.4], Socrates summarises the point he was making earlier[136] ("So correct belief about anything, too, would seem to be about its [i.e. the thing itself] differentness"), and raises the first question [Q1]: if *logos* is to be understood as a differentiating mark – i.e. that via which we pick out *O*, and we assume that at the level of belief about *O*, we did not have *O*'s *logos*, how can we claim that the true belief was really about *O* to begin with? In other words, how were we able to have a true belief specifically about *O* if we assume we do not have the ability or the means to pick out *O*? This question implies that the option of taking *logos* to be a differentiating mark and (at the same time) what gets us from a true belief about[137] an object to knowledge of the object, is a non-starter. We cannot even assume a true belief about an object without a differentiating mark.

In the remaining part of [T5.4], Socrates raises the remaining two questions. Assume we do have knowledge of *O* and that we also have a true belief about *O* (despite the problem raised in Q1). We must then assume that, somehow, we have gained a grasp of *O*'s *logos*. However, this

[136] This point can be traced in [T5.3] and [T5.5] (see below).
[137] I use 'about' but my reading applies also to cases where we choose 'of' (i.e. Rowett's rendition of δόξα – see fn.48).

grasp must be another cognitive state in addition to the true belief about *O*. Socrates explores the option that this grasp is another [Q2] true belief or it is [Q3] knowledge.

I shall further expand and argue for my reading of [T5.4], but first, I shall address an issue regarding the secondary literature.

Almost all secondary literature uses the word 'dilemma' when addressing Socrates' final argument.[138] However, it is unclear what precisely each scholar assumes the two horns of the dilemma are. It seems very probable that the first horn involves Socrates' talk about a true belief about *logos*, whereas the second horn has to do with knowledge of *logos*. Broadly speaking, the second horn corresponds to Q3. The ambiguity or obscurity concerns the first horn and whether scholars take Q1, Q2, or both, to comprise it. It is difficult to formulate the first horn in a way that would fit all the different readings, and I am not sure in some cases what these readings are. Therefore, I shall proceed via hypotheses regarding the dilemma's first horn and subsequently clarify my own position.

Let me begin by connecting the two horns to the respective problems they raise. On the one hand, if we have a true belief about *O* [TB(O)] and a true belief about *O*'s *logos* [TB(L)], knowledge of *O* [K(O)] can be formulated as:

$$K(O) = TB(O) + TB(L)$$

We can identify the following problems with this option. First, it seems that somehow one (true) belief is not knowledge, but a string of two (true) beliefs is knowledge, and this seems

[138] See McDowell, Bostock, Fine (this list is not exhaustive).

counterintuitive. Second, if the second belief was added to the first in order to specify what it (the first) was about, should we not assume we need to add a third [TB(LL)] to the second in order to specify the second and so on? This would lead to an infinite regress, which we can formulate as:

$$K(O) = TB(O) + TB(L) + TB(L_L) + \ldots$$

So, the main problem, in this case, is that assuming we have a true belief about the *logos*, we end up with an infinite regress. I assume that (different) scholars include either Q1 or Q2 or both under this reading. The first problem (string of beliefs) can be understood as illustrating the inability of the belief to pick out what it is we know, and if one belief cannot do that, why would more succeed? So, we should not assume that the initial belief on its own was able to pick out the object (but this is something we assumed was done by the *logos*). The second problem (infinite regress) illustrates what can happen if we assume we grasp the *logos* via some belief, but we have assumed that belief cannot get a firm grasp, so to speak, so we need another belief, and so on. At this point, one might argue that Q2 collapses into Q1, as they both demonstrate the problem of what happens if we assume that the act of picking out the object belongs solely to knowledge – either we cannot assume a true belief, to begin with, or we end up adding beliefs *ad infinitum* without ever reaching knowledge.

On the other hand, the second horn (what I claim corresponds to Q3) is more straightforward. If we assume that we do not have a true belief about *logos* but rather we have knowledge of *logos*, we can formulate as follows:

$$K(O) = TB(O) + K(L)$$

In this case, we have an apparent circularity: knowledge appears both in the definiens and the definiendum. To many, this explicates the 'Knowledge is Based on Knowledge' principle. To Fine, this circularity is not a problem because Plato actually endorses this principle, and he is telling us that knowledge of one thing (*O*) is based on knowledge of something else (*L*), which on its own does not sound so absurd.

Let me now contrast my understanding with what was mentioned above. Q1 and Q2 cannot be addressed in the same horn, and Q2 does not collapse into Q1. To demonstrate my case, I shall reformulate the problems.

First, we must precisify Q1. The problem here is not simply that a string of (true) beliefs cannot get the job done or that we end up with an infinite regress; these are corollaries. The crucial issue, as I mentioned above, is that this option is a non-starter; we cannot even assume TB(O) because the true belief cannot be specifically about *O*. But if, for the sake of argument, we assume the true belief can be about *O*, then we must assume that we were able to differentiate *O* via the initial true belief. The true belief about the *logos* was, we must assume, already part of the initial true belief. Therefore, our formulation should be[139]:

$$K(O) = TB(O + TB(L))$$

Further, if one wants to expand to the problem of infinite regress, we should write:

[139] One might prefer to formulate this as K(O) = TB(O + L) in order to make it clearer that there is actually only one belief. The point is that even if we assume a second belief, it is part of the first. Likewise for the following formulation: $K(O) = TB(O + L + L_{L+\ldots})$.

$$K(O) = TB(O + TB(L + TB(L_L + \ldots)))$$

Each new true belief we assume is encapsulated in the previous one, and ultimately, all are part of the initial true belief.

In turn, Q2 and Q3 can be formulated as follows:

$$K(O) = TB(O) + X(L)$$

For X = TB, we have Q2:

$$K(O) = TB(O) + TB(L)$$

For X = K, we have Q3:

$$K(O) = TB(O) + K(L)$$

Of course, in the case of Q2, the infinite regress problem reappears: $K(O) = TB(O) + TB(L) + TB(L_L) + \ldots$; however, in this case, each added belief does not feature as part of the previous one(s).

Before moving on to the importance of the reading I suggest, I should mention that I am not the only one to stress the difference between Q1 and Q2. As I mentioned, some scholars do take Q1 to be a separate problem, but it is unclear whether it belongs in the first horn of the suggested dilemma.

There are two scholars I would like to mention that address the issue. First, Chappell (p.229) seems to also point to the distinction I draw (Chappell retains the Greek *semeion* in place of differentiating mark):

> […] [So,] knowledge of (say) Theaetetus consists in true belief about Theaetetus plus an account of what differentiates Theaetetus from every other human.
>
> Socrates offers two objections to this proposal. First, if knowledge of Theaetetus requires a mention of his semeion, then so does true belief about Theaetetus. Second, to possess "an account of Theaetetus' semeion" must mean either (a) having a true belief about that semeion, or else (b) having knowledge of it.

The first objection Chappell mentions addresses Q1. Points (a) and (b) of the second objection address Q2 and Q3, respectively. Here, one can also better understand the confusion that arises on the topic: are the two horns of the dilemma meant to correspond to the two objections (in this case, the second horn of the dilemma would comprise Q2 and Q3) or the "…either…or…" of the second objection, or is it meant to cover all cases somehow?

Peramatzis[140] has also noticed the distinction and addresses the problem head-on, suggesting a trilemma:

> (i): The logos (semeion) of Theaetetus is already part of the true belief about Theaetetus.
>
> (ii): To have a logos (semeion) of Theaetetus is to have a true belief about the logos; however, this true belief about the logos is different from the true belief about Theaetetus.

[140] Unpublished manuscript.

(iii): To have a logos (semeion) of Theaetetus is to know the logos.

Horn (i) corresponds to Q1, whereas (ii) and (iii) correspond to Q2 and Q3, respectively. Peramatzis clarifies in (ii) that the true belief about the *logos* must be different from the true belief about Theaetetus (whereas in (i), the initial true belief and the true belief about the *logos* are numerically the same). In my suggestion, by "different", we should understand "distinguishable"; that is, the second true belief is not encapsulated in the first (I do not think this, in effect, changes my reading from Peramatzis').

I shall now move on to the textual evidence that supports my reading, and at the end of this section, I shall look at its upshots.

Following the reading I suggest, Q1 begins at:

[T5.5: 209a1-b1]

S: …Suppose I have a correct belief about you; then if I get hold of your logos as well, I know you, and if not, I merely have you in my belief.

T: Yes.

S: And a logos was to be what gives expression to your differentness.

T: Yes.

S: Well then, when I was merely believing, was it not the case that I had no grasp in my thought of any of the things by which you are different from everything else?

T: Apparently not.

S: So I had in my thought one of the common things, none of which you have to any greater extent than anyone else does.

T:Yes, that must be so.

First, we see here that knowledge is not assumed at the beginning; it is assumed to be the result/outcome of "get[ting] hold of [the] *logos* as well":

Suppose I have a correct belief about you; then if I get hold of your logos as well, I know you, and if not, I merely have you in my belief.

Second, we see the idea that the grasp of the *logos* is already encapsulated in the true belief about the object:

…when I was merely believing, was it not the case that I had no grasp in my thought of any of the things by which you are different from everything else?

Theaetetus dismisses the assumption in the following line (provides a positive answer to the question); nevertheless, it held until now. This dismissal also indicates that this option is a non-starter; we cannot assume that the initial belief was really about Theaetetus because we were not able to differentiate him from everything else, so the belief may have been about something/someone else.

In turn, Q2 is addressed in [5.4], at 209d5-e5:

S: …Because if, on the one hand, it means adding a belief as to how the thing differs from everything else, the instructions turn out to be quite absurd.

T: In what way?

> S: When we already have a correct belief as to how something differs from everything else, those instructions tell us to add a correct belief as to how that same thing differs from everything else. On those lines, 'the turning of a treadmill' would be nowhere near right as a description of them; they might more justly be called a case of a blind man telling one the way. Because telling us to add something we already have in order to get to know what we have in our belief looks like the behaviour of someone who is well and truly in darkness.

Evidently, those who subscribe to the dilemma reading (that collapses Q2 into Q1) assume that the passage starting with "…on the one hand…" still refers to the discussion in [5.3] and [T5.5]. However, in [T5.5], the belief about the differentiating mark was part of the belief about the object (Theaetetus) and ended up being "one of the common things", i.e. a mark Theaetetus shares with other people (so, not really a differentiating mark at all). The aforementioned dismissal of the assumption leads us to assume that the *logos* we are now looking for must be something else, different from those "common things" we assumed were part of the true belief about Theaetetus. Nevertheless, we now assume (apparently for the sake of argument, because one can still bring up the objection: how do we know that the belief is about Theaetetus then?) that "we already have a correct belief" about Theaetetus; only this is not what picks him out.

