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A RYLEAN ACCOUNT
OF
INTELLIGENT ACTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

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for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Philosophy

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Declaration

This thesis is my own work and has not been published or submitted, in whole or in part, for a degree at another university.

Abstract

Gilbert Ryle claimed that intelligent actions and activities are not merely the external signs of inner mental workings but rather that such actions and activities are the workings of the mind itself. In this thesis I propose an interpretation and defence of such claim, against a common and, in my view, mistaken way of understanding Ryle's position.

In chapter [1], I introduce the argumentative thread of this thesis and a more detailed overview of the chapters. In chapter [2], I criticise Stanley and Williamson's understanding of Ryle's argument and position. In chapters [3]-[5] I examine Ryle's position and provide a way of understanding his view against what I take his main opponent, INTELLECTUALISM, to be. Chapter [6] offers an argument against INTELLECTUALISM as a way of motivating a Rylean account intelligent actions and activities. I conclude in chapter [7] with a response to purported counter-examples to the view I propose.

1 | Introduction

1.1 Overview

In this thesis I defend the following Rylean view: whether an action or an activity is intelligent is explained by whether it is the exercise of certain powers of the subject, namely, the subject's powers to think.

According to this view, when we say truly of an exercise of agency that it is intelligent, we are saying of the action or activity itself that it is the exercise of a determinate kind of powers of the subject. What kind of powers? Intelligent exercises of agency, obviously, exercise the subject's agential powers but also, the claim is, their powers to think. What explains whether something is an intelligent exercise of agency is that it is a manifestation of a subject's powers to act and think. This is to say that intelligent actions and activities are themselves forms of thinking. On this view, thinking is more than what belongs to the theoretical, those acts typically related to intellectual operations like judging. Knitting, riding a bike, cooking, and imagining can, on some occasions, be instances of thinking.

The view defended in this thesis was probably not Ryle's actual view on the matter. As we will see, there are reasons to believe that the claim's generality would perhaps not be to Ryle's liking. However, I think it can reasonably be called 'Rylean' for it builds on what I take to be the main insight present in Gilbert Ryle's discussion of intelligent actions and activities in the Presidential Address to the Aristotelian Society and the second chapter of *The Concept of Mind*.

One can begin to appreciate Ryle's main insight in the way he characterises his aims. In the Presidential Address, Ryle describes his main aim in the following way:

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I try to show that intelligence is directly exercised as well in some practical performances as in some theoretical performances and that an intelligent performance need incorporate no “shadow-act” of contemplating regulative propositions. Hence there is no gap between intelligence and practice corresponding to the familiar gap between theory and practice. There is no need, therefore, to postulate any Janus-headed go-between faculty, which shall be both amenable to theory and influential over practice. (Ryle 1945: 2)

When Ryle says here that there is no gap between the intelligence and practice corresponding to the gap between theory and practice, I take him to mean that the realm of the theoretical is not identical to the realm of intelligence. That some element is practical might preclude it from membership in the theoretical but by no means, Ryle claims, does this preclude it from being intelligent. Theoretical and intelligent are not identical.

In the second chapter of *The Concept of Mind*, Ryle characterises his aim in the following way:

The main object of this chapter is to show that there are many activities which directly display qualities of mind, yet are neither themselves intellectual operations nor yet effects of intellectual operations. Intelligent practice is not a step-child of theory. On the contrary theorising is one practice amongst others and is itself intelligently or stupidly conducted. (Ryle 1949: 15-16)

Here we can see Ryle’s claim that there is more to intelligence than theoretical intellectual operations, that is, that not only considerings of maxims, rules or precepts count as intelligent. Ryle talks here about the conditions in which practical activities directly display qualities of mind, which, in the context, means the conditions in which some exercises of agency directly display intelligence. Moreover, Ryle claims, intellectual operations are one among many ways in which one can manifest intelligence — manifesting intelligence is not a matter of intellectual operations only.

The quotes above, I believe, suggest Ryle’s basic insight about intelligent exercises of agency, namely, that intelligent practice is not a step-child of theory. This insight is most

clearly formulated when Ryle says that “overt intelligent performances are not clues to the workings of minds; they are those workings” (Ryle 1949: 46). Exercises of agency are not intelligent because they are the consequence of exercises of the Intellect but rather because they are some of the many ways in which a subject exercises their intelligence. The idea is that though activities like theorising, considering rules, and having in mind propositions might belong to the class of things that count as ‘thinking’ and be intelligent, practical activities like knitting, jumping over slippery rocks, and riding a bike through rush hour traffic can also belong to the class of elements that count as ‘thinking’ and be intelligent themselves. Both theory and practice can, on Ryle’s view, be intelligent in the same way, without the intelligence of one being derivative from the intelligence of the other.

Contrast the interpretation above with the received view about Ryle. According to the received view, Ryle brought it to the forefront the distinction between two kinds of states of knowledge, know-that and know-how —though there are some reasons to believe that philosophers before Ryle might have already made the distinction between know-how and know-that, it is, allegedly, Ryle who brought into the spotlight.¹ The received view about Ryle holds that intelligent exercises of agency are explained in terms of the state of know-how characterised as the conjunction of two claims: i) know how states are not identical or reducible to any form of knowledge of truths, and ii) knowing how to ϕ consists in being able to ϕ .

On the received view, know-how is a knowledge state fundamentally different from propositional states of knowledge, responsible for making actions and activities intelligent, so that a particular exercise of agency is intelligent when it is *guided* by know-how. Actions and activities are intelligent because they are manifestations of know-how. Thus, knitting, jumping over slippery rocks, and riding a bike through rush hour traffic belong to the class of intelligent exercises of agency when they are guided, in the appropriate way, by a state of know-how.

¹ See Stanley (2011a), Stanley and Williamson (2001), Noë (2005), Hetherington (2006), Fantl (2008), to name just some view examples. Several of the essays in Bengson and Moffett (2011a) also make this attribution to Ryle. Philosophers like Hornsby (2011) and Wiggins (2009, 2012) stay away from identifying the standard view with Ryle’s. As it will become clear, I side with the latter.

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What is the relation between the received view and the Rylean view I presented first? One might be tempted to equate them, brushing off the apparent differences claiming that they amount to the same thing. I urge the reader not to give into the temptation. If the received view is that the state of know-how is an additional element of the mind in virtue of which actions and activities are intelligent, I do not defend such a view in this thesis. I do not hold that what explains intelligent exercises of agency is a state of the subject that is different from the intelligent agential occurrence. In this respect, the received view is certainly under pressure, for the arguments I will present against INTELLECTUALISM also target forms of explanations that appeal to states or occurrences of thinking different from the actions and activities in order to explain their being intelligent.

The view defended in this thesis is that exercises of agency are intelligent in so far they themselves are instances of thinking —that is to say that whether an action or an activity is intelligent depends on ‘thinking’ in so far it depends on whether the exercise of agency is an appropriate instance of ‘thinking’. For Ryle, as I understand him, thinking comes in many guises and instances of riding a bike, knitting a jumper, or visualising the intense blue of the Pacific Ocean are on occasions instances of thinking. On such occasions, they are also intelligent exercises of agency.

The plan for the thesis is the following. In chapter [2], I present Stanley and Williamson’s discussion of Gilbert Ryle as a way of introducing the received view. My main focus shall be Stanley and Williamson’s understanding of Ryle’s argument against his opponent, with the particular aim of making explicit extraneous assumptions they bring into the interpretation of Ryle. I argue that Stanley and Williamson’s examination of Ryle’s regress asks us to read him in an unfavourable light, accepting claims about the nature of exercises of agency and their relation to know-how for which they provide little evidence. I believe that looking at Ryle’s regress helps us see something important about the relation between know-how and agency that is not captured by the Stanley and Williamson’s understanding of Ryle. This will be the topic of most of this thesis. Examining in detail Stanley and Williamson’s interpretation of Ryle’s argument helps make salient issues about the purported

relation between that intelligent exercises of agency and know-how, which will come in full light in the argument I present in chapter [6].

Chapter [3] consists of a general specification of five ways of approaching the question about what happens when someone acts intelligently. Starting from the idea that intelligent exercises of agency require thinking, I introduce five ways of understanding what ‘thinking’ might be and on the basis of which I present five accounts of intelligent actions and activities. I offer an initial characterisation of three interpretations of Ryle’s ‘popular idiom’ that suppose an additional, independent action, occurrence, or state, respectively, is needed for intelligent ϕ -ing —three views I take that to belong with the approach common to the received view. But I also present two interpretations on the alleged idiom that do not appeal to an independently specifiable additional element but rather take intelligent actions and activities to depend on the truth of a series of hypothetical statements or a disposition specified in terms of the kind of action ϕ -ing is, respectively —that is, views that, on specific understanding of ‘powers’, hold that intelligent exercises of agency depend on our powers to think.

In chapter [4] I explain some of the challenges that arise in trying to identify Ryle’s target and his argument. For this I present Snowdon’s worries about Ryle’s characterisation of INTELLECTUALISM as a way of examining in more detail some questions about the way to understand the debate. I consider questions about the relevant ontological categories like ‘acts of theorising’, ‘practical activities’, ‘exercises of Intelligence’, ‘acts of thinking’, ‘internal’ and ‘external’ acts, and, most importantly, ‘operations of considering propositions’. I show how the way one understands these terms shapes one’s understanding of Ryle.

In chapter [5], I propose a way of responding to the worries raised in chapter [4]. For this, I suggest a way of specifying Ryle’s target by locating it in the general argumentative strategy of *The Concept of Mind*. This suggestion reflects what I take to be Ryle’s main issue against the views he opposes, namely, the idea that the intelligence of actions and activities is not its own but, as it were, borrowed from some distinct mental element. According to this suggestion, Ryle’s main target is best characterised as the family of views that conceive

the intelligence of exercises of agency to be mediated by some additional, independently specifiable mental element.

Chapter [6] offers an argument against INTELLECTUALISM, understood as an instance of $\langle\theta\text{-AGENTIAL}\rangle$, $\langle\theta\text{-OCCURRENCE}\rangle$, and $\langle\theta\text{-STATE}\rangle$. I offer reasons to believe that INTELLECTUALISM employs an unwarranted distinction between modes of being intelligent of theory and modes of being intelligent of practice. And in addition to being unwarranted, such a distinction creates a gap between practice and theory that is not properly accounted for by the purveyor of $\langle\theta\text{-AGENTIAL}\rangle$, $\langle\theta\text{-OCCURRENCE}\rangle$, or $\langle\theta\text{-STATE}\rangle$.

In conclude in chapter [7], with a presentation of the view that actions and activities are intelligent in virtue of their being instances of thinking. I elaborate on the view by responding to some purported counter-examples on the basis of which the kind of powers and abilities involved is explained.

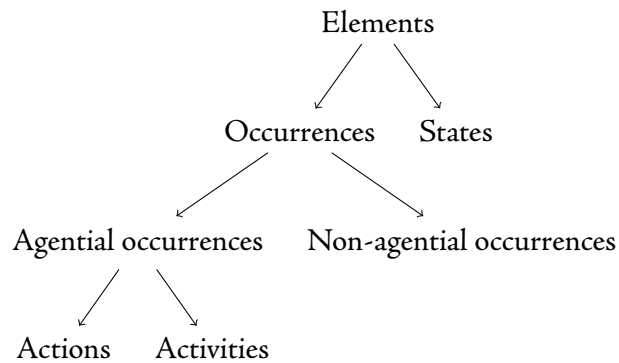
1.2 Some initial terminological remarks

Ryle argues against the view that intelligent exercises of agency require the considering of a proposition. As we will see, spelling out what this view amounts to is not straightforward and it will be the topic of long discussion in this thesis, especially in chapters [4] and [5]. One of the features that complicates the understanding Ryle are the terminological choices he makes, more often than not, without significant notice to the reader. To make matters more complicated, most philosophers discussing Ryle's position give a similar treatment to the relevant terminology.

As will transpire, I believe we should be very careful with way we use the relevant terms, especially with regards to the ontological categories they belong to. So, to end this introduction, I want to present some initial remarks about the way I will be using some central expressions.

1.2.1 *On some terms for ontological categories*

In this thesis I will talk about different ontological categories under which we can understand ‘thinking’, that is, different modes of being an instance of thinking. Here is a rough diagram of the way in which I will use the terms:



For lack of a better term, I will be using ‘element’ to refer to an instance of the class that comprises both occurrences and states. So, when I talk about a mental element, I am talking about something in the mind that could be either an occurrence or a state. I will not appeal to one particular account of the distinction between occurrences or states. I shall assume that the difference is marked by the way they unfold or extend over time.²

Most of the discussions of Ryle’s Presidential Address to the Aristotelian Society and the second chapter of *The Concept of Mind* tend to favour formulations of the claims made by Ryle in terms of ‘actions’, usually meaning intentional actions. I will follow this use, with reservations, in my discussion of Stanley and Williamson (2001) in chapter [2]. But as we will see in chapter [4], section [4.3.2], there are reasons to believe that Ryle’s focus is arguably not on restricted to intentional actions. Accordingly, from chapter [3] onwards, I will prefer talking about ‘agential occurrences’, ‘exercises of agency’ or ‘actions and activities’ in order to avoid committing to one particular ontological category. So, for instance, instead of talking about intelligent actions, I will be talking synonymously about *intelligent exercises of agency, intelligent actions and activities, or intelligent agential occurrences*.

² See Chapters 3 and 4 of Steward (1997) for one way of marking the difference between occurrences and states on the basis of their temporal shape.

1.2.2 *On ‘consider’, ‘contemplate’, and their nominalisation*

I will use indistinctly ‘contemplate’ and ‘consider’, and their cognates. For the most part, I talk use ‘consider’ and its cognates. On occasions, I will talk about ‘contemplation’, mostly because some of the authors I will be looking closely at use this term and maintaining the same terminology makes the text easier to follow. So, for example, Stanley and Williamson (2001) use the term ‘contemplation’ when they talk about Ryle’s formulation of INTELLECTUALISM, and my discussion of their view of Ryle will use the same term in order to keep the continuity between their quotes and the main body of the text.

I will also use ‘considering’ and its plural ‘considerings’ as the nominalisation of ‘consider’. Ryle talks about ‘operations of considering propositions’, which, typically, would also be referred to as ‘considerations of propositions’ or simply ‘considerations’. But the usual nominalisation of ‘considering’ as ‘consideration’ might confuse, since we will be talking about ‘considerations in favour of a view’ and ‘operations of considering propositions’ often in the same breath. To make it clear, I will reserve the term ‘considerations’ for philosophical considerations, and I will talk about ‘considerings’ as a way of referring to what Ryle more longwindedly calls ‘operations of considering propositions’. So for most of the thesis I will talk about ‘considerings’ and ‘operations of considering a proposition’ to refer to the intellectual element Ryle’s opponent claims bestows actions and activities with intelligence.

1.2.3 *On ‘dispositions’, ‘powers’, ‘capacities’, ‘skills’ and ‘abilities’*

One might draw the relation between dispositions, powers, capacities, skills, and abilities in many ways. Some philosophers use the terms ‘powers’ and ‘dispositions’ interchangeably and talk about capacities and abilities as a subclass of the class of powers (See, for example, the essays in Marmodoro 2010). Other philosophers use the terms ‘capacities’ and ‘abilities’ to denote very distinct kinds of dispositions. Van Inwagen (1983), for instance, characterises capacities as reactive powers, that is, powers to respond to certain determinate changes in the environment in certain determinate ways, but characterises abilities as active powers, that is, powers to originate changes in the environment. As we will see es-

pecially in chapter [7], how one draws the lines between these categories determines what might count as a counter-example to the view I wish to present.

I will use ‘powers to act’ or ‘agential powers’ to talk about the powers exercised when someone performs an action or an activity. I will avoid the terms ‘skills,’ ‘dispositions,’ and ‘capacities’ —except in connection to specific quotes and making sure that the ontological category denoted by those terms is clear in the context. But, in general, instead of talking about dispositions or skills exercised or manifested in actions and activities, I will talk about agential powers or abilities being exercised.

1.2.4 *On pronouns*

I have decided to use plural pronouns as a default throughout this thesis. Velleman (1989) favours the neutral use of the male pronoun for he believes that it is already neutral and traditional usage in this case makes English more inclusive, not less. O’Brien (2007) favours the female pronoun for she holds that male pronoun is not, at the moment, neutral, and that the plural pronoun “sounds too far off to [her] ear”. I agree with O’Brien in finding the male pronoun to be non-neutral. But, maybe because I have English as a second language, nothing sounds off to me in the use of the plural pronoun as a default. So, I will talk, for instance, about a subject, *their* actions and activities, and how *they* exercise *their* powers to think and act in them.

2 | Against Ryle's regress argument

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I present Stanley and Williamson's discussion of Gilbert Ryle. My main focus shall be their understanding of Ryle's regress with the particular aim of making explicit extraneous assumptions Stanley and Williamson bring into their reading of Ryle. In section [2.2], I introduce Stanley and Williamson's presentation of the debate and Ryle's place in it, and in section [2.3] I present Stanley and Williamson's formulation of the Ryle's argument against his opponent. I then examine, in section [2.4], the validity and, in section [2.5], soundness of the regress as presented by Stanley and Williamson. The conclusion will be that their examination of the regress asks us to read Ryle in a particular light and to accept claims about the nature of agency and its relation to know-how for which we have not much evidence.

2.2 Stanley and Williamson on the debate about know-how

The debate about know-how, as presented by Stanley and Williamson (2001) and later developed by Stanley (2011a), centres on the question about the nature of knowledge paradigmatically attributed by sentences like (1):

(1) Fatima knows how to knit.

Stanley and Williamson argue against what was, at the time when they published, a widely held philosophical opinion to the effect that there is a fundamental difference between

know-how and know-that.¹ Stanley and Williamson claim that knowledge typically attributed by sentences like (1) is of the same kind as that paradigmatically attributed by sentences like (2):

(2) Fatima knows that ancient Egyptians knitted socks.

Stanley and Williamson begin their examination of the topic by looking at Gilbert Ryle's discussion of know-how, taking the views expressed in Ryle's 1945 Presidential address to the Aristotelian society and the second chapter of *The Concept of Mind* as the crucial defence of the claim they wish to overthrow. On Stanley and Williamson's reading, Ryle's main argument in favour of the claim that know-how is not a species of know-that is based on two premises, namely, that if one Fs, one employs knowledge how to F, and that if one employs knowledge that P, one contemplates the proposition that P.² These premises purportedly lead to a regress, for, roughly, in order to F, one needs to employ propositional knowledge, which in turn requires employing additional propositional knowledge, which itself requires the employment of propositional knowledge, and so on indefinitely. However, they argue, there is no uniform reading of the premises that makes them both true and, thus, there is no uniform reading of the premises that could make the argument sound. But showing that the regress fails to establish the view that know-how is an ability does not demonstrate that the view is not true. To show this, Stanley and Williamson argue that knowing how to ϕ and the ability to ϕ can come apart: a situation where a subject must be credited with know-how but lacks the relevant ability. So, Stanley and Williamson argue that on the best reconstruction of Ryle's negative argument, it is unsound. And they argue

¹ Brown (1970) and Ginet (1975) are notable exceptions to this trend.

² Stanley and Williamson say that "Ryle really had only one argument for the thesis that know-how is a species of knowing-that, of which his other arguments were applications" (Stanley and Williamson 2001: 412). But though some of Ryle's arguments are, no doubt, variations of one same form of regress, it is not evident that all of Ryle's considerations against the claim that know-how is know-that are applications of the regress, and Stanley and Williamson do not offer sufficient reasons to think so. In fact, Stanley (2011a) seems to step away from this generalisation and considers the independent merits of Ryle's claims, suggesting also that there is more to Ryle's view than one regress argument in favour of the claim that know-how is not a species of know-that.

that the positive view of know how that Ryle proposes on the back of his negative argument is untenable.

In the following I examine Stanley and Williamson's discussion of Ryle's regress argument. I will leave discussion of their argument against the view that knowing how is having an ability for chapter [7].

Contrary to Stanley and Williamson's suggestion, I believe it is not easy to identify a single, standard-form argument from premises to conclusion in Ryle's discussion of know-how. Ryle offers several considerations and rewordings of his position, so that a clean, sharp argument is not easy to pin down. However, by Ryle's own lights, as evidenced in the first presentation of the topic in his presidential address to the Aristotelian Society, there is a common thread to his observations: the view that know-how is a species of know-that generates a vicious regress (Ryle 1945: 2). And in his later discussion in *The Concept of Mind*, Ryle claims that the "crucial objection" to his opponent takes the form of a regress (Ryle 1949: 19). So there are reasonable enough grounds to adopt a strategy like Stanley and Williamson's and to try to present Ryle's main argument as a *reductio ad absurdum* of his opponent's view.

In the following sections, I present Stanley and Williamson's formulation of the regress [2.3], and on the basis of it explain Stanley and Williamson's concerns about the validity [2.4] and soundness [2.5] of the argument, with the aim of showing how their concerns are grounded on assumptions about the nature of know-how and agency that demand further discussion.

2.3 The regress argument

Stanley and Williamson present Ryle's argument in favour of the claim that know-how is not a species of know-that as a regress with the following premises.

PREMISE 1 If one *Fs*, one employs knowledge how to *F*.

PREMISE 2 If one employs knowledge that p , one contemplates the proposition that p .³

On a reasonable understanding of the thesis that know-how is a species of know-that, there is a proposition P such that one knows how to F if and only if one knows that P .⁴

Together with **PREMISE 1** and **PREMISE 2**, Stanley and Williamson present the following regress for the thesis that know-how is a species of know-that (p. 414-415):

Suppose Fatima knits. According to **PREMISE 1**, if Fatima knits, Fatima employs knowledge how to knit. If knowing how to knit is propositional, Fatima employs knowledge that P , for some P knowledge of which amounts to knowing how to knit. But employing propositional knowledge that P , according to **PREMISE 2**, requires a contemplation that P . So if Fatima employs knowledge that P , Fatima contemplated that P . Now, according to **PREMISE 1**, it follows that Fatima employs knowledge how to contemplate that P , which amounts, given the thesis that know-how is a species of know-that, to the claim that Fatima employs knowledge of a proposition Q , for some Q knowledge of which amounts to knowing how to contemplate P . But employing knowledge that Q requires the contemplation of Q , which in turn requires that Fatima employs knowledge how to contemplate Q , and this involves using knowledge of a further proposition R and the corresponding consideration of R . And additional considerations employ extra know-how and this, being propositional, employs additional considerations which in turn employ more know-how, and so on *ad infinitum*. Under the assumption that Fatima knits

³ Ryle sometimes formulates his opponent's view as to require considering a proposition. In the following, I use 'contemplate a proposition' and 'consider a proposition' synonymously.

⁴ This is not the only way in which one may understand the claim that know-how is as species of know-that. One may claim, for instance, that know-how is knowledge not of a single proposition but of a set of propositions, that is, that one knows how to F if and only if one knows a set of propositions $\{P, Q, R, N\}$ without this entailing that one knows the conjunctive proposition $P \wedge Q \wedge R \wedge N$. Stanley and Williamson ignore this possibility for most part of their article, for they claim that the technical details of how to account for the differences between knowledge of a sets of propositions and knowledge of propositions would complicate the technical apparatus needed to account for the syntax and semantics of know-how ascription and it would probably only speak to the converted. Their aim is to argue that know-how is propositional, so the details about whether it is knowledge of a proposition or knowledge of a set of proposition are not relevant.

and that it wouldn't be possible if there were infinite requirements, the conclusion is that know-how is not a species of know-that.

Does this argument establish the claim that know-how is not a species of know-that? Is it a valid argument? Is it a sound argument? And, moreover, is the argument Stanley and Williamson present genuinely Ryle's argument? I leave the discussion of whether this is the best interpretation of Ryle's argument for later, but I shall examine the question of validity and soundness in the immediately following sections.

2.4 The validity of the regress

For the regress presented in section [2.3] to be valid, Stanley and Williamson remark, two further assumptions must be made. First, it must be the case that the relation between the proposition knowledge of which is employed in ϕ -ing and ϕ -ing must be such that "distinct actions [map] onto distinct propositions" (Stanley and Williamson 2001: 413). And second, it must be the case that the act of considering P is different from the act of considering the proposition required for considering P , which in turn is different from the act of considering the proposition required for the act of considering the proposition required for considering P . These premises work in the background in order for there to be a genuine regress. In the following I explain why these premises are needed for the regress to work.

Stanley and Williamson say surprisingly little about these assumptions:

For [Ryle's regress] to be sound, however, several additional premises are needed. First, it must be the case that the function, which maps acts to propositions, must map distinct actions onto distinct propositions. Second, it must be the case that $C(p)$ is a distinct action from $C(\phi(C(p)))$, which is a distinct action from $C(\phi(C(\phi(C(p)))))$, and so on. We shall not challenge these additional premises in this section. (Stanley and Williamson 2001: 414)

The content of the assumptions as such is not that important but rather the questions these assumptions are answers to. The assumptions are there to fill out the way in which the detail of the view Ryle targets is meant to work.

2.4.1 *The first additional assumption: PREMISE 3*

The first additional premise is about the relation between, on the one hand, the proposition knowledge of which is required to ϕ and, on the other hand, ϕ -ing itself. “Distinct actions [map] onto distinct propositions”, Stanley and Williamson say and this presumably means that for different values of ϕ different propositions need to be known so that the subject knows-how to ϕ .⁵

Let us examine this premise further. From the conjunction of the claim that know-how is a species of know-that and PREMISE 1 one can conclude that if one ϕ s, one employs knowledge that A and that if one ψ s, one employs knowledge that B . (This follows from an interpretation of the claim that know-how is a species of know-that as the claim that there is a proposition P such that one knows how to ϕ if and only if one knows that P .) Suppose that distinct actions do not map onto distinct propositions. This means that the proposition knowledge of which is employed when one ϕ s and the proposition knowledge of which is employed when one ψ s could be the same, *i.e.*, that possibly $A = B$. But in a situation where ϕ and ψ are different kinds of actions and yet $A = B$, it is possible to stop the regress: it is possible that in order to know how to perform a further act G , one only needs knowledge that A , which, as a previous requirement, it had already been fulfilled. In order to generate an indeterminately long list of requirements, it is important that every further act in the chain requires further knowledge, which in turn requires more acts and more knowledge. But if the proposition knowledge of which is required for one kind of act is the same proposition knowledge of which is required for another kind of act, it is

⁵ Stanley and Williamson are already assuming that the values of ϕ ought to be restricted to (intentional) actions. I shall discuss this assumption below but, for the moment, I will go along with their assumption and take ϕ to be restricted to intentional actions.

possible to stop the regress. Consider the following modification of the regress presented in section [2.3].

Suppose Fatima knits. According to PREMISE 1, if Fatima knits, Fatima employs knowledge how to knit. If knowing how to knit is propositional, Fatima employs knowledge that P , for some P knowledge of which amounts to knowing how to knit. But employing propositional knowledge that P , according to PREMISE 2, requires a contemplation that P . So if Fatima employs knowledge that P , Fatima contemplated that P beforehand. Now, according to PREMISE 1, it follows that Fatima employs knowledge how to contemplate that P , which amounts, given the thesis that know-how is a species of know-that, to the claim that Fatima employs knowledge of a proposition Q , for some Q knowledge of which amounts to knowing how to contemplate P . But employing knowledge that Q requires the contemplation of Q , which in turn requires that Fatima employs knowledge how to contemplate Q , and this involves using knowledge that P and the corresponding consideration of P . But Fatima has already engaged in the consideration of P , so no further requirement is needed —no additional consideration that employs more know-how, which in turn employs more considerations and even more know-how. There is no infinite line-up of requirements, for the list comes back in full-circle; thus there is no problem with the assumption that Fatima knits and that know-how is propositional.

Without the assumption that a different act requires knowledge of a further proposition, there is no guarantee that, at some point, the line-up of requirements doesn't stop because the pre-requisites have already been fulfilled. So, in order to generate an infinite regress, a supplementary premise PREMISE 3 is needed:

PREMISE 3 Different acts require knowledge of different propositions.

The addition of PREMISE 3, then, guarantees that list of requirements will not be met because the purportedly new requirement at each step of the regress has already been fulfilled. If different acts require different pieces of propositional know-how, every new con-

sideration will require knowledge of a further proposition, which in turn requires a further act demanding further knowledge, and so on.

Granting that Ryle needs this premise for the regress argument to work means that either Ryle believes this to be an aspect of Intellectualism, or that he accepts a version of the premise. We can more generally say that for the argument to work one needs to have a way of determining the relation between purported intelligent acts and that which accompanies them.

PREMISE 3 ensures that the succession of requirements continues to grow by guaranteeing that further knowledge is always needed. And in the following section we will see that, in a similar manner, the second additional premise makes sure that the series continues to grow by guaranteeing that further *acts* are needed.

2.4.2 *The second additional assumption: PREMISE 4*

Stanley and Williamson formulate the second additional premise in the following way (p. 414). Let $C(P)$ denote the act of contemplating the proposition that P and $\alpha(F)$ denote the proposition knowledge of which is necessary and sufficient for knowing how to ϕ . The second additional premise states that $C(P)$ is different from $C(\alpha(C(P)))$, which is in turn different from $C(\alpha(C(\alpha(C(P))))$), and so on. Let us examine how this premise is working backstage in the regress argument.

From the conjunction of PREMISE 1, PREMISE 2, and the claim that knowledge-how is a species of know-that one can conclude that when one ϕ s, one employs knowledge that $\alpha(F)$ and performs an act $C(\alpha(F))$, which in turn entails that one employs knowledge that $\alpha(C(\alpha(F)))$ and an act $C(\alpha(C(\alpha(F))))$. Now suppose that the second additional premise does not hold: that it is possible that an act $C(\alpha(C(\alpha(F))))$ could be identical to or involve $\alpha(C(\alpha(F)))$. In a situation where these two acts are the same or come together, it is possible to stop the regress, for to generate a indeterminately long list of requirements, it is required that using know-how demands a further act, which in turn requires further know-how, and so on. But if it is possible for considerations of different

propositions to come, as it were, in one package, it is possible that instead of a regress we generate a circle. To see how to generate a circle instead of an infinite regress, consider this second modification of the regress presented in section [2.3].

Suppose Fatima knits. According to PREMISE 1, if Fatima knits, Fatima employs knowledge how to knit. If knowing how to knit is propositional, Fatima employs knowledge that $\alpha(knit)$. But employing propositional knowledge, according to PREMISE 2, requires an action $C(\alpha(knit))$. So if Fatima employs knowledge that $\alpha(knit)$, she performs an action $C(\alpha(knit))$ beforehand. According to PREMISE 1, it follows that Fatima employs knowledge how to $C(\alpha(knit))$, which uses knowledge that $\alpha(C(\alpha(knit)))$. But if Fatima employs this piece knowledge, she performs an action $C(\alpha(C(\alpha(knit))))$, which in turn requires her to know how to $C(\alpha(C(\alpha(knit))))$, which uses knowledge that $\alpha(C(\alpha(C(\alpha(knit))))$ and requires her to perform an action $C(\alpha(C(\alpha(C(\alpha(knit))))$). But, plausibly, this last consideration does not entail a new requirement because it is identical or was part of the considerations Fatima already engaged in earlier. No additional consideration employing more know-how that in turn would employ further considerations and further know-how. There is no infinite list of requirements, for the regress is stopped thanks to previously fulfilled requirement.

Without the assumption that acts of considering do not, as it were, stack and cancel, there is no guarantee that, at some point, the extra consideration required has not already been brought about. In order to generate an infinite regress, a supplementary premise PREMISE 4 is needed :

PREMISE 4 For different propositions P and Q, considering P is not identical to, or arises together with, considering Q.

PREMISE 4 ensures that the succession of requirements continues to grow by guaranteeing that further acts of considering are needed. Now we can see how Stanley and Williamson take Ryle's argument to work.

2.4.3 *The four premises of the argument*

We have that the regress Stanley and Williamson attribute to Ryle has the following form:

PREMISE 1 If one *F*s, one employs knowledge how to *F*.

PREMISE 2 If one employs knowledge that *P*, one contemplates the proposition that *P*.

PREMISE 3 Different acts require knowledge of different propositions.

PREMISE 4 For different propositions *P* and *Q*, considering *P* is not identical to, or arises together with, considering *Q*.

CONCLUSION Knowledge how to *F* is not knowledge that *P*.

Stanley and Williamson seem happy to concede the additional premises and dedicate their efforts to showing that there is no reading in which **PREMISE 1** and **PREMISE 2** are simultaneously true. Their strategy against Ryle is, accordingly, to show that there is no way of understanding the terms involved in **PREMISE 1** and **PREMISE 2** that makes both premises true at the same time.

The general assumption in the literature following Stanley and Williamson is that the relation between the phenomenon of knowledge-how and skilful action is *explanatory*.⁶ One ϕ s skilfully (partly) because one has the relevant know-how. Stanley, referring to his work developing further the ideas presented in Stanley and Williamson (2001), assumes general agreement on the fact that “one’s skill at hitting a jump shot is due substantially (but not wholly) to one’s knowledge of how to hit a jump shot.” Presumably, Stanley means to say that one’s skill at hitting a jump shot is due to the coming together of many factors (elements needed also for actions that do not display skill) but *substantially* due to one’s knowledge how to hit a jump shot. What is the purported substantial role of know-how in skill at performing an action?

⁶ See Stanley (2011a,b, 2012), Stanley and Williamson (2001), Sax (2010), and Bengson and Moffett (2011b,c) to name just a few. I examine this assumption in chapter [3].

Just stating that one displays skill at an action because one knows how to perform that action says very little about the explanatory relation between one's knowledge and one's skill at an action. Even if one does not question *whether* know-how explains skill at an action it is important to understand *how* it does, that is, to understand the relation between one's knowledge-how and one's skill at an action. PREMISE 3, one of the assumptions that Stanley and Williamson are happy to grant and consider just in passing, tell us something about how they take know-how and skill to interact.

PREMISE 3 constrains the possible accounts of the relation between pieces of know-how and skilful actions. According to this premise, for different values of ϕ , different pieces of propositional know-how are needed. So, if two different actions display skill, then they are due to different pieces of know-how. Why should we accept this restriction? Does Ryle accept the restriction or does he merely attribute it to his opponent? Why does it seem obviously correct to Stanley and Williamson that skill at different actions requires different pieces of know-how? Does this assumption hold regardless of whether one endorses Stanley and Williamson's claim that know-how is know-that? Or is it a pre-theoretical constraint to which our account of know-how should be sensitive?

Stanley and Williamson are too quick to attribute to Ryle claims about know-how and with the same speed happily concede, or at least ignore, them. And already in the way they take Ryle's argument, they seem to suggest more general claims about know-how without telling us much about either their pre-theoretical standing or their own view. As we will see, this is just one of the many ways in which Stanley and Williamson are a bit too quick to accept a view on Ryle's behalf.

