

Title: *Is a "tree" merely a "tree" or more?*

I am sitting in front of a window allowing my sight to wander over a piece of South Tyrolean beauty. Right in front of me I can see a majestic cypress shining in a light green. "Cypress" is supposed to be the technical definition of a species of trees characterised by their long and thin shape.

I am wondering how precise a description of my experience looking at the tree could be. Am I able to translate emotions and feelings felt throughout my senses into language?

The philosopher Wittgenstein believes that there is a limit in doing this. He states that "the limits of language mean the limits of my world".

This is an interesting thought to look at and in my writing process I have just been writing "world" instead of "word". Is therefore the single letter "l" that I added, changing the meaning of the word, the limit of my language and therefore the limit of my world? Can these two words also have the same meaning in my world? And finally: What is my world?

*My world in words or my words in the world?*

The understanding of words linked to personal experiences.

I have been growing up in a multilingual environment. Ladin, German and Italian are the languages that I have been acquiring from my early childhood on and until now I have been expanding my vocabulary and therefore gained precious insights into other languages such as English, Russian, French and Spanish. Languages help me educating myself and learning a language well allows me to feel comfortable sharing my feelings.

A language is primarily a tool helping us to translate inner processes of thoughts, images and feelings. We do this in the language that we are capable of and comfortable with speaking.

Is the interaction with people talking in a different language limited?

Language portrays the culture and traditions of a place. Meeting a person from South Korea, for instance, I can not start talking about "tultres", first of all, because there will not be an appropriate translation for the word and this person never ate this traditional dish. Am I then allowed to state that the language of the person I am talking to is limited? After my explanation of the word or even trying the taste, he will be able to build up a connection. The person learned and therefore proofed that language and his world is not limited.

Every word has a different meanings for a person, because it is connected with different experiences. My experience linked to the word “mountain” is an image of a mountain, which is at least 3.000 meters high, as I have been growing up surrounded by such massive stone blocks. A person coming from England, for instance, could call a “mountain”, what for me looks more like a “hill”.

As we are often living in very international environments, cultures and different languages meet and share. In the act of understanding a person's experience lieing behind the words he/she uses, there is no limit. The limit comes up in the moment we isolate ourselves and get stuck in our habits. Far away from all kind of interaction with other people, we set a limit ourselves.

*Is Shakespeare's definition of love limited?*

Shakespeare's love affairs must have been as infinite as his vocabulary is talking about love. My question now is: Is it possible to put the infinity of numbers equal to the infinity of language? Numbers are put into a repetitive system, which can go on infinitely, whereas language develops with experiences and the person's imagination. Therefore I strongly believe in the fact that a person such as Shakespeare must have been a very sensitive person. If a person can perceive his/her surroundings with a huge sense of awareness, sensitivity and openness, this person is full of experiences, which change every day anew. These experiences can then be translated into words and creativity can create new words. Language is not limited, because our imagination is not. Life is a constant movement and to make this movement and its nuances infinite but not repetitive, we need to look at life every day anew without getting stuck in a fixed pattern.

*Looking at a tree without knowing that it is a tree*

Going back to my observation of the tree in front of me, I can notice differences. The sunlight creates bigger shadows and the colour green is not the same, it is darker, intenser. If I had earlier on limited my description using the single word “tree”, my language and world of perception would have been limited. Translating my sensations at the sight of the tree's beauty into many different words, a larger insight into my experience is possible.

The Indian philosopher Jiddu Krishnamurti talks about freeing oneself from conditioning and fixed ideas about how a “tree” should look like.

Finally it is all about forgetting what we mean by “tree” for a moment and define it anew with the tool of language. This should be an infinite process, so that the world and language that we use is in itself infinite.

CHICKPEA