Some further textual clarifications are in order:

(i) The "add[ition]" (προσλαβεῖν), mentioned at 209e3, can be achieved via true belief or knowledge. The comparison between knowledge and belief here concerns how we add the *logos* to the initial true belief, which we now assume does not contain the *logos*-differentiating mark – i.e. we are under cases Q2 and Q3 (209e7-9):

> If, oh child, when it tells us to add a logos, it is telling us to get to *know*, rather than *believe*, the differentness, then we will have an amusing thing in this most admirable of our accounts of knowledge.

(I have highlighted the contrast between knowledge and belief.)

(ii) It is important to note that "to get to know" at 209e3-4 translates "ἵνα μάθωμεν". One might notice that ἐπιστήμη/ἐπίσταμαι does not feature in 209e3-5, so one might object and claim that Socrates is here considering the option of having a true belief concerning the differentness under a domain other than 'knowledge' (the 'knowledge' they are trying to define, which is referred to as ἐπιστήμη). However, this objection cannot hold because at 209e7-9, 'know' translates "γνῶναι" and apparently picks up the previous "ἵνα μάθωμεν", and in what immediately follows (209e9-210a1), Socrates clarifies that "γνῶναι" must stand for "ἐπιστήμη":[141]

> τὸ γὰρ γνῶναι ἐπιστήμην που λαβεῖν ἐστιν· ἦ γάρ;
>
> Because to get to know is surely to get hold of knowledge, is it not?

So at 209e7-9, knowledge of, and true belief about, *logos* are the two options under the assumption that we have a true belief about Theaetetus (albeit one that does not pick him out).

The way the dilemma is often presented seems to conflate Q1 and Q2. My objection is that the domains of Q1 and Q2 are different. Q1 questions the possibility that an object can be picked

[141] In support of the relation between 'learning'/'getting to know' ("ἵνα μάθωμεν") and 'knowledge' ('ἐπιστήμη'), we have seen earlier (at 206a10) that "hav[ing] learnt perfectly" ("τελέως μεμαθηκέναι") clearly implies a state of knowledge (ἐπιστήμη).

out by a true belief before assuming a grasp of its differentiating mark, whereas Q2 (together with Q3) questions how we are to understand the very *grasp* of *logos* – what was so far referred to as *accompaniment*. Let me further unpack what this means.

The argument in Q1 is that, even at the level of belief, one must already have some sort of grasp of the differentiating mark of the object the belief is about. Q2 proceeds the other way around, assuming that (in some way) we have a true belief. In order then to have knowledge, we must assume another true belief that is distinct from the first one. Where Q1 "looks" internally – every added true belief is contained in the previous true belief – to show that we cannot even have beliefs, Q2 can be seen as "linear" – every new true belief is added to a list – to show that we cannot reach knowledge.

Further, if, as the current meaning tells us, *logos* is "being able to state some mark by which the thing one is asked for differs from everything else" (208c), apart from regress, Q1 raises an important issue of epistemic priority between (true) belief and knowledge. If knowledge involves the addition of a differentiating mark of an object (in order to "pick it out") to a true belief about the same object, how is one assumed to have had the true belief about that object in the first place? One can question the possibility of having a true belief without already having knowledge (under the assumption that knowledge involves "picking out" what we know or know something about).[142]

[142] McDowell (p.257) briefly touches upon this. I tend adopt a reading such as the one we find in Williamson (2000) for Plato; that knowledge is a concept more fundamental than belief, so the former cannot be defined in terms of the latter. I shall not expand further on this here.

Under the reading I put forward, Q1 and Q2 address different parts of the dialogue. Q2 (along with Q3) answers the entire discussion on the definition: Knowledge is True Belief Accompanied by *Logos* (201c-210d).[143] We can quickly and directly refute this definition by employing the regress or circularity argument without referencing anything mentioned from 201d until 210a and, most importantly, without caring about what *logos* means.

On the other hand, if my reading is correct, Q1 addresses the final meaning for *logos* ("being able to state some mark by which the thing one is asked for differs from everything else"). What is challenged is the idea that one needs to be able to offer a *logos* that picks out an object via a differentiating mark before one has a true belief about it; this objection seems intuitively correct.[144]

5.5 Addressing *Accompaniment*

The formulation of Q2 and Q3: K(O) = TB(O) + X(L), helps to highlight wherein the overarching problem lies but also demonstrates the strength of Socrates' argument. *Logos* (L) now stands as a mere placeholder; the point is that whatever L may stand for, it must accompany TB(O), and this accompaniment is either another true belief or knowledge. The metaphorical language of

[143] This indicates that the final refutation of 'Knowledge is True Belief Accompanied by Logos' is even stronger than Bostock suggests.

[144] Say I see someone I do not know walking by on the street. I can have a true belief about that person, say, that "he or she is tall". Now, either this true belief is also that person's differentiating mark, in which case I do not need to repeat it, or it is a non-differentiating true belief (as we may assume, as the predicate "…is tall" applies to many people). But in the latter case, I have still been able to pick out the person for whom I have a true belief, so we must assume that I was able to do so without a *logos* (at least the kind suggested at 208c). The way the dialogue unfolds suggests that if we want to get any further than true belief (i.e. reach knowledge), we must assume that *logos* is a separate addition, and this addition is another true belief (Q2) or knowledge (Q3).

"grasping", "getting hold of", etc., has allowed us so far to speak about the problem without meeting it head-on. Now, Socrates raises the crucial matter: whatever *logos* stands for (ὁτουοῦν, 210a9), the grasp the knower has over it must be some cognitive state.[145]

On the one hand, some scholars assume there is a way out of the dead end we have reached. On the other hand, according to Bostock, there is no way out. I agree with Bostock, and I believe my own reading is even stronger in supporting the "no way out" option; let me explain.

First, I shall mention some points Bostock would agree with. McDowell suggests *logos* can be an answer to the "why" question (I shall try to answer "why what" exactly in the following chapter); Fine goes so far as to endorse a *logos* that is never mentioned in the *Theaetetus*. However, as Bostock points out, and as is also explicated by my above formulation of the problem, this will not solve anything. We would have, in place of L:

K(O) = TB(O) + X(answer to the question "why")

or

K(O) = TB(O) + X(Fine's 'interrelation' suggestion)

Both cases are susceptible to the 'parrot-speech' argument we saw in Chapter 4 without even addressing the problem of the X variable. If we do address the X variable problem, then the only thing we can do is assume that the regress or circularity is not vicious (Fine's suggestion). But Socrates seems to bar this option too: "it is folly to say [knowledge] is correct belief

[145] Or based on what was mentioned earlier (5.1), the cognitive state can refer to the *ability* which may or may not be part of the concept of the *logos* we are looking for.

accompanied by knowledge, whether of differentness or of anything else" (210a7-9). And this brings us to where I part ways with Bostock.

The reading I have so far endorsed, i.e. the suggestion that there is no way out of the regress-circularity argument, is often referred to as Bostock's interpretation. In my view, the interpretation comes directly from the text itself. Now, I mention this not because of how we choose to name the interpretation but because Bostock further suggests that Plato is not aware of the strength of his argument. The latter is a claim I do not agree with. Hence, the next step is to provide evidence that Plato is aware of the strength of his argument. This will bolster the reading both Bostock and I endorse, but more importantly, by bringing Plato's "awareness" to the surface, it becomes very difficult to endorse the sub-textual or hidden solutions some scholars suggest.

Now, much depends on how we interpret the statement quoted above:

> …it is folly to say [knowledge] is correct belief accompanied by knowledge, whether of differentness or of anything else. (210a7-9)

Socrates would not be legitimised to claim "…of anything else" unless he knew that what he said applies to anything else. This brings us back to the kind of argument we came across in Chapter 2: is Plato speaking through Socrates *in propria persona,* or is he using Socrates as an actor?

Those who oppose the reading that the aporia at the end of the dialogue is genuine must assume that Socrates' statement is alerting the reader that something is out of place. We have

not discussed every possible meaning *logos* may have; therefore, Socrates is not legitimised to make this claim. That means that Plato wants to tell us that *logos can* mean *something else* that would render TBL a proper definition of knowledge.[146]

Let me first mention what Plato set out to do and under which assumptions. Obviously, the task was to define knowledge; however, although we did not reach a definition, Plato qualified knowledge in two ways:[147] "*So perception, as being knowledge, is always of what is, and infallible*." (Αἴσθησις ἄρα τοῦ ὄντος ἀεί ἐστιν καὶ ἀψευδὲς ὡς ἐπιστήμη οὖσα, 152c5-6)

So, knowledge has two characteristics: it is *always of what is*, and it is *infallible*. I shall not address the first, i.e. the phrase *always of what is*; doing so would require more space than I can afford in this thesis. The claim that knowledge is *infallible* is clear and strong enough to support my argument.

The demand for infallibility dictates that if knowledge is infallible, so then must be the grasp over whatever it is one must apprehend in order to have knowledge.[148] This does not mean that a belief, or a string of beliefs, does not have its own value. After all, he who knows the way to Larissa, and he who has a true belief about it, shall achieve the same results (at least in most

[146] I assume that for Bostock, this is simply a generalisation Plato makes without realising how well it is supported by the argument he previously employed.

[147] Perhaps a clarification is in order. The following claim involves perception; however, the demands for "always of what is/what obtains" and "infallibility" apply to perception, if we are to assume that perception is knowledge. The premise is that knowledge is infallible, the assumption is that knowledge is perception, and the conclusion is that perception is infallible. The conclusion is based on the assumption and therefore not certain; the premise, on the other hand, is not questioned.

[148] Even in a deflationary reading, where by 'infallible' we should understand that 'nothing false can be known', the same argument applies. All "falsities" have been excluded by the definition (knowledge is *true* belief accompanied by *logos*), and because the *logos* must be of the object that *is* (since it features in a true belief) and the *logos* itself must now be known, it (i.e. the *logos*) must not be false.

cases). However, the demands in the *Theaetetus* are stricter and mere true belief has earlier been rejected as a definition. So, after answering Q1 and showing that the assumption that *logos* means *differentiating mark* will not do, Socrates shifts his focus to what the cognitive grasp of *logos* may be (regardless of what *logos* itself may be at this point), and both true belief and knowledge do not work.