In this section, I have examined Stanley and Williamson's evaluation of the validity of Ryle's regress and the extra assumptions they posit. Even if it were evident that know-how *explains* skill at an action, the way in which this explanation works is not. Stanley and Williamson's evaluation of Ryle's regress seems to suggest that the explanation of skill at an action in terms of know-how is constrained by a relation between know-how and skilful actions such that an explanation of skill at ϕ -ing is to be given in terms of knowing how

to ϕ and no other piece of know-how is equally relevant to this explanation. The question remaining, though, is whether we should accept these restrictions on the explanation of skilful action and, if so, why.

2.5 The soundness of the regress

Stanley and Williamson's main objection to the regress presented in section [2.3] is that there is no single interpretation of the relevant terms that makes PREMISE 1 and PREMISE 2 true. Allegedly, the interpretation that makes PREMISE 1 true makes PREMISE 2 false, and the interpretation that makes PREMISE 2 true makes PREMISE 1 false.

On the one hand, Stanley and Williamson claim that for PREMISE 1 to be true, we must restrict the scope of the premise to that of *intentional actions*. In other words, PREMISE 1 is true *only* when the values of ϕ are appropriately restricted to intentional actions —*i.e.*, that it is true that one employs knowledge how to ϕ when one ϕ s only when the subject's ϕ -ing is an intentional action.

And on the other hand, Stanley and Williamson claim that for PREMISE 2 to be true, contemplating that p must not be an intentional action. In other words, that one contemplates the proposition that p , if one employs knowledge that p *only* if contemplating a proposition is something short of an intentional action.

The problem Stanley and Williamson raise for the regress is, then, that one premise is only true if it is understood to be a claim about intentional actions while the second premise is only true if understood to be about something other than an intentional action. But for the premises to work together, without equivocation in the use of the ϕ , the variable has to be interpreted in the same way. But, according to Stanley and Williamson, there is no interpretation under which the two claims can be put together in order to generate a regress. In this section, I examine Stanley and Williamson's evaluation of the regress and the assumptions they quietly take on board in the process of developing their evaluation.

2.5.1 *The first premise*

PREMISE I states that if one ϕ 's, one employs knowledge how to ϕ . But, Stanley and Williamson claim, there are obvious counterexamples to this claim: the case of digestion and the case of winning the lottery.

Suppose Jane digests food. So, if PREMISE I is unrestrictedly true, Jane employs knowledge how to digest. But it is obviously wrong to say that one employs knowledge how to digest. Thus, it cannot be the case that PREMISE I is true without restrictions. Likewise, suppose that Jane wins the lottery (fairly!). So, if PREMISE I is unrestrictedly true, one employs knowledge how to win the lottery. But it is obviously wrong to say that one employs knowledge how to win the lottery (when one wins fairly). Thus, it cannot be the case that PREMISE I is true without restrictions.

Suppose that it is true that one does not employ knowledge how to digest. Is it really *obviously* so? Stanley and Williamson boldly state: "Digesting food is not the sort of action one knows how to do"(Stanley and Williamson 2001: 414). Why? What is the reason for digestion not to fall into the kind of actions one knows how to do? Is it because we don't normally *say* that one knows how to digest? Stanley and Williamson do not say much about this case —fortunately, they say something more about the reasons for which winning the lottery is not the kind of thing one knows how to do.

Stanley and Williamson claim that "[one] does not know how to win the lottery, since it was by sheer chance that [one does] so"(Stanley and Williamson 2001: 415), suggesting that one's ϕ ing by sheer chance is one reason why it does not make sense to say that one knows how to ϕ . Winning the lottery fairly is not the kind of thing one knows how to do because, allegedly, it is the kind of thing one does by sheer chance. In an attempt to generalise, one might think the things one knows how to do are the things that one does not do by sheer chance. Unfortunately, there is no reason to suppose that this is the only way to determine the kind of things one knows how to do. Digestion does not happen by chance, not at least in the sense in which winning the lottery is a matter of luck, and yet

it is not the kind of thing one knows how to do. Moreover, one might wonder how much and what kind of luck ruins the pot.⁷ So, it is not only for values of ϕ which happen by sheer chance that PREMISE I is purportedly false.

The cases singled out by Stanley and Williamson do not seem to be the only purported counter examples to an unrestricted PREMISE I. It is not only for biological processes, like digesting, or matters of chance, like winning the lottery, for which it does not follow from the fact that the subject performing them knows how to perform them. For example, sentences in (4) do not seem to follow from the corresponding sentences in (3).

- (3) a. Gladiz is in pain.
 b. Jose breathes.
 c. Humberto lives in a small cabin.
- (4) a. Gladiz knows how to be in pain.
 b. Jose knows how to breathe.
 c. Humberto knows how to live in a small cabin.

It is far from evident that when people are in the state of being in pain, undergoing the biological process of breathing, or engaging in the activity of living in a small cabin it is true of them that they have the corresponding pieces of knowledge attributed in (4). But if PREMISE I were unrestrictedly true, inferences from sentences on (3) to the corresponding sentences in (4) would indeed follow. So, either there ought to be a restriction on the values of ϕ for which the premise is true, or we should abandon the premise altogether

It is, first, disingenuous to think that Ryle took PREMISE I to be true for any value of ϕ , such that all the corresponding inferences from (3-a) to (4-a) are allowed, and, second, unfair to attribute such an interpretation of Ryle to Stanley and Williamson. Ryle did not hold that for any ϕ if one ϕ s, one knows how to ϕ , and Stanley and Williamson don't claim that Ryle held such a risible view.

⁷ For example, see the discussion of the relation between epistemic luck and know-how in Carter and Pritchard (2015a,b), and the discussion of the relation between intentional action and luck in Mele and Moser (1994) and Pacherie (2002).

On Stanley and Williamson's reading, Ryle restricts PREMISE 1 to values of ϕ where ϕ -ing is *intelligently executed*. So, digesting and winning the lottery are not the kind of things one knows how to do because they are not intelligently executed. This is a very strange claim. For it seems to assume that we have a grasp of what an intelligent execution is independently of what one knows how to do. And the claim gets stranger: Stanley and Williamson take intelligent execution further to mean that the values of ϕ ought to be restricted to *intentional actions*:

For [PREMISE 1] to be true, the range of actions must be sufficiently restricted. Indeed, Ryle hints as much, when he speaks, in the above quotation, of "operations [that are] intelligently executed." Digesting food is not the sort of operation that is executed with intelligence. Similarly, Hannah's winning the lottery was not intelligently performed. [PREMISE 1] is true only when the range of actions is restricted to intentional actions. (Stanley and Williamson 2001: 415)

Stanley and Williamson quickly jump from a formulation of a restriction of the class of know-how in terms of intelligent execution to a formulation of a restriction in terms of intentional actions. But it is not clear, first, why we should take Ryle to restrict know-how to intelligent execution and, second, why Stanley and Williamson understand this to be a restriction to intentional actions.

Ryle surely didn't think that one could know-how to digest, for instance, but the attribution of this particular restriction seems unwarranted, for it is not clear that Ryle is interested in a general delimitation of the range of things one can have know-how of. His interest in the second chapter of *The Concept of Mind* is, roughly, the application of intelligence epithets like 'careful', 'clever', and 'cunning' (among many others) and his view, in short, is that intelligent epithets are appropriately applied when there is know-how.⁸ But this does not immediately entail that all know-how concerns intelligent executions and only them. Even if all intelligent executions require know-how, it does not follow from this

⁸ I discuss this further in chapter [4].

that know-how is always of intelligent operations.⁹ It seems that Ryle explicitly holds only that intelligent exercises of agency are intelligent because of know-how, not that knowing how to ϕ is genuine know-how because ϕ is an intelligent action.

Moreover, even if one holds, as Stanley and Williamson do, that Ryle thinks know-how is restricted to intelligent exercises of agency, it is not clear this entails that know-how only concerns intentional actions. Stanley and Williamson quickly move from a restriction to intelligent exercises of agency to a restriction in terms of intentional actions —presumably because they hold that what Ryle expresses in terms of intelligent operations is better characterised by the contemporary philosophical notion of intentional action. But Stanley and Williamson do not explicitly explain this move, and it is not clear to me why one would reduce the wide range of examples discussed by Ryle —examples of practices, operations, actions, activities, and other exercises of agency— to ‘intentional actions.’

Stanley and Williamson’s view on PREMISE I can be summarised with the help of the following three formulations:

PREMISE I If one ϕ s, one uses knowledge how to ϕ .

PREMISE I* If one ϕ s and ϕ -ing is an intelligent operation, one uses knowledge how to ϕ .

PREMISE I** If one ϕ s and ϕ -ing is an intentional action, one uses knowledge how to ϕ .

Stanley and Williamson claim that PREMISE I is straightforwardly false, for there are plenty of counter-examples. As a response, Stanley and Williamson offer PREMISE I* as an expression of the restriction Ryle should have had in mind, and further develop the idea in the form of PREMISE I**.

This summary lets us appreciate a question about Stanley and Williamson’s reading of the argument and also their own views about the nature of know-how. Why should one follow Stanley and Williamson with their restriction on know-how? Why think that it is entailed by, or presents the best possible interpretation of, the restriction imposed

⁹ See Hornsby (2011) for reasons to doubt that Ryle in fact is interested in a general theory of know-how and Tanney (2009) for reasons to doubt that he would be interested in any kind of general philosophical account.

by PREMISE I? One can challenge Stanley and Williamson's view of PREMISE I at two points, corresponding to the moves from PREMISE I to PREMISE I* and from PREMISE I* to PREMISE I**.

From PREMISE I to PREMISE I* Why restrict knowledge how to knowing how to perform 'intelligent operations'? What are the reasons for thinking that know-how is only of operations that can be performed 'intelligently'? What is the textual evidence for attributing this view to Ryle? Are the reasons for which Ryle purportedly held this view the same as those for which Stanley and Williamson seem to endorse this restriction?

From PREMISE I* to PREMISE I** Why think that know-how only concerns intentional action? What are Stanley and Williamson's reasons for attributing this view to Ryle? Is this restriction part of the theoretical background purportedly common to Ryle and Stanley and Williamson?

It seems reasonably clear that part of one's know-how concerns what is done intentionally, that is, that intentional actions are the kind of things we know how to do. When Commodore Davidson intentionally sinks the Bismarck, he is using knowledge we can plausibly call know-how where such knowledge is part of the explanation of how he intentionally sinks the Bismarck.¹⁰ The Commodore knows how to aim a torpedo, how to press a button and, indeed, how to sink a battleship, and this knowledge is part of what explains his intentionally sinking the Bismarck. This suggests that know-how is, at least sometimes, involved in intentional action. But is it equally clear that know-how is *only* of intentional actions? This depends on our more general views of agency and intentional action.

Being in the state of being in pain, undergoing the biological process of breathing, or engaging in the activity of living in a small cabin are not typical examples of intentional

¹⁰ I do not mean to suggest here that a means-end beliefs can be know-how, that is, that the Commodore's belief about the ways in which he can bring about the sinking of the Bismarck constitute his knowing how to sink the Bismarck. For all that has been said, it is possible that means-end beliefs and know-how both take part in the explanation of the Commodore's intentional action, and yet means-end beliefs and know-how to be different.

actions. They are not like the standard example of lifting an arm on command, for example. But, arguably, situations can be described where these examples can be up to the agent and their know-how. For any of these examples it is possible to construct a scenario where the subject can knowledgeably bring it about. My state of being in pain is up to me, at least partly, in so far I can diminish it using painkillers; the process of breathing can be partially controlled by taking meditation classes and learning methods of guiding my breathing; and the activity of living in a small cabin is something which I plausibly have to learn how to do and so dependent on my knowledge. In all of these situations it makes sense to talk about the examples as being 'up to the agent' and 'up to the agent's knowledge' because my knowledge, my knowing something about painkillers and pain, breathing and meditation, and living, make sense of them being at least partly under my control and guidance. We are thus making sense of an exercise of agency in terms of the subject's knowledge. However, it is not obvious that they are intentional actions or whether they are the kind of things one knows how to do.

All that Stanley and Williamson say is that intentional actions are the kind of things one has know-how of, which seems to foreclose further discussion about whether one can also have know-how of things like states, processes and activities that are not intentional actions, or whether we should understand such cases to be related to know-how only indirectly —whether, for example, some states, processes, and activities require know-how in so far they are the products of exercises of agency which directly require know-how.

Stanley and Williamson attempt to save Ryle's PREMISE I by suggesting that the scope of know-how needs to be restricted to intentional actions. But the support for this suggestion is, at best, unclear. It is not an ill-intended interpretation, I think. I believe they are trying to make best sense of what they take to be a claim of Ryle's that yields absurd results if left unrestricted. I don't think that it is not unreasonable to restrict know-how to things one intentionally does, but it is not obviously the only or the best restriction that would fit with Ryle's purposes.

Let us look now at Stanley and Williamson's second premise.

2.5.2 *The second premise*

PREMISE 2 states that if one employs knowledge that p one contemplates the proposition that p . But on 'a natural construal', Stanley and Williamson say, it is false that in every case where one employs knowledge that p one contemplates the proposition that p . To support this, Stanley and Williamson present the following quote from Carl Ginet.

I exercise (or manifest) my knowledge that one can get the door open by turning the knob and pushing it (as well as my knowledge that there is a door there) by performing that operation quite automatically as I leave the room; and I may do this, of course, without formulating (in my mind or out loud) that proposition or any other relevant proposition. (Ginet 1975: 7)

Ginet's example of turning the knob is meant to present a case where one employs propositional knowledge and yet does not consider the proposition at hand. In the example, Ginet knows the proposition 'one can get the door open by turning the knob and pushing it' and, presumably, employs this knowledge in his opening the door by turning the knob and pushing it; Ginet's opening the door is, or is the product of, the employment of his propositional knowledge. And even though propositional knowledge is employed, there seems to be no corresponding considering of a proposition. In the example, Ginet opens the door 'quite automatically' and without formulating any proposition, and this is taken to show that no considering of propositions took place. So, the thought seems to be, Ginet's opening the door is or is accompanied by the employment of propositional knowledge and yet there is no considering of propositions to go with that employment of propositional knowledge. But what exactly is the 'natural construal' of the act of considering a proposition on which, in Stanley and Williamson's words, "employments of knowledge-that are often unaccompanied by distinct acts of contemplating propositions" (Stanley and Williamson 2001: 415)?

The purported 'natural construal' of the act of contemplating is one that takes it to be an intentional action. Stanley and Williamson argue that the best interpretation of PREMISE

I makes it a claim about intentional action. Thus, if we are to show that INTELLECTUALISM entails a regress on the basis of PREMISE 1 and PREMISE 2, it better be that PREMISE 2 is also a claim about an intentional action — this seems to be the reason why regarding acts of contemplating or considering propositions as intentional actions is 'natural'. But Ginet's example is meant to show that when one, for example, opens the door and uses knowledge of the proposition that there is a door there, no additional intentional action is performed. In turn, Stanley and Williamson use Ginet's example to show that when one performs an intentional action and uses propositional knowledge, there is no further intentional action of considering a proposition and so that PREMISE 2 is false, at least in the 'natural construal' of the act of contemplating. So, Stanley and Williamson hold, one can either accept this construal and reject PREMISE 2, or adopt a different construal on which the assumption is true.

An alternative construal of the act of contemplating that makes PREMISE 2 true is, Stanley and Williamson suggest, one in which the act of contemplating a proposition is no more intentional than the act of digesting food. If contemplating a proposition is something automatic and over which the subject has no intentional control, for example, then Ginet's example does not show that there is no such act and, thus, the premise may be saved.¹¹

Stanley and Williamson's view about PREMISE 2 can be summarised with the help of the following three formulations.

PREMISE 2 If one employs knowledge that p one contemplates the proposition that p .

PREMISE 2* If one employs knowledge that p one performs the intentional action of contemplating the proposition that p .

PREMISE 2** If one employs knowledge that p , one performs in a non-agential way the consideration of the proposition that p .

¹¹ Stanley (2011a: 15) suggests treating the act of considering that P as the triggering of a representation that P . On this construal, the act of considering a proposition is not an intentional action and is thus not endangered by Ginet's example.

PREMISE 2*, the 'natural construal' of PREMISE 2, is purportedly revealed to be false on the basis of Ginet's example, for the example is plausibly taken to show that one need not engage in an additional intentional action when one is using propositional knowledge. However, the alternative reading PREMISE 2** is immune to the attack raised on the basis of the counter-example, therefore it is the version of PREMISE 2 that has a better chance of being true. (But, as we will see, the most plausible reading of PREMISE 2 renders the argument invalid.)

One can challenge Stanley and Williamson's view of PREMISE 2 at two points, corresponding to the moves from PREMISE 2 to PREMISE 2* and from PREMISE 2* to PREMISE 2**.

From PREMISE 2 to PREMISE 2* Why is it that Ginet's example forces us away from the so-called 'natural construal' of considerations? What are the reasons for thinking that the automaticity of simply employing propositional knowledge entails that there is no further intentional act of considering a proposition? Is an example like Ginet's something that Ryle really didn't consider?

From PREMISE 2* to PREMISE 2** Why think that if an act of considering a proposition happens 'automatically', the act of considering ought to be understood as a non-agential operation? Suppose that there are reasons not to think that it is not an intentional action. Why move from that the idea that the consideration of a proposition is not an intentional action to the idea that it is not agential at all? Why think, in particular, of the operation as a sub-personal mechanism happening in the background outside of the subject's power?

These questions about Stanley and Williamson's view on PREMISE 2 are more than just issues about their take on the regress. Stanley and Williamson's eagerness to avoid an interpretation of the relevant premise in terms of intentional actions suggests more general questions about the nature and scope of know-how and how it relates to actions. It does not seem enough to say that skill at an action is due to know-how. One must also say how it is

that know-how relates to skilful actions, that is, explain the mechanism, whether personal or sub-personal, conscious or subconscious, mediated or not, through which knowledge and action relate in skilful action.

It seems clear that one can hold on to the 'natural construal', accept PREMISE 2, and deny that Ginet's example is problematic. Ginet, and Stanley and Williamson as well, seems to assume that from the fact that one opens the door 'quite automatically' it follows that there is no intentional action of considering a proposition. This does not seem right to me.

It does not follow from the appearance of automaticity that, first, it is automatic and, second, it is not done intentionally. The act of considering a proposition could happen, as Ryle is willing to concede, in a manner that is "very swift and ... quite unmarked by the agent" (Ryle 1949: 18), and this does not immediately entail that it is not done intentionally. It does not follow from the fact that the subject cannot tell that there is an intentional act of considering a proposition (for it happens 'quite automatically' and outside of their awareness), that there is in fact no intentional act of considering a proposition. For the example to work, one needs to commit to the claim that it what happens 'quite automatically' is not done intentionally.¹² But even if we did commit to a tight link between awareness and intentional action along these lines, it does not follow that the act of considering a proposition ought to be regarded as non-agential. Suppose that considering a proposition is not an intentional action, why think it is not an exercise of agency? Furthermore, why think it is a sub-personal operation? Why regard, as Stanley (2011a: 16) suggests, acts of considering proposition to be the triggering of the relevant representations? What is the reason for thinking that if an act of considering is not an intentional action then it is not an exercise of agency and, probably, belongs with the denizens of the sub-personal level?

Stanley and Williamson attempt to save PREMISE 2 by suggesting that it should be taken to be about a sub-personal activity, but Ginet's example only warrants the claim that the act of considering a proposition should be an 'automatic' activity. Maybe the agent,

¹² Noë (2005) makes a similar point in response to Stanley and Williamson and the purported challenge presented by Ginet's example of opening the door.

had they reflected on the moment, would have noticed. The example only warrants that, in acting from propositional knowledge, one does not necessarily notice the happening of considering of a proposition. In order to determine whether we should regard acts of considering as intentional actions or not, we should examine further the reasons why the agent cannot tell that there is a further consideration. This resonates with the verdict about PREMISE 1 in the following way.

Suppose that on further examination it turns out that PREMISE 2** is in fact the correct interpretation of PREMISE 2, and suppose also, that PREMISE 1** is in fact the correct interpretation of PREMISE 1.¹³ If these are the interpretations that make true the premises of Ryle's argument, the regress is invalid: the regress simply does not follow from PREMISE 1** and PREMISE 2**. One cannot generate a regress because one premise is about intentional actions and the requirements of intentional action, while the other premise is about the non-intentional action required in the employment of propositional knowledge. To see this, consider the following reformulation of Fatima's situation.

Suppose Fatima knits *intentionally*, that is, Fatima's knitting is an intentional action. According to PREMISE 1**, if Fatima knits and the knitting is an intentional action, Fatima employs knowledge how to knit. If knowing how to knit is propositional, Fatima employs knowledge that P , for some P knowledge of which amounts to knowing how to knit. Employing propositional knowledge that P , according to PREMISE 2**, requires a non-intentional contemplation that P . Therefore, if Fatima employs knowledge that P , Fatima contemplated that P beforehand —e.g., she triggered a representation that P . And here it stops, for Fatima's contemplation that P does not, in turn, employ further knowledge since it is not an intentional action.

An appropriate interpretation of PREMISE 1 requires a restriction to intentional action, but an appropriate interpretation of PREMISE 2 requires a restriction to values other than

¹³ PREMISE 1** is the interpretation according to which if one ϕ s and ϕ is an intentional action, one employs knowledge how to ϕ .

intentional actions. Since there is no way to delimit the domain of the premises in way that makes both premises true, Stanley and Williamson claim the argument fails. But we have seen that it is not clear that Stanley and Williamson's way of reaching these interpretations is transparent. The steps that lead to these interpretations require, at least, further examination.

2.6 Conclusion

Stanley and Williamson's examination of the regress asks us to read Ryle in a particular light and accept claims about the nature of actions and the relation to know-how for which we have little evidence. This is not, yet, to say that the regress works, but I believe that looking at Ryle's regress helps us see something important about the relation between know-how and action. Perhaps the exact regress does not work but an argument in the vicinity makes salient deep issues about the particular way in which intelligent exercises of agency are possible thanks to know-how. In chapter 6, I examine the potential problems in trying to specify the relation between know-how and intelligent actions and activities. But before that, we need to attempt to get a better understanding of Ryle's target. This is what will occupy us in the following chapters.

3 | Ryle's popular idiom and 'thinking'

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter I offer a general specification of five ways of approaching the question about what happens when someone acts intelligently. In section [3.2], I introduce Jason Stanley's idea, according to which skilled action requires know-how, and, in section [3.3], I compare this to a similar proposal made by Gilbert Ryle. On the basis of Ryle's purportedly popular idiom, according to which intelligent actions and activities require thinking, I introduce five ways of understanding what 'thinking' might be, on the basis of which five accounts of intelligent exercises of agency might be given. In section [3.4], I offer an initial characterisation of three takes on Ryle's 'popular idiom' that suppose an additional, independent action, occurrence, or state, respectively, is needed for intelligent ϕ -ing. In section [3.5], I consider two takes on the alleged idiom that do not appeal to an independently specifiable additional element but rather take intelligent exercises of agency to depend on the truth of a series of hypothetical statements or a disposition specified in terms of the kind of exercise ϕ -ing is, respectively. After presenting the five accounts of intelligent action, I introduce in section [3.6] a question about the kind of explanation proposed by views within these five models.

3.2 A (near enough) conceptual truth

In chapter [2] I presented several background assumptions in Stanley and Williamson's discussion of Ryle's regress argument, with respect to their characterisation of the argu-

ment but also with respect to their evaluation of it. On their view, Ryle *agrees with his opponent* with respect to the claim that know-how explains intentional action —for if one intentionally ϕ s, one knows how to ϕ — but Ryle *disagrees with this opponent* with respect to the claim that know-how is a species of know-that. Stanley and Williamson argue against such a picture by showing that the regress argument that purportedly supports it is not valid —there is no single interpretation of the terms involved in the premises that makes them all true. Their conclusion is that Ryle's argument does not establish that know-how is not a species of know-that. I argued that Stanley and Williamson's assumptions are unwarranted. Their evaluation of Ryle attributes to him claims about the scope of know-how and its relation to intentional action —attributions for which Stanley and Williamson do not present clear evidence that Ryle holds or should hold. I think Stanley and Williamson's assumptions are due to their peculiar take on the debate, and on Ryle's place in it, and are not the best interpretation of Ryle's actual views. Let me explain why.

Stanley develops the views first presented in Stanley and Williamson (2001) at length in his book *Know How*. In the final chapter of the book, he summarises his view of the debate in the following way:

If Derek is a skilled fielder of fly balls, then he knows how to field a fly ball; if Michael is a skilled swimmer, then he knows how to swim. That someone skilled at an activity knows how to do that activity is as good a candidate as any to be a conceptual truth. It is therefore no surprise that everyone who discusses skilled action, from Ryle forwards, agrees that skilled action requires knowledge how. The debate has been about the nature of knowledge how. I have argued that skilled action is action guided by knowledge how, and that knowing how to do something amounts to knowing a fact. Skilled action is action guided by knowledge of facts. (Stanley 2011a: 175)

Stanley's overall assessment of the discussion around know-how and skilled action is, I believe, misleading. For, as we will see, thinking that that debate is mostly about the nature

of know-how without a worry about how skilled action requires know how. It potentially misrepresents the aims of those seeking to draw on Ryle's main insights in this area.

For Stanley, the claim that skilled action requires know-how is 'a (near enough) conceptual truth'. We saw this claim at play in the evaluation of Ryle's argument in his work with Williamson. Although Stanley gives us no reason to believe this claim about skilled action —aside from maintaining that the claim is 'more entrenched' than the purportedly related claim that having a proper reason for action requires knowledge (Stanley 2011a: 175)— it is easy enough to see the appeal of the claim.¹ In fact, as we will see, Ryle himself makes a similar claim. However, the way Ryle understands the dependence claim is different from the way Stanley understands the dependence claim.

The kind of relation between agency and know-how favoured by Ryle, I defend, is intrinsically bound up with what he believes is the nature of intelligent exercises of agency. In the following sections, I examine the purported agreement about the dependence of skilled action on know-how, in particular the supposedly common ground between Stanley and Ryle. To this end, I will begin by presenting Ryle's version of the dependence claim, stating an apparently general connection between intelligent actions and activity and know how in line with Stanley's purported near enough conceptual truth.

3.3 Ryle's 'popular idiom'

Stanley claims that everyone agrees that skilled action requires know-how —Ryle in particular (Stanley 2012: 733). Though Ryle tends to illustrate his points through examples and tends to avoid very general claims, I think there are some passages that could be interpreted in a way that lends support to Stanley's claim. Here is a characteristic passage:

[A]n action exhibits intelligence, if, and only if, the agent is thinking what he is doing while he is doing it, and thinking what he is doing in such a manner

¹ See Hawthorne and Stanley (2008) for Stanley and Hawthorne's defence of the claim that one ought to treat the proposition that p as a reason for acting only if one knows that p.

that he would not do the action so well if he were not thinking what he is doing. (Ryle 1949: 18)

Part of what this 'popular idiom,' as Ryle calls it, expresses is that good performance is necessary but not sufficient for intelligent exercises of agency. Though there is a sense in which a well-adjusted clock and a well-drilled seal both perform well, they do not perform intelligently.² Intelligent exercises of agency are actions and activities that are well-performed because the agent is thinking what they are doing in a way such that what they are doing would not be performed well if the agent were not thinking what they are doing. The point that Ryle seems to express here is that intelligent actions and activities are exercises of agency carried out well and such that its being well-performed *depends* on the agent thinking what they are doing.

Ryle's idiom is suggestively similar to Stanley's purported conceptual truth. Notice, however, a crucial difference in the formulations. While Stanley talks about know-how and skilled action, Ryle talks about *thinking* and *intelligent* doings. Stanley seems to think that these are innocuous differences —*i.e.*, he seems to hold that 'thinking' just refers the state of know-how, and skilled action just is a species of intelligent action. Such that the claim that skilled action requires know-how can be translated into the claim that intelligent action requires thinking.

Regarding the formulation of Ryle's claim in terms of 'skilled action' and not 'intelligent action or activity,' I think we need to exercise some care and track the different uses of those expressions. According to Stanley, "[t]he intelligence concept that occupies Ryle perhaps the most is the concept of skill" (Stanley 2011a: 4). This, one might think, justifies concentrating the discussion on skilled action. One reason to worry about an immediate identification of Ryle's use of 'intelligent' with Stanley's use of 'skilled,' however, has to do

² «The well-regulated clock keeps good time and the well-drilled circus seal performs its tricks flawlessly, yet we do not call them 'intelligent.'» (Ryle 1949: 17). One might take this to be a claim about machines like clocks and animals like seals, suggesting that Ryle held a view of intelligent actions and activities that precludes the possibility of robots and non-human animal acting intelligently. A more charitable reading is to take Ryle to be talking about ways of performing well such that good performance product of being well-regulated or well-drilled is not intelligent performance. Ryle's observations about drill and training suggest that the more charitable reading is to be preferred. (See Ryle 1949: 30-31).

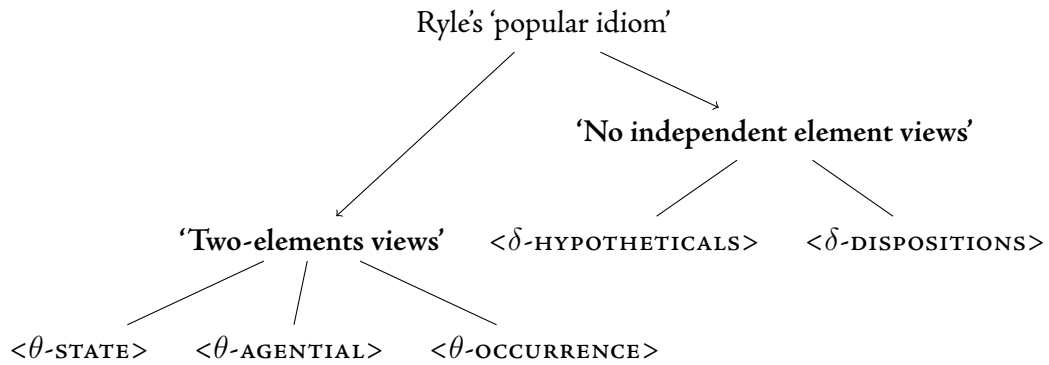
with the use Ryle makes of the term 'skill' and its cognates. On some occasions, Ryle uses 'skilful' as an example of an 'intelligence concept' — a set that includes instances like 'careful', 'humorous', 'wise', and 'tasteful' (See Ryle 1949: 17, 18, 21, 28, 36). But on other occasions, Ryle talks about 'skill' as that which explains the application of 'intelligence concepts', by contrast with attempts to explain the application of intelligence concepts that make appeal to 'ghostly' episodes of thinking (See Ryle 1949: 21, 22, 28, 30, 33, 46, 47). The latter use is no doubt central in Ryle's account of intelligent action; but it is not clear to me that the former use of 'skill' makes it more central to Ryle's discussion of intelligent actions and activities than other members of the class of intelligence concepts. To avoid potential confusions with respect to the uses of 'skill', I will talk about intelligent exercises of agency as that which is explained by know-how/thinking and talk about 'hypothetical statements' or 'dispositions' as that which from a Rylean point of view explains intelligent action.

Regarding the identification of know-how and thinking, I believe that we have to be extremely careful and it is worth specifying at length the senses in which Ryle's formulation can be understood. For simplicity, I will talk about thinking/know-how as the most general way of talking about that on which intelligent action depends.³ Even having made that simplifying assumption, various questions remain open about how we should understand thinking/know-how depending on the ontology of 'thinking' one adopts.

The basic idea is to distinguish two families of views and characterise variations of them. On one way of construing Ryle's 'popular idiom', it lends support to the claim that an instance of ϕ ing exhibits intelligence if and only if the agent is ϕ -ing well and their ϕ -ing well depends on an *independent* instance of thinking what they are doing — this, I will show, is a central feature of the way that Ryle's target understands the idiom. These are 'Two-elements views'. On another way of construing the idiom, it lends support to the claim that an instance of ϕ ing exhibits intelligence if and only if the agent is ϕ -ing well and their ϕ -ing well depends on the subject thinking what they are doing where the latter

³ In chapter [7], I further specify the relation between know-how and ability to the effect that the state of knowing how to ϕ is the state a subject is in when they have a specific ability to ϕ such that their ϕ -ing is an instance of thinking as well.

cannot be specified as an independent element —this is the characteristic feature of Ryle's approach. These are called 'No independent element views'. Here is the family tree we will be discussing in the remaining of this chapter.



In the following I give a general specification of the alternative ways of understanding the idiom by citing the kind of element (if any) the particular understanding of the idiom supposes that intelligent ϕ -ing depends on. In section [3.4], I offer an initial characterisation of three takes on Ryle's 'popular idiom' that include the supposition that an additional, independent action (< θ -AGENTIAL>), non-agential occurrence (< θ -OCCURRENCE>), or state (< θ -STATE>), respectively, is needed for intelligent ϕ -ing. In section [3.5], I consider two ways of understanding Ryle's idiom that do not appeal to an independently specifiable additional element but rather take intelligent action to depend on the truth of series of hypothetical statements (< δ -HYPOTHETICALS>) or a disposition specified in terms of the kind of action ϕ -ing is (< δ -DISPOSITIONS>), respectively. After introducing these five possible ways of understanding the idiom, I further characterise the range of views that are available by examining the kinds of dependence between action and thinking/know-how that they postulate.

3.4 Two-elements views

From the point of view that intelligent exercises of agency involve two independent elements, one could say that two distinct *exercises of agency* are involved in the subject's exhibiting intelligence in ϕ -ing: the action or activity of ϕ -ing and the action of thinking θ .

Something like this, we will see, is the formulation that Ryle considers and goes on to criticise. This it is by no means the only understanding of what is being criticized; there are two other ways of adopting this point of view, depending on how one characterises the additional element, *i.e.*, 'thinking'.⁴ In the following I introduce these three ways of adopting the idiom.

One could say that two distinct *occurrences* are involved in a subject's exhibiting intelligence in ϕ -ing: an occurrence of ϕ -ing that is agential and an occurrence of thinking θ that needs not be agential. Alternatively, one could say that the two distinct elements involved in a subject's exhibiting intelligence in ϕ -ing are an action and a *state*: an action or activity of ϕ -ing and a state of thinking θ . Provided we have different accounts of the nature of actions/activities, occurrences, and states, we thus have at least three possible accounts of intelligent action. In the following I offer a further characterisation of the ways to adopt what I have called 'Two-elements views', and then briefly discuss some aspects of those views that need further specification.

3.4.1 < θ -AGENTIAL>

The first expression of a two-elements view I want to consider is one that takes the relevant kind of thinking involved in intelligent ϕ -ing to be an action:

< θ -AGENTIAL> An instance of ϕ -ing exhibits intelligence if and only if the agent is ϕ -ing well and their ϕ -ing depends on a mental action of thinking what they are doing θ *distinct* from their ϕ -ing, where the agent would not ϕ so well if it were not for θ .

