**To what extent does language determine our reality?**

 

* *Ludwig von Wittgenstein*
* *One of the few 20th century philosophers to already be viewed as great*
* *Spent his academic career looking at philosophy of language*
* *Early and late works directly contradict each other*
* *Demonstrates the complexity of looking at language and its role in our pursuit of knowledge*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Tractatus – 1921** | **Philosophical Investigations - 1953** |
| * Language as a creation
* Reflects reality
* Structure of language reflects the structure of reality
* Real life relationships and meanings are mirrored by language
* Language determines our reality

"the limits of my language are the limits of my world" | * Language as a tool
* Reflects language games we play
* Structure of language reflects pre-determined rules of these games
* True meanings determined by the use of surface & depth grammar
* Language an innate function

 “if God looked into our minds, he would  not have been able to see there of  whom we were speaking.” |

1. **HC - TOK - Knowledge + Language - Language as Thought; Language as Commmunication**

Read; match Wittgenstein’s theories in the table above to a stance on language in each section

* *Relative (language depends much more on individuals and their existence)*
* *Universal (language depends much more on common characteristics that we all share)*
1. **Which do you see as being more likely and why?**