Now, one can raise the following objection. Let us assume, as I suggest: (a) that *logos* does stand as a placeholder for anything – any possible articulation, any image, sound, smell, etc.; and (b) that the problem lies with the *accompaniment* of whatever we choose to stand in place of *logos*. Has Socrates considered all possible ways/modes of accompaniment? That is, are belief and knowledge the only cognitive means we have of grasping *logos*?

To answer this, let us revisit [T1.4]:

> [T1.4, 196d1-197a5]
>
> S: You seem not to be bearing in mind that our whole discussion, from the beginning, has been a search after knowledge (ἐπιστήμης), on the assumption that we do not know what it is.
>
> T: No, I am bearing it in mind.
>
> S: In that case, does it not seem shameless to make pronouncements about what knowing (τὸ ἐπίστασθαι) is like, when we do not know knowledge (μὴ εἰδότας ἐπιστήμην)? But in fact, Theaetetus, we have been infected, for a long time, with an impure way of carrying on our discussion. Countless times we have said 'we know' (γιγνώσκομεν), 'we do not know' (οὐ γιγνώσκομεν), 'we have knowledge' (ἐπιστάμεθα), 'we do not have knowledge' (οὐκ ἐπιστάμεθα), as if we could understand each other at all, while we are still ignorant of

knowledge (ἐπιστήμην). Even at this very moment, if you do not mind, we have used 'be ignorant' (ἀγνοεῖν) and 'understand' (συνιέναι) again, as if it were proper for us to use them when we are bereft of knowledge.

T: But, Socrates, how are you going to carry on the discussion, if you keep off those words?

S: Since I am what I am, I am not going to, though I would if I were a logic-chopper (ἀντιλογικός). If a gentleman of that kind were here now, he would have professed to keep off those words, and he would tell us off emphatically for what I am saying. Well now, since we are not clever people, would you like me to overcome my scruples and say what knowing (τὸ ἐπίστασθαι) is like? Because it seems to me that it might prove helpful.

Socrates uses several terms for knowledge throughout the entire dialogue. We now assume that *logos* is no longer the centre of our focus, but rather it is *accompaniment*. If one wishes to challenge the view that the aporia at the end of the dialogue is genuine (i.e. Plato ends the dialogue at an impasse, and there is no answer he favours or suggests to the 'what is knowledge' question), one might claim that there are several modes of cognition that can stand in for *accompaniment* that have not been investigated. Many of these modes are even mentioned by Socrates in [T1.4] via the different terms used for knowledge. Perhaps, then, some other mode of cognition/grasp of *logos* can allow for the definition to hold; I shall offer two reasons not to accept this.

It has been made clear in Chapter 1 that the word used for knowledge is consistent whenever it is mentioned as the term we are trying to define or as part of the candidate definitions, and this is the case throughout the entire dialogue (with no exception) – we are trying to define ἐπιστήμη. However, in the Dream, the word primarily used for knowledge of (or lack of it) is

γιγνώσκω. But as is evident in [T1.4], Socrates is not a logic-chopper; i.e. he allows the use of words that have not been defined yet but relate in some way to knowledge. Nevertheless, his consistency when referring to the definition leaves no ambiguity that it is ἐπιστήμη he seeks. In addition, the demands Socrates set early on for knowledge – being infallible (and always of what is/obtains) – have not been lifted, and although the discussion allows for a loose use of several terms, it is definitely the infallible ἐπιστήμη we are in search of. Even if we give into the genus-differentia view between γιγνώσκω and ἐπίσταμαι (see discussion on Lyons, Lescher, and Burnyeat, in 1.8), we are bound by the stricter demands of ἐπίσταμαι. All the other words Socrates mentions, γιγνώσκω being the most prominent, can be used for looser versions of cognition or acquaintance, and Socrates does use them. However, we cannot retain the option that there is some other mode of cognition that could fit the definition, for the unbending demands of infallibility for ἐπιστήμη can only be met by ἐπιστήμη itself.[149] Anything shorter, if we accept that γιγνώσκω and εἰδέναι do fall short of ἐπιστήμη, would be an improvement over true belief, at best. Therefore, from Socrates' viewpoint, the aporia is genuine. To be infallible demands that our mode of cognition is infallible, and the only such mode Socrates mentions is ἐπιστήμη. Even if we allow for γιγνώσκω, εἰδέναι, etc., to act as pure synonyms for ἐπιστήμη or words that signify a mode of cognition of equal strength to that of ἐπιστήμη, we would still be in the same place, i.e. in the place of having to explain the infallibility of the apprehension/grasp of *logos*. Arguably, that is what the passage: "τὸ γὰρ γνῶναι ἐπιστήμην που λαβεῖν ἐστιν· ἦ γάρ;" explicates: to know-γνῶναι is to have gotten hold of knowledge-

[149] Clarification: one might think that I am invoking a principle where X cannot be F unless its parts (or some part(s)) are F. This is not what I am alluding to. Instead, my claim is that it appears as if the cognitive grasp one has over what it is they know, depends on the cognitive grasp they have over its *logos*.

ἐπιστήμη. So, if the other words used stand for an inferior mode of cognition, we cannot attain infallibility; if the other words are synonyms for or equivalent to ἐπιστήμη, then the problem of circularity remains.

Let us now step back to address a different objection. One may claim that the aporia at the end of the dialogue is not genuine because somewhere between 152c and 210a, Socrates has relaxed his strong demands. Indeed, this is what we must assume in the case of Burnyeat's interpretation; Plato finally allows for what Burnyeat mentioned earlier (see 4.5) as a "democratic" view of knowledge (at least for particulars). Let us look at this option.

We must first assume that Socrates' statement: "knowledge is neither perception, nor true belief, nor a *logos* added to true belief", is a false statement. So, Socrates is either intentionally insincere or he is simply in confusion. In either case, we must assume that Plato is using Socrates (once again) in the dramatic setting to perform the maieutic method on the reader, and we may (if Socrates is intentionally insincere) or may not (if Socrates is just confused) assume that Socrates is doing the same to Theaetetus. This is reminiscent of our discussion in Chapter 2 regarding the so-called refutation of the Dream, where we again entertained the option that Socrates was consciously using a faulty mereological argument (as Harte, Bostock, and others suggest). As in that case, also here, I argue that Plato is not trying to perform midwifery on us. Therefore, we should take Socrates' words at face value and not assume sub-textual solutions. However, I believe the issue is much less complicated in the present case because Socrates' alleged sub-textual/hidden view is not engulfed in some long argument. It is suggested that Socrates literally articulates the exact opposite view from what he truly believes, and what we

must do is (i) assume his crucial statement is straight-out false and (ii) negate his statement to obtain the correct answer. I find this suggestion highly unlikely. Nevertheless, let us entertain this view.

Let us negate the statement: "knowledge is neither perception, nor true belief, nor a *logos* added to true belief". We then have: "knowledge is at least one of perception, true belief, a *logos* added to true belief".[150] Let the latter be NS.

Based on the discussion above, in order for Socrates to endorse NS, he must have somewhere along the way, between 152d (where he mentions the infallibility demand) and 210a-b (where he concludes that knowledge cannot be defined by any of the suggested definitions), dropped or at least loosened the infallibility demand.

The burden of proving where exactly Socrates has relaxed his demand should lie with whoever wishes to claim that Socrates endorses NS. I admit that I cannot find such textual evidence. The only objection I can consider is [T1.4], as well as any passage where Socrates uses γιγνώσκω, εἰδέναι, etc. I assume that one might claim that these words are not as strict as ἐπιστήμη; hence, this indicates Socrates' relaxed view. However, as I argued above, Socrates merely does this to not be considered a logic-chopper (he explicitly tells us so) and to allow the conversation to move forward. Nevertheless, he remains clear and consistent that it is ἐπιστήμη that we are trying to define. And as I further argued, allowing for all these different words to stand in for

[150] The negation of (¬(K=P)∧¬(K=TB)∧¬(K=TBL)) is ((K=P)∨(K=TB)∨(K=TBL)), where the disjunctions in the latter are not exclusive (xor); so K can be any (not necessarily just one) or all of P, TB, TBL.

knowledge and accompaniment was why Socrates brought an end to the muddled discussion by saying that "τὸ γὰρ γνῶναι ἐπιστήμην που λαβεῖν ἐστιν· ἦ γάρ;".

On the contrary, Socrates' vocabulary and arguments show that he never stepped back from his strict demands. I shall focus on the discussion as it unfolded from 202c onward (i.e. under the third definition of knowledge) and try to show that the demand for infallibility has not been dropped.

First, let us look to the Dream. Regardless of which interpretation one chooses to follow, one of the Dream's main maxims is that some things are knowable (compounds), whereas others are not (elements). This alone would not be a problem – we cannot know everything after all, and this was never a demand. The problem is that elements are parts of compounds, so the question is, how can we claim to know the compound if we cannot know its constituents?

Every interpretation of the Dream, at its core, faces a similar problem (if not the same); they just use different words to express it. Ryle's Logical Atomism approach asks the question of how we start with what appears as a *connaître* type of knowledge (or, in Russellian terms, how we start with an *acquaintance* of *sense data*) and end up with *savoir*. Under the view that knowledge solely concerns objects, the problem is how a set of unknown things (parts) transforms into something knowable (whole). Even in Morrow (1970), where the elements are to be understood as mathematical axioms, the problem is that which the mathematicians of the *Republic* face; that is, they cannot secure/prove infallibility because anything they claim is based on unproven axioms that we simply take for granted. The lack of a firm foundation for knowledge, whether because an axiom is not provable or because a part of a compound can only be the subject of

acquaintance/*connaître*-knowledge, is one of the features that rest at the heart of the Dream's claims. It is also what sparks Socrates' reluctance about the Dream (202d-e), i.e. the claim that elements are unknowable.

When discussing the first meaning for *logos*, the problem was that just articulating one's thought would amount to belief, not knowledge; beliefs are certainly not infallible. There is a deeper problem here: the definition of knowledge only mentions true beliefs, so the beliefs that concern us should, by definition, be infallible. However, it seems that the problem lies in the knower's awareness of his state of cognition, similar to how, in the Aviary model, a knower has to be aware of whether the bird he grasps is a piece of knowledge or non-knowledge. This grasp the knower has/performs corresponds to the accompaniment we are currently discussing.[151]

Under the second meaning for *logos*, the problem again becomes the indiscernibility between knowledge (whatever it may be) and true belief.