What happens when someone exercise agency intelligently? The answer according to < θ -AGENTIAL> goes like this. When a person ϕ s intelligently they are performing two things that count as exercises of agency: one well-performed action or activity of ϕ -ing and an-

⁴ Strictly speaking Ryle considers the view that someone acts intelligently if and only if they ϕ well and their ϕ -ing well depends on a distinct, *prior* instance of thinking what they are doing (Ryle 1949: 15, 19-21). This feature is often downplayed (Stanley and Williamson 2001: see), though some philosophers have made a point of looking at what it could mean. (Fantl 2011). I agree with the latter and meant to capture talk about 'prior element' in terms of 'independent element', so that there is no confusion about the kind of priority meant.

other, distinct mental action of thinking θ . (θ , for example, could be the agential considering of rules, principles, or maxims that guide behaviour in virtue of which ϕ -ing is well-performed). It is because θ is an action that monitors and controls ϕ -ing that the latter is intelligent. For example, when a chef cooks intelligently, they are performing two things that count as exercises of agency: the cooking and the considering of relevant recipes and precepts of cooking, so that the latter guides the cook's behaviour in a way that their cooking is well-performed. Since the cook's well-performed cooking is due to the guidance of an action of considering, their cooking is intelligent.

3.4.2 < θ -OCCURRENCE>

Turn now to the expression of a two-elements view that takes the relevant kind of thinking involved in intelligent ϕ -ing to be a non-agential occurrence:

< θ -OCCURRENCE> An instance of ϕ -ing exhibits intelligence if and only if the agent is ϕ -ing well and their ϕ -ing depends on a mental non-agential occurrence of thinking what they are doing θ *distinct* from their ϕ -ing, where this dependence is such that the agent would not ϕ so well if it were not for θ .

What happens when someone exercises agency intelligently? According to < θ -OCCURRENCE>, the answer goes like this. When a person ϕ s intelligently two things occur: one well-performed action or activity of ϕ -ing and another, distinct mental occurrence of thinking θ . The latter is an occurrence of considering rules, principles, or maxims that guide behaviour in virtue of which ϕ -ing is well-performed. It is because θ monitors and controls the action of ϕ -ing that the latter is intelligent. For example, when a chef cooks intelligently, two things occur. There is an occurrence of considering recipes and precepts of cooking that guide behaviour in a way that the cook's cooking is well-performed. Since the cook's well-performed cooking is due to the guidance of an occurrence of considering, their cooking is intelligent.

3.4.3 < θ -STATE>

Finally, consider the expression of a two-elements view that takes the relevant kind of thinking involved in intelligent ϕ -ing to be a state:

< θ -STATE> An instance of ϕ -ing exhibits intelligence if and only if the agent is ϕ -ing well and their ϕ -ing depends on a mental state of thinking about what they are doing θ *distinct* from their ϕ -ing, where the agent would not ϕ so well if it were not for θ .

What happens when someone exercises agency intelligently? The answer according to < θ -STATE> goes like this. When a person ϕ s intelligently the following is true of the subject: they performed an action or activity of ϕ -ing well and they are mental state of thinking. θ is not an action —like < θ -AGENTIAL> holds— nor a non-agential occurrence —like < θ -OCCURRENCE> holds. θ is a state of considering rules, principles, or maxims that guide behaviour in virtue of which ϕ -ing is well-performed. It is because such a state monitors and controls the ϕ -ing that the latter is a intelligent. For example, when a chef cooks intelligently, they are in a state of considering recipes and precepts of cooking that guide behaviour in a way that their cooking is well-performed. Since the cook's well-performed cooking is due to the guidance of a state of considering, their cooking is intelligent.

3.4.4 *Further specification*

I have presented the bare bones of three ways of interpreting Ryle's idiom. I say 'bare bones' because there is much more to be specified; these ways of interpreting Ryle's passage are not yet full-blown accounts of intelligent action and activity. For example, nothing has been said about the particular action/activity, occurrence, or state that purportedly is required for intelligent exercises of agency in < θ -AGENTIAL>, < θ -OCCURRENCE>, < θ -STATE>, respectively, or about the way such element is allegedly required for intelligent exercises of agency. In order to pursue these expressions of the idiom properly and form an account of intelligent action, one has to at least give a fuller characterisation of the kind of element that is doing the work —the relevant action/activity, occurrence, or state— and the kind of

dependence posited —the specific way in which intelligent action depends on the element; otherwise it is difficult to see why $\langle\theta\text{-AGENTIAL}\rangle$, $\langle\theta\text{-OCCURRENCE}\rangle$, and $\langle\theta\text{-STATE}\rangle$ are different from each other and the other two ways of understanding what 'thinking' is, and why these differences matter.

3.4.4.1 *Mental actions/activities, occurrences, and states*

Let me offer an example to illustrate the need for further explanation of what mental actions/activities, occurrences, and states are. The following is meant to show how certain assumptions about the nature of the relevant categories and our way of talking about them might have consequences with respect to $\langle\theta\text{-AGENTIAL}\rangle$, $\langle\theta\text{-OCCURRENCE}\rangle$, and $\langle\theta\text{-STATE}\rangle$. Consider, then, a possible philosopher who holds the following:⁵

When one acts intelligently, introspection does not reveal any mental occurrence accompanying and guiding one's action. Introspecting over one's experience of intelligently cooking, for example, does not reveal any further occurrence guiding and controlling one's cooking. Thus, there are reasons to think that no occurrence is required for intelligent action.

Given some assumptions about what introspection can deliver, our fictional philosopher might conclude that $\langle\theta\text{-OCCURRENCE}\rangle$ is not true. Moreover, with the help of further assumptions, they might even go on to claim that either $\langle\theta\text{-AGENTIAL}\rangle$ or $\langle\theta\text{-STATE}\rangle$ are not true. If our fabled philosopher holds that all mental actions and activities are occurrences, then they can further conclude that introspection does not reveal any mental action or activity accompanying intelligent action. Thus, within this fable, there are reasons to believe that $\langle\theta\text{-AGENTIAL}\rangle$ is not true. Alternatively, our fictional philosopher might construe 'mental occurrences' broadly —tying down mental events, processes, and states into one same category. Accordingly, in this version of the fiction, to say that introspection

⁵ This is a fictionalised variation of Stanley's objection to the view that all intelligent actions are preceded by a distinct action of avowing to oneself a rule. As we will see, Stanley claims that when one acts intelligently, introspection does not reveal any mental action accompanying and guiding one's action and that, therefore, a view of the form of $\langle\theta\text{-AGENTIAL}\rangle$ is 'manifestly absurd' (Stanley 2011a: 13).

reveals no accompanying mental occurrence is to say that no mental event, process, or *state* accompanies intelligent action. Thus, there are reasons to think that no state is required for intelligent action. From this it follows that even $\langle\theta\text{-STATE}\rangle$ is not true, for such an approach holds that a state is required for intelligent action.

The lesson I want to take from the example is that depending on one's understanding of the categories of mental occurrence, state, action, and activity (e.g., whether one thinks that mental actions and activities are occurrences, for example) and the way we talk about such categories (e.g., whether one construes them 'broadly'), it is possible to blur the lines separating $\langle\theta\text{-AGENTIAL}\rangle$, $\langle\theta\text{-OCCURRENCE}\rangle$, and $\langle\theta\text{-STATE}\rangle$. The example shows one way in which this could happen — a way where it is sufficiently easy to spot that, at least in part, the problems in understanding Ryle's argument have to do with how the relevant categories are conceived and talked about.

3.4.4.2 *Dependence*

We now need to specify the nature of the way in which intelligent action depends on a mental action/activity, occurrence, *i.e.*, the kind of dependence posited by $\langle\theta\text{-AGENTIAL}\rangle$, $\langle\theta\text{-OCCURRENCE}\rangle$, and $\langle\theta\text{-STATE}\rangle$. Consider the following situation.

Riley plays hockey intelligently. Before every game, Riley sits down in a quiet place and makes a detailed plan of her shots, blocks, and stick movements. She at best plays mediocly whenever she hits the ice without having done her pre-game preparation; without the mental action/activity of planning her shots, blocks, and stick movements would have not been intelligent. On the reasonable assumption that mental actions/activities are occurrences, it is also true to say that her intelligent hockey playing is accompanied by a mental occurrence — the occurrence that is her mental action/activity. And it is true that had there been no such occurrence, her shots, blocks, and stick movements would have not been intelligent. Moreover, when Riley is performing her mental action/activity, she is in a corresponding mental state: while Riley is planning, she is in a state of planning. Thus, it is true to say that

her intelligent play is accompanied by a mental state and had she not been in such a state, she would not have played intelligently.

In this situation it is true to say that a mental state, a mental occurrence, and a mental action/activity accompany Riley's hockey playing. One might hold that even though all of these elements accompany Riley's performance, her performance *only depends on one of them* —e.g., one could say that her performance only really depends on her planning *qua* action, and thus only < θ -AGENTIAL> appropriately describes what makes Riley's action intelligent. Alternatively, one might hold that in so far the absence of any of the relevant mental elements in the example would be detrimental for Riley's performance, Riley's performance *depends on every one of them*. Thus, one could think that < θ -AGENTIAL>, < θ -OCCURRENCE>, and < θ -STATE> are compatible with each other.

Ryle's idiom says very little about the relation between intelligent action and thinking—it only says that if there were no thinking, the action would not be intelligent. The example presents a situation where it is true that intelligent action depends, in some sense, on a state, an occurrence, and action/activity and this might lead to potentially different views with respect to the truth of < θ -AGENTIAL>, < θ -OCCURRENCE>, and < θ -STATE>. What is distinctive of this family of options is the causal relation: intelligent action depends on an action/activity, non-agential occurrence, or state, respectively, because the latter stands as the cause of the former. In section [3.6], I discuss the topic of how to understand the kind of dependence between intelligent action and 'thinking'. But before that, I will examine a different point of view on the idiom and two expressions of it.

3.5 'No additional elements views'

From the point of view introduced in the previous section, the idea that ϕ -ing intelligently involves performing well and the requirement of there being some instance thinking is taken to mean that there is one action of ϕ -ing that depends on an independently specifiable action/activity, occurrence, or state of thinking. Contrary to this, there is an approach that

does not take the idea that acting intelligently involves two independently specifiable elements and still accepts Ryle's 'popular idiom'. In the following I introduce these two ways of approaching the idiom.

Against the views in section [3.4] that only one actual element is involved in a subject's exhibiting intelligence in ϕ -ing: there is only one thing happening, namely, an actual well-performed ϕ -ing. However, what distinguishes this situation from cases of un-intelligent good performance is that in the former —crucially not the latter— a set of hypotheticals δ regarding how the subject would act in other situations is true. (Ryle's own development of the idiom, as we will see, is something like this.) But there is another way of taking the current point of view —depending on how one further spells out the idea that no two independently specifiable elements are needed. One could say that no second independently specifiable element is involved in a subject's exhibiting intelligence in ϕ -ing because intelligent ϕ -ing involves the manifestation of a disposition δ that cannot be specified independently of the kind of action ϕ -ing is.

In the following sections, I provide a further characterisation of these two ways of taking the point of view now being considered.

3.5.1 < δ -HYPOTHETICALS>

Consider now an expression of what is required for intelligent ϕ -ing in terms of hypothetical statements:

< δ -HYPOTHETICALS> An instance of ϕ -ing exhibits intelligence if and only if the agent is ϕ -ing well and a series of hypothetical statements δ about how the agent would act in other circumstances are true, where the agent would not count as ϕ -ing intelligently if it were not for the hypotheticals δ .

What happens when someone acts intelligently? According to < δ -HYPOTHETICALS> the answer goes like this. When a person ϕ s intelligently, it is true that the subject performed well. But in addition to this, it is true that in different situations, they would have acted

accordingly. It is because it is true that in different situations the subject would have acted in corresponding ways that in the current situation their ϕ -ing is intelligent.

It is difficult to get a general account of this form, for there is no systematic way of specifying the corresponding ways in which the subject would act (at least according to Ryle). A particular example will hopefully help grasp the idea behind this approach. Consider a soldier hitting the bullseye. It is a well-performed shot but is it an intelligent one? The truth of a description of the soldier's actual well-performed shot depends on what was or would be true of her performance in other situations. If her subsequent shots, her past record, the kind of suggestions about shooting she would have given and would give, her imagining positioning herself to hit the bullseye, and other exercises of her agency that have to do with shooting were or would be well-performed, then it is appropriate to say that her actual shooting is intelligent. There is no general characterisation because there is "no one signal of [...] knowing how to shoot, but a modest assemblage of heterogeneous performances generally suffices to establish beyond reasonable doubt whether [she] knows how to shoot or not" (Ryle 1949: 18). According to $\langle\delta$ -HYPOTHETICALS \rangle , to say that a well-performed action is intelligent is, in part, to say that it is not an isolated successful action; it places the current performance in the context of a series of past and future successes. Importantly, to say that an action is intelligent is not, on this view, to postulate the existence of another independently specified entity. These conditionals do not exist in the head of the subject or anywhere at all in addition to the performed action.

It should be apparent why this view does not belong with 'Two-elements views'. $\langle\delta$ -HYPOTHETICALS \rangle mentions in their explanation 'a modest assemblage of performances'. So whether instance of ϕ -ing to be intelligent is a matter of other actions and activities, past, present, and future. Whether this particular shooting of the bullseye is intelligent depends, according to $\langle\delta$ -HYPOTHETICALS \rangle , on whether it would be true that in other occasions there would be the appropriate shootings: if the wind were blowing strongly to the right, the agent would have shot in a different way. Crucially, what it is for an instance

of ϕ -ing to be intelligent is not defined independently of other instances of ϕ -ing. I will explain this by providing further characterisation of the view in section [3.5.3].

3.5.2 < δ -DISPOSITIONS>

Now consider an expression of the same point of view in terms of dispositions:

< δ -DISPOSITIONS> An instance of ϕ -ing exhibits intelligence if and only if the agent is ϕ -ing well and ϕ -ing is the manifestation of a disposition δ , where the agent would not ϕ intelligently if her ϕ -ing were not a manifestation of δ .

What happens when someone acts intelligently? According to < δ -DISPOSITIONS> the answer goes like this. When a person ϕ s intelligently, their ϕ -ing is a manifestation of a specific disposition δ —an ability to ϕ intelligently.⁶ It is because ϕ -ing is the manifestation of this disposition that it is intelligent. Consider, again, a soldier hitting the bullseye. It is a well-performed shot, but is it an intelligent one? It depends on whether it is a manifestation of an ability to shoot intelligently — an ability that manifests itself in her hitting the target, but also in offering suggestions about shooting, imagining positioning herself to hit the bullseye, among others. On this view, the disposition is not specified independently of its manifestation, for in order to characterise the relevant disposition one has to appeal to the kind of intelligent action.

It should be apparent why this view does not belong with 'Two-elements views.' < δ -DISPOSITIONS> mentions in their explanation an ability to ϕ intelligently. So whether instance of ϕ -ing to be intelligent is a matter of other actions and activities, past, present, and future of the same kind. Whether this particular shooting of the bullseye is intelligent depends, according to < δ -DISPOSITIONS>, on whether there is the relevant ability. Crucially, what it is for an instance of ϕ -ing to be intelligent is not defined independently of other instances of ϕ -ing, for the disposition is thus characterised. I will explain this by providing further characterisation of the view in section [3.5.3].

⁶ All abilities are dispositions but not all dispositions are abilities. Abilities are agential dispositions, that is, dispositions whose manifestation involve an agent and their powers to act.

3.5.3 *Further specification*

I have presented the bare bones of two ways of interpreting Ryle's idiom. I say 'bare bones' because there is much more to be specified; these ways of interpreting Ryle's passage are not yet full-blown accounts of intelligent action. Not much has been said about the kind hypothetical statements and dispositions that purportedly are required for intelligent action in $\langle \delta\text{-HYPOTHETICALS} \rangle$ and $\langle \delta\text{-DISPOSITIONS} \rangle$, respectively, or about the way they are allegedly required for intelligent exercises of agency. In order to pursue these expressions of the idiom properly and form an account of intelligent action, one has to at least give a fuller characterisation of dispositions and hypothetical statements, and specify the way in which intelligent action depends on the either dispositions or statements. Otherwise it is difficult to see why $\langle \delta\text{-HYPOTHETICALS} \rangle$ and $\langle \delta\text{-DISPOSITIONS} \rangle$ are different from each other and the other three ways of understanding what 'thinking' is, and why these differences matters.

3.5.3.1 *Hypotheticals statements and dispositions*

Let me offer an example to illustrate the need for further explanation of that dispositions and hypotheticals are. The following is meant to show how certain assumptions about the nature of the relevant categories might have consequences with respect to $\langle \delta\text{-HYPOTHETICALS} \rangle$ and $\langle \delta\text{-DISPOSITIONS} \rangle$. Consider the following example:⁷

Susan has always wanted to meet the Queen and has studied the relevant protocol. But whenever she thinks about meeting the Queen she gets a nervous stammer that stops her from talking altogether, and, in normal conditions, if she were to meet the Queen and attempt to address her properly, she would only stand there in awkward silence.

⁷ This is a modified version of an example from Snowdon (2003). I discuss this and similar examples in chapter [7], section [7.3.2].

Suppose that, against all odds, Susan addresses appropriately the Queen. Can we say that Susan addressed the Queen *intelligently*? Consider what the story would be according to < δ -HYPOTHETICALS> and < δ -DISPOSITIONS>, respectively.

Following < δ -HYPOTHETICALS>, the answer to this question depends on the truth of some hypothetical statements. So, in order to determine whether Susan acted intelligently, one needs to specify the relevant set of conditionals. Consider the following list of conditionals.

- (1)
 - a. If the subject, in normal conditions, attempted to address the Queen properly, they would do so appropriately.
 - b. If the subject, in normal conditions, attempted to describe how to address the Queen properly, they would do so appropriately.
 - c. If the subject, in normal conditions, attempted to visualise themselves addressing the Queen properly, they would do so appropriately.

According to the description of the example, (1-a) is not true. So if the set of relevant conditionals includes (1), we can say that Susan does not act intelligently, for in a normal situation, if Susan attempted to address the Queen, she would only stand in awkward silence. Even though in the extraordinary situation she finds herself, Susan appropriately addresses the Queen, she does not do so intelligently. But if (1-a) is not included in the list, it is possible to hold that it is not true, accept < δ -HYPOTHETICALS>, and still claim that Susan acted intelligently. The answer depends on how one specifies the relevant conditionals.

The point I wish to emphasise is that we might accept the Rylean suggestion that the truth of 'a modest assemblage' of conditionals is enough to determine whether there is an intelligent performance, but in order to take this as a general theory of intelligent exercises of agency we would need to actually get a firm enough grasp of such a list. The example reveals how our attitude with respect to one conditional might sway the answer given by a full-blown theory in the line of < δ -HYPOTHETICALS>.

Following < δ -DISPOSITIONS> the answer to the question about whether Susan acts intelligently depends on whether she has the relevant disposition and her acting appropriately manifests this disposition. The particular answer, then, depends on what one takes dispositions to be and what it is to manifest a disposition. Ryle certainly suggests on many occasions that to ascribe dispositional properties is for certain hypothetical statements to be true (Ryle 1949: 31, 72, 101-109, 122), and, accordingly, we could say that the question about whether Susan has the relevant disposition just is the question about whether certain hypotheticals are true. On such account of dispositions, < δ -DISPOSITIONS> and < δ -HYPOTHETICALS> turn out not to be that different.

But one need not analyse dispositions in terms of sets of simple conditionals, or in fact give any kind analysis of dispositions at all.⁸ That is, one might instead hold that having a disposition to ϕ intelligently is having a dispositional property that cannot be further analysed into simpler elements. According to < δ -DISPOSITIONS>, then, to act intelligently is to have a disposition to act intelligently and to exercise it. Thus, the answer to the question about whether Susan acted intelligently depends on whether she has the relevant disposition and whether she exercised it.

The point I wish to emphasise is that we might accept dispositions are not identical to 'a modest assemblage' of conditionals and think that they determine whether there is an intelligent performance. (This does not necessarily mean that the truth of the conditionals is not required for the possession of the disposition —just that the latter does not reduce to the former.) This would sharply distinguish < δ -HYPOTHETICALS> from < δ -DISPOSITIONS>. But in order to make < δ -DISPOSITIONS> a general theory of intelligent exercises of agency we would need to actually get a firm enough grasp of the way in which the exercise of dispositions and intelligent action relate. How one accounts for this relation is what, ultimately, determines the kind of account of intelligent action provided. To explain this is to explain the way in which intelligent action depends on dispositions —which

⁸ See Martin (1994) for an argument against the simple conditional account of dispositions, and Lewis (1997) for a modification of the conditional account. See Bird (1998) for an argument against the possibility of an analysis of dispositions.

does not mean that our way of *telling* that such dispositions are present does not depend on the truth of 'a modest assemblage' of conditionals.

3.5.3.2 *Dependence*

It is worth emphasising the importance of specifying the kind of dependence posited by $\langle\delta\text{-HYPOTHETICALS}\rangle$ and $\langle\delta\text{-DISPOSITIONS}\rangle$ —that is, the nature of the way in which intelligent action depends on a the truth of hypotheticals or dispositions, respectively. It is here that the differences among accounts of intelligent action come through. Consider the relations among the following statements about Irina.⁹

- (2)
- a. Irina intelligently performs a Salchow —a complex skating stunt— at the semi-finals of the regional tournament.
 - b. Irina, if she tried, would succeed in performing a Salchow at the finals of the regional tournament.
 - c. Irina, if she tried, would succeed in performing a Salchow at the semi-finals of the national tournament.
 - d. Irina, if she tried, would succeed in performing a Salchow alone in the ice rink.
 - e. Irina is disposed to perform a Salchow intelligently.

Simplifying, we can say the following about the way in which $\langle\delta\text{-HYPOTHETICALS}\rangle$ and $\langle\delta\text{-DISPOSITIONS}\rangle$ explain Irina's intelligent Salchow. A view like $\langle\delta\text{-HYPOTHETICALS}\rangle$, whether (2-a) is true depends, roughly, on the truth of (2-b)–(2-d). So, whether Irina intelligently performs a Salchow depends on the truth of some conditionals describing how she would behave in situations other than the actual. According to $\langle\delta\text{-DISPOSITIONS}\rangle$, whether (2-a) is true depends on the truth of (something like) (2-e). So, whether Irina intelligently performs a Salchow depends on whether she is disposed to perform a Salchow intelligently. Why think that these explanatory relations hold?

⁹ This is a variation of an example by Bengson and Moffett (2011b).

One could say that the explanatory relations postulated by $\langle \delta\text{-HYPOTHETICALS} \rangle$ and $\langle \delta\text{-DISPOSITIONS} \rangle$ are grounded in an explanation of the kind postulated by views in the range of $\langle \theta\text{-AGENTIAL} \rangle$, $\langle \theta\text{-OCCURRENCE} \rangle$, or $\langle \theta\text{-STATE} \rangle$. Suppose that there is an action, non-agential occurrence, or state in virtue of which the conditions presented by $\langle \delta\text{-HYPOTHETICALS} \rangle$ and $\langle \delta\text{-DISPOSITIONS} \rangle$ hold. In the case of $\langle \delta\text{-HYPOTHETICALS} \rangle$ this means that the relevant conditionals are true and explain intelligent action because there is a mental element—a mental state, occurrence, or action—that causes the intelligent action and makes the conditionals true. And in the case of $\langle \delta\text{-DISPOSITIONS} \rangle$, this means that the relevant disposition is grounded in a mental element—a mental state, occurrence, or action—that causes the intelligent action in virtue of which the subject has a disposition. In the case of Irina, we might say that it is true that had some conditionals been false she would not have performed intelligently but the reason is that the falsehood tracks the absence of the relevant mental element. Likewise, we might say that if Irina did not have the relevant disposition, she would not have acted intelligently, but the reason is that the absence of the relevant disposition tracks the absence of the relevant mental element.

This approach, however, takes away the explanatory power of $\langle \delta\text{-HYPOTHETICALS} \rangle$ and $\langle \delta\text{-DISPOSITIONS} \rangle$ and places it on to $\langle \theta\text{-AGENTIAL} \rangle$, $\langle \theta\text{-OCCURRENCE} \rangle$, or $\langle \theta\text{-STATE} \rangle$. On this approach, the most fundamental explanation of intelligent action is given in terms of $\langle \theta\text{-AGENTIAL} \rangle$, $\langle \theta\text{-OCCURRENCE} \rangle$, or $\langle \theta\text{-STATE} \rangle$. So, in order to make the former genuine alternatives, we need to make sense of them independently of causal relations like those postulated in the first three options. In the following section, I examine the possible ways in which one may talk about explanation.

3.6 Explanation

I have said that there are two families of views, with three and two members, respectively. Though Ryle does not quite consider the five distinctions I have presented, the divide between the two main families—that is, between views that posit independent elements

and views that do not— is central to Ryle's discussion. On Ryle's view, explanation of intelligent action in terms of an additional element is characteristic of his opponent —this is the family comprised of $\langle\theta\text{-AGENTIAL}\rangle$, $\langle\theta\text{-OCCURRENCE}\rangle$, and $\langle\theta\text{-STATE}\rangle$; and explanation of intelligent action that does not appeal to an independently specifiable element is characteristic of the line advanced in *The Concept of Mind*—this is the family comprised of $\langle\delta\text{-HYPOTHETICALS}\rangle$ and $\langle\delta\text{-DISPOSITIONS}\rangle$. If Stanley is right in his appraisal of the debate, everyone involved in it accepts that intelligent action requires thinking/know-how and disagrees about its nature. In terms of the explanatory families, it suggests that both families agree that something explains intelligent action but disagree about its most fundamental characterisation.

But what Ryle explicitly says about the explanation of behaviour suggests that though there might be a sense in which both families agree that there is an explanation of intelligent action in terms of thinking/know-how, the agreement is quite superficial. According to Ryle, each family thinks of the explanation of intelligent action in significantly different ways. Here is one of Ryle's clearest formulations of the two different senses of explanation:

I am arguing that in describing the workings of a person's mind we are not describing a second set of shadowy operations. We are describing certain phases of his one career; namely we are describing the ways in which parts of his conduct are managed. We 'explain' his actions not by inferring their occult causes, but by subsuming his actions and activities under hypothetical and semi-hypothetical propositions. The explanation is not of the type 'the glass broke because a stone hit it', but more nearly of the different type 'the glass broke when the stone hit it, because it was brittle'. It makes no difference in theory if the performances we are appraising are operations executed silently in the agent's head, such as what he does, when duly schooled to it, in theorising, composing limericks or solving anagrams. Of course it makes a lot of difference in practice, for the examiner cannot award marks to operations which the candidate successfully keeps to himself. (Ryle 1949: 38)

Ryle seems to think of the difference between explanations that cite causes and explanations that cite hypothetical statements in the following way. In the causal sense of 'explanation', to explain a feature of an action is to give its cause, e.g., to explain the carefulness of an action is to cite the cause of the carefulness. To explain why someone regularly reads books on logic, discusses logic at the pub, and works out problems in logic is to cite the causes of their reading, discussing, and working. Like the explanation of the breaking of the glass by citing the hitting of the glass by the football, the explanation of a person's discussing logic at the pub by citing the motives is an explanation that reports an occurrence that stood in relation to the explanandum as a cause to its effect. To explain what is required for someone to intelligently control the puck, tackling and blocking opponents, and aiming is to cite certain elements that *cause* the controlling, tackling, blocking, and aiming to be intelligent. Explanations that cite hypothetical statements, on the other hand, do not cite causes, ghostly or otherwise.

Ryle marks the difference between the kinds of explanation as, on the one hand, explanation that cites ghostly causes, and explanation that subsumes particular cases under hypothetical statements. For Ryle, explanation of intelligent action in terms of causes involves mysterious elements and is the characteristic form of explanation of what he calls *THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE* —roughly, the view that the mind and the body are fundamentally different kinds of "things"¹⁰ Explanations that subsume particular cases under hypothetical statements, on the other hand, do not involve ghostly elements, for they do not involve any other element at all. It is describing the manner in which they are performed, Ryle says. In Ryle's words: "There is the one activity, but it is one susceptible of and requiring more than one kind of explanatory description." (Ryle 1949: 38)

In the following chapters, I shall discuss one particular worry about Ryle's way of presenting the two explanatory strategies with respect to intelligent action. Ryle seems to bundle together any causal explanation with *THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE*: to cite mental elements as the causes of action is, for Ryle, to cite ghostly elements. What are the reasons

¹⁰ I discuss Ryle's formulation of *THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE* and how he sees it in relation to intelligent exercises of agency in chapter [5].

for this matrimony? It might be true that *THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE* is poised to give a causal account but that does not give us a reason to think that the only way of providing causal explanations is in terms of ghostly elements.¹¹ How should we understand Ryle's contribution to the debate if we want to divorce causal explanations from *THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE*? In the following chapter, I begin answering this question by looking at Stanley and Williamson's discussion of Ryle's views on know-how.

3.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I presented a general specification of five ways of understanding intelligent action around the idea that intelligent action requires thinking. On the basis of this, I presented five ways in which one could understand what is involved in 'thinking': one family comprised of $\langle \theta\text{-AGENTIAL} \rangle$, $\langle \theta\text{-OCCURRENCE} \rangle$, and $\langle \theta\text{-STATE} \rangle$, and another family comprised of $\langle \delta\text{-HYPOTHETICALS} \rangle$, and $\langle \delta\text{-DISPOSITIONS} \rangle$.

Ways of understanding intelligent action in the first family offer an explanation of intelligent action in terms of an independently specified cause: to explain intelligent action is to cite an additional element that caused it. Accordingly we have that $\langle \theta\text{-AGENTIAL} \rangle$ explains intelligent action by citing a mental action/activity as its cause; $\langle \theta\text{-OCCURRENCE} \rangle$ explains intelligent action by citing a mental non-agential occurrence as its cause; and $\langle \theta\text{-STATE} \rangle$ explains intelligent action by citing a mental state as its cause.

Ways of understanding intelligent action in the second family do not offer an explanation of intelligent action in terms of an independently specified cause: to explain intelligent action they do not appeal to an additional element that caused it. $\langle \delta\text{-HYPOTHETICALS} \rangle$ explains intelligent action in terms of hypotheticals; and $\langle \delta\text{-DISPOSITIONS} \rangle$ explains intelligent action in terms of dispositions.

These five ways of understanding the relation between thinking and intelligent action provide a general framework within which a fuller explanation of intelligent action can be

¹¹ Part of Jerry Fodor's criticism of Ryle's understanding of action explanation has to do with Ryle's assumption that causal explanation is ghostly explanation. See, for example, Fodor (1968, 1975).

CHAPTER 3. RYLE'S POPULAR IDIOM AND 'THINKING'

framed and explained. In following chapters I will use these ways to frame Ryle's argument and its target.

4 | A Monstrous Target

4.1 Introduction

We have already come across grounds for thinking that the proper assessment of Ryle's arguments will depend on a clear identification of his target—that is, the position, or range of positions, that he hopes to undermine. In this chapter, I present and explain some of the challenges that arise in trying to identify Ryle's target. In section [4.2], I present Ryle's formulation of his target as given in the opening pages of his (1945) Presidential Address to the Aristotelian Society. In section [4.2.1], I introduce the main formulation of the target; I then break down this passage in two parts and examine those parts in section [4.2.2] and section [4.2.3], respectively. In section [4.3], I present and expand Paul Snowdon's (2011) discussion of Ryle's characterisation of the target, separating different issues for discussion. In section [4.3.1], I present a worry about the characterisation of intelligence concepts; in section [4.3.2], I raise questions about Ryle's use of the terms 'acts', 'exercises', 'operations' and 'activities'; in section [4.3.3], I present specific worries about the definition of 'operations of considering propositions'; and, finally, in section [4.3.4], I present a question about the kind of theory Ryle targets.

4.2 Initial characterisation of Ryle's target

According to Stanley and Williamson, Ryle's target is the view that know-how is a species of know-that (Stanley and Williamson 2001: 412). In terms of the classification offered in chapter [3] one would think that Stanley and Williamson hold that Ryle's target is under-

stood as the view that intelligent action depends on a state θ , where θ is a state of propositional knowledge specifiable independently of the kind of action it purportedly explains—*i.e.*, an instance of $\langle\theta\text{-STATE}\rangle$. I want to suggest that adopting such understanding of Ryle’s target does not capture his main point.

In the interpretation I want to defend, Ryle’s main target is best understood not as the view that propositional knowledge is required in order to explain any action that manifests intelligence, but rather a more general view according to which an independently specifiable element explains the manifestation of intelligence in practical activities. In other words, Ryle’s argument is not specifically aimed at views that explain intelligent activity in terms of a distinct state of propositional knowledge, an operation of considering a proposition, an act of thinking, or any other intellectual element. Rather, it is the whole family comprised by $\langle\theta\text{-STATE}\rangle$, $\langle\theta\text{-OCCURRENCE}\rangle$, and $\langle\theta\text{-AGENTIAL}\rangle$.

In the following section, I present Ryle’s initial characterisation of INTELLECTUALISM as given in the first couple of pages of Ryle’s Presidential Address to the Aristotelian Society. The core idea of this initial characterisation is that practical activities are intelligent in virtue of their being ‘piloted’ by distinct acts of the intellect. We could think of those ‘acts of the Intellect’ as states of propositional knowledge as Stanley and Williamson take them to be. As we shall see, some of Ryle’s formulations do not cleanly fit with that interpretation. The question at issue is, to repeat, how should we understand Ryle’s target in a way that best fits his account of that target, and makes the best sense of the arguments that he offers against it?

One obstacle in attempting to characterise Ryle’s target is that he fails explicitly to mention the purported heroes of the Intellectualist legend or to provide much by way of detailed exposition of the view.¹ With respect to the difficulty of capturing Ryle’s target, Paul Snowdon, in a discussion of Ryle (1945), says, “Ryle’s intellectualism is a monster, not

¹ This is, arguably, generally true of *The Concept of Mind*. Ryle paints a hazy picture of the mind he dubs ‘Cartesian’ but does not relate to particular instances of the philosophical works of Descartes or his predecessors like Plato and Aristotle. See Stewart Hampshire’s review of *The Concept of Mind*, reprinted in Hampshire (2015), for the difficulty of picking out the target of the book, THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE, in “actual historical shape”.

so much monstrous in what it says, but monstrous as a target for philosophical discussion” (Snowdon 2011: 65). According to Snowdon, we can get a general sense of the INTELLECTUALISM but not a firm enough sense of the motivations someone might have to adopt the view, the details of how it works, and what exactly it is a view of. I agree that a good part of the difficulty in assessing Ryle’s argument is that he does not give us a firm enough sense of the motivations that might lead someone to adopt the view he opposes, the details of how it works, or what exactly it is a view of. Most importantly, given my aims, it fails explicitly to decide whether the view is best characterised as Stanley and Williamson do.

However, I believe that most of the problems with the characterisation can be dealt with by looking at Ryle’s discussion in *The Concept of Mind*. The main target of this book is THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE, what Ryle sometimes calls Descartes’s Myth or the Dogma of the Ghost in the Machine. In the first chapter, Ryle presents THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE as a view of the nature and place of mind, according to which mind and body are fundamentally distinct kinds of things. *The Concept of Mind* purports to reveal the ways in which such doctrine mistakenly “represents the facts of mental life as if they belonged to one logical type or category (or range of types or categories), when they actually belong to another” (Ryle 1949: 6). In the book, Ryle tells us, he tries to ‘prove that the official theory does rest on a batch of category-mistakes by showing that logically absurd corollaries follow from it.’ (Ryle 1949: 12). So, we can see the topics of discussion in each chapter as ways to reveal examples where the facts of one category are treated as belonging to another category, that is, to reveal “category-mistakes”. As we will see in the following chapter, Ryle’s discussion of know how in the book can be illuminated by placing it in the context of his general criticism of the Dogma of the Ghost in the Machine.

In the following section, I will use the Presidential Address and the more concise picture it offers as a springboard for discussion of the appropriate characterisation of Ryle’s target.

4.2.1 *The opening pages of the Presidential Address*

Ryle's Presidential Address begins with a three-page long introduction that serves as a general introduction to the main issues of the paper but also to Ryle's discussion of know-how in the second chapter of *The Concept of Mind*. It is, therefore, a good place to begin. In this introductory section, Ryle characterises what he refers to as the 'prevailing doctrine' in the following paragraph:

The prevailing doctrine (deriving perhaps from Plato's account of the tripartite soul) holds: (1) that Intelligence is a special faculty, the exercises of which are those specific internal acts which are called acts of thinking, namely, the operations of considering propositions; (2) that practical activities merit their titles "intelligent," "clever," and the rest only because they are accompanied by some such internal acts of considering propositions (and particularly "regulative" propositions). That is to say, doing things is never itself an exercise of intelligence, but is, at best, a process introduced and somehow steered by some ulterior act of theorising. (It is also assumed that theorising is not a sort of doing, as if "internal doing" contained some contradiction.) (Ryle 1945: 1)

In this quote, Ryle paints a broad picture of the landscape of relations between 'acts of theorising', 'practical activities', 'exercises of Intelligence', 'acts of thinking', 'internal' and 'external' acts, and 'operations of considering propositions' according to what he here calls 'the prevailing doctrine'. Ryle (1945) uses the label 'the prevailing doctrine' to talk about INTELLECTUALISM, which can be confusing in the task of explaining the relation between INTELLECTUALISM and the general view targeted in *The Concept of Mind*. To avoid confusion, I shall talk about what Ryle refers to as 'the prevailing doctrine' as 'INTELLECTUALISM' and use the label 'THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE' to refer to the more general target of *The Concept of Mind*.

4.2.2 *Acts of thinking and operations of considering propositions*

In the passage quoted above, Ryle characterises INTELLECTUALISM as the conjunction of two claims. According to the first:

Intelligence is a special faculty, the exercises of which are those specific internal acts which are called acts of thinking, namely, the operations of considering propositions. (Ryle 1945: 1)

INTELLECTUALISM, Ryle tells us, regards ‘Intelligence’ as a faculty the direct manifestations of which are ‘acts of thinking’. Of these actualizations of the faculty of ‘Intelligence’ we are given a further characterisation: they are acts of thinking, which Ryle, presumably on behalf of INTELLECTUALISM, equates to ‘operations of considering propositions’ (whatever these operations might be). Thus, according to this view, we have that the direct manifestations of ‘Intelligence’ are ‘acts of thinking’ and ‘operations of considering propositions’. Presumably, this is to be understood as a claim about identity: the classes of direct manifestations of ‘Intelligence’, ‘acts of thinking’, and ‘operations of considering propositions’ are identical. Everything that is a direct manifestation of intelligence is an instance of ‘thinking’ and of a ‘considering of a proposition’.² But acts and activities other than considerings are ordinarily said to be intelligent. Are they said to be intelligent because they are direct manifestations of Intelligence? No, only considerings of a proposition are direct manifestations of Intelligence. But this does not mean that other acts and activities do not manifest intelligence in any way. Rather, acts and activities different from considerings manifest Intelligence derivatively. This, Ryle tells us, is the second claim of INTELLECTUALISM.

4.2.3 *Practical activities and acts of thinking*

According to the second claim:

² To avoid confusion I will talk about ‘considerings’, and not ‘considerations’, as short for ‘operations of considering a proposition.’

...practical activities merit their titles “intelligent,” “clever,” and the rest only because they are accompanied by some such internal acts of considering propositions (and particularly “regulative” propositions). (Ryle 1945: 1)

Ryle here talks about the occasions where, according to INTELLECTUALISM, practical activities merit the titles of «“intelligent,” “clever,” and the rest», that is, the occasions where concepts of intelligence apply to practical activities. Practical activities merit the title of, for instance, “intelligent” not because they are the direct manifestation of Intelligence but rather because they are accompanied by ‘operations of considering propositions’, which are direct manifestations of Intelligence. Practical activities are said to be intelligent, clever and careful not in themselves but in virtue of being ‘guided’ (Ryle 1945: 2) by direct manifestations of Intelligence.

For ease of reference, I use the following rewordings of the initial characterisation:

- (INT1) Intelligence is a special faculty, the exercises of which are those specific internal acts which are called acts of thinking, namely, the operations of considering propositions.
- (INT2) Practical activities merit the title of “intelligent” because they are accompanied by acts of considering propositions.

Where does this view fit in the model presented in chapter [3]? (INT1) and (INT2) seem to fit right into $\langle \theta\text{-AGENTIAL} \rangle$ or $\langle \theta\text{-OCCURRENCE} \rangle$, assuming that an act of considering is either an action/activity or a non-agential occurrence. But we could also talk about the act of considering a proposition P as the state that is actualised when someone is in a mental state with P as its propositional content. Accordingly, (INT2) would seem to fit $\langle \theta\text{-STATE} \rangle$. As we will see, however, there are several obstacles in identifying the commitments of INTELLECTUALISM and thus to locating it within the structure offered in chapter [3].

4.3 Questions about the initial characterisation of Intellectualism

The initial characterisation of Ryle's target gives us a broad picture of the view and the starting structure upon which we can formulate some questions in an attempt to sharpen the view. In chapter [3], we saw five ways of understanding intelligent action. In order to see the framework supporting INTELLECTUALISM, I'll begin by presenting and expanding on Snowdon's concerns about Ryle's characterisation of INTELLECTUALISM.

Snowdon (2011) claims that INTELLECTUALISM, at least as presented in the Presidential Address, is a monstrous target for philosophical discussion, for Ryle does not offer the reader a good enough account of the motivations to adopt the view, the details of how it works, and what exactly it is a view of.

4.3.1 *What are intelligence concepts?*

Ryle begins the paper with the following statement of his aim: "to exhibit part of the logical behaviour of the several concepts of intelligence, as these occur when we characterise either practical or theoretical activities as clever, wise, prudent, skilful, etc." (Ryle 1945: 1). Following Ryle's opening line in the paper, the main object of study is the set of intelligence concepts, of which the following are examples: 'clever', 'wise', 'prudent', and 'skilful'. Further ahead in the introduction, Ryle adds 'shrewdly', 'wittily', 'methodically' and 'scrupulously' to the list of examples (Ryle 1945: 2). Snowdon's first worry is about the characterisation of the subject of study. What is a 'concept of intelligence'?

Snowdon suggests that one might think of intelligence concepts as those that are used in characterising or talking about the intelligence of the subject. The idea is that when we apply an intelligence concept to an activity we are saying something about the intelligence of the subject. So, for instance, when we talk about the comedian's clever retort to the heckler, we are talking about the intelligence of the comedian. Snowdon rejects this idea, for in the case of 'witty' and 'scrupulous' "it is surely not part of our understanding of these notions that their application indicates intelligence (or lack of intelligence)" (Snowdon 2011:

63). So, if these are the paradigmatic examples of intelligence concepts and they do not indicate intelligence, this cannot be the defining feature of intelligence concepts. However, Snowdon is a bit too quick. Why should we think that ‘witty’ and ‘scrupulous’ do not indicate intelligence? In so far the OED captures at least part of our understanding of the words ‘intelligent’ and ‘intelligence’, it is not clear that these are the best examples to support Snowdon’s claim. According to the OED, the words ‘intelligent’ and ‘intelligence’ have uses related to the measure, degree, and speed of understanding and to the amount of knowledge or wisdom of individuals, and it seems plausible to me that a witty remark is one manifesting quick understanding and a scrupulous doubt is one manifesting attention to the smallest details. Why think that talking about a person’s witty remark or their scrupulous doubt is not in some way talking about the subject’s intelligence? It may be that Snowdon’s understanding of the scope of intelligence differs from Ryle’s. If so, it is not obvious that we should prefer Snowdon’s more restrictive understanding.

Nevertheless, I think that Snowdon is right that we need a better idea of what groups together the cases Ryle puts under intelligence concepts. To follow Ryle’s argument we need to get a good grip of what he takes to be the distinguishing feature of the concepts that figure in that account. It becomes more difficult to see what might be common to the cases when already in the main body of the paper, Ryle expands the list of examples to include “wise”, “logical”, “sensible”, “prudent”, “cunning”, “skilful”, “scrupulous”, “tasteful”, “witty,” *etc.*, but also what seem to be their contraries: “unwise,” “illogical,” “silly,” “stupid,” “dull,” “unscrupulous,” “without taste,” “humourless”, respectively. A first worry arises from the question whether some particular positive examples, like ‘tasteful’, really help to get a better grip of the relevant class. A second worry arises from the inclusion of the contrary concepts in the theory. Consider them in turn.

In the expanded list, Ryle includes examples like ‘tasteful’ and ‘cunning’. What do these have in common that makes them both intelligence concepts? In fact, tasteful is notoriously out of sync with its purported fellows and seems to be a good case on which to build Snowdon’s complaint. For concepts like ‘tasteful’ do not obviously seem to characterise

their subjects as intelligent. When we talk, for example, of a filmmaker's tasteful representation of nudity, in which way are we talking about intelligence of the filmmaker? The worry is not that there is no way, for surely one could come up with one; the worry is that Ryle should give us one and not impose upon the reader the task of filling in the details with respect to the way in which the main subject of his study is identified.

Moreover, the expanded list also includes examples like 'illogical,' 'silly, and 'without taste' —what Snowdon calls 'negative intelligence concepts' (Snowdon 2011: 64). These are naturally construed as the contraries or contradictories of more natural seeming members of the category of intelligence concepts. What is the Intellectualist's view about the application of these concepts? Snowdon's worry is that these concepts do not seem to denote intelligence (one might even say that they denote a lack of intelligence!). We can imagine that INTELLECTUALISM does not hold that these are applied in exactly the same cases in which we would apply the positive ones, though perhaps the same structure does apply in so far their application is defined in terms of an 'operation of considering a proposition'.

A negative intelligence concept might denote the absence of an 'operation of considering a proposition,' so that, for instance, talking about a silly retort is to talk about the absence of an 'operation of considering a proposition.' The same worries about the identification of the relevant kind of operation of considering a proposition apply here. Think about an occasion where we talk about a silly remark and an occasion where we talk about a silly joke. Does 'silly' denote the absence of the same kind of 'operation of considering a proposition' on both occasions? Could the absence of the same 'operation' be denoted by different concepts? Think about an occasion where we talk about an unwise chess move and an occasion where we talk about a silly chess move. Could the absence of the same operation be denoted on both occasions? If the positive intelligence concepts apply in the presence of the considering of a proposition and negative intelligence concepts apply in its absence, does that mean that it is always the case that an intelligence concept, positive or negative, applies to practical activities? For example, on an occasion where Fatima makes a remark and the relevant 'operation' denoted by 'clever' is present, INTELLECTUALISM holds that her remark is clever;

but if the relevant ‘operation’ is not present, would the Intellectualist say that the concept ‘silly’ applies? Assuming that an ‘operation of considering a proposition’ is either present or not, does this mean that the Intellectualist believes that all practical activities are either ‘clever’ or ‘silly’ and *tertium non datur*? Ryle, again, does not seem to say.

4.3.2 What are ‘acts’, ‘exercises’, ‘operations’ and ‘activities’?

On some occasions, we use ‘act’, ‘exercise’, ‘operation’, and ‘activity’ to denote manifestations of agency. These are typically the doings of agents, e.g., people and groups, qua agents. On other occasions, we use ‘act’, ‘operation’, and ‘activity’ in a way that does not denote manifestations of agency. These are typically the doings of non-agents or of agents not qua agents. (It seems that ‘exercise’ is typically used to denote agency, though.) So when Ryle talks about the Intellectualist’s view about ‘acts of theorising’, ‘practical activities’, ‘exercises of Intelligence’, ‘acts of thinking’, ‘internal’ and ‘external’ acts, and ‘operations of considering propositions’, how should we understand these terms?

There is a sense of ‘act’, ‘action’, ‘exercise’, ‘operation’, and ‘activity’ in which they denote manifestations of agency. Consider the following examples:

- (1)
 - a. Alvin looks at Donald’s act of turning on the light.
 - b. Donald analyses Gertrude’s action of pumping water.
 - c. The NSA oversees the on-line activity of potential terrorists.
 - d. The law guarantees every citizen’s free exercise of religion.
 - e. The operation of the capitalist conglomerate lowered the market’s prices.

In these examples, the use of the relevant words is agential. This is especially clear in the use of ‘acts’ and ‘actions’ when they denote intentional doings of people, like the ‘act of turning on the light’ and ‘the action of pumping water’. In these cases, ‘act’ and ‘action’ denote a person’s manifestations of agency.³ Similarly, to talk about ‘the free exercise of religion’, ‘the

³ This is the use that philosophers like Anscombe (1957), Davidson (1980), Goldman (1970), and Hornsby (1980) have in mind when they talk about ‘intentional acts’ and ‘intentional actions’.

on-line activity of potential terrorists', and 'the operations of capitalist conglomerates' is to talk about an agent or a group of agents doing something intentionally.⁴

But there is also a sense of 'act', 'action', 'operation', and 'activity' (but not, apparently, 'exercise') in which they denote non-agential occurrences. Consider the following examples where the relevant terms do not manifest, hopefully without controversy, agency.

- (2) a. Donald analyses the action of the sun on the colour of textiles.
- b. Alvin looks at the activity of the volcano from a safe distance.
- c. Gertrude oversees the operation of the industrial sewing machine.
- d. The EEG reads the patient's brain activity.

In these examples, the use of 'action', 'activity', and 'operation' are occurrences that do not belong to an agent *qua* agent. When we talk about the 'action of the sun', 'the activity of the volcano', and 'the operation of the machine' we are not talking about the doings of an agent, for 'sun', 'volcano' and 'machine' do not denote, on this occasion, an agent. But it would be a mistake to think that any sense in which we talk about the doing of an agent is agential —the non-agential use also appears, sometimes, applied to agents. These are the doings of agents but not *qua* agents. When we talk about the brain activity of the patient, we are not talking about a manifestation of agency of the patient, though the activity is in some sense the agent's. So in cases where one talks about, for example, an 'operation' of a person *simpliciter* it could be either that one is talking about a manifestation of agency (e.g., a conglomerate's operation) or it could be the mere manifestation of an ordinary, non-agential occurrence (e.g., a patient's brain activity).

We have seen situations where an agential sense is clear and situations where a non-agential sense is clear. But there are some situations where it is not clear which sense is being applied, *i.e.*, whether we are talking about 'act', 'exercise', 'operation', and 'activity' in

⁴ The examples do not yet differentiate between a particular token manifestation of agency (e.g., the actual on-going activity of terrorists) or a type of manifestation of agency (e.g., the type of free exercise of religion). See chapter one of Goldman (1970) for a way of drawing this distinction for 'act-types' and 'act-tokens'.

an agential or in a non-agential sense. This is especially true when philosophers talk about mental concepts. Consider the following examples:

- (3)
- a. The activity of judgement has different goals at different times.
 - b. The presence of acts of reasoning distinguishes the human from the animal mind.
 - c. The operation of mind that is believing is one of the mysteries of philosophy.
 - d. Judgements are not exercises of spontaneity in any sense that connects spontaneity interestingly with freedom of choice.⁵

Having in mind these possible uses of ‘act’, ‘exercise’, ‘operation’, and ‘activity’, which one is Ryle using to characterise INTELLECTUALISM? In particular, one might worry about the Intellectualist’s view on ‘operations of considering’ and ‘acts of intelligence’. When Ryle says that the Intellectualist believes that the manifestations of Intelligence are ‘acts of thinking’, does this mean that they are agential manifestations of the faculty of Intelligence? Or does INTELLECTUALISM simply talk about acts of thinking, more generally, as realisations of the faculty of Intelligence? This characterisation, of course, matters for our purposes because whether ‘operations of considering’ and ‘acts of intelligence’ denote actions/activities, occurrences, or states partly determines whether INTELLECTUALISM is an instance of $\langle \theta$ -AGENTIAL \rangle , $\langle \theta$ -OCCURRENCE \rangle , or $\langle \theta$ -STATE \rangle . Unfortunately, the characterisation of INTELLECTUALISM given in Ryle (1945) does not seem to be sufficient to decide. This is particularly problematic in the case of ‘operations of considering a proposition’, and deserves a section of its own.

⁵ These are almost verbatim examples from various philosophers talking about various aspects of the mind. See Campbell (1995: 232), Korsgaard (2009), Hume (1978: 628) and Strawson (2003: 239), respectively. It is worth observing that Korsgaard and Strawson disagree about the way in which one ought to understand these terms when talking about the mind. Korsgaard argues that there is an important sense in which the activity of reason is to be understood as an agential phenomenon, while Strawson believes that the activity of reason could (and ought to) be understood independently of the subject’s agential powers.

4.3.3 *What is an 'operation of considering a proposition'?*

Since the Intellectualist's view of the application of intelligence of practical activities depends on the guidance of 'operations of considering a proposition', it is especially important to look at Ryle's characterisation of the latter operations. What exactly are 'operations of considering propositions'? They are what INTELLECTUALISM takes thinking to be, but we have seen that it is possible to regard 'thinking' in many ways. In order to advance the understanding of the purported 'near enough conceptual truth' that intelligent action requires thinking, we need to be able to identify what 'thinking' is. So, what is an 'operation of considering a proposition'?

According to Ryle, INTELLECTUALISM holds that 'operations of considering' propositions guide intelligent practical activities, *i.e.*, the former are that in virtue of which the latter merit the 'title' of intelligent. But on occasions Ryle also says that INTELLECTUALISM holds that intelligent activity depends on the knowledge of truths or facts. For example, he describes the Intellectualist as saying that Jose's angling is skilful because it is guided by knowledge of norms about how to angle. What is the relation between 'operations of considering' and 'knowledge of truths'?

Ryle talks as if they were the same, for in his descriptions of INTELLECTUALISM he oscillates between talk of 'operation of considering a proposition' and talk about 'knowledge of a proposition'. Here are some representative passages:

Philosophers have not done justice to the distinction which is quite familiar to all of us between knowing that something is the case and knowing how to do things. In their theories of knowledge they concentrate on the discovery of truths or facts, and they either ignore the discovery of ways and methods of doing things or else they try to reduce it to the discovery of facts. They assume that intelligence equates with the contemplation of propositions and is exhausted in this contemplation. (Ryle 1945: 3)

I hope to show that a number of notorious cruces and paradoxes remain insoluble if knowing-that is taken as the ideal model of all operations of intelligence. (Ryle 1945: 3)

This shuffle assumes that knowledge-how must be reducible to knowledge-that, while conceding that no operations of acknowledging-that need be actually found occurring. (Ryle 1945: 8)

In these passages, Ryle swiftly moves between, on the one hand, talk about operations of considering and acknowledging and, on the other hand, talk about discoveries of truths or facts and knowledge-that. But it is not clear whether Ryle believes them to be the same or rather takes the Intellectualist to believe them to be the same. Snowdon seems to think that it is the former. With respect to ‘operations of considering propositions’ and knowledge of truths, Snowdon says that ‘[i]t is, surely, obvious that in fact these are not the same idea, but Ryle at times seems to think that they are’ (Snowdon 2011: 65). I am not sure why Snowdon believes this to be a confusion of Ryle’s and not a confusion he imputes to INTELLECTUALISM. Moreover, perhaps, we might not need to think of it as a confusion. That might depend on how we are to understand acts of considering propositions. Are they acts proper, or is this just a label for a category that might include states?

Philosophical work attempting to mark the difference between, on the one hand, states, and, on the other, occurrences (*i.e.*, processes and events) typically draws on distinctions made by Ryle in chapter five of *The Concept of Mind*.⁶ A good part of Ryle’s discussion in the chapter “Dispositions and Occurrences” is about the difference between the behaviour of verbs for states, like ‘know’, in opposition to the behaviour of verbs for occurrences, like ‘run’.

The verbs ‘know’, ‘possess’ and ‘aspire’ do not behave like the verbs ‘run’, ‘wake up’ or ‘tingle’; we cannot say ‘he knew so and so for two minutes, then stopped

⁶ For examples of this attribution, see the opening pages of Vendler (1957), Mourelatos (1978) and Steward (1997).

and started again after a breather', 'he gradually aspired to be a bishop', or 'he is now engaged in possessing a bicycle.' (Ryle 1949: 100)

This strongly suggests that Ryle is not unaware of the ordinary distinction between 'operations of considering' and 'knowing'. However, I think that Snowdon is right, in so far Ryle could be clearer in the Presidential address: is the equivocation of 'operation' and 'knowledge' among the sins of INTELLECTUALISM? Would a formulation of INTELLECTUALISM that does not make the equivocation, say, one that commits to either an operation or a state of knowledge, still be Ryle's target? The view presented in the paper is not clear.

Consider a version of INTELLECTUALISM that postulates 'operations of considering' as that in virtue of which practical activities are intelligent. To the extent that it seems that considering a rule, maxim or principle is like an intentional 'taking mental note', there seem to be multiple counter-examples to the claim that an activity is intelligent when and only when it is accompanied by an act of considering. Think about a situation where a CEO of a computer software company sits down for days, weighing her options, and settles upon declaring bankruptcy. Suppose that this is a silly decision because it was too quick, disregarded part of the evidence, or was otherwise epistemically or practically at fault, and yet it was accompanied by some considerings. 'Operations of considering' clearly took place, why is her decision silly? It might be that absence of the right kind of considering explains the silly decision of the CEO. Here, again, questions about the identification of the relevant proposition discussed above also apply. Presumably, considering a maxim about raising chickens is not relevant for the CEO's decision, but the formulation of INTELLECTUALISM does not say anything about the way of identifying the relevant considerings. The mere fact that 'operations of considering' take place does not seem to be enough; it ought to be the right kind of considering.

The characterisation of INTELLECTUALISM as a view that claims that intelligent activities are accompanied and guided by operations of considering propositions leaves open many questions. Is it possible, according to INTELLECTUALISM, for the considering of the relevant proposition to pilot an un-intelligent activity? What does the Intellectualist

say about the possibility of considering the relevant proposition and failing to act intelligently? Is it possible that the considerings of the relevant propositions happened in the case of the silly decision of the CEO? Perhaps; Ryle is not clear. Ryle suggests that the obvious rejoinder to purported counter-examples is to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate considerings of the right proposition — a rejoinder he considers faulty too. But Ryle does not make a serious attempt at spelling out the details of this response. The details of how exactly INTELLECTUALISM selects relevant propositions or makes sense of ‘appropriate’ considerings of the relevant propositions are left to the reader.

Part of the problem here is that Ryle says very little about INTELLECTUALISM and even less about the motivations one might have to adopt it. He tells us that the Intellectualist regards ‘Intelligence’ as a faculty the manifestations of which are ‘acts of thinking’ and characterises the latter as ‘operations of considering propositions.’ But Ryle does not explain the motivation for this identification. He tells us that INTELLECTUALISM holds that ‘acts of thinking’ directly manifest intelligence. Why? This seems reasonable, for they are taken to be the direct manifestation of the faculty of ‘Intelligence.’ But one wants to know more about the relation between this faculty and manifestations of intelligence. Why does INTELLECTUALISM claim that all direct manifestations of Intelligence are acts of thinking and vice versa? Furthermore, ‘acts of thinking’ are, according to INTELLECTUALISM, ‘operations of considering propositions.’ Why is this part of the view? In section [4.2.2] we saw the purported identity between ‘operations of considering’ and ‘acts of thinking.’ What is the motivation to think in this way? If one takes ‘operations of considering propositions’ to be intentional operations of attentively taking mental note of propositions, ‘acts of thinking’ are intentional actions. Is every case of thinking to be understood as an agential occurrence? If so, is it a matter of the intentional weighing reasons and taking them into account? Is INTELLECTUALISM committed to a particular account of the introspective access we have to such intentional action? If not the intentional weighing of reasons, what are ‘operations of considering propositions’? Again, Ryle does not seem to say.

Assuming that there is an answer to these questions about what ‘operations of considering’ are, questions about the way these operations are individuated remain. Ryle says that the Intellectualist thinks that operations of considering “principles, rules, canons, standards or criteria” (Ryle 1945: 8) guide behaviour. All of these examples denote regulative propositions. How should we understand the normative force of these propositions? Are the relevant propositions ways in which one *could* or *should* act? An Intellectualist might think that the relevant propositions considered are like the rules of a board game: they tell one what one can do in the game. Alternatively, an Intellectualist could think that the relevant rules are like the rules of etiquette: they tell one what one ought to do in a given situation. Is the view criticised by Ryle committed to any of these accounts? These particular questions about the content of the relevant considering, *i.e.*, about what proposition is considered, can be generalised and so give rise to questions about the selection of objects being considered. How does the Intellectualist determine the relevant rules? Is the same kind of ‘operation of considering a proposition’ denoted by the application of the same concept to two different kinds of practical activities? Think about an occasion where we talk about a witty retort and an occasion where we talk about a witty joke. Does ‘witty’ denote the same kind of ‘operation of considering a proposition’ on both occasions? Could different intelligence concepts refer to the same operation? Think about an occasion where we talk about a wise chess move and an occasion where we talk about a clever chess move. Could the same operation be denoted on both occasions? Ryle does not tell us.

4.3.4 *What is Intellectualism a view of?*

Ryle states in the opening lines of the paper that his aim is to “exhibit part of the logical behaviour of the several concepts of intelligence” (Ryle 1945: 1). According to this statement, his aim is to establish a view about the logical nature of *concepts*. But INTELLECTUALISM does not seem to be directly about concepts but about the mind and intelligent activities. Is INTELLECTUALISM a view about concepts of intelligence as well?

Snowdon holds that it is quite clear that Ryle also regards INTELLECTUALISM as a view about intelligence concepts. On Snowdon's reading, Ryle's treatment of INTELLECTUALISM takes it to be a theory about the concepts of intelligence:

Now it is clear that Ryle himself treats intellectualism as a conceptual thesis. This is clear from, among other things, the way he describes the sort of mistake it is on his conception: he calls it a type mistake, which seems to be his term (in 1945) for what he later called a category mistake, that is, a serious conceptual misconception. (Snowdon 2011: 674)

But INTELLECTUALISM is best understood, Snowdon holds, as a view about the mind itself, not only our concepts of mind. Specifically, it is a theory about what intelligent activities are and in virtue of what they merit such title.

If Snowdon is right, the worry is that Ryle discusses mental concepts when INTELLECTUALISM should be understood as a view about the mind itself, not the way we talk and think about the mind. Of course, Ryle is free to regard his opponent as he wishes—especially since he does not tie his characterisation of that opponent to any particular historical figure. From this perspective, the worst outcome would be characterising a position that nobody would be tempted to hold. But in so far as he takes himself to be talking about a general tradition inherited from Plato and Descartes, it is not obvious that philosophical theories in this tradition were all talking about the use of our concepts of mind. The tradition is more naturally understood as talking about the nature of the mind itself, claims Snowdon. So is INTELLECTUALISM, as Ryle presents it, a view about the mind itself or one about our mental concepts?

I don't think that it is clear that Ryle regards INTELLECTUALISM merely as a theory of concepts. The formulation of INTELLECTUALISM at the beginning of the paper (discussed in sections [4.2.2] and [4.2.3] above) presents a theory about Intelligence, acts of thinking, and considerings of propositions, that is, a theory about purported elements of mind not directly about the concepts of such elements. This can be seen in the first quote when Ryle talks about the 'faculty of Intelligence', 'acts of intelligence', and 'operations of considering

propositions' ([4.2.2] above). Ryle does not present INTELLECTUALISM as a view about the logical behaviour of our concepts of 'Intelligence', 'acts of thinking', or 'considerings of propositions' — even if one holds that such claim does have consequences about the logical behaviour of intelligence concepts. The aspect of INTELLECTUALISM that seems related to concepts is the second claim ([4.2.3] above): the claim about conditions in which practical activities merit the 'title' of 'intelligent'. On a natural reading, this is as a claim about the situations where intelligence concepts apply to practical activities. To adopt this reading is to take Ryle to present INTELLECTUALISM as a view about concepts. But it is also possible to read it as a claim about properties, that is, about the situations where practical activities are said to have the properties we track with the intelligence-concepts. To adopt this reading is to take Ryle to present INTELLECTUALISM as a view about the *denotata* of our concepts of intelligence. So, there are aspects of Ryle's formulation of INTELLECTUALISM that are more hospitable than others to a reading of them as claims about the nature and place of the mind.

But I share Snowdon's worry about the way in which Ryle's claims about concepts relate to the view of the nature of mind proposed by INTELLECTUALISM. If that view is not directly about concepts, why would a complaint about a purported mistake in the use of concepts affect it? Suppose that INTELLECTUALISM is about Intelligence concepts and Ryle is right about the ordinary use of said concepts. If we further assume that we should follow our ordinary practice in this respect, INTELLECTUALISM is in trouble. But if we take INTELLECTUALISM to be about the nature and place of the mind, is there still a problem? The discussion in the Presidential Address is not clear. Again, the worry is not that Ryle *could* not have given an account, but rather that he does not. At least in the paper, Ryle leaves to the reader the task of connecting his claim about the logical behaviour of intelligence concepts with a claim about the place and nature of the mind.

4.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I have presented some questions that arise from Ryle's initial presentation of INTELLECTUALISM and highlighted ways in which answering them is important. I used Snowdon's worries about Ryle's formulations as a framework to present in more detail some gaps in Ryle's presentation of INTELLECTUALISM.

First, there are questions about the main topic of debate. What exactly are the concepts the behaviour of which Ryle wishes to exhibit? What unifies concepts like "wise", "logical", "sensible", "prudent", "cunning", "skilful", "scrupulous", "tasteful", "witty," "unwise," "illogical," "silly," "stupid," "dull," "unscrupulous," "without taste," and "humourless," such that they are all 'intelligence concepts'? But there are also questions about the way in which INTELLECTUALISM is presented. What is INTELLECTUALISM a view of? Is it a view about our concepts of intelligence? A view about what those concepts denote? Both? If INTELLECTUALISM is about the Intelligence and intelligent actions, what is the relation between these and intelligence concepts? If it is not directly about concepts, why does Ryle think that a complaint about the purported mistake in the characterisation of concepts undermines it?

There are also questions about the general formulation of INTELLECTUALISM. Ryle talks about 'acts of theorising', 'practical activities', 'exercises of Intelligence', 'acts of thinking', 'internal' and 'external' acts, and 'operations of considering propositions' in his characterisation of INTELLECTUALISM. How should we understand these terms? What kind of elements do they denote? As we saw in chapter [2], it is especially important to get clear on what 'considering of proposition' amounts to in order to properly to assess Ryle's regress argument, for the argument might work differently (or not at all) depending on whether such operations are taken to be intentional, for example. Why does the Intellectualist hold that 'operations of considering propositions' are the only direct manifestations of Intelligence? What is the relation between 'operations of considering' and 'knowledge of truths'?

Finally, there are questions about the details of the view. Even if we had a clearer idea of the general motivation for INTELLECTUALISM and of what it means to say that practical activities are derivatively intelligent because they are accompanied and guided by operations of considering propositions, questions about how such operations of considering propositions pilot intelligent activity would remain open. How do practical activities inherit the title of intelligence from purportedly direct manifestations of intelligence? Is the mere presence of the relevant considering sufficient to guide intelligent activity and bestow Intelligence on it? If not, what else is necessary? Which proposition ought to be considered for one to act intelligently? What is the relation between the proposition and the actions it guides? What are the Intellectualist's criteria to select the relevant rules, criteria, maxims or principles that guide intelligent action? What does INTELLECTUALISM say about 'negative intelligence concepts' like 'silly'?

These questions have not yet received satisfactory answers. But whose fault is it that these questions are left open? Is it Ryle's fault in presenting a monstrous target for philosophical discussion? Snowdon seems to be of this opinion, and I agree that there are some occasions where this is the case. But I believe that there are occasions where questions are left open and it is the Intellectualist, and not Ryle, who is at fault.

One gap that seems to be Ryle's fault is the characterisation of intelligence concepts. Ryle does not give us a general characterisation of these concepts but rather introduces them through long lists of examples (both in the Presidential Address and in *The Concept of Mind*). This might leave the reader wondering: what unifies Intelligent concepts? What do concepts like "wise" "sensible", "silly," and "dull" have in common? Ryle probably believed there is no single (non-trivial) feature common to all of them independent of particular examples where they are at play.⁷ But does the Intellectualist hold this view as well? We

⁷ The view about concepts Ryle presents in "Phenomenology Versus "The Concept of Mind", suggests that he believed that there is no single, occasion independent feature common to all of the uses of intelligence concepts. According to Ryle, « Concepts are not things that are there crystallised in a splendid isolation; they are discriminable features, but not detachable atoms, of what is integrally said or integrally thought. They are not detachable parts of, but distinguishable contributions to, the unitary senses of completed sentences. To examine them is to examine the live force of things that we actually say. It is to examine them not in retirement, but doing their co-operative work.» Ryle (2009: 192)

are given little clue, and here it seems to be Ryle's fault. The question about what INTELLECTUALISM takes intelligence concepts to be should be settled by Ryle, either by clearly specifying that his particular way of structuring a set of views is part of INTELLECTUALISM, or by stating clearly that it is part of the view itself to make such identification.

But some gaps are not obviously Ryle's fault. In the presentation given in section [4.2.2], for example, acts of thinking are taken to be the only direct manifestations of Intelligence. What is the motivation for thinking, first, that they manifest Intelligence, second, that they are *direct* manifestations of Intelligence, and, third, that they are the *only* direct manifestations of Intelligence? Ryle believes that there is no reason for this, for they are the part of the misconceptions of INTELLECTUALISM that need to be dispelled. Here the gap in the account seems to be the Intellectualist's fault. Though perhaps Ryle should have been more explicit about his position, he couldn't have given a full, coherent account of the position, because he believes there to be no such coherent account. For in the end he believes that the view is untenable: there is no way to fill in the gaps.

In the following chapter, I suggest one way of dealing with some of the problems identified in this chapter. For this, I will look at INTELLECTUALISM in the light of the general discussion in *The Concept of Mind*, in order to understand the view about intelligent action as part of a general view about the mind. In doing so, I contend, a less monstrous target for philosophical discussion can be found.