Under the third meaning for *logos*, the problem with L2 and L3 is that they do not sufficiently precisify what we are looking for. That is to say, a description of, say, Theaetetus will not be precise enough as it may pick out the 'last of the Mysians'; hence it is not infallible. In the cases of L1 and L4, even if we assume that they provide us with a sufficient precisification, we cannot know that they can withstand temporal objections (will they always be sufficient precisifications?), or we cannot claim that we understand what 'grasping' these *logoi* really means.

[151] Again here, there are two separate questions: how I grasp the mark and how I know it is the mark.

In all these cases, as is the case throughout the dialogue, Socrates' approach is that 'pretty good' or 'pretty close' will not do. The precision of our definition of knowledge is equal to the precision knowledge itself should provide. Knowledge cannot be "democratic" or vague.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

Introduction

This final chapter comprises three sections. In section 6.1, I shall explain where and how my reading of the *Theaetetus* (at least of 201c-210d) should be classified with regard to the secondary literature. I shall attempt to offer a bird's-eye view of the three most important kinds of interpretations the secondary literature has to offer (I shall not engage in an in-depth survey and criticism). The first view suggests that sub-textually, TBL is a good definition; the problem lies with finding a correct *logos*. So, we are to pick up from where Plato left off, disregard Socrates' concluding remarks and his regress and circularity argument, and continue our search for *logos*. The second view suggests that the impasse is genuine; however, Plato would allow for a way to overcome it, and this involves more than just finding a suitable *logos*. The third view suggests that the aporetic ending of the *Theaetetus* is genuine; there may be takeaways and lessons to learn, but Socrates' final argument is not intended to be undermined. I shall place my own reading in the last of the three groups. I shall claim that it is also the strongest by measure of how definitive the aporia really is, both for Plato and as a philosophical thesis.

In sections 6.2 and 6.3, I shall draw two distinctions and suggest that they may prove helpful in understanding more about what Plato thought of knowledge. The first distinction (6.2) is between ἐπιστήμη and ἐπιστήμων, and the second (6.3) is between active and dispositional knowledge.

6.1 How to Classify My Reading of the *Theaetetus*

I begin this section with a few disclaimers. First, this is not meant to be a survey of secondary literature; my aim is to broadly categorise the different types of interpretations one may find for the *Theaetetus*. That said, this section does not, and cannot, mention all the available interpretations. Second, there are many scholars that I shall not mention here. My criteria for choosing the ones I have are based on how representative they are within the reading I place them, how influential their reading has been, and how their reading relates to my own (either in favour or against). Third, these groupings are broad; even between scholars of the same group, one might find crucial differences (e.g. see Burnyeat and Cornford below).

The *Theaetetus* shares many structural characteristics with early-period Platonic works.[152] One of these characteristics is the impasse we are left with at the end of the dialogue. Since ancient times,[153] scholars have tried to overcome this impasse, either by assuming that Plato is sub-textually guiding the reader toward an answer or by trying to deduce some broader lesson which may or may not require us to make assumptions about the genuineness of the impasse itself. For the purpose of the current discussion, I have divided the interpretations of the ending of the *Theaetetus* into three groups.

Knowledge *Is* True Belief Accompanied by *Logos*

This view takes it that the final definition of the *Theaetetus* is not just an improvement on the previous ones, but it can actually get the job done, provided we find a suitable *logos*. In other

[152] See Bostock's introduction.
[153] See Sedley (1996).

words, the mode of investigation we find after the Dream's criticism (after 206c), i.e. trying to find a meaning for *logos* that can fit the definition, is the way to continue and get us out of the "supposed" impasse.

The basis on which one establishes this view is the assumption that Socrates omits a premise: that *logos* cannot mean something else apart from the meanings that have been examined in the dialogue.[154] Therefore, the reader may reasonably assume that *logos* can mean something else. In addition, and perhaps more importantly, we are required to overlook Socrates' final argument (as I examined it in 5.4 and 5.5) or to assume that Socrates is intentionally arguing erroneously in order to guide the reader to some answer or, as Fine suggests, we should embrace the outcome of the argument and assume that the regress or circularity is not vicious. This latter point is important because if one accepts the soundness of Socrates' final argument, then the need for a premise that explicitly says that *logos* cannot mean something else ceases to exist.

The strongest proponent of the view that TBL works is Fine, who not only assumes that *logos* can mean something else but also claims that Plato has pointed to what it is: "Knowledge of x is correct belief about x with the ability to produce accounts properly relating x to other suitably interrelated objects in the same field." (p.249) According to Fine, Plato has placed signposts in the dialogue to show us that this is the *logos* we are looking for, and hence, the answer to the aporia at the end of the dialogue. I have already disagreed in Chapter 2 with what Fine takes to be one of Plato's signposts, namely, (her interpretation of) the argument from experience of Socrates' criticism of the Dream. Even if Fine is correct in assuming that the mentioning of θέσις

[154] See McDowell (p.257-9).

(206a7) implies the *logos* she suggests, her *logos* is susceptible not only to the regress and circularity argument at the end of the dialogue but also to the parrot speech argument we saw in Chapter 4. If one follows my analysis in Chapter 5, the word 'ability' in Fine's *logos* still acts as a placeholder for 'accompaniment'; so, even if one were able to produce such a *logos*, we would still have reason to doubt the basis on which this *logos* was produced (the knower might recite the *logos* by heart, without understanding anything of what is being recited). In turn, this would lead to the question of what exactly this ability entails, and as Socrates exhibited, we have two options: the 'ability' to produce the *logos* is based either on true belief or on knowledge. Fine sees nothing wrong with this.

Setting aside my criticism of Fine's suggested solution and Bostock's criticism (p.243-250), I believe Fine's view might be more readily accepted if one adopted a different approach. If we allow for a non-infallible type of knowledge (see discussions in 4.5, 6.2, and 6.3), perhaps we can allow for a more contemporary view of knowledge based on credence. The higher the number of interrelations, the more corroborated and strong the belief becomes.[155] So, having a sufficiently strong belief would qualify as knowledge. Nevertheless, although this view has philosophical value, it cannot be found in the *Theaetetus*. Furthermore, it requires that we ignore or doubt Socrates' sincerity in his closing remarks (that none of the definitions examined fit knowledge).

McDowell is more cautious than Fine in that he raises the view that we should not dismiss TBL as a possibility, but he does not insist that there is a hidden solution. McDowell assumes that

[155] See also Karasmanis (2018) for an interpretation of a coherency theory in the *Meno*.

logos may very well be an answer to a "why?" question. Of course, any *logos*-answer will always be susceptible to the regress or circularity argument at the end of the dialogue, but let us look deeper into McDowell's suggestion.

One might ask: what exactly does "why?" refer to? In other words, what does the *logos* aim to answer? There are at least two ways of looking at this issue: to ask whether it is an answer to a "why p?" question or to "why A believes/knows that p?".[156] We may add the proviso that, in this case, p refers to a special proposition-definition in order to retain the common assumption that we are discussing objectual knowledge (however, this raises the question that if definitions are basic, then is there anything prior to them on the basis of which we could know them?). However, how the "why?" question functions in the case of objectual knowledge is not clear. In the case of knowing Theaetetus (as in the last example Socrates employs), should the *logos* answer "why" Theaetetus is who he is (assumedly, what makes Theaetetus who he is – the being (*ousia*) of Theaetetus), or rather, on which basis can one pick out/identify Theaetetus (which may not necessarily be the same answer)? It appears that a "why?" question is more fitting in the case where we have to explain how or why we spell a word correctly (as in the example under the discussion of the second meaning for *logos*), but it becomes problematic when we inquire about the knowledge of an object.

[156] This addresses the same set of questions I have raised since Chapter 5; namely, why is the *logos* (of Theaetetus in Chapter 5) a *logos* that belongs to the object (Theaetetus), and what does the metaphorical *grasp* mean, regarding the knower and the *logos*.

One may also observe that Fine's suggested *logos* is also an answer to a "why?" question, and arguably, one might raise the same questions that apply to McDowell's suggestion. I shall try to address some of these questions.

Again, I must begin with a disclaimer-clarification. As I noted, primarily in Chapters 1 and 5, it is not obvious how we should understand TBL. Assume our object of knowledge is a car, and I have a true belief that *the car is blue*, and I have a *logos* of the car: 'the car is so-and-so'. In the case of "why p?", the *logos*-answer (we must assume) must say why the car is so-and-so and not why I have the true belief that it is blue. The first hurdle we need to face is the pressing question of whether there can be a *logos* of particulars; so even if I could come up with a *logos* that says what makes a car a car, it seems more challenging to come up with a *logos* that says what makes this particular car the car that it is. There is also the third option of the *logos* saying what makes this particular car a car, but I shall set that aside for now (see the following discussion on ἐπιστήμη and ἐπιστήμων in 6.2).

If we try to address "why A believes/knows that p?" things are not easier. Let us assume that we are discussing a specific car, perhaps because it is popular, and that we can search in an encyclopaedia and find a *logos* that says what makes this car the car it is. Let us further assume that this can act as the *logos*-answer that belongs to the car in question (so, for the sake of argument, this way, we bypass the "why p?" question). Can we assume then that I possess/grasp the *logos* (if I read it and I am able to recite it)? Arguably not; I might learn the answer by heart without understanding what it means to have a "… four-cylinder in-line engine…" (which we may assume features in the *logos*). Hence, this option is susceptible to the

parrot speech argument and the regress and circularity argument (because of my questionable cognitive relation to the *logos*).

Recall the final (third) meaning for *logos*; it can also be understood as an answer to a "why?" question, say, "why is this Theaetetus?" If we assume (without damage to generality)[157] that Theaetetus' nose-snubness is also the content of the 'Theaetetus is so-and-so' *logos*, then again, we fall back to the problems Socrates raises with the final argument (in these cases, we will be susceptible to Q2 and Q3 in the case of "why A knows that p?", and to Q1 in the case of "why A believes that p?", according to my analysis in Chapter 5).