5 | Intellectualism and the Official Doctrine

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I suggest a way of specifying Ryle's target by locating it in the general argumentative strategy of *The Concept of Mind*. This suggestion reflects what I take to be Ryle's main issue with the views he opposes, namely, the idea that the intelligence of actions is not its own but, as it were, inherited from some distinct mental element. According to this suggestion, Ryle's main target is best characterised as the family of views that conceive the intelligence of actions to be mediated by some additional, independently specifiable mental element. To show this I place what in chapter [3] I called 'Two-elements views' in the context of the view criticised in *The Concept of Mind*. In section [5.2], I present THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE, the view that Ryle criticises at length in *The Concept of Mind*. In section [5.2.1], I offer a general characterisation of the doctrine. Then, in sections [5.2.2], [5.2.3], and [5.2.4], I examine in more detail the doctrine by presenting its ontological, epistemological, and semantical commitments, respectively. Finally, in section [5.3] I explain the connection between 'Two-elements views' and THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE, so to suggest 'Two-elements views' as Ryle's target.

5.2 The Official Doctrine

The main aim of this chapter is to provide an appropriate identification of the range of views targeted by Ryle's argument, that is, the range of views that fall under the name of INTELLECTUALISM. I am inclined to believe that it is not possible to offer a fully coherent

characterisation of INTELLECTUALISM —not at least in the sense in which it is discussed in *The Concept of Mind*. For Ryle thinks of the target as the expression of a temptation that we should abstain from giving into and not a genuine philosophical position; he does not seem to be interested in targeting a position so much as a temptation.

Nevertheless, I think it is possible to give a general coherent characterisation of a range of positions targeted by Ryle in order to gain purchase on his argument. To begin the characterisation, I want to turn again to what in chapter [3] I called Ryle's 'popular idiom':

[A]n action exhibits intelligence, if, and only if, the agent is thinking what he is doing while he is doing it, and thinking what he is doing in such a manner that he would not do the action so well if he were not thinking what he is doing. (Ryle 1949: 18)

We have seen that this idiom can be understood in five ways, depending on how 'thinking' is construed. Out of these five ways of understanding the idiom, I suggested that $\langle \theta\text{-AGENTIAL} \rangle$, $\langle \theta\text{-OCCURRENCE} \rangle$, $\langle \theta\text{-STATE} \rangle$, what I called 'Two element views', were characteristic of Ryle's opponent. I believe that 'Two element views' capture the essence of Ryle's target in so far they are views that develop the idea that intelligent action requires thinking accordance with the general view of the mind targeted in *The Concept of Mind*. 'Two-elements views' capture, I shall try to show, the essence of the view Ryle opposes: an explanation of intelligent action in terms of an independently specified mental element that itself is a manifestations of Intelligence and that, as it were, confers such status to actions by causal influence. In the following section, I will present the general form of THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE, what Ryle sometimes less sympathetically calls the myth of the Ghost in the Machine or Descartes's Myth.

5.2.1 *The general form of the Official Doctrine*

Ryle's general aim in *The Concept of Mind* is to criticise THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE about the place and nature of mind. This, roughly, is the doctrine that the mind and body of humans are essentially different kinds of 'things'. This view is introduced in the first chapter

of *The Concept of Mind*, and, as we will see, it is comprised of claims about what the mind is, how we come to know it, and how we ordinarily talk and think about it. Accordingly, I will present THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE as consisting of ontological, epistemological, and semantical commitments which are directly responsible for the conception of “thinking” of INTELLECTUALISM.

Ryle characterises THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE as the view that humans have or, rather, are a composite of mind and body. Here is one formulation of the doctrine.

Though there might be some exceptions (“idiots and infants in arms”, for example), humans live a bodily life in the physical world, and a mental life in a spiritual or mental world. One’s bodily life takes place in the physical world, subject to the mechanical laws of physics, like any other object in space-time. The careers of events, states, and processes of this body are public, open to external observers, and subject to physical laws in the way that the careers of trees, dinosaurs, and planets are public, open to observers, and subject to physical laws. One’s mental life, in contrast, takes place in a mental world, parallel to (though not necessarily in harmony with) the physical world, free from the yoke of mechanical laws. The careers of events, states, and processes of this mind are private, observable only to its owner, and unlike the events, states, and processes taking place in the physical world.¹

In the following I will try to spell out Ryle’s characterisation of THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE in some detail. The aim of this characterisation is to gain purchase on INTELLECTUALISM. Accordingly, I will mainly focus on the aspects of THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE that have to do with the line of thought that leads to INTELLECTUALISM. This means looking at the interaction between practical activities and “thinking”. In section [5.2.2], I present the distinctively ontological commitments of THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE, that is, claims about what the mind is. In section [5.2.3], I present the distinctively epistemological com-

¹ Compare: « A person ... lives through two collateral histories, one consisting of what happens in and to his body, the other consisting of what happens in and to his mind. The first is public, the second private. The events in the first history are events in the physical world, those in the second are events in the mental world.» (Ryle 1949: 2)

mitments of THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE, that is, claims about the ways we come to know minds. Lastly, in section [5.2.4] I present the semantical consequences Ryle attributes to THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE in virtue of the epistemological and ontological commitments, that is, the claims about the meanings of mental expressions that follow from how the mind is taken to be and be known.

My aim is to characterise what THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE takes ‘thinking’ to be and so centrally concerned with the ontological commitments of the view. However, the epistemological and semantical commitments are also crucial in Ryle’s criticism of INTELLECTUALISM, for one of the main forms of argument Ryle uses against THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE appeal to the kind of logical problems of the epistemological and semantical commitments.

5.2.2 *The ontological commitments of the Official Doctrine*

THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE holds that bodies and minds are essentially distinct kinds of ‘things’.

Ryle argues against his view, not because he denies that there are important differences between mental concepts and physical concepts but rather because he objects to the way of constructing the difference as a difference in the kind of things they refer to.

One might be tempted to focus on the ‘essentially distinct’ part of the claim but the focus of Ryle’s criticism is that THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE regards minds to be or be composed of ‘things’.

There is here a possible ambiguity with respect to what talk of things in inverted commas means. On one construal, it is used to talk about substances: when we say that THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE holds that the minds and bodies are essentially different kinds of ‘things’ we are saying that that bodies and minds are distinct kinds of substances. On another construal, talk about ‘things’ is used to talk about properties: when we say that THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE holds that minds and bodies are or are composed of essentially different kinds of ‘things’ we are saying that mental properties are essentially distinct from physical properties. And we can have present a more nuanced version where ‘things’ denote

events, states, or processes such that when we say that THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE holds that minds and bodies are or are composed of essentially different kinds of ‘things’ we are saying that mental events, states, or processes are fundamentally different from physical events, states, or processes.

Though Ryle is typically taken to argue against the view that takes minds and bodies to be essentially different substances, one might also take him to argue, for example, against property dualism, that is, against the view that physical and mental properties are fundamentally different.² For current purposes, we do not need to decide. I will tell the story in the terms of ‘things’, independently of whether these are taken to be substances, properties, events, occurrences, or states. What matters is that mental things and physical things can be characterised independently of each other. Mental substances qua mental need not be characterised in terms of physical substances, and vice versa —even if, as a matter of fact, something instantiates both; Mental properties qua mental need not be characterised in terms of physical substances, and vice versa, —even if, as a matter of fact, something instantiates both; mental states or occurrences qua mental need not be characterised in terms of physical substances, and vice versa, —even if, as a matter of fact, something instantiates both.

THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE views a person’s body as a physical thing, subject to the mechanical causes like any other spatiotemporal object, but a person’s body can also be affected by, what Ryle calls, “para-mechanical causes”. According to THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE, one’s body may move as an effect of the physical forces but also as an effect of the non-physical forces of one’s mind. My body being pushed back by a strong wind on the top of a mountain is an example of a mechanical causal relation typical of the physical world; my body being ‘pushed’ by my will to get to the top of the mountain is an example of the kind of para-mechanical causal relation THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE postulates. Ryle often uses scare quotes to denote the way in which the doctrine expresses the idea that the mind

² Fodor (1968) and Armstrong (1968), for example, take Ryle to argue against substance dualism and in favour of (a variety of) philosophical behaviourism. Tanney (2009) discusses the extent to which Ryle’s attack on the official doctrine includes both substance and property dualism, as well as the extent to which a general ‘ism’ like behaviourism can be attributed to Ryle.

is meant to cause a bodily movement in a *similar-but-different* way to how physical things cause bodily movements. Accordingly, we can say that doctrine holds that the wind causes my body to move, while the will ‘causes’ my body to move. Ryle talks in a way that suggests that THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE holds that physical things are causes in a physical way, while mental things are causes in a mental way.

These aspects of the doctrine can be captured as the conjunction of a claim about the difference between the mental and the physical, and a claim about the causal powers of the mental over the physical: Mental things are fundamentally different from physical things but nevertheless can have physical effects.

(ONT1) Mental things are essentially different from physical things.

(ONT2) Mental things can exert causal influence over physical things.

THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE, Ryle tells us, treats the mind as if it were a ghostly figure, outside of the realm and laws of the physical, and so essentially different from the physical body and yet somehow having a similar structure expressed in terms of things and causes. Minds are things but different kinds of things from physical things like bodies. Minds can be causes but different kinds of causes from physical causes.³

It is worth observing that the above characterisation does not mention the interaction between the physical and the mind like one would think happens in perception, where there seems to be an interaction from a physical object (e.g., a pig) to one’s mind as one perceives the physical object (e.g., one sees the pig). This is the topic of Ryle’s discussion in chapter seven of *The Concept of Mind* on ‘Sensation and Observation’. In this chapter, Ryle examines the relation between the mental sensations and the physical bodies to the conclusion that the question «‘How do we jump from describing or inspecting sensations to becoming apprised of robins and football matches?’ is a spurious how-question.» (Ryle 1949: 203). For the purposes of understanding THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE to illuminate

³ “The differences between the physical and the mental were thus represented as differences inside the common framework of the categories of ‘thing’, ‘stuff’, ‘attribute’, ‘state’, ‘process’, ‘change’, ‘cause’ and ‘effect’. Minds are things, but different sorts of things from bodies; mental processes are causes and effects, but different sorts of causes and effects from bodily movements.” (Ryle 1949: 9).

INTELLECTUALISM, however, we do not need to examine what the doctrine's view on perception of the physical world is and I will not consider these aspects of the doctrine any further.

THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE, according to Ryle, takes minds and bodies to be essentially different and yet describable with the same categories. What is the reason to think that the categories that apply to physical things like bodies apply to the mind as well? Ryle's worry here has to do with the reasons to characterise the difference between the mental and the physical as a difference between kinds of *things*. He believes that THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE's principal mistake is trying to apply the categories of the physical to the mind. Ryle tells us that THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE "represents the facts of mental life as if they belonged to one logical type or category (or range of types or categories), when they actually belong to another." (Ryle 1949: 6). As I mentioned above, saying that the mind is a 'thing' can be either understood as a claim that the mind is a substance or as a claim about properties of a substance. Regardless, Ryle holds that the describing the mind with the same categories of the physical misrepresents the mind.

The general idea of what Ryle calls a category mistake is easy enough to understand, but, as we will see, showing that THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE makes such a mistake is not. To explain what a categorical mistake is, Ryle first presents examples of what we may call intermediate, as opposed to master, users of the language. These are examples of less than competent users of the language, users who are still learning the use of some of the concepts, that make mistaken use of the language:

A foreigner visiting Oxford or Cambridge for the first time is shown a number of colleges, libraries, playing fields, museums, scientific departments and administrative offices. He then asks 'But where is the University? I have seen where the members of the Colleges live, where the Registrar works, where the scientists experiment and the rest. But I have not yet seen the University in which reside and work the members of your University.' (Ryle 1949: 6)

[A] child witnessing the march-past of a division, who, having had pointed out to him such and such battalions, batteries, squadrons, etc., asked when the division was going to appear.' (Ryle 1949: 6)

A foreigner watching his first game of cricket learns what are the functions of the bowlers, the batsmen, the fielders, the umpires and the scorers. He then says 'But there is no one left on the field to contribute the famous element of team-spirit. I see who does the bowling, the batting and the wicket-keeping; but I do not see whose role it is to exercise *esprit de corps*.' (Ryle 1949: 6-7)

The response of the intermediate's interlocutor is to teach them the correct use of the language. The "foreigner" visiting Oxford or Cambridge has to be taught that 'university' is not a term for another entity like 'building', 'student', or 'room'. The child has to be taught that the term 'division' is not a term for some thing over and above the battalions, squadrons, etc.. The cricket-going "foreigner" has to be taught that 'team spirit' is not another role to be played by a member of the team like bowler or catcher. Ryle suggests that masters of the language do not make this kinds of mistake; they understand how the language is to be used correctly. Masters of the language understand that seeing the buildings and rooms of the university is seeing (part of) the university; that witnessing the march-past of the battalions, batteries and squadrons is seeing (part of) the division; and that contributing to the team-spirit is a not another job over and above bowling, catching, or batting.

Ryle's main claim is that purveyors of THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE make a categorical mistake even though they are, presumably, masters of the language. The child's and the foreigner's worries and questions are the product of a category mistake: it is because they apply the wrong categories that they expect to find a university, a military division, and a person in charge of team-spirit in addition to colleges, libraries, playing fields, museums, scientific departments, battalions, batteries, squadron, catchers, bowlers, and batters, respectively. Likewise, the purveyor of THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE expects to find additional elements—mental things,— in addition to the physical body of a person because they make the categorical mistake, Ryle claims, of applying the physical categories to the mind.

To show that THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE makes such a mistake, Ryle considers different instances in which mental facts are taken to belong to the wrong category: Ryle breaks down THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE's general claim of a double life, a physical and a mental, and examines their different aspects. To show that an account of the mind in accordance with (ONT1) and (ONT2) represents mental facts under mistaken logical categories, Ryle concentrates on the epistemological and semantical aspects of the doctrine. Ryle argues against THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE as a whole by targeting the epistemological and semantical commitments so as to reveal that the ontological commitments entail the application of the wrong categories to the mind.

Let us now look at the general epistemological commitments of THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE.

5.2.3 *The epistemological commitments of the Official Doctrine*

According to Ryle, THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE holds that bodies and minds belong to essentially distinct kinds of 'things' but we also come to know them in essentially different ways. The basic idea is that knowledge of one's own mind is direct and infallible, while knowledge of other's mind is only achieved through cues and hints and is subject to mistake. Let me explain.

According to THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE, there is a difference in the way one can be acquainted with the body and the mind. Bodily states, events, and processes happen in space and time and are, in principle, observable by anyone. One can see the state of solidity of a body, the process of moving a body, and the event of a body having been moved. One need only open one's eyes and directly see them. Perhaps the beating of a heart is a bodily process that cannot without cutting open the body be seen, but it is in principle observable. By contrast, mental states, events and processes, THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE claims, do not happen in space and cannot be observed directly by a third party. They take place in one's inner theatre, away from the public eye, and are only observable by the person who has them. A mental life is private to the person living it; a bodily life is part of the public space-

time and available for public scrutiny. There is no way to cut open the body in order to make one's mental life available for others to see.

However, the mind's eye, THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE holds, can "see" directly into one's own mind only. One's knowledge of one's own mind is in principle incorrigible and infallible, so that, for instance, if I, looking from the inside, say that I feel pain, no other person is in a better epistemic position with respect to the mental element that is my feeling pain and, moreover, I cannot possibly be wrong about the fact that I *feel pain*. The subject's self-ascriptions of mental states, events, and processes are infallible and privileged; one cannot possibly be wrong about one's mind and no other person is ever in such a position.

In chapter six of *The Concept of Mind*, Ryle further specifies the doctrine's view of the knowledge from the inside. According to Ryle, THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE distinguishes between two modes of knowledge from the inside (Ryle 1949: 136-137). On the one hand, there is what THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE calls 'consciousness': a constant, passive mode of awareness of what takes place in the inner theatre which is immediate and infallible. On the other hand, THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE also talks about 'introspection': a kind of non-sensuous perception through which one can deliberately scrutinise further one's one mental elements. In between these two forms of knowledge, everything in the mind can be known by the subject. So, though "[p]eople are actuated by impulses the existence of which they vigorously disavow; some of their thoughts differ from the thoughts which they acknowledge; and some of the actions which they think they will to perform they do not really will" (Ryle 1949: 4), it is because the subject is not scrutinising their mind appropriately. If such impulses and thoughts are really not as the subject takes them to be, the claim about knowledge of own's one mind needs qualification. As a result, Ryle attributes to THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE a weakened claim: even if there is a darkness of one's mind to oneself, "[a] person's present thinkings, feelings and willings, his perceivings, rememberings and imaginings are intrinsically 'phosphorescent'; their existence and their nature are inevitably betrayed to their owner" (Ryle 1949: 4). So, the idea is, even though there might some darkness, in normal conditions the conscious states, events, and

processes of one's own mind are transparent to oneself. Ryle is not very explicit about the reasons why the purveyor of *THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE* would adopt this particular response to the apparent counter-examples, but for present purposes all that matters is that *THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE*, as Ryle presents it, takes the present, conscious elements of mind to be phosphorescent, that is, immediately known to their owner. Knowledge from the inside of *present* mental states, events, and processes is immediately and infallible.

The "phosphorescent" character of present elements of one's own mind stands in sharp contrast with the thick darkness of other's minds. Elements of one's own mind —like present thinkings, perceivings, and remembering— are an open book; so that to settle questions about one's mental states, events and processes, one need only 'look'. From the inside, as it were, the character and nature of a own mind is immediately apparent; from the outside one can at best make "problematic inferences" (Ryle 1949: 4).

Looking from the outside, the character and nature of other's mind can only, if at all, be reached as a result of reasoning from the similarity of what is present to view —the public, physical body— to what in one's own case has internal causes. These are the "problematic inferences". One sees the bodily movements of others and supposes they have the same kind of internal causes as one's own, reasoning "from bodily movements similar to [one's] own to mental workings similar to [one's] own"(Ryle 1949: 4). But there is no certainty that such analogical mode of thinking works. According to *THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE*, we suppose that others have mental states cause their observable bodily movements but we have no guarantee that there are other minds behind causing what we do observe.

These aspects of the doctrine can be captured as the conjunction of the following epistemic claims about our access to minds:

(**EPI1**) Acquaintance from the inside of mental states, processes, and events is immediate and infallible.

(**EPI2**) Acquaintance from the outside of mental states, processes, and events is mediated by weak analogical inferences and subject to (potential) correction from the mind's owner.

THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE, Ryle tells us, thinks of the mind as a ghostly figure, outside of the realm and laws of the physical and outside of the direct grasp of anyone but their owner.

5.2.4 *The semantical commitments of the Official Doctrine*

From these metaphysical and epistemological commitments, Ryle tells us, the following picture of our mental concepts ensue. When we say truly that, e.g., “Fatima desires to paint a wall”, we are talking about something that i) is not observable from the outside (EPI2); ii) only Fatima can talk about with certainty (EPI1); iii) is an essentially different kind of thing from physical things like walls (ONT1); and iv) can have an effect on the physical world (ONT2), e.g., it can be part of a causal chain that leads up to a wall being painted. Simply put, when we use mental concepts and accept THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE we are talking about what the ontological and epistemological commitments of the doctrine describe.

According to THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE, we suppose that the bodily movements of others have mental causes because we suppose that they have mental causes in the way that it is apparent to us that our own mental elements cause our own bodily movements. We are never in direct acquaintance with Fatima’s beliefs, desires, or intentions, for instance. This means that when we talk about Fatima’s beliefs, desires, and intentions, for instance, we are talking about something of which we have not observed. So that when we use mental concepts, we do not refer to observable things.

It is plausible enough that when we use mental concepts, we do not refer to observable things. But, according to Ryle, THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE concludes from this that such concepts refer to unobservable ‘things’. The concepts we use to talk about our neighbour’s wishes, for instance, “denote the occurrence of specific modifications in his (to us) occult stream of consciousness” (Ryle 1949: 5). As a result of the ‘occult’ (to us) character of mental things, what we say about our neighbour’s mind is uncertain and subject to revision by the author. In Ryle’s words:

As a necessary corollary of this general scheme there is implicitly prescribed a special way of construing our ordinary concepts of mental powers and operations. The verbs, nouns and adjectives, with which in ordinary life we describe the wits, characters and higher-grade performances of the people with whom we have to do, are required to be construed as signifying special episodes in their secret histories, or else as signifying tendencies for such episodes to occur. (Ryle 1949: 5)

Ryle seems to attribute to THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE the idea that meanings of mental expressions are (at least partly) determined by things they refer to. On this assumption, the meaning of the expression 'Tim is a human' is partly determined by the things the expressions refer to. Likewise, on the reasonable assumption that mental expressions have meaning, mental expressions must refer to something. But we don't see people's minds; we only 'see' our own (EPII). Therefore, Ryle says on behalf of THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE, mental expressions refer to *unobservable things*. Thus we have the following commitment about the denotation of mental expressions:

(SEMI) Mental expressions denote unobservable, mental things.

THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE, Ryle tells us, takes the mind to be outside of the realm and laws of the physical, outside of the direct grasp of other human minds but their owner. So our everyday use of mental concepts, according to THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE, refers to mental 'things' as characterised by the doctrine's ontological and epistemological commitments. According to THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE, when we, for example, talk about a Fatima's beliefs and desires, for instance, we are talking about something non-physical, outside of our reach.

5.3 An interpretative suggestion

Having seen the main commitments of THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE, I wish to suggest a reasonable account of INTELLECTUALISM that addresses the challenges raised against them in

the previous chapter. In particular, I want to present a coherent way of dealing with questions about the nature of ‘operations of considering propositions’ and ‘acts of the intellect’ as I presented in sections [4.3.2] and [4.3.3]. The suggestion, as we will see, consists in treating the target of Ryle’s argument as what I called ‘Two-elements views’ in chapter [3].

To motivate this suggestion, consider what Ryle says about the understanding of intelligent action fostered by THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE:

Why are people so strongly drawn to believe, in the face of their own daily experience, that the intelligent execution of an operation must embody two processes, one of doing and another of theorising? Part of the answer is that they are wedded to the dogma of the ghost in the machine. Since doing is often an overt muscular affair, it is written off as a merely physical process. On the assumption of the antithesis between ‘physical’ and ‘mental’, it follows that muscular doing cannot itself be a mental operation. To earn the title ‘skilful’, ‘cunning’, or ‘humorous’, it must therefore get it by transfer from another counterpart act occurring not ‘in the machine’ but ‘in the ghost’; for ‘skilful’, ‘cunning’ and ‘humorous’ are certainly mental predicates. (Ryle 1949: 21)

‘The dogma of the ghost in the machine’ —another of Ryle’s names for THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE— pursues the following line of thought. Since the difference between intelligent action and action *simpliciter* is on occasions not observable, it must be that an unobservable mental element that distinguishes intelligent action from action *simpliciter*. For example, since there is, on occasions, no difference in the observable bodily moments of distracted and studious pupils, the difference between them lies in what went on in their inner theatres.⁴ On a particular occasion where a distracted pupil and a studious pupil write down the same words, there is no observable difference in their answer to the question issued by their tutor —at least in so far they write the same words. According to THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE, when we describe a pupil as answering intelligently, we are talking

⁴ This is one of the examples Ryle uses to contrast intelligent action with actions done by rote, where the purported difference is that the latter is not done intelligently. (See Ryle 1949: 28)

about something physical —a bodily action— but also something mental denoted by the mental concept ‘intelligent’. On this view, though there is no observable difference between the pupil who answered intelligently and the pupil who answered by rote, they are different in their *unobservable causes*: in the case of the studious pupil (but not of the distracted one) an inner element of thinking causes the observable bodily movements. According to this line of thought, a bodily action exhibits intelligence if and only if the action is caused by an unobservable instance of thought —what, according to THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE, is an immediate actualisation of Intelligence.

The basic idea of the interpretative suggestion I wish to put forward is the following. Notice that, on the one hand, the view targeted in the second chapter of *The Concept of Mind* holds that the intelligence of bodily actions is inherited from a non-physical operation of considering a proposition. For THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE about the place and nature of mind, physical elements are properly ascribed mental qualities only in so far they are caused by non-physical elements of mind —*e.g.*, bodily actions are appropriately to be intelligent just when they are caused by mental elements. Only non-physical mental elements directly and immediately have mental qualities. And notice, on the other hand, ‘Two-elements views’ hold that the intelligence of actions is inherited from an additional mental element. For these views, an action is intelligent when it is caused by thought, where ‘thought’ is understood to be a further mental action/activity, a non-agential, mental occurrence, or a mental state. This family of views hold that an instance of ϕ -ing exhibits intelligence if and only if the agent is ϕ -ing well and their ϕ -ing well is caused by an additional instance of thinking. Since ‘Two-elements views’ and the account of intelligent action that follows THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE seem to regard the intelligence of actions as derivate or mediated by another element of mind, let us take this commonality and INTELLECTUALISM in relation to ‘Two-elements views’.

The understanding of intelligent action fostered by THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE, and other ‘Two-elements views’ hold that the intelligence of actions is mediated by an independently specifiable element of mind. On the one hand, the understanding sanctioned by

THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE, an instance of ϕ -ing is intelligent if and only if the instance of ϕ -ing is caused by a non-physical mental element θ that is specified independently of ϕ . The mental element θ is independently specified, for ϕ -ing is a mental exercise of agency and θ -ing is bodily exercise of agency, and the body and the mind are, on their view, essentially different kinds. On the other hand, 'Two-elements views' of intelligent action hold that the intelligence of action depends on an instance of thinking that is by definition specified independently of the kind of action it explains.

The suggestion I am putting forward is that Ryle argues against views that regard the intelligence of actions as mediated of a further element of mind. Accordingly, I find it misleading to say that Ryle's aim is to bring down an account of intelligent action in terms of an action/activity, non-agential occurrence, or state in favour of some other account of the action/activity, non-agential occurrence, or state from which the intelligence of actions 'derives'. It is misleading because it suggests that Ryle understands the intelligence of actions to come through the mediation of some other mental element —as if he believed non-propositional epistemic mental elements had qualities of mind in a more fundamental way than actions. Stanley, for instance, seems to hold that Ryle targets the view according to which the intelligence of actions is due to a propositional epistemic *state* in favour of the view that intelligent action depends on a non-propositional epistemic *state*.⁵ But this misrepresents Ryle's view inasmuch as the intelligence of actions is mediated by a further state, regardless of whether or not it is a propositional state or not.

We can understand Ryle's position as the view that intelligent actions manifest intelligence directly, that is, in the same way the INTELLECTUALISM understand acts of considering propositions or avowing to oneself precepts are manifestations of intelligence. Bodily actions and theoretical intellectual acts are *direct* manifestations of Intelligence, and neither required a further element from which to inherit their title of 'intelligent'. To properly appreciate Ryle's main contribution in the discussion of know-how, we need to

⁵ See Stanley (2011a: 23, 26, 28, 31). For other philosophers who explicitly take Ryle to argue against a propositional state of know-how in favour of a non-propositional state of know-how, see Kumar (2011) and Bengson and Moffett (2011c).

avoid focussing on Ryle's reasons against one particular understanding in the family of $\langle\theta\text{-AGENTIAL}\rangle$, $\langle\theta\text{-OCCURRENCE}\rangle$, and $\langle\theta\text{-STATE}\rangle$, but on the points raised against the common feature of the family, namely, that intelligent action is explained in terms of an independently specifiable mental element that itself is an actualisation of Intelligence.

This interpretative suggestion elicits a different approach to Ryle's argument. For Ryle's argument is then to be directed at accounts of intelligent actions where their intelligence is mediated by some further element of mind. In line with the suggestion, the characterisation of the argument I will offer in the following chapter reflects Ryle's concern with ways of understanding action where the intelligence of actions is inherited from some other independently specified element.

5.4 Conclusion

Stanley and Williamson's understanding of Ryle's opponent leads them to a problematic version of Ryle's argument. Since proper assessment of Ryle's arguments depends on a clear identification the range of positions that he hopes to undermine, I have suggested a reasonably clear characterisation of Ryle's target on the basis of, first, some ways understanding of the popular idiom presented in chapter [3], and, second, Ryle's characterisation of his target as a view motivated by THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE. The suggestion is to understand Ryle's target to be not a particular view but a range of views that explain the intelligence of actions as 'inherited' from their causes. In the following chapter, I shall present the corresponding understanding of Ryle's argument.

6 | A Rylean challenge to Intellectualism

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I present what I take to be Ryle's main challenge to INTELLECTUALISM: an objection to the idea that the intelligence of practical elements is to be mediated by further elements of the mind. In section [6.2], I present what I take to be the core of Ryle's argument and how it affects INTELLECTUALISM interpreted as an instance of $\langle\theta\text{-AGENTIAL}\rangle$, $\langle\theta\text{-OCCURRENCE}\rangle$, and $\langle\theta\text{-STATE}\rangle$. In section [6.4], I present a question about the reasons the Intellectualist has to mark a distinction in the mode of being intelligent of practice and the mode of being intelligent of theory. To conclude, I raise in section [6.5] some issues about the possibility of spelling out how theoretical elements interact with practical elements.

6.2 The core of Ryle's challenge to INTELLECTUALISM

What, if anything, makes actions and activities intelligent? According to the suggestion made in the previous chapter, the purveyor of THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE favours what I have called 'Two-elements views', that is, the range of views that what makes actions intelligent is a mental state, a non-agential occurrence, or an agential occurrence. Given the connection between THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE and INTELLECTUALISM, we may take INTELLECTUALISM—in so far it is the target of Ryle's argument—as the view that the intelli-

gent character of actions and activities is mediated by some other, independently specified mental element.¹

The suggestion made in the previous chapter was that instead of trying to get a single coherent account of Ryle's terminology —e.g., determining whether 'operations of considering propositions' are agential occurrences, non-agential occurrences, or states— we do better to consider different varieties of INTELLECTUALISM and examine the ways in which they offer accounts of intelligent exercises of agency as mediated.

Ryle, I contend, is best understood as targeting the very idea of mediation between two different kinds of elements. In the following I will present the general shape of Ryle's argument and then consider ways in which the Intellectualist might respond.

Let us begin first with the following formulation of Ryle's regress:

The crucial objection to the intellectualist legend is this. The consideration of propositions is itself an operation the execution of which can be more or less intelligent, less or more stupid. But if, for any operation to be intelligently executed, a prior theoretical operation had first to be performed and performed intelligently, it would be a logical impossibility for anyone ever to break into the circle. (Ryle 1949: 19)

Following in the interpretative suggestion about the target I made in the previous chapter, I want to propose the following way of understanding the challenge presented in this quote. If exercises of agency inherit their title of 'intelligent' from some other mental element, we might wonder where does this mental element θ get such power from. A plausible answer seems to be that it also is intelligent. (I will explain what this amounts to below.) Then for this element there is also a question about its intelligent character: whether θ is itself intelligent is either mediated by another element or not. If θ does not depend on a further element in order to merit the title, why could actions and activities not merit the title of 'intelligent' in the same way? And if θ depends on a yet another mental element θ^* , we

¹ Henceforward, I will just talk about 'other' mental element, just for simplicity.

may wonder where did this mental element θ^* gets its title from and why could exercises of agency not merit the title of 'intelligent' in the same way.

To illustrate the general idea of this challenge, consider the following example.

Suppose Fatima knits intelligently. According to INTELLECTUALISM, whether she knits intelligently depends on a prior, distinct mental element. Fatima's knitting, as it were, inherits the title 'intelligent' from some prior mental considering of a proposition P. It is intelligent because it *manifests* such operation of considering. But how come operations of considering P can provide such title? Because such operations of considering propositions are themselves intelligent. Where did they get this title from? Either the operation of considering P got the title from a further operation of considering a proposition Q or it got the title without the mediation of another element. If the considering of P got its title from a further considering, where did this further considering of proposition Q get the title from? And if the operation of considering P did not get the title from any further element, why could Fatima's knitting not get the title of 'intelligent' in such way? If some mental elements can be no-derivatively intelligent (even though there are some of the same kind are not intelligent), there seems to be no reason why exercises of agency cannot.

The core of Ryle's objection to INTELLECTUALISM, I contend, is a challenge to an asymmetrical treatment of the conditions in which we say truly of theoretical elements and practical activities that they are intelligent.

The Intellectualist regards operations of considering a proposition as *direct* manifestations of intelligence but actions and activities as *indirect* manifestations of intelligence, for the former are direct manifestations of the Intellect and the latter are not. The core of the Rylean objection, as we will see, consists in showing that the asymmetry is unwarranted.

Let me say something more about what it means to say that the Intellectualist takes operations of considering to be direct manifestations of intelligence. According to the Intellectualist, operations of considering a proposition are intelligent. On their view, operations of considering do not need further elements in virtue of which they are manifestations of

intelligence, for they are immediately intelligent in virtue of the powers of thinking they are manifestations of: they are intelligent *because* they manifest the subject's intellectual powers —they are exercises of the subject's powers to think. Actions and activities, instead, are, for the Intellectualist, intelligent only in so far they are appropriately related to intellectual elements. Exercises of agency could never, on their view, be manifestations of the subject's powers to think; they are manifestations of our agential powers. Exercises of agency need further elements —theoretical operations— to, as it were, imbue them with intelligence.

Intellectualists face here a first problem with respect to the way in which they account of the intelligent character of considerings. (We will see that problems about such an account and why it does not apply to exercises of agency is a recurring theme.) Intellectualists claim Fatima's knitting is intelligent because of an operation of considering and the latter is intelligent because they manifest intellectual powers. Is it that *any* manifestation of intellectual powers is intelligent? On the face of it there are instances of thinking that are not intelligent. Remember the example of the CEO who hastily and lightheartedly decides to declare bankruptcy. Their decision is an instance of thinking but it was a silly, *i.e.*, not intelligent, decision (See [4.3.3]). But if there are some operations of considering that are not intelligent, what characterises those that are? Why does they manifest intelligence directly? There seems to be no reason why exercises of agency could not.

The Intellectualist seems to regard agential powers and powers for thinking as if they were two fundamentally distinct kinds of powers such that no thing could ever be directly a manifestation of both, that is, as if no thing could both be an exercise of our powers to think and an exercise of our agential powers. An element of mind is either an exercise of agency or an exercise of thinking. Though it might be that only some exercises of our powers for thinking are intelligent, those that are intelligent are so in a non-mediated manner. But on the Intellectualist view, an exercise of agency gets to be intelligent not because it itself is an exercise of our powers for thinking but because it is appropriately related to something that is itself the direct manifestation of a subject's powers of thinking. Since nothing can

be a manifestation of both agency and thinking, and only exercises of one's powers for thinking can be directly intelligent, then manifestations of agency can only be intelligent in a mediated manner, *i.e.*, being appropriately related to the relevant considering.

The Rylean challenge as I wish to present it consists in questioning the reasons for the asymmetric treatment of our powers to think and our agential powers. Why cannot one and the same thing be a direct manifestation of Intelligence and a direct manifestation of agency? Why does the Intellectualist regard operations of considering propositions as direct manifestations of intelligence but does not extend such courtesy to actions and activities? INTELLECTUALISM gives insufficient reasons to regard, on the one hand, intelligence manifested in theoretical elements, like operations of considering propositions, as direct, and intelligence manifested in practical activities, like exercises of agency, as mediated by a further theoretical activity.

According to the interpretation of Ryle I am suggesting, we should treat actions and activities as themselves capable of directly manifesting intelligence. We should not need to appeal to a further independently specified element in virtue of which exercise of agency are intelligent. To make sense of this argumentative strategy, we need to look in more detail at what it means to say that 'operations of considering propositions' are directly intelligent and the purported reasons for thinking that exercises of agency could not be so. This, in turn, depends on the nature of 'operations of considering propositions.' Accordingly, we need to examine the particular shapes the argumentative strategy could take depending on the interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM under scrutiny.

In chapter [5] I suggested that Ryle targets 'Two-elements views', that is, the range of views according to which an instance of ϕ -ing is intelligent if and only if the agent is ϕ -ing well and their ϕ -ing well depends on an *independent* instance of thinking θ . In the light of this suggestion, I will discuss in the following sections interpretations of INTELLECTUALISM as an instance of $\langle\theta$ -AGENTIAL \rangle , $\langle\theta$ -OCCURRENCE \rangle , and $\langle\theta$ -STATE \rangle , respectively. The aim is to explain, on each occasion, the specific kind of asymmetry —as we will see, some of the interpretations of INTELLECTUALISM lead to the same place. INTELLECTUAL-

ISM, in all three interpretations, seems to hold two notions of intelligence, one that applies to exercises of agency like knitting and jumping and another that applies to, depending on the interpretation, mental actions, non-agential occurrences, or states. In section [6.4], I will examine the purported grounds for the distinction.

6.3 Three interpretations of INTELLECTUALISM

I offered a general specification of five ways of approaching the question about what happens when someone acts intelligently. Three of those correspond to the possible ways in which one might formulate INTELLECTUALISM. As we will see, their attempts to explain why operations of considering and exercises of agency are intelligent in different ways seem to assume precisely that there is an asymmetry for which there is no warrant and none can be given.

6.3.1 INTELLECTUALISM as an instance of $\langle \theta$ -AGENTIAL \rangle

In chapter [3], I characterised $\langle \theta$ -AGENTIAL \rangle in the following way:

$\langle \theta$ -AGENTIAL \rangle An instance of ϕ -ing exhibits intelligence if and only if the agent is ϕ -ing well and their ϕ -ing depends on a mental action or activity of thinking what they are doing θ distinct from their ϕ -ing, where the agent would not ϕ so well if it were not for θ .

In an interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM as an instance of $\langle \theta$ -AGENTIAL \rangle , the ‘operations of considering propositions’ that the Intellectualist postulates to explain intelligent actions and activities are exercises of agency themselves —*i.e.*, the operation of considering a proposition is an action. According to such an account, what explains the intelligence of practical elements like riding a bike or knitting a jumper is that they depend on an action of considering a proposition —presumably, the relevant proposition about how to ride a bike or knit a jumper. On this interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM, one kind of actions and activities (*e.g.*, knitting and riding a bike) is intelligent in virtue of another kind of ac-

tions (*i.e.*, considerings of propositions), so, whether exercises of agency of the kind ϕ are intelligent depends on actions of some other kind ψ .

How come actions of the kind ψ can bestow the title of ‘intelligent’ onto exercises of agency of the kind ϕ ? That is, what is the reason for holding that actions like the considering of propositions have the power to confer intelligence to exercises of agency like knitting? The purported reason for holding that actions of the kind ψ can bestow the title of intelligent upon actions of the kind ϕ is that the former are episodes of thinking and intelligent themselves and these *guide* ψ . According to what we called ‘Ryle’s popular idiom’ (see chapter [3], section [3.3]), intelligent exercises of agency depend on ‘thinking’, for whether an action or an activity is intelligent depends on whether the agent is thinking what they are doing while they are doing it, and thinking what they are doing in such a manner that they would not do the action or activity so well if they were not thinking what they are doing — where ‘thinking’ can be understood in several ways depending on the interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM. Actions of the kind ϕ are intelligent in so far they are acts of the intellect, *i.e.*, instances of thinking. On an interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM as an instance of $\langle \theta\text{-AGENTIAL} \rangle$, ‘thinking’ is understood as a mental action: the agential operation of considering a proposition. For the Intellectualist, operations of considering a proposition are exercises of the subject’s intellectual powers and, thus, manifestations of intelligence, for intelligence resides in the Intellect and the manifestations of the Intellect are the direct manifestations of intelligence. On an interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM as $\langle \theta\text{-AGENTIAL} \rangle$, exercises of agency like considering propositions are direct manifestations of intelligence in virtue of being direct manifestations of the Intellect. Considerings have the power to bestow the title of ‘intelligent’ to actions like knitting and riding a bike because the former, but presumably not the latter, are exercises of Intellectual powers, and, therefore, instances of thinking and direct manifestations of Intelligence themselves.

The main problem with the above interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM as an instance of $\langle \theta\text{-AGENTIAL} \rangle$ is that it makes use of two notions of intelligent exercises of agency, that is, two ways in which an exercise of agency can merit the title ‘intelligent’. The two

notions of intelligent exercises of agency are the following. On the one hand, there seem to be some exercises of agency that are intelligent in so far they depend on an operation of considering a proposition. These exercises of agency are truly said to be intelligent in the way explicitly sanctioned in the formulation of INTELLECTUALISM as $\langle \theta\text{-AGENTIAL} \rangle$: they are intelligent if and only if the agent is, for example, knitting well and their knitting depends on the operation of considering a proposition. On the other hand, there seem to be some elements that are intelligent in so far they are direct manifestations of the Intellect. They are not said to be intelligent in the explicitly sanctioned way but rather because they are exercises of the subject's powers to think. This notion of intelligence applies to actions like the considering of propositions.

Faced with the apparent use of two accounts of what it is for an exercise of agency to be intelligent and the need to have a single account of what makes exercises of agency intelligent, it is possible to adopt one of the following three strategies:

- S1) One may hold that an exercise of agency is intelligent if and only if it depends in the relevant way on an additional intelligent exercise of agency.
- S2) One may hold that an exercise of agency is intelligent if and only if it is an exercise of the subject's powers to think.
- S3) One may hold that an exercise of agency is intelligent if and only if either it is an exercise of the subject's powers to think or it depends in the relevant way on an additional intelligent exercise of agency.

The argumentative approach against an interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM as an instance of $\langle \theta\text{-AGENTIAL} \rangle$ will amount to showing that S1), S2), and S3) lead to problems. In the following sections, I will examine the consequences of adopting these strategies to deal with the apparent double standard for intelligence in an interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM as an instance of $\langle \theta\text{-AGENTIAL} \rangle$. I will show, first, that strategy S1) leads one to an infinite regress, second, that strategy S2) amounts to the negation of $\langle \theta\text{-AGENTIAL} \rangle$,

and, finally, that strategy S3), what amounts to incorporating the two notions into one, needs to appeal to an asymmetry for which there is no warrant.

6.3.1.1 *Issues with strategy S1) for < θ -AGENTIAL>*

If one adopts S1) as a way of dealing with the conflict between the apparently different ways of talking about intelligence, there is a risk of leading to an infinite regress. According to S1), an exercise of agency is intelligent if and only if it depends in the relevant way on an additional intelligent exercise of agency. But why does this further intelligent action or activity come to be intelligent? If an instance of ϕ -ing requires a further exercise of agency, which, let us suppose, is neither, at some level of description, identical to, nor arises together with a ϕ -ing, it does not seem possible for any exercise of agency to be intelligent.² If intelligent ϕ -ing requires further ϕ' -ing, which in turn requires an additional ϕ'' -ing, and so on indefinitely, it would not be possible for one to ϕ intelligently. If the Intellectualist adopts strategy S1), they make intelligent exercises of agency impossible, for there is no way of getting any intelligent exercise of agency if there is not already one. So, INTELLECTUALISM better look for another way of dealing with the conflict.

6.3.1.2 *Issues with strategy S2) for < θ -AGENTIAL>*

If one adopts S2) as a way of dealing with the conflict between the apparently different ways of talking about intelligence, one ends up adopting a version of INTELLECTUALISM that is not an instance of < θ -AGENTIAL>. According to S2), any exercise of agency is intelligent if and only if it is an exercise of the subject's powers to think. There are two ways in which this might unfold. This is in direct conflict with the interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM an instance of < θ -AGENTIAL>, for the latter belongs to 'Two-elements views', that is, views that explain the intelligence of exercises of agency in virtue of a further element. What is,

² These assumptions echo the additional premises in Stanley and Williamson's presentation of Ryle's argument. They are there in order to guarantee that there is an endless list of requirements. See chapter [2], sections [2.4.1] and [2.4.2].

then, the further element appealed to by S2)? It seems that the strategy consists in denying that there is a further element.

Part of the challenge that is presented to INTELLECTUALISM by the two notions of intelligence is that one notion purports to explain the intelligence of an element in virtue of a further element, while the other purports to explain the intelligence as a result of the exercise of a power. That is, one notion of intelligence attempts to explain the intelligence of an instance of ϕ -ing in virtue of its relation to a ϕ' -ing, while the other attempts to explain the intelligence of ϕ -ing by characterising ϕ -ing itself as the exercise of the subject's powers to think. Adopting S2) entails an explanation of the intelligence of exercises of agency by specifying that they are exercises of the subject's powers to think. This, however, amounts to a rejection of $\langle\theta$ -AGENTIAL \rangle and, *a fortiori*, cannot work as a defence of an interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM as an instance of $\langle\theta$ -AGENTIAL \rangle . Strategy S2) does not appeal to an additional element in order to account for the intelligence of an instance of ϕ -ing, but rather the explanation takes the form of a characterisation of an instance ϕ -ing as the manifestation of a power to think.

So, INTELLECTUALISM interpreted as $\langle\theta$ -AGENTIAL \rangle cannot appeal to strategy S2), for it amounts to a rejection of the basic strategy adopted by 'Two-elements views'. Therefore, this attempt to save an interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM as an instance of $\langle\theta$ -AGENTIAL \rangle does not work.

6.3.1.3 *Issues with strategy S3) for $\langle\theta$ -AGENTIAL \rangle*

According to S3), an exercise of agency is intelligent if and only if either it is an exercise of the subject's powers to think or it depends in the relevant way on an additional intelligent exercise of agency. Strategy S3) provides a way of dealing with the conflict between the apparently different notions of intelligence that seems to solve the problems of strategies S1) and S2). But, as we will see, has problems of its own.

Strategy S3) seems to solve the problems with strategy S1) in so far it does not generate a regress. The disjunctive condition provides a way for exercises of agency to be intel-

lignant in virtue of their being instances of thinking that do not require a further element—therefore, stopping the regress. One may say that knitting a jumper, for instance, is intelligent in virtue of the subject's considering of the relevant proposition without this entailing a regress because whether the considering of a proposition is intelligent does not require a further intelligent exercise of agency. According to this strategy, considerings are intelligent, not in virtue of further elements but because they are themselves exercises of the subject's powers to think.

Strategy S3) seems to solve the problems with strategy S2) in so far it keeps the initial thrust of $\langle \theta\text{-AGENTIAL} \rangle$ in terms of the second disjunct, which is meant to capture the idea according to which some actions and activities are intelligent in virtue of an agential operation of considering a proposition. But at the same time, strategy S3) eliminates the threat of a regress, for one may say that considering a proposition is intelligent in virtue of it being an exercise of the subject's powers to think, without the need of further elements. This does not entail a complete abandonment of the ideas behind $\langle \theta\text{-AGENTIAL} \rangle$ in so far actions and activities like knitting a jumper and jumping rope are still intelligent in virtue of a further intelligent exercise of agency. That is, to the extent that bodily actions and activities are characterised as intelligent in virtue of a further mental element, the core idea of INTELLECTUALISM seems to be, at least partially, captured.

However, strategy S3) makes salient the arbitrariness of a distinction between some kinds of elements that are intelligent in virtue of powers and those that are not. Why are some practical activities intelligent in virtue of a further element and some others in virtue of them being an instance of thinking? Are there specific kinds of exercises of agency that are intelligent because they satisfy one of the disjuncts or could any action and activity be intelligent in virtue of either disjunct? Is there a principled division between actions and activities that are intelligent because of the subject's powers to think and those that are intelligent because of a further element? How does one tell whether a particular exercise of agency is intelligent because of the subject's powers to think or because of an additional element? Possible ways of addressing these questions will be examined in section [6.4].

Whether the distinction between, on the one hand, things that are intelligent in virtue of powers to think and, on the other, things that are intelligent in virtue of a further element is unwarranted will also pop up in other interpretations of INTELLECTUALISM. As we will see, $\langle \theta\text{-OCCURRENCE} \rangle$ and $\langle \theta\text{-STATE} \rangle$ also seem to require a distinction between modes of being intelligent along these lines. Because of this commonality, I will consider the problems with the distinction in a separate section. Before this, however, let us examine $\langle \theta\text{-OCCURRENCE} \rangle$.

6.3.2 INTELLECTUALISM as an instance of $\langle \theta\text{-OCCURRENCE} \rangle$

In chapter [3], I characterised $\langle \theta\text{-OCCURRENCE} \rangle$ in the following way:

$\langle \theta\text{-OCCURRENCE} \rangle$ An instance of ϕ -ing exhibits intelligence if and only if the agent is ϕ -ing well and their ϕ -ing depends on a mental non-agential occurrence of thinking what they are doing θ *distinct* from their ϕ -ing, where this dependence is such that the agent would not ϕ so well if it were not for θ .

In an interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM as an instance of $\langle \theta\text{-OCCURRENCE} \rangle$, the ‘operations of considering propositions’ that the Intellectualist postulates to explain intelligent actions and activities are non-agential occurrences —*i.e.*, considerings are events or processes that are not manifestations of agency. According to such an account, what explains the intelligence of practical activities like riding a bike or knitting a jumper is that they depend on an operation of considering a proposition —presumably, the relevant proposition about how to ride a bike or knit a jumper, respectively. On this interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM, agential occurrences are intelligent in virtue of intelligent non-agential occurrences (*i.e.*, considerings of propositions).

How come non-agential occurrences like considerings can bestow the title of ‘intelligent’ onto exercises of agency? That is, what is the reason for holding that operations like the considering of propositions have the power to confer intelligence to Fatima’s knitting or Jose’s jumping? The purported reason for holding that non-agential occurrences can

bestow the title of intelligent upon actions and activities is that the former are episodes of thinking and, thus, intelligent themselves.

Here, again, ‘Ryle’s popular idiom’ comes into play. According to this idiom, intelligent exercises of agency depend on ‘thinking’, for whether an action or an activity is intelligent depends on whether the agent is thinking what they are doing while they are doing it, and thinking what they are doing in such a manner that they would not do the action or activity so well if they were not thinking what they are doing —where ‘thinking’ can be understood in several ways depending on the interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM. Non-agential occurrences like the considering of propositions are intelligent in so far they are acts of the intellect, instances of thinking. On an interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM as an instance of $\langle \theta\text{-OCCURRENCE} \rangle$, ‘thinking’ is understood as a non-agential occurrence of considering a proposition. For the Intellectualist, operations of considering a proposition are exercises of the subject’s thinking powers and, thus, manifestations of intelligence, for intelligence resides in the Intellect and the manifestations of the Intellect are direct manifestations of intelligence. Considerings have the power to bestow the title of ‘intelligent’ to exercises of agency like knitting and riding a bike because the former, but presumably not the latter, are exercises of Intellectual powers, and, therefore, direct manifestations of Intelligence themselves.

An interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM as an instance of $\langle \theta\text{-OCCURRENCE} \rangle$ makes use of two notions of what it is to be intelligent, one that applies to non-agential occurrences and one that applies to exercises of agency. On the one hand, exercises of agency are intelligent in so far they depend on an operation of considering a proposition. They are truly said to be intelligent in the way explicitly sanctioned in the formulation of INTELLECTUALISM as $\langle \theta\text{-OCCURRENCE} \rangle$: they are intelligent if and only if the agent is, for example, knitting well and their knitting depends on the operation of considering a proposition. On the other hand, there seem to be some elements of the mind that are intelligent in so far they are direct manifestations of the Intellect. These occurrences are not said to be intelligent in the explicitly sanctioned way, but rather because they are exercises of the subject’s

intellectual powers. This notion of intelligence applies to, for example, occurrences like the considering of propositions.

In the case of an interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM as $\langle \theta\text{-OCCURRENCE} \rangle$ there does not seem to be a threat of a regress, for exercises of agency require mental occurrences, but, according to the characterisation of the view, the latter do not require a further occurrence. According to $\langle \theta\text{-OCCURRENCE} \rangle$, an intelligent practical activity of knitting requires an intelligent non-agential occurrence of considering, but it remains silent about what it is required for the latter non-agential occurrence to be intelligent. On this interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM, only *agential* occurrences require further occurrences.

Why are practical activities intelligent in virtue of a further element and non-agential occurrences intelligent in virtue of them being an instance of thinking? Which feature of non-agential occurrences explains this? It seems arbitrary to claim that non-agential occurrences can themselves be manifestations of Intelligence but that agential occurrences can only be intelligent in virtue of another element. As I said in the previous section, whether the distinction between some things that are intelligent in virtue of powers to think and some other things that have a different mode of being intelligent is unwarranted will also pop up in other interpretations of INTELLECTUALISM. The interpretations of INTELLECTUALISM as $\langle \theta\text{-AGENTIAL} \rangle$ and, as we will see, $\langle \theta\text{-STATE} \rangle$ also seem to require a distinction between modes of being intelligent. Because of this commonality, I will consider the problems with arbitrariness in a separate section. Before this, however, let us examine the interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM as an instance of $\langle \theta\text{-STATE} \rangle$.

6.3.3 INTELLECTUALISM as an instance of $\langle \theta\text{-STATE} \rangle$

In chapter [3], I characterised $\langle \theta\text{-STATE} \rangle$ in the following way:

$\langle \theta\text{-STATE} \rangle$ An instance of ϕ -ing exhibits intelligence if and only if the agent is ϕ -ing well and their ϕ -ing depends on a mental state of thinking about what they are doing θ *distinct* from their ϕ -ing, where the agent would not ϕ so well if it were not for θ .

In an interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM as an instance of $\langle \theta\text{-STATE} \rangle$, the ‘operations of considering propositions’ that the Intellectualist postulates to explain intelligent actions and activities are states —*i.e.*, considerings are mental states of the subject. According to such an account, what explains the intelligence of practical activities like riding a bike or knitting a jumper is that they depend on a state of considering a proposition —presumably, the relevant proposition about how to ride a bike or knit a jumper, respectively.

How come mental states like considerings can bestow the title of ‘intelligent’ onto exercises of agency? That is, what is the reason for holding that mental states like the one of considering propositions have the power to confer intelligence to Fatima’s knitting or Jose’s jumping? The purported reason for holding that mental states can bestow the title of intelligent upon actions and activities is that the former are instances of thinking and, thus, intelligent themselves.

Following again the lead of ‘Ryle’s popular idiom’, we have that intelligent exercises of agency depend on ‘thinking’, for whether an action or an activity is intelligent depends on whether the agent is thinking what they are doing while they are doing it, and thinking what they are doing in such a manner that they would not do the action or activity so well if they were not thinking what they are doing —where ‘thinking’ can be understood in several ways depending on the interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM. States like that of considering propositions are intelligent in so far they are acts of the intellect, instances of thinking. On an interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM as an instance of $\langle \theta\text{-STATE} \rangle$, ‘thinking’ is understood as state of considering a proposition. For the Intellectualist, states of considering propositions are exercises of the subject’s intellectual powers and, thus, manifestations of intelligence. For intelligence resides in the Intellect and the manifestations of the Intellect are the direct manifestations of intelligence. Considerings have the power to bestow the title of ‘intelligent’ on exercises of agency like knitting and riding a bike because the former, but presumably not the latter, are exercises of Intellectual powers, and, therefore, direct manifestations of Intelligence themselves.

An interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM as an instance of $\langle \theta\text{-STATE} \rangle$ makes use of two notions of what it is to be intelligent, one that applies to mental states of the subject and one that applies to their exercises of agency. On the one hand, exercises of agency are intelligent in so far they depend on an operation of considering a proposition. They are truly said to be intelligent in the way explicitly sanctioned in the formulation of INTELLECTUALISM as $\langle \theta\text{-STATE} \rangle$: they are intelligent if and only if the agent is, for example, knitting well and their knitting depends on a state of considering a proposition. On the other hand, there seem to be some elements of the mind that are intelligent in so far they are direct manifestations of the Intellect, *i.e.*, mental states. These states are not said to be intelligent in the explicitly sanctioned way but rather because they are exercises of the subject's intellectual powers. This notion of intelligence applies to, for example, the state of considering propositions.

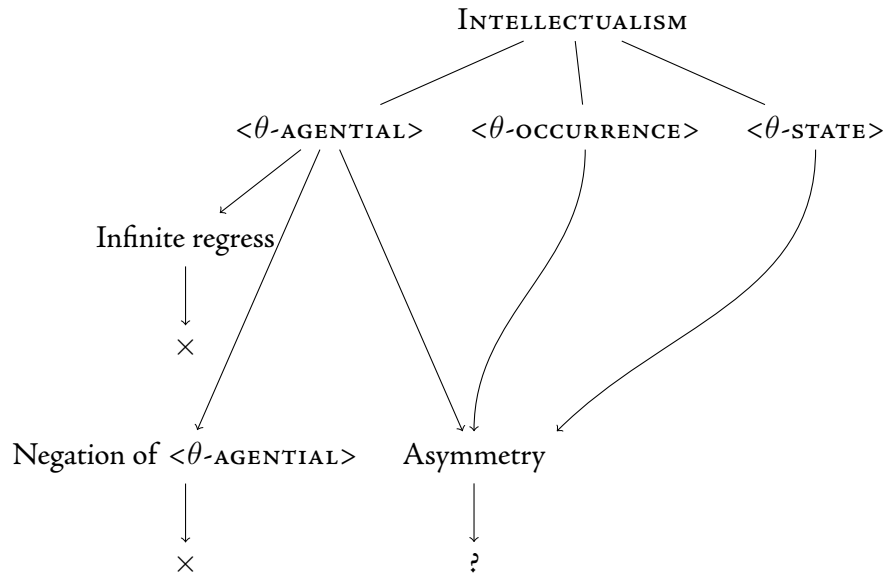
In the case of an interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM as $\langle \theta\text{-STATE} \rangle$ there does not seem to be a threat of a regress, for exercises of agency require mental states, but the latter do not require a further state. An intelligent practical activity of knitting requires an intelligent state of considering, but $\langle \theta\text{-STATE} \rangle$ says nothing about the latter requiring a further mental state. On this interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM, only *agential* occurrences require further occurrences.

Why are practical activities intelligent in virtue of a further element and states intelligent in virtue of them being an instance of thinking? Which feature of mental states explains this? It seems unwarranted to claim that mental states can be themselves manifestations of Intelligence but that exercises of agency can only be intelligent in virtue of another element. As I said in the previous section, whether the distinction between some things that are intelligent in virtue of powers to think and some other things that have a different mode of being intelligent is unwarranted will also pop up in other interpretations of INTELLECTUALISM. All three of the interpretations of INTELLECTUALISM considered, $\langle \theta\text{-AGENTIAL} \rangle$, $\langle \theta\text{-OCCURRENCE} \rangle$, and $\langle \theta\text{-STATE} \rangle$, seem to require a distinction between

modes of being intelligent. In the following section, I will consider the grounds for such a distinction in different interpretations of INTELLECTUALISM.

6.4 The unwarranted asymmetry

Here is a representation of the path that we have covered up until now:



Ryle's critics typically assume that the critique of INTELLECTUALISM consists only in an argument against strategy *S1*), that is, a regress argument against the view that an exercise of agency is intelligent if and only if it requires on an additional intelligent exercise of agency. On the basis of this assumption, they hold that Ryle does not establish the falsehood of INTELLECTUALISM. If Ryle's criticism of INTELLECTUALISM only amounts to a criticism of *S1*), there is no argument against interpretations of INTELLECTUALISM that do not postulate a dependence of intelligent exercises of agency on an additional *action* or *activity* —interpretations of INTELLECTUALISM as an instance of $\langle \theta\text{-STATE} \rangle$ or as an instance of $\langle \theta\text{-OCCURRENCE} \rangle$. As we will see, though, Ryle has more to say against INTELLECTUALISM. To this end, consider Stanley's defence of the claim that Ryle does not have a good argument against INTELLECTUALISM as a whole.

Stanley (2011a) thinks that Ryle's argument against INTELLECTUALISM reduces to a critique of $\langle \theta\text{-AGENTIAL} \rangle$. On his view, the main problem with Ryle's argument is that

there is only an argument against the view that intelligent exercises of agency require further intelligent actions. Since this does not suffice to bring down every other interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM, Ryle's argument leaves more reasonable interpretations untouched. In Stanley's words:

The chief problem with Ryle's argument is the implausibility of its first premise. It is based upon his claim that intellectualism about intelligent action entails that any intelligent action must be preceded by a distinct action of avowing to oneself a maxim or rule. But it is just manifestly absurd that all intelligent actions are preceded by distinct actions of self-avowals of propositions. If anything can count as a datum of phenomenology, it is that we often act intelligently without first avowing to ourselves any maxims or rules. If the intellectualist position has the absurd consequence that this datum of phenomenology is incorrect, then Ryle is in no need of a regress argument to dismiss it. Since the view that an action is intelligent in virtue of being guided by knowledge of maxims or rules does not seem manifestly absurd, one should wonder about Ryle's unsupported claim that it has this consequence. (Stanley 2011a: 14)

Stanley takes the chief problem with Ryle's regress to be the implausibility of the claim that an agential consideration of a proposition is needed for any interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM to be true. Surely, an interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM as an instance of $\langle \theta\text{-AGENTIAL} \rangle$ has such requirement, but there is no reason to believe that interpretations of INTELLECTUALISM as an instance of $\langle \theta\text{-OCCURRENCE} \rangle$ or, more importantly, $\langle \theta\text{-STATE} \rangle$ impose such requirement on intelligent exercises of agency.

Moreover, Stanley claims that such a requirement is evidently in tension with the phenomenology of intelligent action, for, he claims, it does not seem to one that when one is acting intelligently one is engaging in a further agential exercise in virtue of which one's action is guided so as to make it intelligent. "If anything can count as a datum of phenomenology," Stanley says, "it is that we often act intelligently without first avowing to

ourselves any maxims or rules". Stanley seems to restrict the relevant mental exercise of agency to avowals of maxims and rules and further assumes that introspection over one's own intelligent actions is a reasonable way to establish what guides intelligent action. But this is far from obvious, and Ryle has good reasons not to adopt such an argumentative strategy from the purported phenomenology of intelligent action.

Ryle does not think that the purportedly phenomenological datum cited by Stanley could deliver a quick argument against INTELLECTUALISM, for considerings of propositions may be 'very swift' and go 'quite unmarked by the agent' (Ryle 1945: 18), so that the fact that it does not seem to one as if intelligent exercises of agency require considerings, does not establish the absence of considerings. The lack of awareness could be accounted for, say, by the fact that it is a phenomenon too quick for one to notice in the midst of intelligent action and much less available for post hoc recollection. Or perhaps one is only marginally aware of it in a way that is not available in the way that Stanley expects. Stanley just seems to assume that considerings are *agentive avowals*, and expects that this shows up in the phenomenology. But he does not explain why understand considerings in this way and the purported phenomenological data is not enough to argue against the view that intelligent exercises of agency require further actions.

Nevertheless, we can reasonably take Stanley's comments as a complaint about Ryle's lack of clarity with respect to the problem of INTELLECTUALISM. We can agree with Stanley and hold that the falsehood of INTELLECTUALISM does not follow from the regress presented in section [6.3.1.1]. But we must disagree with Stanley's overall assessment of Ryle's argument, for, I believe, Ryle gives us the material for more than an argument against strategy S1). The reasons to reject INTELLECTUALISM altogether have to do with the unwarranted distinction in modes of being intelligent and the problems it ensues.

The core of the Rylean challenge to INTELLECTUALISM, I contend, consists in showing that the asymmetric treatment of theoretical operations and practical elements is unwarranted, and, moreover, problematic. Since this asymmetry is at the basis of 'Two-elements views' of intelligent exercises of agency, we should not adopt 'Two-elements views'. IN-

INTELLECTUALISM, in all three of its interpretations, seems to have one notion of intelligence for theoretical elements like considerings and another notion of intelligence for practical elements like jumpings and knittings. Though the exact version of the challenge depends on whether one interprets INTELLECTUALISM as an instance of $\langle \theta$ -AGENTIAL \rangle , $\langle \theta$ -OCCURRENCE \rangle , or $\langle \theta$ -STATE \rangle , all of these interpretations lead to an unwarranted asymmetry between, on the one hand, things that are direct manifestations of intelligence (theoretical states, non-agential occurrences, or mental actions) and things that are indirect manifestations of intelligence (exercises of agency like knittings and jumpings).

The Intellectualist regards certain mental elements (e.g., agential occurrences, non-agential occurrences, or states of the individual) as direct manifestations of intelligence. In virtue of their being intelligent they have the power to, as it were, confer intelligence to actions and activities. Why regard a theoretical mental element in this way but not extend such courtesy to actions and activities like jumping or knitting? Why is it that jumping cannot be both a direct manifestation of Intelligence and a direct manifestation of agency? In other words, why is there one mode of being intelligent for practical occurrences and another mode of being intelligent for theoretical elements? Why is it that not only is there a difference between intelligence in the practical domain and intelligence in the theoretical domain, but also that the former depends on the latter? In virtue of what does the gap between practice and theory get bridged? I will argue that there seems to be no good answer to these questions and, so, that we should not accept 'Two-elements views'.

Let us examine the purported reasons for holding that practical elements are intelligent in virtue of an additional element, and try to explain better why the mode of being intelligent of theoretical elements is purportedly different from that of practical elements.

6.4.1 *Mental/bodily distinction*

One might think that the justification for the asymmetric treatment of the notion of intelligence that applies to practical elements like knittings and jumpings and theoretical elements like considerings comes from the fact that the former are bodily and the latter are

mental. The idea is that since there is a difference between the physical and mental realms and these never will come together, we need different notions of what it is for an element of each domain to be intelligent. This seems to be how the purveyor of *THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE* thinks.

According to *THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE*, the way in which practical elements are intelligent is different from the way in which theoretical elements are intelligent because there is a fundamental distinction between the mind and the body — a distinction captured by ontological, epistemological, and semantical commitments of *THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE* (see chapter [5], sections [5.2.2]-[5.2.4]). Practical elements essentially involve the body, for they are movings of the body. On the assumption that there is a fundamental difference between the mental substance and the physical substance such that they also have fundamentally different properties, one might think that bodily affairs cannot have mental properties like being intelligent — at least not in the same way as mental elements. If both practical and theoretical elements are however said to be intelligent, they are not going to be intelligent in the same way. Though they both are said to be ‘intelligent’, the qualification is going to refer to different properties. Moreover, since ‘intelligent’ is primarily a mental property, it belongs properly to the mental substance. If the physical substance is said to have such a property it could only be in reference to the mental substance. To see this better, consider Ryle’s diagnosis of the situation:

Why are people so strongly drawn to believe, in the face of their own daily experience, that the intelligent execution of an operation must embody two processes, one of doing and another of theorising? Part of the answer is that they are wedded to the dogma of the ghost in the machine. Since doing is often an overt muscular affair, it is written off as a merely physical process. On the assumption of the antithesis between ‘physical’ and ‘mental’, it follows that muscular doing cannot itself be a mental operation. To earn the title ‘skilful’, ‘cunning’, or ‘humorous’, it must, therefore, get it by transfer from another

counterpart act occurring not ‘in the machine’ but ‘in the ghost’; for ‘skilful’, ‘cunning’ and ‘humorous’ are certainly mental predicates. (Ryle 1949: 21)

According to Ryle, the purveyor of *THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE* sharply distinguishes a mental substance from a physical substance, placing practice within the body and theory within the mind. Since practical elements are ‘merely physical’, their mode of being intelligent is parasitic on the mode of being intelligent of theoretical *mental* elements. So, for the purveyor of *THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE*, intelligence in the practical domain is a step-child of intelligence in the theoretical domain —the former, *qua* bodily, can only be said to have mental features like intelligence in a way that depends on the features of the latter.

The assumption that the practical can only be said to have certain features we associated with the mind in a derivative way is by no means exclusive of *THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE*. It seems possible to reject the main tenets of the doctrine without abandoning the claim that practical elements *qua* bodily can only be said to have mental features like intelligence in a derivative way. That is, it is possible to maintain the asymmetry between the notion of ‘intelligent’ that applies to theoretical elements and the notion that applies to practical elements without embracing all of the commitments of *THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE*. Jerry Fodor, in his criticism of Ryle’s general picture of the mind, provides us with an example.

Fodor holds that what makes practical exercises, *e.g.*, the clown’s clowning, intelligent is that it is the effect of a mental element but he rejects all of the ‘Cartesian’ commitments that would have otherwise come with such a claim according to *THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE*. In Fodor’s words:

‘What makes a clown’s clowning intelligent (witty, clever, ingenious, etc.)?’

The doctrine [Ryle] is disapproving goes as follows: What makes the clowning intelligent is the fact that it is the consequence of certain mental operations (computations, calculations) privy to the clown and causally responsible for the production of the clown’s behavior. Had these operations been other than they were, then (the doctrine claims) either the clowning would have been witless or at least it would have been witty clowning of some different

kind. In short, the clown's clowning was clever in the way that it was because the mental operations upon which the clowning was causally contingent had whatever character they did have. And, though Ryle doesn't say so, it is presumably implied by this doctrine that a psychologist interested in explaining the success of the clown's performance would ipso facto be in the business of saying what those operations were and how, precisely, they were related to the overt pratfalls that the crowd saw. ... [The] psychologist might accept the sorts of theories that Ryle doesn't like without wanting to commit himself to the full implications of what Ryle calls 'Cartesianism.' (Fodor 1975: 3)

According to Fodor, what makes an exercise of agency intelligent is the fact that it is the consequence of certain mental elements. But this does not mean that he accepts the more problematic features of *THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE* — features like, for example, the claim that mind and body are fundamentally different kinds of substances, or that the mind is fundamentally unknowable from a third person perspective. From Fodor's point of view, 'canonical psychological explanations of behaviour' always explain behaviour in terms of mental states/occurrences.

Behavior is organized, but the organization of behavior is merely derivative; the structure of behavior stands to mental structure as an effect stands to its cause. So much is orthodox mentalist doctrine and will be assumed throughout the discussion on which we're now embarked: Canonical psychological explanations account for the organization of behavior by appealing to principles which, they allege, explicate the structure of the mind. (Fodor 1983: 2)

For Fodor, there is no discussion about the claim that the organisation of behaviour derives from the organisation of mental structure. In the terms of our current discussion: there is intelligence in action in so far there is intelligence in the mental structure: behaviour merits the title of 'intelligent' in so far there is some mental state/occurrence behind it.