To conclude on this view, if any interpretation that TBL holds is to stand a chance, it must ignore the strength of Socrates' final argument, or it must assume that Socrates does not take the argument seriously. If one considers my reading too strong, perhaps we can phrase it another way. Any answer to a why-question is susceptible to another why-question aimed at the previous why-question (one might imagine a toddler endlessly asking, "but why…"). Sooner or later, we will either have to end the exchange of why-questions and answers or run into a

[157] To explain why this assumption does not damage generality: any essential definition that captures the what-it-is of an object can act as a differentiating mark. The same does not hold in reverse; i.e. we may have a differentiating mark that is non-essential. So, if the *logos*-answer has to answer what makes Theaetetus who he is, we can use that also as a type of *logos* that fits the last meaning examined in the dialogue. If it is not (as we may assume the snubness of Theaetetus' nose does not make him who he is), this is simply not an answer to a "why is Theaetetus who he is", so not the kind of answer we are examining. However, the latter would work if the *logos* McDowell suggests aims to answer "why A believes that p", where I might believe that this man in front on me is Theaetetus because of the snubness of his nose and without knowing any essential feature about him. (One might also think of the classic Aristotelian example of "man is a rational animal/ biped" vs "man is an animal that laughs".)

because-answer we employed earlier (or simply carry on answering *ad infinitum* and complete the options of Agrippa's Trilemma).[158]

The Aporia Is Genuine (Qualified Version)

Arguably, without the bracketed "Qualified Version", this view might encompass every other view that does not belong to the previous group. I shall explain how the next view differs from this when we reach it.

The main characteristic here is that we do not need to assume that the ending aporia is not genuine. But, we should assume that Plato is looking at other ways we can have knowledge and how this knowledge is qualified over a specific range of things. There are two scholars I shall mention under this view: Burnyeat and Cornford.

Burnyeat assumes that by the end of the dialogue, it should become clear that knowledge concerns objects and not propositions. This is the view most scholars favour. He devotes a rather long part of his commentary to the final definition of knowledge (201c-210d); however, he really offers the highlight of his own view in a lengthy footnote (fn.106, p.222-3). This footnote summarises the need for some perceptual experience that must take place (according to Burnyeat) in order to have knowledge (keep in mind that by this point, Burnyeat is discussing knowledge of particulars; I shall return to this below). This perceptual experience will allow one to make an imprint in their wax-memory-tablet of the differentness, i.e. a perceptible mark, of the object. In turn, having this mark-imprint, the knower will be able to

[158] An interesting point on the difference between Fine and McDowell: for Fine, Plato is aware of the solution and hides it, whereas McDowell makes no strong assumptions about where Plato stood at the end of the *Theaetetus*.

identify the object in their next encounter. As I mentioned in Chapter 5, Burnyeat's view has been highly influential. However, if one adopts it, one must also allow for some assumptions.

The first is one, Burnyeat himself mentions in his footnote. That is, we must assume a special reading for the demonstrative power of 'this', both in the case of "*this* is Theaetetus" (209b) and of "*this* snub-nosedness of yours" (209c). Burnyeat suggests that 'this' is not referentially abstract; it "points" to a specific thing or a feature of a thing which is perceptible. To make matters clearer, let us look at the Greek and the translations of McDowell and of Burnyeat (modified Levett):

[T6.1, 209b2-c10]

Greek

ΣΩ. Φέρε δὴ πρὸς Διός· πῶς ποτε ἐν τῷ τοιούτῳ σὲ μᾶλλον ἐδόξαζον ἢ ἄλλον ὁντινοῦν; θὲς γάρ με διανοούμενον ὡς ἔστιν οὗτος Θεαίτητος, ὃς ἂν ᾖ τε ἄνθρωπος καὶ ἔχῃ ῥῖνα καὶ ὀφθαλμοὺς καὶ στόμα καὶ οὕτω δὴ ἓν ἕκαστον τῶν μελῶν. αὕτη οὖν ἡ διάνοια ἔσθ' ὅτι μᾶλλον ποιήσει με Θεαίτητον ἢ Θεόδωρον διανοεῖσθαι, ἢ τῶν λεγομένων Μυσῶν τὸν ἔσχατον;

ΘΕΑΙ. Τί γάρ;

ΣΩ. Ἀλλ' ἐὰν δὴ μὴ μόνον τὸν ἔχοντα ῥῖνα καὶ ὀφθαλμοὺς διανοηθῶ, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸν σιμόν τε καὶ ἐξόφθαλμον, μή τι σὲ αὖ μᾶλλον δοξάσω ἢ ἐμαυτὸν ἢ ὅσοι τοιοῦτοι;

ΘΕΑΙ. Οὐδέν.

ΣΩ. Ἀλλ' οὐ πρότερόν γε, οἶμαι, Θεαίτητος ἐν ἐμοὶ δοξασθήσεται, πρὶν ἂν ἡ σιμότης αὕτη τῶν ἄλλων σιμοτήτων ὧν ἐγὼ ἑώρακα διάφορόν τι μνημεῖον παρ' ἐμοὶ ἐνσημηναμένη

κατάθηται—καὶ τἆλλα οὕτω ἐξ ὧν εἶ σύ—ἥ με, καὶ ἐὰν αὔριον ἀπαντήσω, ἀναμνήσει καὶ ποιήσει ὀρθὰ δοξάζειν περὶ σοῦ.

McDowell (unaltered)

S. But, for heaven's sake, in such conditions how on earth could it be you that I had in my judgement any more than anyone else? Suppose my thought was that Theaetetus is the one who is a man, and has a nose, eyes, a mouth, and so on with each part of the body. Now, could that thought make it Theaetetus that I have in my thought, any more than Theodorus, or, as one might say, the remotest peasant in Asia?

T. No, how could it?

S. And if I have in my thought not merely the one who has a nose and eyes, but the one with a snub nose and prominent eyes, it still won't be you that I have in my judgement any more than myself or anyone else who is like that, will it?

T. No.

S. In fact it won't, I think, be Theaetetus who figures in a judgement in me until precisely that snubness has imprinted and deposited in me a memory trace different from those of the other snubnesses I've seen, and similarly with the other things you're composed of. Then if I meet you tomorrow, that snubness will remind me and make me judge correctly about you.

Burnyeat

S. Then tell me, in Heaven's name how, if that was so, did it come about that you were the object of my judgement and nobody else? Suppose my thought is that 'This is Theaetetus – one who is a human being, and has a nose and eyes and mouth', and so on through the whole list of limbs.

> Will this thought cause me to be thinking of Theaetetus rather than Theodorus, or the proverbial 'remotest Mysian'?
>
> T. No, how could it?
>
> S. But suppose I think not merely of 'the one with nose and eyes', but of 'the one with a snub nose and prominent eyes'. Shall I even be judging about you any more than about myself or anyone who is like that?
>
> T. Not at all.
>
> S. It will not, I take it, be Theaetetus who is judged in my mind until this snub-nosedness of yours has left imprinted and established in me a record that is different in some way from the other snub-nosednesses I have seen; and so with the other details of your make-up. And this will remind me, if I meet you tomorrow, and make me judge correctly about you.

So, in the first instance, it is a matter of how we understand οὗτος (209b4). For Burnyeat, it is important that by οὗτος, Socrates can literally point his finger to an object within his visual field, i.e. Theaetetus, with whom he is talking and is presumably sitting in front of him.[159] On

[159] Recall *Sophist* 263a9 (Θεαίτητος, ᾧ νῦν ἐγὼ διαλέγομαι…). There is an important point here that I shall not expand on; however, I must mention it briefly. One of the issues that comes up in both the *Theaetetus* and the *Sophist*, is that of securing the referent. Nevertheless, in the *Theaetetus* it is crucial to secure the referent (in this case Theaetetus or his nose) via a uniquely identifying description, i.e. a definition or demarcating statement. On the other hand, in the *Sophist* the referent is needed in order to make up a proper statement, even a false one. However, the problem of securing the referent is simply overcome in the *Sophist* by making sure who the statement is about: "Theaetetus, the one I am talking to right now…" In the *Theaetetus*, we would have had further questions rising from this statement; e.g. (non-exhaustive list of possibilities) can you trust your senses (perception) that this is truly Theaetetus?; what makes this man to whom you are now talking to different from every other man – how can you pick him out? Giving in to Burnyeat's solution, I claim that we are simply dismissing the problem by pointing to the perceptual experience. This is allowed (verbally/metaphorically) in the *Sophist*, for the sake of argument and to allow the conversation on false statements to proceed; it is not the main concern of the dialogue. If this was allowed in the *Theaetetus*, the entire conversation at 188 would have easily ended by declaring "I know that the man I see is Socrates (and not Theaetetus), because I see him". (Barney (2001:

the other hand, for McDowell οὗτος is proleptic and picked up by the description of Theaetetus that follows.

Accordingly, in the second instance, for Burnyeat, αὕτη (209c6) is again an instance where we can imagine Socrates pointing at Theaetetus' nose (the snubness of Theaetetus' nose, to be precise). In contrast, for McDowell αὕτη refers to "that snubness" (ἡ σιμότης), i.e. the one we were talking about (i.e. the description/articulation of what Burnyeat assumes Socrates points at) and is Theaetetus'.

Burnyeat's view must answer how one can come up with true statements or even knowledge-claims about Theaetetus just on the basis of memory, without an occurrent perception of him (for this must be possible).[160] Apart from the problems this may cause, which Socrates has addressed during the discussion of the definition 'Knowledge is Perception', there is one other important implication: that knowledge, at this point in the *Theaetetus*, cannot be of universals (I cannot see or point at a universal); which leads to the second assumption one must concede to when adopting Burnyeat's view.

For Burnyeat, by the end of the dialogue, Plato is restricted to discussing knowledge of particulars, and he is exploring ways of knowing them. This implies that knowledge is no longer infallible, so Plato has given in, so to speak, to the idea that knowledge can be

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186–7) argues that Plato, on this point in the *Sophist*, admits that names by themselves are not sufficient to pick out the correct referent. The Eleatic Visitor might well be referring to his "homonymous pet bird.")

[160] Perhaps Burnyeat can say that, for cases of non-perception, we might have memory imprints that causally refer back to perceptions, and we can say 'Theatetus is…' or 'that man (I saw yesterday) is…'. In this case the 'pointing' is mental and not physical; but I take it this is exactly the problem Socrates addresses when he mentions the Theaetetus example: suppose I have that mental image that I can trace all the way back to yesterday when I saw Theaetetus. This case is susceptible to all the criticism that applies to the final meaning for *logos*.

"democratic", at least the kind he ends up discussing (see discussion in 4.5). So, this means that for Burnyeat, Plato allows for different types of knowledge; he has just reserved the "strict" type, which requires infallibility, for universals or Forms, and this is the type of knowledge the aporetic ending applies to.[161]

Burnyeat's view is both similar and different to Cornford's. It is similar in that they agree that Plato is solely concerned with particulars (at least at this point in the dialogue). But where Burnyeat looks for a compromise, a type of knowledge that drops the infallibility premise and takes particulars as its objects, for Cornford's view, it is imperative that there is no compromise.

For Cornford, Plato is not trying to find a solution around the problem of knowing particulars. Plato deliberately guides us to a dead end to show us that there cannot be knowledge of particulars.

As both Bostock and McDowell have argued, the arguments Socrates employs in the *Theaetetus*, and especially the final argument (for Bostock), apply also to Forms, so it is difficult to imagine how we would overcome the problems we came across, even if it was Forms that we were speaking of.

The Aporia Is Genuine (Unqualified Version)

This is the group my reading and Bostock's belong to. We both support the view that Socrates' final argument refutes any "… plus *logos*" attempt to define knowledge. This argument is so strong that it does not even need to consider whether knowledge is objectual or propositional,

[161] I cannot clearly see what Burnyeat's view on knowledge is unqualifiedly (i.e. on knowledge that is not restricted to particulars).

or whether it concerns universals or particulars. So, this reading differs from the previous one because it does not require any assumptions or particular interpretations about different kinds of knowledge or of the objects of knowledge. I shall explain why my reading suggests more strongly than Bostock's that the aporia at the end is genuine.

First, Bostock often either speculates choppy editing on behalf of Plato or endorses the view that Plato employs arguments that were not that well thought-out simply because he had already figured out his ending (i.e. the final argument), so he did not really care to argue convincingly or accurately. On the other hand, my reading, as expounded from Chapters 1 to 5, suggests that Socrates' arguments are well-structured and that there is a coherency and natural progression in how the discussion unfolds.

Second, Bostock does not hesitate to dismiss some of the Dream's claims as unimportant, which leaves his view open to criticism. Even if Bostock and I are correct in bestowing so much strength on Socrates' final argument, there are many more things Plato settles prior to it, which, under Bostock's interpretation, are left open. So, I believe my reading does not allow much room for doubt regarding what other ways out of the ending aporia we might have.

Third, it is Bostock's view that Plato is not fully aware of the strength of the final argument. In 5.4 and 5.5, I argued that the strength of the argument should be immediate from the text and that Plato is fully aware of it. Therefore, my reading suggests that not only is the aporia genuine, but Plato also perceives it as such. This point is crucial, as it bars interpretations such as those we saw in the first group, i.e. Plato favouring some meaning for *logos* that he did not

mention in the *Theaetetus*. This is all to say that the aporia is not only a valid philosophical conclusion but also a solid interpretive position on the dialogue.

Plato nowhere dismisses the infallibility premise (152c), which means he does not give in to the "democratic" view of knowledge. So, in my view, all the ending actually tells us is that under the premisses set out, we failed to define what knowledge is. This is not to say that Plato is a sceptic, and I will explain why in the following section.

One might ask, as Bostock does, why does Plato go through all this trouble? That is, why did he not simply mention the final argument right away and show that TBL was not a good candidate from the beginning? Was it because he wanted to address the Dream because he thought it was a theory worth mentioning? Perhaps. But perhaps we should also consider the pedagogical value of the *Theaetetus* and look at how it is structured as a whole. Every definition Theaetetus mentions is followed by long discussions on correlated subjects, and only at the end of every such discussion does Socrates give a swift and concise argument against the definition itself. So, perhaps Plato tries to address the topic more comprehensively, answer several other views and "what most people would say" (208c), and place his own thoughts within this context. Otherwise, the entire dialogue would have been much shorter – three definitions, each followed by a paragraph on why that definition is wrong.

6.2 On Ἐπιστήμη and Ἐπιστήμων

The central question of the *Theaetetus* is 'what is ἐπιστήμη?'. We find the interlocutors facing numerous difficulties throughout the dialogue in their effort to define ἐπιστήμη, and we also

see debates in the secondary literature that try to answer related questions, such as whether ἐπιστήμη concerns objects or propositions, particular or universal objects, etc. Moreover, in the secondary literature, we can trace a further effort to dismiss some of these secondary questions in order to focus on the main question, claiming that we should not care what ἐπιστήμη is of but what ἐπιστήμη itself is. For example, Ryle begins his paper with a criticism of Cornford's view:

> The problem discussed in the Theaetetus is What is Knowledge? Socrates makes it clear that what is wanted is not a list of things that people know or a catalogue of sciences and arts, but an elucidation of the concept of knowledge - not What is known? but What it is to know? Attention to this simple point might have saved Cornford from saying that the implicit conclusion of the dialogue is that "true knowledge has for its objects things of a different order – not sensible things, but intelligible Forms and truths about them.[162]

Nevertheless, these clarifications help map out some important issues and may not (necessarily) be as unwarranted as Ryle makes them sound. Let me explain why.

The question "what is ἐπιστήμη?" is indeed ambiguous, as is demonstrated by Theaetetus' initial response; ἐπιστήμη can refer both to the cognitive state of an individual as well as a body of knowledge. So, when Theaetetus starts listing several ἐπιστήμαι, and Socrates clarifies that that is not what he was asking for, the discussion is guided in a different direction. Now, this is an important but not a sufficient step to indicate what exactly Socrates is asking for. In earlier

[162] This is a different kind of criticism from that which we find in the text, where Socrates' response is not dismissive but rather aids the understanding of the topic at hand; for instance:

> But that was not what you were asked for Theaetetus. You were not asked which things knowledge is of…but what, exactly, knowledge itself is" (146e)

dialogues, the clarification Socrates provides after his interlocutor lists examples is (in some ways) sufficient in order to understand what Socrates is asking. For example, when Meno lists the virtues of man, woman, etc. (*Meno* 71e-72a), and Socrates clarifies what he is asking for, we understand that, indeed, these may be virtues; however, we are looking for what virtue itself is, what is common in everything Meno listed.

Now, at first glance, one might assume the pattern is the same in the case of the Theaetetus. What Theaetetus mentioned are indeed ἐπιστήμαι (cobblery, geometry, etc.), and Socrates clarifies that he is not inquiring about different types of ἐπιστήμαι/how many there are (ὁπόσαι τινές, 146e8) or what ἐπιστήμη is of (τίνων, 146e7) but about what ἐπιστήμη itself is. But the question is still not clear. Are we enquiring about what makes all the ἐπιστήμαι such as those listed, ἐπιστήμαι (what all the listed ἐπιστήμαι have in common)? Or is the question about what it is for someone to be in a state of ἐπιστήμη in each case where we have an ἐπιστήμη one can be an ἐπιστήμων/ἐπιστάμενος of? Even the following mathematical example (147c-148b) does not definitively clarify the question. It is only when we reach the definitions Theaetetus offers and Socrates accepts (as candidate definitions – not as correct ones) that we understand that we are trying to define the cognitive state of the ἐπιστήμων. But as is evident from the text, there is a connection between ἐπιστήμη and ἐπιστήμων (I take it the connection is present throughout; the following text is just a clear indication of the point I am raising):

[T6.2, 151d3-e3]

> S: […] So start again from the beginning, Theaetetus, and try to say what, exactly, knowledge is. Do not ever say you cannot; because if God is willing, and you keep your courage up, you will be able.
>
> T: Well, Socrates, with you encouraging one like that, it would be disgraceful not to do one's best, in every way, to say what one can. Very well, then: it seems to me that a person who knows (ὁ ἐπιστάμενός) something is perceiving the thing he knows (τοῦτο ὃ ἐπίσταται). The way it looks to me at the moment is that knowledge is nothing but perception.

According to my reading (as presented in Chapter 5), it is precisely this connection between the ἐπιστήμων (referred to as ἐπιστάμενός in the above text) and τοῦτο ὃ ἐπίσταται that leads to the impasse at the end of the dialogue. To be precise, I argued it is the connection of the ἐπιστήμων to the *logos* of τοῦτο ὃ ἐπίσταται, but this does not alter what I shall explain.

The word ἐπιστήμη is sometimes translated as 'science' instead of 'knowledge'. This applies to contemporary scholars (e.g. Rowett (2018)) and translations in other languages (e.g. Cousin's translation in French). For what it is worth, 'science' is the meaning ἐπιστήμη came to hold in Modern Greek. Now, we cannot attribute to ἐπιστήμη today's full contemporary view of 'science' (that includes rigorous methods, experiments and trials, etc.). Nevertheless, we can allow for a "loose" use of the word 'science', in the sense that McDowell refers to as a "body of knowledge." This would surely apply to the examples of cobblery, astronomy, etc. This also allows for the view discussed in 1.8, based on Lyons (1963), of understanding ἐπιστήμη as τέχνη.

The problem appears when one might ask: "what then is an ἐπιστήμων?" The verb ἐπίσταμαι cannot imply 'scientific knowledge', even if we allow for a division between ἐπίσταμαι, γιγνώσκω, εἰδέναι (see discussion in 1.8). That is to say, even if we assume that ἐπίσταμαι implies a stronger, perhaps more rigorous type of knowledge than γιγνώσκω or εἰδέναι, it would be highly unlikely that we could translate ἐπιστήμων as 'scientist' in the contemporary sense. The most we can assume is that the ἐπιστήμων is a 'knower', regardless of whether the knowledge he or she has is, in contemporary terms, scientifically established. Nevertheless, it seems safe to assume that the ἐπιστήμων is some kind of expert whose knowledge regarding a specific area (or thing) is special in some way.

But we have to note that Plato uses ἐπιστήμαι in a wider sense, too, which allows the word to refer to pieces of information or the cognitive relation the knower has with the objects that belong to a body of knowledge. For instance, under the discussion of knowledge taken to be Perception, one might know whether the wind is cold or warm (152b) (and not, say, the science of meteorology). On the other hand, recall [T4.7]:

> [T4.7, 198a4-b11]
>
> S: […] You say there is such a thing as an art (τέχνην) of arithmetic?
>
> T: Yes.
>
> S: Well, you must think of it as a hunt for pieces of knowledge (ἐπιστημῶν) of everything odd and even.
>
> T: Very well.

S: It is by this art, I imagine, that one has subject to oneself pieces of knowledge (ἐπιστήμας) of the numbers, and that those who pass them on to others do so.

T: Yes.

S: If someone passes them on, we call it teaching, and if someone receives them, we call it learning. And if someone has them, by possessing them in that aviary, we call it knowing (ἐπίστασθαι).

T: Certainly.

S: Pay attention, now, to this next point. If someone is completely versed in arithmetic, he knows (ἐπίσταται) all numbers, does he not? Because there are pieces of knowledge (ἐπιστήμαι) of all numbers in his mind.

T: Of course.