According to Fodor, there seems to be no real discussion about this; the debate is about the kind of structure. On his view, there is no doubt that ‘mental structure’, whatever it might be, explains why the clowning of the clown is intelligent; the debate is about what precisely such mental structure is.

The idea that there is agreement about whether mental structure explaining behaviour is echoed by Stanley in a quote we examined in chapter. [3]:

If Derek is a skilled fielder of fly balls, then he knows how to field a fly ball; if Michael is a skilled swimmer, then he knows how to swim. That someone skilled at an activity knows how to do that activity is as good a candidate as any to be a conceptual truth. *It is therefore no surprise that everyone who discusses skilled action, from Ryle forwards, agrees that skilled action requires knowledge how. The debate has been about the nature of knowledge how.* I have argued that skilled action is action guided by knowledge how, and that knowing how to do something amounts to knowing a fact. Skilled action is action guided by knowledge of facts. (Stanley 2011a: 175, *emphasis added*)

According to the Intellectualist there is no discussion about the claim that intelligence in behaviour derives from intelligence in the mental. In other words, there seems to be agreement on the fact that what makes behaviour intelligent is some mental state/occurrence ; the issue in debate is the account of the structure the mind has. The purveyor of THE OFFICIAL DOCTRINE, Fodor, and Stanley (apparently following Fodor) seem to regard behaviour as the mere movements of a subject’s body. So we might say that, from their perspective, if there is a sense in which behaviour is intelligent, it is intelligent in virtue of a mental element that guides something that could exist independently of such guidance. They take the question about what makes actions and activities intelligent to be the question about what pilots movements of a subject’s body because the practical, allegedly, lacks such properties —for it could be as it is independently of its relation to the agent. But this is not an innocent way of taking the question.

The question we have been examining is ‘what makes exercises of agency intelligent?’ and it is not clear that the transition to the question ‘what makes bodily movements intelligent?’ is a straightforward reformulation. To make such reformulation we need to equate movements of the body with exercises of agency. Why think that they are the same? Even if there is a sense in which bodily movements may be identified with exercises of agency, we need to be extra careful with a straightforward identification. Hornsby (1980), for instance, proposes a distinction between transitive and intransitive movements, where only the former can properly be the answer to the question about what the subject did. Sandis (2012) further distinguishes between mere bodily movements, the occurrence of the agent moving their body, and what the agent has done. The term ‘behaviour’, Sandis says, can be used in any of these three different ways, where the second and the third —but not the first— might an exercise of agency. It seems then that

It is possible for INTELLECTUALISM to accept that there are reasons to distinguish between bodily movements and exercises of agency without this entailing a problem for their view. They might claim that precisely the mental precursors they postulate are what accounts for such difference. On their view, the reason why not all bodily movements are exercises of agency is that only some of these are appropriately related to mental elements as stated by $\langle \theta\text{-AGENTIAL} \rangle$, $\langle \theta\text{-OCCURRENCE} \rangle$, and $\langle \theta\text{-STATE} \rangle$. Even though there are some differences between exercises of agency and bodily movements, the Intellectualist might claim, the difference is to be explained by precisely the kind of elements that they postulate so that the question about what makes exercises of agency intelligent is precisely that what makes bodily movements intelligent.

I wish to sidestep this discussion. Though it might be that the Intellectualist manages to explain why some bodily movements are exercises of agency in terms of antecedent mental elements, it is important to see that the question about the intelligent character of exercises of agency does not reduce to this. The Intellectualist seems to assume that mental elements have some kind of special preferential standing over exercises of agency like knittings and jumpings. This is what we have seen in the assumption, in Fodor’s words, that the

structure of behaviour is due to the structure of the mind. But instead of looking into their account of bodily agency, where the Intellectualist might have a response, I wish to look what Ryle calls internal doings, that is, exercises of agency that do not seem to be outer like jumpings and knittings. The question I will consider is the following. Internal doings are mental exercises of agency, according to the Intellectualist, qua exercises of agency, they require a further mental element for them to merit the title of 'intelligent'. Why cannot the notion of 'intelligent' that applies to considerings, one that does not require further mediation, apply to mental exercises of agency?

6.4.2 *Internal/external distinction*

In the Presidential Address, Ryle claims that his opponent seems to think that there is some contradiction contained in the idea of internal doings. Intuitively, internal doings are exercises of agency like singing in one's head, remembering the layout of your family house, and imagining a hovering teapot. In contrast, external doings are exercises of agency like jumping and knitting a jumper. Looking at what INTELLECTUALISM would say about intelligent so-called internal doings will help us see why their distinction in modes of being intelligent is unwarranted. Let us first characterise internal doings.

We could characterise internal doings as exercises of agency that are not publicly perceivable. For example, my colleague's singing is not an internal doing, since it is a publicly perceivable exercise of agency. Given the satisfaction of appropriate perceptual conditions, a third person could perceive their singing. So, if a colleague is loudly singing in the next door office, I do not have my hearing impaired, and there are no other drowning sounds (like the hammering from the offices below), I can directly perceive my colleague's singing. Their singing is an overt doing. In contrast, internal doings are not publicly perceivable. For example, my colleague's singing *in their head* is not, on Ryle's view, publicly perceivable, for there are no possible perceptual conditions that, were they satisfied, I could hear their internal singing. So, my colleague could be singing in their head in perfect lighting and in complete silence, and I would not perceive their action.

The problem with the above characterisation of internal doings is that if Physicalism is true, it might be possible to perceive internal elements. A fortiori, it might be possible to perceive occurrences which intuitively seem to belong within the class of internal doings like imaginings. Let me explain. Suppose that my colleague is singing in their heads while in a machine that reads their neural activity and translates it into images. If some version of Physicalism is true it *might* be possible, thanks to a machine, to see their singing in their head, in so far the images I see the activation of neurones that are or constitute their imagining. By seeing the images tracking, in some way or another, how my colleague's singing, one might come to see their internal occurrences. The machine might let us see her internal doings in a way not unlike the way telescopes let us see galaxies and microscopes let us see electrons. Assuming that (some version of) Physicalism is true, I have the right kind of tool in the right conditions, and I am not visually impaired, I might come to see my colleague's singing in her head by looking at an image in a projector. Thus, if we were to adopt this characterisation, given the appropriate tools and conditions, any doing could be observable and no doing would be ever internal.

If Physicalism is not true, the definition of internal doings in terms of observability might work, for no machine of the kind envisaged could be possible. But if Physicalism is true, whether the definition in terms of observability works shall depend on the characterisation of observability. I want to sidestep issues about Physicalism and observability, and instead use O'Shaughnessy's characterisation of items of the 'inner world' in order to characterise 'internal doing'.

As a way of characterising what he means by an item of the inner world, O'Shaughnessy says:

An item x is located in the inner world if (i) x is psychological and (ii) it is not the case that there exists some bodily non-psychological item y which is such that it is a priori given that y is a part of x . On this test pains and thoughts and the volition as traditionally conceived all turn out to be, while kickings

and talkings prove not to be, situated in the inner world. (O'Shaughnessy 2008: 364)

Though O'Shaughnessy characterises internal elements in terms of two features, we may just focus on the second feature. The first feature has to do with a distinction between mental and psychological items, which is important for O'Shaughnessy's purposes but not so much for the purposes of distinguishing internal doings from overt doings.

I want to focus on the second feature and propose the following characterisation of internal doings. Internal doings are such that *a priori* reflection on them does not reveal a bodily part as constituting the doing. Even if it is an *a posteriori* truth that an internal doing is at least partly constituted by a specific body part or parts, internal doings are those exercises of agency for which armchair reflection does not reveal that the body part or parts belonging to the action or activity. So, consider the kind of agential exercise that takes place when Fatima is imagining a teapot floating around the house, hovering in between the kitchen and the coffee table in the front room. Is this an internal doing? It seems so, for armchair reflection on the imagining does not reveal that it involves a specific modification or state of her body, say the activation of such and such neurones. Even if it is true that specific modifications or states of Fatima's body constitute her imagining the teapot, they do not appear to involve them to armchair reflection. The imagining could be performed, in principle and from the point of view of armchair reflection, by a hypothetical disembodied agent. Compare internal doings with external doings. When Fatima pours herself some tea, reflection on her doing reveals that she used some extremity or other in order to lift the teapot. It could not be performed, not even in principle, by a disembodied agent for it involves, at least, bodily movements of lifting the teapot.³

Armed with this indication about internal doings, we can ask the following question. What makes them intelligent? Are they intelligent in virtue of an additional element or are they intelligent in virtue of their being an exercise of the subject's powers?

³ The characterisation of internal doings as doings for which armchair reflection does not reveal a bodily part being involved is not a characterisation of the essence internal doings. It is just meant to be a way of *telling* whether a specific exercise of agency is internal or not.

Internal doings present a difficult case for accounts that make use of two notions of intelligence, for, on the one hand, an internal doing is practical and so belongs to the kind of things of which it is said to be intelligent in virtue of a further element, but, on the other hand, it is internal and could, in principle, be conceived to be performed by a disembodied agent. Qua practical, an internal doing is dependent on the elements of the mind for it to be intelligent. Qua internal, an internal doing seem to be on the same standing as operations of considering a proposition —at least with respect to whether it seems to require a specific body part or not— and thus be intelligent in virtue of it being an instance of the subject's powers.

Consider a particular example of an internal doing. Suppose that Jose is deciding whether he is going to sign up for an apprenticeship, where this deciding is carried out in an internal monologue. If Jose's deciding is intelligent it is because, according to INTELLECTUALISM, of a further mental element. Qua practical, Jose's deciding owes its being intelligent to another mental element. But now his decision can be taken to be that in virtue of which a bodily movement, say the signing of a contract, is intelligent. The decision can be, qua practical, that upon which intelligence is conferred, but, qua internal, the kind of thing that further confers intelligence to bodily movements. Does this deciding have a dual life, one qua practical and another qua mental?

Whether an internal doing, qua practical, is intelligent depends on a further element, that is, a state, a non-agential occurrence, or an action —depending on the interpretation of INTELLECTUALISM adopted. Qua practical, deciding seems apt to receive the same treatment as, say, an instance of jumping or knitting and thus whether it is intelligent will depend on a further intelligent element. But jumpings and knittings require, according to INTELLECTUALISM, of a further element because they themselves are not essentially connected in the relevant way to the mind. As Fodor puts it: behaviour, purportedly, has structure only in so far it is appropriately related to the structure of the mind. But a decision can also play the role of conferring intelligence onto a further practical element, that is, it could play the role of a theoretical element.

Internal doings can both play the role of being the kind of things whose mode of being intelligent is derived from a further element and the role of being the kind of things whose mode of being intelligent is directly upon its shoulders and can thus transfer it to further elements. If the answer to the question ‘what makes internal doings intelligent?’ appeals to a further element, we may then ask how come deciding could in turn confer the title to bodily movements if the title they had been, as it were, borrowed. If the answer to the question does not appeal to a further element, we may ask for the reasons why, despite being agential, internal doings do not require a further element.

That internal doings could play the role of intelligence conferring and at the same be intelligent only derivatively helps us see that the divide between modes of being intelligent is arbitrary for the internal and for the bodily is arbitrary. At least *some* practical elements can play the role of theoretical elements and, thus, also be intelligent in the way theoretical elements are said to be intelligent. If it is possible for internal doings to be directly intelligent, does this mean that it is possible for overt doings? If INTELLECTUALISM claims that internal doings do not require further elements, how come other practical elements could not be intelligent in this way? That is, if INTELLECTUALISM claims that internal doings require further elements, how come is this requirement no applicable to other activities and actions? That something is practical is no reason to hold that it merits the title of ‘intelligent’ only thanks to a further, independently specified element. Intelligent internal doings seem to belong to the class of elements to which considerings belong—they seem to belong to the kind of things that do not require a elements like those postulated by $\langle\theta$ -AGENTIAL \rangle , $\langle\theta$ -OCCURRENCE \rangle , and $\langle\theta$ -STATE \rangle . Why can no other exercise of agency be like an internal deciding that is intelligent in virtue of additional mental elements? The reasons for this are not forthcoming. In the following section, I will explain why it not only there is no reason provided but that there might not even be a good reason to be looking for it.

6.5 Bridging the gap

6.5.1 *The challenge*

Suppose that there is some non-arbitrary way of marking of a distinction between those elements of mind that require no mediation for them to merit the title of ‘intelligent’ and those that require the mediation of some other element of mind. According to INTELLECTUALISM, the mode of being intelligent of practical elements derives from the mode of being intelligent of some theoretical element. How does this derivation take place? What kind of relation is there between the practical and the theoretical such that this mediation is possible? If one says that an intelligent exercise of agency is the result of an agent’s theoretical element, is there room for a philosophical account of the relation in virtue of which theory grants intelligence to practice? What kind of relation is this?

Consider the following situations α , β and γ , where Luis José dances in the way ϕ . In situation α , Luis José is not a dancer and his dance moves are only the result of whimsey and loss of inhibitions (probably the result liquid courage). In situation β , Luis José has the relevant theoretical element but his dance moves are only the result of whimsey and loss of inhibitions; the theoretical element is present but not put into action. In situation γ , the theoretical element and the actions combine in the appropriate way such that the former confers intelligence to the latter despite whimsey and the loss of inhibitions typical of alcohol. In α , there is no intelligent ϕ ing because the action does not combine with the relevant piece of theory, since there is no relevant theoretical state/occurrence. In γ , ϕ -ing combines in the right way with a particular piece of theory and there is an intelligent exercise of agency. What should we say about β ? Is Luis José dancing intelligently in β ? This situation is similar to α in so far the action is the product of whimsey and loss of inhibitions, and thus there seem to be reasons to think that it might not be an instance of intelligent agency, but it is similar to γ in so far Luis José has the theoretical element, and thus there seem to be reasons to think that it is an instance of intelligent agency dancing. What is happening in β ?

In order to answer the question about what goes on in situation β , one needs to decide whether more than just the presence of the relevant theoretical element is necessary for an account of what it is to exercise agency intelligently. If one thinks that just the mere presence of the relevant theoretical element is enough for one to perform intelligently, then β is like γ , and in both cases there is an intelligent exercise of agency. This, however, seems unlikely. Think about common the tip-of-the-tongue phenomenon where one knows a word but cannot bring oneself to use it. Likewise, the relevant theoretical element might be present and Luis José cannot bring himself to use it. So it seems that the relevant theoretical element might be present and yet not be in a position to act intelligently. What else is necessary?

One possible answer might be that for one to be in a position to perform intelligently one needs to have one's theoretical element 'in mind' and this amounts to, as it were, activating the theoretical element. A theoretical element is only sufficient if the element is, the suggestion goes, brought to mind so that it can be brought into action. According to Stanley (2011a: 15), bringing to mind is most reasonably understood as the triggering of a representation. For Stanley, there are only two ways in which one could understand the requirement of 'bringing to mind': either as a further agential element or as the sub-personal triggering of representation. Since the former has already been discarded for, purportedly, being against the phenomenology of intelligent action, the only reasonable option is to hold that what makes an exercise intelligent is the relevant theoretical element in addition to a triggering of the corresponding representation.

Such a response only brings down the problem to a further level: the question turns out to be whether we could build an analogous set of situations α' , β' and γ' that also include the triggering of representation and asks how to understand a case where the theoretical element and the relevant triggering are present, but there is no intelligent exercise of agency. In situation α' , Luis José is not a dancer and his dance moves are only the result of whimsey and loss of inhibitions (probably the result liquid courage). In situation β' , Luis José triggers the relevant theoretical element but not towards action: his dance moves are only

the result of whimsey and loss of inhibitions; the theoretical element is present, put into action but not in the right way. In situation γ' , the theoretical element is triggered in the right way such that the theoretical element confers intelligence to the practical element despite whimsey and the loss of inhibitions typical of alcohol. In α' , there is no intelligent ϕ -ing because the action does not combine with the relevant piece of theory, since there is no relevant theoretical state/occurrence. In γ' , ϕ -ing combines in the right way with a particular piece of theory triggered and there is an intelligent exercise of agency. What should we say about β' ? Is Luis José dancing intelligently in β' ? This situation is similar to α' in so far the action is the product of whimsey and loss of inhibitions, and thus there seem to be reasons to think that it might not be an instance of intelligent agency, but it is similar to γ in so the relevant theoretical element is triggered, and thus there seem to be reasons to think that it is an instance of intelligent agency dancing. What is happening in β' ? It seems that appealing to the triggering of representations does not help answer the challenge.

The challenge that 'Two-elements views' must face is one inherent to their view in so far they attempt to explain intelligent exercises of agency in terms of an independently identified element. They need to explain how is it that the element manages to guide. The challenge is to explain what else, in addition to the presense of the relevant element, is needed for there to be such guidance. The attempt to explain what else is needed in terms of the triggering of the relevant representation does not help, for the then the question can be raised at this level. It seems then that 'Two-elements views' always fall prey of this kind of challenge.

6.5.2 *A possible response*

Stanley tries to respond to the challenge by return it back to his opponent. His response is that since the triggering of a representation is not something that only the Intellectualist would have to appeal to, if there is a question about how theoretical elements together with the triggering of the relevant representation are enough for intelligent actions and activities,

then there is also a question for this opponent (Stanley 2011a: 15). If representations ought to be triggered in the right way for propositional states to guide exercises of agency, then, Stanley claims, the triggering of representations is also needed for dispositional states to guide exercises of agency.

To the extent that Stanley takes his opponent to hold that what makes exercises of agency intelligent is a further non-theoretical element (a non-propositional state of know-how, in his terms), he seems to be right. If there is a question about how an additional theoretical element and the triggering of the corresponding representation come together to bestow intelligence upon an exercise of agency, there is also a question about how an additional *non-theoretical* element and the triggering of the corresponding representation come together to bestow intelligence upon an exercise of agency. Saying that an element of mind is responsible for the intelligent character of an exercise of agency by guiding it invites a question about how such guidance happens. What guarantees such link between them? If this were the best reading of Ryle, it seems that Stanley would be right to think that both the Intellectualist and his opponent have to face this challenge.

As I have already remarked in chapter [3], Stanley misrepresents Ryle's position. In particular, he is wrong in thinking that Ryle falls prey of this problem. According to Stanley, Ryle's main aim in the second chapter of *The Concept of Mind* is "to establish that whether or not an action has a property in the family of intelligence properties is constituted by the exercise of dispositional states of the speaker" (Stanley 2011a: 11). And the main argument for this view, Stanley claims, goes through an argument against the view that "an action counts as having such a property, for example skill or cunning, in virtue of being guided by propositional knowledge, say of maxims or rules" (Stanley 2011a: 12). Already in this characterisation of the aim and strategy, Stanley has adopted a tendentious reading of Ryle. Let's slowly work our way through some of the details of Stanley's reading.

Stanley holds that for Ryle whether an exercise of agency is intelligent "*is constituted by the exercise of dispositional states of the speaker*" (Stanley 2011a: 11). This, presumably, means that Ryle purports to establish the view that the application of intelligence predicates

to exercises of agency is to be explained in terms of the exercise of dispositional states of the speaker.⁴

But Ryle does not speak of a dispositional state, not in the chapter on know-how, not in the chapter on dispositions. The expression ‘dispositional state’ is never used in *The Concept of Mind*. Ryle does, however, talk about dispositional statements and dispositional properties, and one might think that it is reasonable to change move from talk about dispositional statements and properties to talk about dispositional states. This, though, seems to go against Ryle’s explicit remarks about how to understand his talk of dispositions. In the chapter on know-how, Ryle says that “To possess a dispositional property is not to be in a particular state, or to undergo a particular change; it is to be bound or liable to be in a particular state, or to undergo a particular change, when a particular condition is realised.”(Ryle 1949: 31). And in the chapter on dispositions and occurrences, Ryle says that “Dispositional statements are neither reports of observed or observable states of affairs, nor yet reports of unobserved or unobservable states of affairs. They narrate no incidents.” (Ryle 1949: 108) Taking Ryle to be talking about dispositional states seems to be in tension with his own metaphysics of dispositional statements and properties.

I don’t think that Stanley is simply ignoring Ryle’s explicit recommendations. Presumably, the changes introduced are a result of wanting to consider Ryle’s discussion of intelligent exercises of agency independently of the metaphysical picture endorsed in *The Concept of Mind*. Stanley, I think, is aware that he is not faithful to Ryle’s formulations and intentionally attributes an extraneous metaphysics. Stanley sees this as a way of “rescuing” Ryle’s view on intelligent actions and activities from the wreckage of his metaphysical picture of the mind. The following quote seems to suggest as much:

Ryle is operating with a metaphysical picture of knowing how according to which one’s know how just is constituted by the fact that when one is so situated, one acts thus. On Ryle’s picture of action, intentional actions are not

⁴ Stanley says that “to establish whether [there is an intelligent action] is constituted” by the exercise of dispositional states ...”. I am unsure about how to understand this but I think it means that the application of intelligence-predicates to actions *depends* on the exercise of dispositional states.

the effects of inner categorical causes. Thus, his picture of knowing how coheres with his conception of intentional action. Ryle's metaphysical picture is widely regarded as implausible, since it involves ungrounded dispositions – that is, the possession of dispositions without any categorical basis. But that is not the crucial point. The point is rather that if this picture is plausible for knowing how, then, given the phenomenology of action, it is no less plausible for knowing that. (Stanley 2011a: 17)

Stanley thinks that Ryle's metaphysics is not crucial in the present discussion. Stanley's way of "rescuing" Ryle, on the assumption that his metaphysical picture is something he ought to be saved from and can be nicely excised out, is to read him as explaining intelligent actions and activities in terms of additional elements—in terms of independently specified dispositional states. Stanley's point is that whatever Ryle would or should say about what the explanation of intelligent action could also be said about the Intellectualist explanation of intelligent action. If 'know-how', in the way Ryle construes it, can guide exercises of agency in the correct way, there is no reason, Stanley believes, for thinking that such an account would not work for 'know-that'.

I strongly disagree with Stanley's way of reading Ryle. As I have presented the argument against INTELLECTUALISM, there is a question about how the gap between theory and practice is bridged that can be raised provided the account appeals to certain kind of element, namely, independently specified elements. But, as I have shown, not all accounts of intelligent action explain it in these terms.

It seems to me that Stanley thinks that Ryle's account of intelligent exercises of agency is most favourably understood in terms of non-propositional dispositional states that are causally related in the appropriate way to exercises of agency. I think he takes this reading as a way of rejecting the purportedly defective metaphysics of mind adopted by Ryle. Let me explain.

Stanley believes that Ryle's metaphysics of mind entails 'ungrounded dispositions', which he in turn finds problematic. According to Stanley dispositions that have no categorical

base are problematic, for all dispositions always have to be grounded — otherwise, he says, we explain nothing. Though this is by far not obvious, let us assume that every dispositional property has to be grounded on some categorical property. Nevertheless, it does not follow that a metaphysics of the mind in terms of powers is problematic. This would only follow if a dispositional metaphysics of mind would entail an overall dispositional metaphysics, that is, if the view also entailed that all properties are dispositional. But it is possible for mental dispositional properties to have a non-mental categorical ground. One can have a dispositional metaphysics of mind without accepting an overall dispositional metaphysics. In other words, mental properties may be dispositional without this entailing that all properties are dispositional. There seems to be no problem in postulating *mental* dispositional properties that are not grounded on *mental* categorical properties, so long that such dispositional properties are grounded on *non-mental* categorical properties.

It might be possible to present a picture of the mind such that all mental properties are dispositional properties with non-mental categorical grounds.⁵ But it is not necessary to accept such a general view of the mind: we might not want to account for all of the mind in terms of dispositional properties. However, it seems possible to account for the intelligent character of exercises of agency in terms of dispositions without mental categorical ground. How could we characterise such dispositions then? I will suggest an alternative in the following chapter.

6.6 Conclusion

INTELLECTUALISM holds that practical elements are intelligent in virtue of an additional, theoretical element. The Intellectualist's attempts to explain why the mode of being intelligent of theoretical elements is purportedly different from that of practical elements seems ill-founded. They seem to have no good reason for making such a distinction and even when some kind of asymmetry is accepted, there is a question about how it is that theor-

⁵ Alternatively, one might attempt to resist Stanley's purported problem with Ryle's in a different way. Julia Tanney (2009), for instance, has argued that Ryle is not a philosophical behaviourist, at least in the traditional understanding of the view.

etical elements guide practical elements. Intellectualists struggle to mark a sharp divide and then struggle to connect them. Why then adopt ‘Two-elements views’ and attempt to make such divide?

One possible reason to hold on to ‘Two-elements views’ would be that such problem is inherent to any view that tries to explain the intelligent character of exercises of agency. According to the argument presented in this chapter, the problem rises because of an attempt to characterise what makes exercises of agency intelligent that appeals to independently specified elements will need to bridge the gap between them. For any independently specified element purportedly guiding exercises of agency it seems to be needed a further specification of what is needed. Stanley seems to believe that there is no special problem for INTELLECTUALISM; it is a problem for any kind of view.

$\langle \theta\text{-AGENTIAL} \rangle$, $\langle \theta\text{-OCCURRENCE} \rangle$, and $\langle \theta\text{-STATE} \rangle$ all make the instance of thinking in virtue of which exercises of agency are intelligent something different from the exercise of agency itself. But I believe that we can gain some insight into intelligent actions and activities by considering an account in terms of the subject’s powers to think and act as manifested in the same element. Exercises of agency are intelligent because they themselves are also exercises of our powers to think, such that what explains why they are intelligent is not an independently specified element. We should adopt a view that does not make such a sharp divide, that is we should adopt what I have called ‘No additional elements views’.

7 | Abilities to intelligently ϕ

7.1 Introduction

In chapter [3], I presented two ranges of views based on the idea that intelligent actions and activities require thinking in the way sanctioned by what I have called Ryle's popular idiom. On the one hand, 'Two-elements views' hold that what explains intelligence in actions and activities is an independently specified element of thinking, a state/action/non-agential occurrence of considering a proposition. On the other hand, 'No additional elements views' hold that what explains intelligence in exercises of agency is that the actions and activities are instances of abilities. To ϕ intelligently is to ϕ in a way that manifests an ability, where having this ability can be taken to consist either in the truth of some hypotheticals that put the exercise of agency in context, or that the exercises of agency themselves are the exercises of the subject's power to act intelligently.

In this chapter I propose an account of intelligent actions and activities. This view belongs among 'No additional elements views', for it is a view that whether an action or activity is intelligent is explained by whether it is an exercise of the subject's powers to act intelligently. It accommodates the Rylean idiom in a way that respects the spirit of Ryle's own proposal—for it explains what it is to be intelligent in terms of an ability—but goes against the strict letter of the Rylean metaphysics of abilities—for it is not tied to a metaphysics of dispositions understood in terms of hypotheticals.

According to the view I propose, Fatima's knitting is intelligent for it is, at the same time, an instance of her thinking and instance of her agential powers; it is because Fatima's knitting is both her thinking and her acting that her knitting is intelligent. In section [7.2],

I give an initial characterisation of the view by presenting the idea that being an exercise of ability to ϕ explains intelligent ϕ -ing. In section [7.2.1] I present the version of $\langle \delta$ -DISPOSITIONS \rangle . I favour and then, in section [7.2.2], I characterise the corresponding account of the state of know-how. In order to develop the view, I will consider the purported counter-examples that have been raised in the recent literature against a view of this kind. In section [7.3], I present the general idea behind the way I will deal with the challenge raised from the purported counter-examples. In section [7.3.1], I respond to examples of cases where there purportedly is knowledge but no ability, and in section [7.3.2], I respond to examples of cases where there purportedly is ability but no knowledge. In section [7.3.3], I round up with some remarks about abilities that follow from the discussion of the counter-examples and how this understanding of abilities let us think of intelligent actions and abilities as manifestations both of our agential powers as well as our powers to think.

7.2 The suggested view

7.2.1 *Intelligent exercises of agency as instances of thinking*

I wish to propose a the version of $\langle \delta$ -DISPOSITIONS \rangle . In chapter [3], I characterised $\langle \delta$ -DISPOSITIONS \rangle in the following way:

$\langle \delta$ -DISPOSITIONS \rangle An instance of ϕ -ing exhibits intelligence if and only if the agent is ϕ -ing well and ϕ -ing is the manifestation of a disposition δ , where the agent would not ϕ intelligently if their ϕ -ing were not a manifestation of δ .

According to the view I wish to propose, δ , the disposition that is manifested in intelligently ϕ -ing, is an ability to ϕ such that its exercise in ϕ -ing is an instance of thinking and agency. Ryle's idiom is respected in so far it is true that intelligent exercises are intelligent because of thinking in so far that intelligent exercises are intelligent because they themselves are instances of thinking. What explains the intelligence of practical activities like riding a bike, knitting a jumper or making a clever decision is, according to this view,

that such occurrences, in addition to being exercises of agency, are also exercises of the subject's powers to think. The idea is to advance our understanding of the nature of intelligent actions and activities by taking them to be instances, not merely the result of, of the phenomenon of thinking.

How come actions and activities are intelligent in virtue of their being instances of thinking? What is the reason for holding that their being instances of thinking explains their being intelligent? Following the lead of Ryle's idiom, we have that intelligent exercises of agency depend on 'thinking', for whether an action or an activity is intelligent depends on whether the agent is thinking what they are doing while they are doing it, and thinking what they are doing in such a manner that they would not do the action or activity so well if they were not thinking what they are doing. Intelligent exercises of agency depend on thinking, not because they depend on an additional independently specified instance of thinking, but because they depend on their being instances of thinking themselves. The presence of just any kind 'thinking' is not enough for intelligent ϕ -ing. (Remember the case of the CEO of a computer software who makes a silly decision: they decide, they think but they do not decide intelligently.) The right kind of thinking is needed and the right kind, the suggestion goes, is thinking that happens when the very same exercises of agency is itself an instance of thinking.

I believe this view can be found in some passages of Ryle, where he insists that intelligently acting is not a matter of two elements. Here is one instance of this insistence.

But when a person talks sense aloud, ties knots, feints or sculpts, the actions which we witness are themselves the things which he is intelligently doing, though the concepts in terms of which the physicist or physiologist would describe his actions do not exhaust those which would be used by his pupils or his teachers in appraising their logic, style or technique. He is bodily active and he is mentally active, but he is not being synchronously active in two different 'places', or with two different 'engines'. There is the one activity. (Ryle 1945: 38)

When a person acts intelligently —e.g., in talking, tying, feinting or sculpting— the person is bodily and mentally ‘active’. When Ryle says that “There is one activity” I take this to mean that what we witness, presumably the exercise of agency, is also the way in which the mind is being active. The very instance of talking is itself the way in which the person is thinking.

One significant advantage of this view is that it does not fall prey of the problem identified in chapter [6]. An interpretation of $\langle \delta\text{-DISPOSITIONS} \rangle$ does not offer an explanation of intelligent ϕ -ing in terms of an element θ independently characterised, so there is no question about bridging the gap between them. There is no question about the relation between the agential occurrence and the element of thinking in virtue of which the agential occurrence is intelligent because they are essentially linked: the instance of θ and the instance of ϕ -ing are the very same. For an exercise of agency to depend on thinking to be intelligent is not for an instance of thinking to guide an exercise of agency but for agential and thinking powers to be exercised by the same episode.

7.2.2 *The state of know-how*

Where does an account of the state of know-how in terms of ability fall in the kind of explanation of intelligent exercises of agency I wish to propose? In principle, an account of know-how in terms of abilities might either belong to ‘Two-elements views’ or ‘No additional elements views’. It seems to be close to ‘No additional elements views’ —for it might explain intelligent exercises of agency in terms of ability— but it also seems close to ‘Two-elements views’ —for it might explain intelligent exercises of agency in terms of an additional *state* of know-how. On which side it falls depends on how the ability is specified. If the ability is specified independently of the relevant ϕ , an account of know-how in terms of ability belongs with ‘Two-elements views’; if the ability is not independently specified it belongs with ‘No additional elements views’. Since have reasons not to adopt the range of ‘Two-elements views’, as presented in chapter [6], let me suggest one way in which to understand a view of know-how as ability along the lines of ‘No additional elements views’.

The state of knowing how to ϕ is the state a subject is in when they have a specific ability to ϕ such that their ϕ -ing is an instance of thinking as well. So, Fatima knows how to knit, if and only if she has a specific ability to knit, namely, an ability to knit where her knitting is also the manifestation of her powers to think. What makes Fatima knitting intelligent is her ability to knitt intelligently, where this is her ability to knit and her ability to think exercised in the very same instance of knitting. The explanation is given in terms of the relevant ability and the agential occurrence, for it is the former being an instance of thinking what explains its being intelligent.

To develop this view further I will examine an argument offered by Bengson and Moffett (2011b), according to which knowing how to ϕ cannot be characterised in terms of ability to ϕ . On their view, explanation of intelligent ϕ -ing can be given in terms of ability, for ability to ϕ is neither necessary nor sufficient for intelligent ϕ -ing, and *a fortiori* no ability of the kind postulated by the view I suggest would be sufficient or necessary for intelligent ϕ -ing.

7.3 The purported counter-examples

In recent literature discussing Ryle and intelligent exercises of agency there have some purported counter-examples to the claim that the state of know-how consists in ability or powers. The examples are situations where it seems reasonable to claim that the subject knows how to ϕ but is not able to ϕ , and situations where it seems reasonable to claim that the subject does not know how to ϕ even though they allegedly are able to ϕ . These examples allegedly show that powers or abilities to ϕ are neither sufficient nor necessary for knowing how to ϕ . But, as we will see, the strength of the challenge comes from an assumption about abilities and their exercises, so a different understanding of abilities can provide an answer to the challenge.

There are two kinds of purported counter-examples to an account of intelligent ϕ -ing in terms of ability to ϕ . One kind of example aims to show that being able to ϕ is not sufficient for intelligent ϕ -ing —these are examples of what I will call able but unknowledgeable

subjects. The other kind of example aims to show that being able to ϕ is not necessary for knowing how to ϕ —these are examples of what I will call unable knowers.

On the basis of the purported counter-examples, Bengson and Moffett (2011b) argue that there is a ‘structural flaw’ in an account of intelligent exercises of agency in terms of ability, for the possibility of unknowledgeable but able subjects suggests that intelligent ϕ -ing requires *more* than just being able to ϕ , but the possibility of unable knowers suggests that intelligent ϕ -ing requires *less* than being able to ϕ . So, Bengson and Moffett claim, the prospects of understanding intelligent exercises of agency in terms of ability are not bright. They believe that there is no way to respond to both challenges, for they each pull in opposing directions. Moving closer to an answer to the challenges presented by one set of examples moves one away from an answer to the challenges presented by the other set.

In order to respond to the challenge presented by the purported counter-examples, I want to emphasise two features of our understanding of abilities: the possibility of different levels of specificity in *talk* about abilities to ϕ , and the possibility of different ways in which one same ability can be exercised. As we will see, responding to the challenge is not a matter of adding further conditions to some a given take on abilities but reflecting on our understanding of abilities. I want to focus on two features.