In the case of [T4.7], we are discussing the ἐπιστήμη or τέχνη of arithmetic, but the objects of arithmetic – numbers, are what the ἐπιστήμων knows (ἐπίσταται). So, although it is a question that is derived from the original (what is knowledge?), trying to answer what knowledge is about can help us better understand knowledge itself because, as this case exemplifies, one may ask whether knowledge means knowing arithmetic (i.e. the "body") or knowing numbers (i.e. the objects the "body" is concerned with) or even truths about numbers (i.e. truths about the objects the "body" is concerned with, which would lead us back to propositional knowledge (one might also claim that the "body" is exactly the sum of the truths about the objects with which it is concerned)).

So, a question that deserves attention is: what is an ἐπιστήμων? But let me slightly alter the question to: what is it that one must know in order to be considered an ἐπιστήμων?

When one is asked: "can you spell ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ?" (i.e. "do you know how to spell ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ?"), does the question refer to one's ability to spout out a specific sequence of letters, or rather to their cognitive relation to a body of knowledge, according to which the sequence of letters is established to form the name ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ? According to the discussion at 206e-208c, I tend to side with McDowell's reading that it must be closer to the latter. However, this raised an interesting question (see 4.5): unless one is a γραμματικός, can anyone qualify as an ἐπιστήμων of (spelling) even their own name? And even γραμματικοί can surely make mistakes, just like every expert/specialist in their own field (race drivers crash, engineers make faulty buildings, cobblers can make faulty shoes, etc.).[163] But let us assume, for now, that only the specialist, say, the γραμματικός, can know how to spell words. So, a mathematician like Theaetetus[164] does not know (how to spell) his own name; assumedly, he, at best, has a true belief about it, as described in the *Meno*.[165]

Based on the assumption above, let us distinguish between a technical and a non-technical use of ἐπιστήμων. In the non-technical sense, an ἐπιστήμων is someone who gets by, similarly to how Theaetetus can spell his name, even though he is a mathematician. In an everyday sense,

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[163] This is essentially the same debate as that between Socrates and Thrasymachus in *Republic* I. I do not see Socrates choosing sides in this debate in the *Theaetetus*. It looks more as if he is examining the consequences of taking knowledge or the knower to be infallible.

[164] To be precise, the Theaetetus after the dramatic time the dialogue refers to (and, of course, before his death, to which he was close at the dialogue's opening), because in the dialogue he is still a student in mathematics (under Theodorus).

[165] Of course, we can assume that someone can be an ἐπιστήμων of more than one field. However, in this case I believe we are meant to assume that Theaetetus is a mathematician (at least an aspiring one) and not an ἐπιστήμων of also another field.

we would say Theaetetus "knows" how to spell his own name. However, in strict terms, this is arguably the state of true belief one is in and not (truly) knowledge. In a technical sense, only the specialist γραμματικός knows how to spell any name. So, rather than answering the question "what is it that may be known" in a way that suggests a division between universals and particulars, or types and tokens, or Forms and "concrete" objects, perhaps it is of more use to clarify that an ἐπιστήμων has knowledge, arguably because it is the ἐπιστήμων (in the technical sense) that can have a profound cognitive grasp over whatever matter and/or object (universal or particular) within their field.

So, if we consider an ἐπιστήμων in the technical sense, and the ἐπιστήμων has the appropriate cognitive grasp of all matters that pertain to their field, what exactly is it that the ἐπιστήμων (assumedly) knows? Take a wagon maker – the ἐπιστήμων of wagon making.[166] One option would be to say that the wagon maker should not only be acquainted with but also be able to identify every single wagon-token for exactly what it is (say, what timber it is made of, what is its top speed, etc.), whereas the non-ἐπιστήμων would be able to simply identify it as a wagon. If this is the case, it would be fair to say that knowledge is not really achievable. Even if we

[166] I shall leave aside the corresponding question of *Republic* Book X of whether the wagon maker or the wagon user is the true ἐπιστήμων. Without damage to generality, for the sake of this example, let us assume that it is the maker who is considered the ἐπιστήμων.
There is a further necessary clarification to make here. The difference between ἐπιστήμη and τέχνη and ἐπιστήμων and τεχνίτης may run deeper than I suggest, especially concerning the Greek language as a whole. For example, looking at Aristotle's *Metaphysics* A.1, one might claim that a wagon maker is a craftsman, which would more likely correspond to τεχνίτης, and not an ἐπιστήμων. However, in Aristotle's case, there is a further division between experienced (one who has acquired ἐμπειρία), τεχνίτης, and ἐπιστήμων, and a debate about whom *logos* is a characteristic of/who possesses it (for an interesting view on this debate, see Johansen (2017)). Of course, what *logos* is meant to stand for in the *Theaetetus* is not necessarily what Aristotle has in mind, but the point I am trying to make is that there are more divisions between knower and not knower (ἐπιστήμων – not-ἐπιστήμων). Nevertheless, for the purpose of the current discussion, it should suffice to simply draw a distinction between one who knows (whatever we assume that is) and one who does not.

assume that one did have the chance to see every wagon in their lifetime (and we accept that their sight/perception is not deceptive), and subsequently they were able to offer a differentiating mark for every specific wagon, we cannot guarantee that at some point in time after their death there will not be another wagon with the exact same differentiating mark (this is the argument I discuss in 5.2).

Another option would be to say that the wagon maker does not need to know (be acquainted with and able to identify) every single wagon in existence. All he or she needs to know is the *ousia* of what a wagon is (207c). In other words, let us assume the wagon maker knows the ideal wagon-type, and his or her expertise involves the ability to identify every particular wagon-token as an instantiation of a wagon. This interpretation of what exactly the knowledge of an ἐπιστήμων involves is certainly more attainable; nevertheless, it does not entail infallibility. For, "black swans" occur in every field of knowledge (or one might make something that looks so similar to a wagon, it could fool even the best of wagon makers); i.e. it is non-controversially accepted (I would hope) that no knower, even a specialist-scientist in the contemporary sense, is all-knowing and infallible in their field.

Where does all this leave us? The picture painted may seem very discouraging for the potential to really have knowledge since even experts are not infallible. But even if we presume that they are, can we assume that there is such a field that constitutes a body of water-tight knowledge in that it does not require any knowledge from outside its own field? Even cobblery (a "non-scientific" in today's terms ἐπιστήμη), one might argue, cannot be completely independent of, say, leather craft. And, say we include leather craft under cobblery; the quality and type of

leather depends on the animal. Does that mean that we should also include farming under cobblery? Say we do. Animals often need medical attention. Are we to assume that the farmer, whom we have assumed is also a cobbler, is also a veterinarian? It is evident that the list can go on.[167]

This picture suggests that the strict infallible knowledge Socrates seeks in the *Theaetetus* seems virtually unrealistic. Even if we assume Cornford's suggestion that knowledge must be of Forms, the previous paragraph suggests that one Form alone cannot be known; a true knower knows all the Forms (and, presumably, how one Form is connected to other Forms). So knowledge is an "all or nothing" matter, not only in a "hit or miss" sense (I either know something or I do not) but also in the sense of "knowing everything or nothing". Therefore, a knower is assumedly only a true philosopher who knows all the Forms and how they *interweave* to form everything in what we take to be the fabric of reality. Arguably, this state is only attainable by the Philosopher Kings and Queens of the *Republic*, or Diotima and her pupil who manages to reach the Form of the Beautiful (*Symposium*) (or the Demiurge of the *Timaeus*). If all we are left with are solutions that are not metaphorical or generally vague, it seems that the ἐπιστήμη Socrates is asking for cannot be attained.

This interpretation, however, should not paint Socrates as a sceptic. The practical difficulties of attaining ἐπιστήμη do not bar the theoretical possibility of the attainment or the existence of knowledge (the strict infallible kind). In addition, in the spelling example under the discussion

[167] Plato has also addressed these issues elsewhere by introducing a hierarchy where one ἐπιστήμη falls under another; e.g. see *Statesman*, *Euthydemus* (one might also consider the *Gorgias*, however, the point there seems to be that cosmetics is the *false* counterpart of gymnastics, so not a real ἐπιστήμη/τέχνη).

for the second meaning for *logos*, Socrates does not question whether the older Theaetetus knows how to spell his own name; the misspelling concerned Theaetetus when he was a child and had not fully learned how to spell. And to return to the aporetic ending of the dialogue, asking for a definition of knowledge is entirely different from asking whether there is knowledge (or whether knowledge is attainable). It is only the first question that was left unanswered in the *Theaetetus*.[168]

With the earlier dialogues in mind, perhaps all this says of Socrates' view is that we should think twice before declaring ourselves or others as so-called specialists (ἐπιστάμενοι) who claim to know and teach what are virtue, piety, etc. Maybe the best we can do is to get as close to these concepts as we can, and even as specialist-γραμματικοί admit that now and then, we might make a (spelling or other) mistake. Theaeatetus, unlike Meno or Euthyphro (not to mention more hot-headed figures like Callicles or Thrasymachus), never appeared arrogant; he was always reluctant to answer, and when he did, he was always open to discussion with Socrates and to admitting his error (unlike the aforementioned characters who may be characterised as stubborn and irritated when Socrates proved them wrong). Nevertheless, Socrates' ending words should echo as a reminder to anyone who professes to "know":

[168] Brown (2017) has a useful categorisation of different features of an *aporia* in the *Theaetetus* and *Sophist*: F1: not whether but how; F2: the puzzle is a familiar one; F3: is one that can be treated in both an eristic and a philosophically serious manner (there is a fourth regarding correct speaking in the *Sophist*). In broad terms, my reading of the aporetic ending of the *Theaetetus* focuses on F1; that is, Socrates does not doubt that there is such a thing as knowledge but asks what it is.

[T6.3, 210b4-d2]

S: Well now, are we still pregnant and in labour with anything about knowledge, or have we given birth to everything?

T: Yes, indeed, Socrates; actually you have got me to say more than I had in me.

S: And my art of midwifery tells us that they are all the results of false pregnancies and not worth bringing up?

T: Yes, definitely.

S: *Well then, if you try, later on, to conceive anything else, and do so, what you are pregnant with will be the better for our present investigation. And if you stay barren, you will be less burdensome to those who associate with you, and gentler, because you will have the sense not to think you know things which in fact you do not know.* That much my art can do, but no more, and I do not know any of the things which others know, all the great and admirable men there are and have been; but this gift of midwifery my mother and I received from God, she with women, and I with young and noble men and all who are beautiful.

(I have *highlighted* the relevant passage.)

6.3 On Active and Dispositional Knowledge

Let us now return to [T4.7]. Let us assume a specialist who is concerned with numbers, an arithmetician/mathematician (as in the case of [T4.7]). Even in the strict sense of knowledge, it is difficult to assume that Plato believes the arithmetician has some direct cognitive relation to every single number, whichever way we choose to interpret this relation (as, say, a causal

connection because the arithmetician has thought of or made calculations with every number). We seem to have to distinguish between active and dispositional knowledge. So, the arithmetician may actively know (in some superior way compared to the non-arithmetician) the number 2. In addition, the arithmetician also knows truths about the number 2, say, that it is an even number, that 2 + 2 = 4, etc. The arithmetician, however, does not actively know (we can assume), say, the number 8030130080050 but is able to draw correct conclusions concerning this number about the same kind of questions he or she is asked about the number 2 (whether it is odd or even, results of calculations that include 8030130080050, etc.). Therefore, we can assume that the knowledge the arithmetician has of or about 8030130080050 is dispositional.

Assuming we have a distinction between active and dispositional knowledge, it is worth revisiting the spelling example we came across in 4.4 under the discussion of the second meaning for *logos*.

First, let us look at how we may understand knowledge on behalf of the ἐπιστήμων and contrast with the non-ἐπιστήμων. The child spells ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ correctly, and he misspells ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ as ΤΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ. The misspelling happens in the first syllable, which is common in both words; therefore, the child does not know either word (in Socrates' view). Has Socrates changed the object of knowledge from a word (ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ) to one of its syllables (ΘΕ)? Does he suggest that knowledge of a word implies or presupposes knowledge of its syllables? The latter sounds like the hidden KBK (knowledge must be based on knowledge) principle.

However, I do not believe that we need to invoke KBK, even in this case. Assuming simply that knowledge is a higher cognitive state than belief, we may interpret this case as one where the

child has a false belief about how a syllable is spelled. The child falsely believed that ΘΕ was spelled T-E. Following the *Meno's* suggestion, the child had a true belief about the syllable when spelling ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ; however, that belief ran away (like a statue of Daedalus, 97d) when he was spelling ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ. Therefore, we cannot say that the child knows the syllable ΘΕ; he only had a true belief about it (so he was an ἐπιστήμων in the non-technical sense or even not an ἐπιστήμων at all). In turn, the true belief about ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ was based on or included the true belief about ΘΕ, so when the latter ran away, the former ran with it.

A question one might ask is why Socrates here mentions a syllable. Why would a letter not suffice? I believe it is because Socrates does consider the amended version of the Dream. Socrates secures two things by giving an example of a syllable with more than one letter. The first is obvious – the syllable is wrong; however, it is wrong because an element was replaced with another (a Θ with a T). The second is that he secures an answer to a possible objection, even against the Dream. Let me explain. A syllable can be misspelled, not only because of a wrong letter but also because of the order of its elements, even if we have all the correct ones. So, by choosing the example Socrates has, he can address cases like BAT instead of CAT but also ACT instead of CAT; the latter pair, as per my interpretation, is non-distinguishable by the Dream. In short, misspelling because of a wrong letter is just a special case of the general example Socrates puts forward (i.e. the misspelling of a syllable).[169]

Now, let us generalise the example. Assume the child spelled ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ correctly, but he also spells ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ correctly. We may assume that the child has a true belief (we cannot be

[169] This way, Socrates can also address cases with single letter (vowel) syllables, say, E-NIGMA misspelled as A-NIGMA.

sure he has knowledge) of the following syllables: ΘΕ, ΑΙ, ΤΗ, ΤΟΣ, Ο, ΔΩ, ΡΟΣ (I omit re-mentioning the common ΘΕ). Let us now take a third word, say, ΘΕΟΦΡΑΣΤΟΣ.[170] Either the child gets this one correct, too, or it makes a mistake. If the mistake is in the first syllable (ΘΕ), we have to immediately reject the possibility that he knew the syllables of the previous two words and, therefore, the words they belong to because it is a syllable all three words have in common. If the mistake is in some other syllable, say, he spells ΘΕΟΦΡΑ*ΤΤΟ*Σ, it is then just a matter of finding a word with the miss-spelled syllable, say, ΘΑΥΜΑΣ*ΤΟ*Σ, take another syllable from that word, and carry on until we find a syllable that is part of ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ; thus we have again proven that the child does not know ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ. If the child gets ΘΕΟΦΡΑΣΤΟΣ correct, we may assume he has a true belief about more syllables (those included in ΘΕΟΦΡΑΣΤΟΣ); however, we cannot again be certain that he knows the three words we have mentioned so far, for he may very well misspell some other word that contains one of the syllables contained in the words we have assumed so far. So, one might claim that we cannot know a syllable or word unless we know all syllables/words ('words' in this case would suffice since if we know all the words, we would know all the syllables).

But is this truly the view Socrates is arguing for? There are two ways to approach this question. If we assume the ἐπιστήμων can only be considered as such by holding on to the strict view about ἐπιστήμη we mentioned earlier, then we would have to think that Socrates really is arguing for the view that we must know all words.

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[170] I choose a name like ΘΕΟΦΡΑΣΤΟΣ because it not only has the first syllable in common with ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ (and ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ) but also has a common etymological root; i.e. the syllable ΘΕ comes from ΘΕΟΣ. One can also obtain the syllable ΘΕ from ΘΕΜΙΣΤΟΚΛΗΣ; however, in this case it comes from ΘΕΜΙΣ. So, the ΘΕΟΦΡΑΣΤΟΣ example covers the case in which Plato might think that there is more to a syllable that just the element-letters and their order/position that make it up.

The other approach is to take the previous to be an extremely demanding requirement; that the γραμματικός, the one we would consider as the ἐπιστήμων who knows (about) words, knows all the words. This case is equivalent to the mathematician case we saw earlier.[171] And the way out is the same as in the case of the mathematician: we can assume the γραμματικός has a dispositional knowledge of all words (based, say, on knowledge of the rules/principles of spelling/literacy), so when/if they come across them, we can assume they will spell them correctly, even if they have never come across them before.

Observe that in the *generalised* example I employed above, we should assume that the relation is one of equivalence; knowing ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ implies knowing ΘΕ and knowing ΘΕ implies knowing ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ if we adhere to the "strict" view for knowledge. This equivalence is hard to dispose of, for even if one assumes only knowledge of letters, and at the same time, they allow for mistakes in words (or sub-compounds/syllables), by applying the generalisation method we saw above and breaking down the word into letters (or first into syllables and then letters) they contradict their initial principle of knowing letters.[172]

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[171] One can assume that one case is more difficult than the other. If we assume every new word is added to the sum of the previous (N), we would always need a number to represent the new sum (N+1), and we can always assume a number greater than that (N+2) (Archimedean property). So, the mathematician has more objects to consider. However, this view may be contested (argued for the opposite claim) if we assume that every number is nameable and we also have non-number names, so the sum of words is greater that of numbers (yet, again, we would need to count the assumed extra words). A (mathematically) neutral answer would be to claim that both sets (of numbers and of words) are countably infinite.

[172] On equivalence: Suppose that there is nothing other than letters, say acting as hieroglyphs or ideograms, and that they do not change meaning based on context (the latter is an added assumption – ideograms actually do change meaning based on context). However hard or unlikely this scenario may be, we need not discard it. The equivalence necessity occurs when we add the demand to be able to exhibit the lack of knowledge of the whole (word) from the lack of knowledge of a part (syllable or letter).

A closing remark that goes beyond the active-dispositional knowledge distinction. At 199d-200c, Theaetetus suggests that some birds in the Aviary must represent non-knowledge (arguably non-truths, e.g. that 7 + 5 = 11). There are different ways to interpret the difficulties Socrates sees in this; for instance, how can one have both 7 + 5 = 11 and 7 + 5 = 12 in their mind? If one knows that 7 + 5 = 12, the bird that represents 7 + 5 = 11 has no place in the Aviary. However, I believe there is a deeper issue here: how one knows that the bird they are grasping is a piece of knowledge. In other words, how one knows that they know (what it is they know).[173]

At first glance, the above might seem like a problem of regress or circularity, similar to what we came across at the end of the dialogue. But there, things seemed a little less complicated. To know X was to know (or have a true belief about) Y, etc. One may choose to focus on the problem that "to know" appears in the definiens and the definiendum (as have I) and render the discussion moot; others (like Fine) see no problem because it is not absurd to assume that to know one thing (X), one must know something else (Y). Nevertheless, in the Aviary example, the question is how one knows that they know X. This, in my view, concisely depicts a central problem in answering the question "what is knowledge" and is what Socrates addresses when (according to my interpretation) he chooses to focus on *accompaniment*. The *accompaniment* or

[173] Again, within this issue, are hidden the two questions we came across in Chapter 5; why is what I have grasped correct (in Chapter 5 it was a question of whether the mark was really a differentiating one) and what exactly this metaphorical grasp means.

ability mentioned throughout relates to the request to know what it is we (claim to) know, and this request is more demanding than that which asks of us to know something else.[174]

[174] Of course, one may claim that to 'know X' [A] is different from 'knowing that I know X' [B]. So, A and B fall back to the X – Y problem just mentioned. However, this is a special case of the general case of K(K(X)).
I believe this issue is linked to the question of whether Plato revisits Meno's Paradox in the *Theaetetus*. I shall not expand on this here but simply offer a few points.
Following the analyses of Bostock and White, the answer to "what is knowledge?" must be a definition of knowledge, and this is how we may easily trace Meno's Paradox. If we knew what knowledge is, we would not be asking the question, and if we do not, we would not be able to grasp the correct definition, even if it was right in front of us. So, is this what Plato was troubled with when writing the *Theaetetus*? According to White, it was, and not just during the *Theaetetus*, but pretty much up to the end of his life (at least until the *Seventh Letter*, assuming Plato was its author).
In my view, it does look as if the problem of priority between the definition of a concept and the concept itself (in this case, knowledge) is present, and under some interpretation, it is a problem. However, it does not seem as if it is the problem Plato set out to address (in the *Theaetetus*).
Plato set out to examine what knowledge is in a way that is similar to how he set out in earlier dialogues to examine virtues or virtue. In some way, Meno's Paradox is a culmination of a common problem in the Socratic approach: the priority of definition. This might have roots in Socratic intellectualism, but I believe the problem runs deeper in the *Theaetetus*. What Plato ultimately addresses is not simply the difficulty of knowing something but of knowing (or understanding) what it means to know something. Even if this issue is susceptible to Meno's Paradox and the problem of the priority of definition, it is clearly a different question.

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