Consider the first feature:

Different levels of specificity in talk about abilities to ϕ : Since, for any ϕ -ing, it is possible to talk about more than one kind of ability to ϕ , talk about *the* ability to ϕ independently of a particular occasion does not determine a specific ability. We need additional information on the basis of which to identify what kind of ability to ϕ we are talking about.

Talk about the ability to speak Spanish, for example, is, on occasions, talk about an ability that some toddlers, feral children, students, and politicians, but no bonobo, chimpanzee, or ape have. In some contexts, though, we would rather characterise this as the ability to *learn* Spanish. On some other occasions, talk about the ability to speak Spanish is talk about an ability a three-month-old toddler or feral children lack but some politicians and

university students have. One might call this ability, more precisely, the ability to *talk and write* in Spanish. What more generally could be called the ability to speak Spanish could in different contexts be specified further.¹

This is by no means a unique feature of the case. To the extent that there are several things that on given occasions count as ϕ and several ways in which one can bring ϕ -ing about, we can talk about different abilities to ϕ , corresponding to the different ways and different occasions. When dealing with purported counter-examples, then, it is important to make sure that the relevant ability is targeted: it is important to have a clear idea which ability is said to constitute or to be necessary for intelligent exercises of agency.

Consider the second feature:

Different ways of exercising the ability to ϕ : It is possible for two manifestations of the same ability to be, at one level of specificity, of a different kind. So, an instance of ϕ and an instance of ψ might both be manifestations of the same ability, even though at some level of specificity ϕ -ing and ψ -ing are of different kind.

One might think that tying a knot and imagining tying a knot are manifestations of one same ability to tie a knot, even though one of the manifestations is, ostensibly, a mental action (*i.e.*, an internal doing) while the other is a bodily action. Imagining tying a knot and tying a knot are manifestations of the same ability but the way in which they are manifestations of the ability varies: one is the primary manifestation, the manifestation in terms of which the ability is defined, while the other is secondary a manifestation that plays no role in the individuation of the ability.

In the following section, I show how these features of abilities help us respond to the purported counter-examples. If we can make sense of different powers to ϕ and different ways in which powers can be exercised or realised, we can see that it is possible to understand intelligent actions and activities as the exercise of powers to think and act, thus developing an account of intelligent exercises of agency in terms of powers or abilities in

¹ This is an elaboration of an example offered by Aristotle in *De Anima*, Book 2, Part 5.

the way I suggest while at the same time making sense of the cases presented by Bengson and Moffett.

7.3.1 *Able but unknowledgeable subjects*

Here are some of the examples that purportedly challenge the claim that being able to ϕ and ϕ -ing is sufficient for intelligent ϕ -ing. The reasons for thinking that there is no knowledge despite the presence of ability will be clearer in some examples. But in all of them the reasons to attribute ability are stronger than the reasons to attributed knowledge since it seems that ability purportedly depends on facts of the matter that can be independently established before the subject comes into knowledge or in a position to know.

(1) Examples presented by Snowdon (2003)

- a. A man is trapped in a room. He hasn't explored it and does not yet *know how* to get out. But in fact, there is an obvious exit he *can* get out of the room through. It would be weird to say that he knows how to get out of the room, for he has not explored it. However, it would not be weird to say that he can get out of the room, for there is, in fact, an obvious door he can use to get out of the room. (Snowdon 2003: 11)
- b. The smallest member of the Australian gymnastic team certainly *can* squeeze through the window in my kitchen. But they do not know the rough size of the window or its approximate height from the floor, or, in fact, anything about my kitchen, so it would be odd to say that they *know* how to get through the window in my kitchen. There are reasons to believe that they are able to get through, for they are small enough to fit through the small frame, even though they do not know how. (Snowdon 2003: 11)
- c. Nairo goes every day to the gym and works out, so he *can* do fifty consecutive push-ups unlike the rest of his family. Yet it does not seem natural to say that, in virtue of this, he *knows* how to do something that his family does not. Even

though he is able to do fifty consecutive push-ups, it is weird to say that he knows how to do fifty consecutive push-ups. (Snowdon 2003: 11)

- d. One evening Paul sight-reads a musical piece he had not seen or heard before. It seems true to say that he is *able* to do it well in advance of his even trying to sight-read this piece. But it would seem quite incorrect to say that Paul knows how to sight-read that piece before even setting his eyes on the sheet. He has not been acquainted with the piece and has no knowledge of it. In particular, it seems, knowing how to sight-read it. (Snowdon 2003: 11).

(2) Examples presented by Hawley (2003) and Bengson and Moffett (2011b)

- a. Sally has no idea what to do in an avalanche. But when caught in one, she luckily escapes by moving her body as if she were swimming in liquid water. She has no reason to favour such movements but by moving her arms and legs as if she were swimming, she manages to safely escape. Sally, it seems, does not *know how* to escape an avalanche and yet is *able* to escape. (Hawley (2003: 27) and Bengson and Moffett (2011b: 186))
- b. Susy believes she can annoy Joey by smoking. She is mistaken, for in fact it is her tapping the cigarette box before smoking that annoys Joey. So it is true to say that Susy *can* annoy Joey by smoking, for she always taps the cigarettes before smoking, but because of her mistaken belief there are reasons to say that she does not *know how* to annoy Joey. (Hawley (2003: 27))
- c. Shelley sets herself to make a cake from whatever she find in the cupboard. By chance, Sarah had cleared out from the cupboard everything but flour, eggs, sugar, and butter. Surprisingly, the quantities are the ones prescribed for a cake, so Shelley *can* bake a cake from whatever she finds in the cupboard because of Sarah. A certain amount of luck is presumably needed in the making of the cake, but it seems that in Shelley's case it does more than its fair part of the job. It's only by chance that the right ingredients are in the cupboard and only because of this great coincidence that Shelley manages to

bake a cake. Because of the great amount of luck, it is reasonable to think that Susie does not really *know how* to bake a cake and yet she is able to bake the cake. (Hawley 2003: 27)

- (3) Examples presented by Bengson and Moffett (2011b)
- a. Irina is mistaken about how to do a Salchow, for she believes that the correct way is to take off from the front outside and land on the front inside of her skate. But a severe neurological abnormality makes her act in ways that drastically differ from how she takes herself to be acting. So what would otherwise be a confused movement turns out to be, because of her condition, a Salchow. Irina is *able* to do a Salchow, because of her condition, but, because of her mistaken understanding, it is not natural to say that she *knows how* to do it. (Bengson and Moffett 2011b: 128)

Behind these examples is a purportedly intuitive understanding of the conditions of attribution of know-how that claims to be independent of the question about whether know-how is constituted by ability. The judgments about the know-how in these particular cases are allegedly independent of the particular account of what know-how is. On the basis of this, it is argued that there are occasions where it is reasonable to attribute the ability to ϕ but not knowledge-how: a variety of ‘problematic epistemic conditions,’ *i.e.*, conditions where subjects either lack the relevant epistemic take on the matter or have a mistaken one.

Let’s consider an example where the subject lacks the relevant epistemic take: the case of a man, who hasn’t explored a room and misses the (obvious) exit —example (1-a). In this example, the subject is in no particular epistemic position with respect to the room. Before exploring the room, there seems to be no reason to think that the man knows anything relevant about it or how to get out of it, *i.e.*, no reason to think that he knows how to exit the room. But since there is, in fact, an obvious exit, there is a way in which the man *can* exit the room. The exit exists independently of the man having found it, and so there is a moment before the man explores the room where it seems we can attribute some ability

to him even though we cannot attribute know-how because he has no state of mind that could even purport to be knowledge. Not all the facts about what the subject can do in the room are determined by what the subject can come to know about the room and the example presents a situation where the man has no knowledge about the room, but it is true to say that he can do something, *i.e.*, exit.

Now consider (2-b) — an example in which the subject's epistemic position is mistaken. Susy has an incorrect belief about how to annoy Joey, which, arguably, puts her in a dubious epistemic position. Hawley does not make clear what is the relation between a mistaken belief and know-how. What does her mistaken understanding show about her knowing how to annoy Joey? Presumably, the relation holds independently of whether know-how is a propositional state of knowledge but Hawley does not say how. In any case, the idea is that her claim to knowledge is somehow undermined. Nevertheless, since it is a fact that she taps the cigarette box when she smokes and the former annoys Joey, there is a sense in which she can annoy Joey (namely, by smoking and tapping) despite her mistaken beliefs about what annoys Joey. Her mistaken belief undermines her epistemic position but does not seem to equally undermine her ability. Example (3-a), Irina the Salchow performer, is similar in so far Bengson and Moffett claim that Irina's epistemic position undermines her claim to knowledge but her ability is left untouched.

One might respond to these purported counter-examples by either denying that there is no know-how, rejecting that there is ability, or, lastly, by taking the examples at face value but denying that they pose a problem. I think the best response is a combination of these strategies, trying to specify the relevant notion of ability in terms of which to understand know-how — so that, either the purported counter-examples do not show the presence of the relevant ability, or that there are no grounds to claim the relevant knowledge is absent. The examples strike a delicate cord because they ask about the relation between ability and know-how, but, I believe, they do not show that the position is untenable. Let me begin to spell this out.

Some of the examples depend on purported pre-theoretical judgments about how what I have called ‘problematic epistemic positions’ relate to attributions of knowledge-how. To talk about a subject’s epistemic position is to talk about their general epistemic attitudes and relation to the world. For example, (3-a) presents Irina and her ‘mistaken understanding’, which purportedly show that she does not know-how. It is assumed by those who yield this as a counter-example that a mistaken understanding undermines her claim to knowledge-how. How does understanding relate to know-how so that a mistaken understanding undermines a claim to know-how? This demands a characterisation of the relation between knowledge-how and other elements in a subject’s ‘epistemic position’. In the case of (3-a), the situation asks one to think about the relation between understanding and knowing how to perform a Salchow. Does Irina’s mistaken understanding undermine her claim to know-how? If so, why? It is not clear how to go about answering this question, for it is not clear what is meant by ‘understanding’.

I suppose that talking about understanding is a way of talking about beliefs and similar attitudes with respect to something so that understanding a way to ϕ is to have specific beliefs and epistemic attitudes towards such a way of ϕ -ing. Bengson and Moffett, for instance, seem to equate ‘understanding’ of a way to ϕ with ‘having a correct and complete conception’, where the latter is at least partly constituted by beliefs. Unfortunately, they are not very explicit. With respect to (3-a), for example, Bengson and Moffett say that “[Irina] believes incorrectly that the way to perform a salchow is to take off from the *front outside* edge of one skate, jump in the air, spin, and land on the *front inside* edge of the other skate.” Bengson and Moffett (2011b: 171). Though this suggests that understand has to do at least in part with beliefs, and therefore that beliefs have to do with know-how, the question is how such beliefs and epistemic attitudes relate to know-how.

Perhaps the idea is that the mistaken belief grounds what purports to be know-how in a way that undermines the claim to knowledge. Compare to the well-known case first presented by Gettier (1963), where the standing of some of a subject’s beliefs undermines their claim to knowledge. For example, Smith’s purported state of knowing that either

Jones owns a Ford or Brown is in Barcelona is not really knowledge, for Smith reached that conclusion on the basis of the false belief that Jones owns a Ford. Likewise, if knowing how to ϕ is based on an understanding of the way to ϕ to, one might think that a purported state of know-how based on an incomplete or otherwise defective conception is not really know-how.

It seems plausible that such mistakes would undermine knowledge, if know-how is propositional. It might be problematic for Susy to be mistaken about the way she annoys Joey because such mistake would undermine the grounds for the attribution to her of knowledge how to annoy Joey — Susy's incorrect belief could interfere with her claim to knowledge how to annoy Joey much like false premises could interfere with Smith's claim to knowledge that Jones owns a Ford or Brown is in Barcelona.

And even if know-how is not propositional, the connection might be present, though perhaps in a less obvious way. Even if know-how is not identical to know-that, it might be that knowing how to do something entails or, alternatively, is grounded on certain beliefs. Consider these options in turn.

Suppose that non-propositional knowing how to annoy Joey entails certain propositional attitudes that would clash with Susy's mistaken understanding of the way to annoy Joey. Even though knowing how to annoy Joey is not constituted by certain beliefs, it might entail beliefs about annoying Joey. So that if the beliefs are not there, knowledge-how is also absent: if Susy does not have certain beliefs she does not know how to annoy Joey. More generally, even if know-how is not identical to any propositional belief, it might entail certain beliefs such that the absence of the beliefs entails the absence of know-how

Alternatively, suppose that non-propositional know-how to annoy Joey is grounded on certain propositional attitudes that would clash with Susy's mistaken understanding of the way to annoy Joey. Even though knowing how to annoy Joey is not constituted by certain beliefs, it might be grounded by beliefs about annoying Joey. So that if the beliefs are not there, knowledge-how might also be absent: if Susy does not have certain beliefs she does not know how to annoy Joey. More generally, even if know-how is not identical to

any propositional belief, it might entail certain beliefs such that the absence of the beliefs entails the absence of know-how

Those who raise the counter-examples against an account of intelligent exercises of agency in terms of abilities and powers suppose that some connection or other between know-how and beliefs hold, such that a mistaken understanding is not compatible with know-how. But since they do not spell out how mistaken belief is related to the failure of knowledge attribution, it is difficult to judge whether the examples are biased or not.

In other examples, the problem is not so much a defective epistemic position but an incomplete one. For instance, it seems quite acceptable to think that Nairo, in example (1-c), does not know more than his family in virtue of being able to make fifty consecutive push-ups. This invites questions about the individuation of know-how and abilities. If one accepts that Nairo does have the relevant knowledge how, does that mean that on the days in which he can do fifty-one consecutive push-ups he knows more than the days he can only do fifty? The example seems to ask about the relation between changes in ability and changes in knowledge. Dealing with these examples will help us understand better the relation between know-how and ability.

Suppose Nairo can do more push-ups on Mondays than Tuesdays, does that mean that he knows more on Mondays than on Tuesdays? Does Nairo have a different ability on Mondays and Tuesdays? If ability varies, is one committed to a similar variation of know-how? Consider example (1-a): the man is not yet in the appropriate epistemic contact with the room and so, it seems, does not know anything about the room and, in particular, does not know how to get out of the room. Is it possible for someone to know how to exit a room even if they yet have no epistemic contact with it? Maybe, at some level of specificity, it is true that the man has no knowledge of the room. Perhaps, the man knows nothing about *this particular room and its exit*, but he might know something about rooms and exits *in general*. We might say he knows how to get out of rooms, even though he might not know how to get out of this room (yet). When we say that the man is able to exit, at which level

of are we talking? Is it the same level of specificity as the knowledge the man purportedly lacks?

Whether examples like (1-a) pose a genuine challenge to the claim that know-how is ability, then, depends on, first, the way know-how changes with respect to changes in ability, and, second, the relation between different levels of specificity in which one may talk about know-how and ability. In an account of intelligent exercises of agency in terms of the subject's powers to think and act as manifesting in the same element, does every change in powers at any level of specificity change the warrant for know-how attribution? What is the right level of specificity when we talk about know-how and ability?

Thinking about the challenges suggests the following response in terms of the relevant ability or powers and their exercise. To deal with the purported counter-examples, we should answer the questions about different levels of specificity in ability and know-how, and the relation between changes in ability and changes in know-how. we ought to understand where it seems that the relevant ability to ϕ is present and know-how absent, as cases where both knowledge and ability identified in the appropriate way are missing. (More on this in section [7.3.3])

Instead, Bengson and Moffett claim that the examples pull towards the view that know-how consists in having an ability to ϕ plus something else. They take the examples at face value and argue that, to get away from the problems, one needs to add an extra element to their conception of know-how as ability. In the examples, the absence of know-how in the presence of ability would, accordingly, be explained by the absence of such an additional requirement.

One possible candidate for an additional condition is a correct and complete conception of a way to ϕ , that is, knowing how to ϕ is to be understood as the state of having the ability to ϕ and a complete and correct understanding of the way to ϕ . So, the response to the purported counter-examples would be that the reason why there is an ability to ϕ but no knowledge how to ϕ is to be understood in terms of the relevant subjects not having a correct and complete understanding of the way to ϕ , even though they have an ability. On

this way of responding, for example, we might say that Irina does not know how to make a Salchow because she lacks a complete and correct understanding of the way to make a Salchow: she has mistaken beliefs about the Salchow which make her understanding less than correct and complete, hence, she does not know-how to perform a Salchow. The man in the room has the ability to escape the room but does not know-how because he lacks a complete conception of the exit in this room he is in. Susy can annoy Joey but lacks know-how because she does not have a complete conception of the way she annoys Joey. And in a similar manner, the rest of the examples ought to be taken as cases where the subject lacks the relevant complete conception.

So we have two options. One is to give a better specification of the relevant abilities and how they are exercised, such that the state of know-how is the state a subject is in when they have a specific ability to ϕ such that their ϕ -ing is an instance of thinking as well. No additional element has been added. The response to the counter-examples, then, is that the relevant ability is also missing. The second option is to accept the formulation in terms of powers and exercises assumed in the examples but postulate an additional element (e.g., 'complete conceptions'). However, the second option, as we will see, runs into problems with another set of counter-examples.

7.3.2 *Knowledgeable but unable subjects*

In addition to the examples purportedly showing ability but a lack of knowledge, there are examples taken to show that it is possible to have knowledge without ability, thus challenging the claim that being able to know-how to ϕ is necessary for knowing how to ϕ . The general idea behind most of the counter-examples seems to be that ability's depends on facts of the matter that can be independently tinkered with without thereby undermining knowledge.

(4) Examples presented by Snowdon (2003)

- a. Paul knows how to make Christmas pudding. But suddenly, the world supplies of sugar disappear. Suppose that genuine Christmas pudding essentially requires sugar and no sugar substitute could ever replace it. From then on, nobody is able to make Christmas pudding. Ever. The mysterious happening erases sugar from earth but arguably leaves Paul's mind untouched: he still knows how to make Christmas pudding. Paul has know-how but is unable to make Christmas pudding. (Snowdon 2003: 8)
- b. Susan knows how to address the Queen. She has always wanted to meet the Queen and has studied the relevant protocols. But nerves and excitement on the day she finally meets the Queen make her stammer during the day and it gets progressively worse so that she develops a speech complete impediment the moment she is in her Royal presence. Susan is unable to address the Queen —she just stands there in awkward silence for a couple of seconds. But her nerves and excitement, arguably, do not take away her knowledge; she has not forgotten how to address the Queen. Susan knows how to address the Queen but is unable to do so. (Snowdon 2003: 8)
- c. Paul is in New Zealand for work. If he were to try to open his safe, he would not be able to do so for some time: his safe is in London and would not be able to open it in at least the time that takes him to fly back to London. In the time he is in New Zealand and flying back home, Paul is unable to open his safe. But his geographical position does not undermine his knowledge, and Paul still, arguably, knows how to open the safe; flying to New Zealand has not induced in Paul a temporary amnesia from which he will recover once he is back home in London. While in New Zealand, Paul knows how to open his safe but is unable to open it. (Snowdon 2003: 9)
- d. Ann is trapped on the roof a building on fire. There is no way to go down the stairs or the fire escape; the only available option is to try to jump to the neighbouring building before it also catches fire. Ann knows that this is it

the only way, so, arguably, Ann knows how to escape. But she goes to the ledge looks at the other side and finds herself overcome with vertigo. She is paralysed by fear and so she is unable escape. (Snowdon 2003: 9)

- (5) Examples presented by Stanley and Williamson (2001)
- a. “A ski instructor might know how to perform a certain complex stunt without being able to perform the stunt herself.”(Stanley and Williamson 2001: 416) She is well known for having tutored some of the best Olympic athletes in the last 20 years. The particular stunt is her signature; so only those who have trained with her manage to perform this stunt in this particular way, which is a sign that she knows how to perform the complex stunt. But she is unable to perform the stunt herself (ear canal problem or old age) makes it impossible for do as her pupils come to do. She, allegedly, knows how to but is unable to perform the complex stunt.
 - b. ‘A master pianist who loses both of her arms in a tragic car accident still knows how to play the piano. But she has lost her ability to do so’(Stanley and Williamson 2001: 416) She has learned how to play piano since she was four years old and has practiced from more than 10000 hours. She knows how to play the piano but since the accident she can no longer play because she has lost her arms. The accident eliminated her ability but, purportedly, not her knowledge how to play piano.
- (6) Examples presented by Bengson and Moffett (2011b)
- a. “Louis, a competent mathematician, knows how to find the n *th* numeral, for any numeral n , in the decimal expansion of π . He knows the algorithm and knows how to apply it in a given case. However, because of principled computational limitations, Louis (like all ordinary human beings) is unable to find the 1046 numeral in the decimal expansion of π .” (Bengson and Moffett 2011b: 171)

I have attempted to present the examples in more or less the same level of detail, supplementing those that are not well-described by their respective authors. I try to show, first, the reasons the authors think there is no ability, and, second, the reasons why knowledge how is present. For some of them, the reasons why to think there is no ability despite the presence of knowledge will be clearer than others. Let's examine them.

Stanley and Williamson do not say exactly how the absence of ability is determined, but the idea seems to be that since she has no arms she cannot play the piano and, therefore, she does not have the ability to play. On their view, losing her arms seems to entail her losing ability. Snowdon, instead, says a little bit more towards establishing the reasons why one might think that the relevant subject is unable and yet knowledgeable. On his view, nerves, lack of sugar, or paralysing fear makes the agent unable to perform. From this, Snowdon concludes that subjects lack the relevant ability. Bengson and Moffett offer, I think, the clearest formulation of an unable knowledgeable subject. According to them, the mathematician does not have the ability, for any n , to find the n th numeral in the decimal expansion of π because even in normal conditions she has 'computational limits' that make her unable to find the expansion. In the purported counter-examples, there is a particular feature that allegedly eliminates ability but not knowledge. Lack of arms, nerves, absence of sugar, or computational limits of humans undermine ability but not the subject's claim to knowledge.

A striking feature of these examples is the way in which the purported absence of ability is established on the basis of a variety of different uses of the expressions 'unable' and 'cannot'. The examples use a very general sense of what constitutes the absence of ability corresponding to several ways in which we say of a subject and a kind of 'agential exercise' ϕ that the subject cannot or is unable to ϕ . Let me comment on how this is seen in the examples above by looking at Snowdon's examples.

Snowdon talks about what a subject is 'unable' and 'cannot' do as a way of talking about the abilities of subject lacks in a way that suggests the following. What an agent can or is able to do is, on his view, what an agent has an ability to do, and what they are unable or

cannot do is what an agent lacks an ability to do. Consider how this move seems to be made in (4-a). In this example, Paul is unable to make Christmas pudding because there is no more sugar in the world. Obviously, if sugar is an essential ingredient for Christmas pudding (suppose stevia and other sugar substitutes won't work) and there is no more sugar, everybody is unable to make a Christmas pudding, in particular, Paul. We might express this by saying that Paul cannot or is unable to make a cake. In this sense, Paul lacks the ability to make a cake, and since the disappearing of sugar does not, purportedly, have to do with his knowledge, so it won't affect his knowledge how to make pudding.

The example assumes that the change in the world leaves knowledge untouched, but it could turn out that Paul's knowledge how is undermined by the disappearing of the sugar. It is not unreasonable to think that some changes in the world do change one's knowledge. For example, if I know-how to use Microsoft Windows and Windows changes, it seems reasonable to say that I no longer know how to use Window. (Perhaps a more accurate way of expressing this would be to say that I knew how to use Windows or that I know how to use an outdated version of Windows.) Moreover, other changes in the world might also affect one's knowledge. In the event of permanent amnesia, I might lose forget how to use Windows.

How do we know that the disappearing of sugar does not undermine one's knowledge how to make Christmas pudding? We do not get a firm enough grip on how changes in the world could change our know-how, and the examples do not seem to provide one a better understanding of the conditions in which change would affect knowledge how.

Now consider how the same move is made in (4-b). In this example, Susan is unable to address the Queen because of her nerves. But it is possible to be nervous and address the Queen: some people can control their nerves in a way that does not interfere with their speech. Paula, Susan's colleague, is also nervous to meet the Queen and her nerves make her sweat even in the chilly autumn. But her nerves do not give her a speech impediment. Nerves only make some people in the know-how unable to perform —unlike the disappearing of sugar that makes everybody unable to make Christmas pudding. Paul's inability

to make Christmas pudding is different from Susan's inability to address the Queen, and the difference is surely not accidental. The examples provided by Snowdon are meant to show different situations in which one says that a subject knows how and lacks ability. Better: they are meant to show different ways in which we *say* that people are unable or cannot perform. In (4-a), Paul is unable to perform because of the disappearing of sugar; in (4-b), Susan is unable to perform because of her nerves; in (4-c), Paul is unable to perform because of his geographical location; and in (4-d), Ann is unable to perform because of fear.

There seem to be three ways in which the one might respond to the purported challenge presented by these examples: I) deny that there is no ability, II) deny that there is knowledge, and, lastly, III) taking the examples at face value but denying that they pose a problem to the view Rylean account. Consider them in turn. I) One could argue that there are not enough grounds to claim that the ability is absent. The idea is that what is characterised as lack of ability is better understood as an *interference* in the exercises of the ability or an absence of the *opportunity* to exercise the ability. The success of this strategy, then, depends on making sense of 'interference' and 'opportunity' and explaining how these work in each case. II) One could also argue that what undermines the subject's ability also interferes with knowledge, so that the same features of the example that might make one doubt the presence of ability can be seen to make one doubt that there is knowledge. The success of this strategy, then, depends on showing the way in which, for example, Paul in the sugarless world suddenly makes him unable to make Christmas pudding but also makes his knowledge disappear. III) Lastly, one could argue that though there is a sense in which people in the examples are unable and there is knowledge, this does not pose a problem for the Rylean account of intelligent exercises of agency. Yes, there is no ability and yes there is know-how, but the ability absent is not the relevant one.

I think the best response is a mix of the first and third strategies. This requires some work on how we individuate abilities and how they are exercised. Some examples are best handled by showing that, even though there is a sense in which some ability to ϕ is absent,

there is another sense in which some other ability to ϕ is present and being exercised. Some other examples are best handled by showing that even though an exercise of the relevant ability is not possible, it is because there is an interference with the exercise of their ability to ϕ not because of its absence.

Glick (2012) argues that it is important to talk about internal ability and opportunity, such that the examples are understood as instances where there is internal ability in the absence of opportunity. For example, Paul has the internal ability to make Christmas pudding but lacks the opportunity to make it because of the lack of sugar. Similarly, when Paul is in New Zealand he has the internal ability to open his safe but lacks the opportunity. In either case, the apparent lack of ability is explained as the lack of opportunity. For some, the distinction between opportunity and ability seems easy to draw: it is easy to see examples (4-a) and (4-c) as cases where the subject has the ability but lacks opportunity to exercise it. But what should we say about the pianist who loses their arms or Susy and her nerves? In a sense, the pianist without arms in front of a piano has the opportunity to play, and Susy, even as a bundle of nerves, has the opportunity to address the Queen. According to Glick, it seems that on such cases the subject has no chance of having the internal ability. The alternative I shall suggest leaves it open.

Thinking about the challenges suggests the following response in terms of the relevant ability or powers and their exercise. To deal with the purported counter-examples, we should answer the questions about different levels of specificity in ability and know-how, and the relation between changes in ability and changes in know-how. That is, we ought to understand cases where it seems that the relevant ability to ϕ is absent and know-how present, as cases where both knowledge and ability identified in the appropriate way are present, but there is interference with the relevant ability. (More on this in section [7.3.3])

Instead, Bengson and Moffett claim that the examples pull towards the view that know-how consists in something less than ability to ϕ . They take the examples at face value and argue that, to get away from the problems, one needs to claim that know-how amounts to something less than ability. In the examples, the present of know-how in the absence

of ability would, accordingly, be explained by the absence of some additional element in addition to knowledge.

7.3.3 *A response to the purported structural flaw*

Bengson and Moffett take the above examples to identify a serious difficulty for an Rylean account like the one I wish to defend. On their view, the difficulty is not only that the Rylean should deal with counter-examples. Rather, they claim, the difficulty is that one set of issues pulls towards a strengthening of the relation between know-how and ability, while the other set of issues pulls towards weakening the relation. In their words:

What the problems of pervasive inability and ignorant reliability seem to show is that (c) there is a structural flaw in the [Rylean] position. In short, the two problems push [a Rylean position] in opposite directions. The problem of pervasive inability counsels us to weaken the ability condition: we must require less than a reliable ability to ϕ , since a reliable ability to ϕ is not necessary for knowledge how to ϕ . But the problem of ignorant reliability counsels us to strengthen the ability condition: we must require more than a reliable ability to ϕ , since a reliable ability to ϕ is not sufficient for knowledge how to ϕ . In light of this internal conflict, we submit that the prospects of a consistent [Rylean] thesis that succeeds in reaching its intended destination are not good. (Bengson and Moffett 2011b: 174)

Bengson and Moffett's challenge targets some versions of the claim that knowing how to ϕ is ability to ϕ . As I have said, I believe that the answer to the challenge ought to come not from looking for conditions that are to be added or subtracted in the equation describing the relation between know-how and ability.

In the Rylean view I favour, knowing how to ϕ is the state a subject is in when they have a specific ability to ϕ such that their ϕ -ing is an instance of thinking. Just any ability to ϕ is not enough for know-how, it ought to be an ability to ϕ , where ϕ -ing is an instance of thinking. Equally, the absence of just any ability to ϕ does not amount to the absence of

know-how, unless the absent ability to ϕ is one where ϕ is an instance of thinking and as well as agency.

As we will see, it is better to understand the so-called unable knowers, despite their purported inability, have the relevant ability but cannot exercise it in certain ways. And the so-called unknowledgeable but able subjects, despite their apparent possession of some ability, are best understood as lacking the relevant ability. In the following section I will examine these responses in turn.

7.3.3.1 *Response to the unable knowers*

The examples that purport to be cases of subjects who know how to ϕ but are unable to ϕ are best understood in the light of a distinction between different ways in which one may be unable to perform. Being unable to ϕ does not always entail not having an ability to ϕ , for, as we will see, inability to ϕ may be an instance of lack of ability to ϕ , lack of opportunity to ϕ , or interference in the ϕ -ing. So, the purported counterexamples, we will see, need not to be understood as cases where the relevant ability is absent.

A toy example will help us see the differences in the ways in which we say that a subject is unable to ϕ . Consider the differences between a person who has never learned a language and, thus, cannot speak at all, a person with a severe sore throat who cannot speak, and a person who is always interrupted by their interlocutor before even finishing a word. At some level of description, all three people are unable to speak. But it is important to see that the way in which they are unable is different. Arguably, the second and the third persons have an ability to speak but cannot exercise their ability, but there seems to be no reason to believe that the first person has the ability to speak. And the second and the third cases differ in so far in the second cases what stops the exercise of the ability is internal to the subject while in the third case what stops the exercise is external to the subject.

The distinction I propose is just a slight improvement of the distinction marked by Glick (2012) between internal ability and opportunity. Glick's proposal does not distinguish between the second and the first person in the example above: there is no way of

telling whether, in Glick's terms, a person who has internal inability but opportunity and a person who lacks ability altogether. Consider another example. There is nothing external stopping a fully awake subject from imagining a crystal palace. And though they have the opportunity to exercise their ability to imagine a crystal palace, they cannot exercise it because soul crushing anxiety stops them amidst their imagining. In this case, the subject's imagining is being interfered despite their having the ability and the opportunity.

We should distinguish between the following three modes of inability:

Internal interference Cases where there is an ability to ϕ but when there is an attempt to exercise it, there is something within the subject that stops the exercise from taking place.

Lack of opportunity Cases where there is an ability to ϕ but when there is an attempt to exercise it, there is something in the world that stops the exercise from taking place.

Lack of ability Cases where the subject just lacks the ability altogether.

On the basis of this distinction, we can say the following about the examples:

(7) Examples presented by Snowdon (2003)

- a. *Paul knows how to make Christmas pudding. But suddenly, the world supplies of sugar disappear and now everybody is now unable to make Christmas pudding.*

This is best understood as an example where Paul has the relevant ability but lacks the opportunity. It is a feature of the external world —the lack of sugar— that is responsible for Paul's inability to exercise his ability to make Christmas pudding. If there were sugar, it seems that Paul would have the opportunity to exercise his ability to make Christmas pudding.

- b. *Susan knows how to address the Queen. But nerves and excitement on the day she finally meets the Queen stop her from addressing the Queen.*

This is best understood as an example where Susan has the relevant ability but there an internal interference that stops her from exercising her ability.

She has the opportunity, for she is in her Royal presence, but her own nerves stop her from exercising her ability. If her nerves subsided or she took medication that helped control her nerves and anxiety, she would be in a position to exercise her ability.

- c. *Paul knows his safe combination but since he is in New Zealand he is unable to do so for some time*

This is best understood as an example where Paul has the ability but lacks the opportunity. It is a feature of the external world —the geographical position of the safe with respect to him— that is responsible for Paul’s inability to exercise his ability to open the safe. If the safe’s and Paul’s spatial locations were closer, Paul would have the opportunity to exercise his ability to open the safe.

- d. *Ann knows how to escape. But she is paralysed by fear and so she is unable escape.* This is best understood as an example where Ann has the relevant ability but there an internal interference that stops her from exercising her ability. She has the opportunity, for she is is at the roof-top and by the gap, but her own nerves stop her from exercising her ability. If her fear subsided or she took medication that helped control it, she would be in a position to exercise her ability.

(8) Examples presented by Stanley and Williamson (2001)

- a. *A ski instructor might know how to perform a certain complex stunt without being able to perform the stunt herself.*

This is best understood as an example where the instructor has the relevant ability but an internal interference stops them from exercising her ability. If she managed to fix the interference, she would be in a position to perform the stunt herself.

- b. *A master pianist who loses both of her arms in a tragic car accident still knows how to play the piano. But she has lost her ability to do so.*

This is best understood as an example where the pianist has the relevant ability but an internal interference stops them from exercising her ability. If she managed to fix the interference, she would be in a position to perform a piece herself, moreover she might be able to manifest the ability in a different way. Just because some manifestations of an ability are not available to a subject, it does not mean that no manifestation of such ability is available.

- (9) Examples presented by Bengson and Moffett (2011b)
- a. *Louis knows how to find the n th numeral, for any numeral n , in the decimal expansion of π , but is unable to find the 1046 numeral in the decimal expansion of π .* This is best understood as an example where the Louis has the relevant ability but an internal interference stops them from exercising her ability. Tools might help her overcome the inability and thus exercise her ability in a way that lets her find the 1046 numeral in the decimal expansion of π .

The suggested way of understanding the examples relies on having prima facie reasons to attribute the ability to ϕ in each of the cases. What is required for this? There is no one way to answer, but Ryle gives us the following guidance with respect to the cases where we could attribute know-how, and thus, ability:

To decide whether his bull's eye was a fluke or a good shot, we need and he himself might need to take into account more than this one success. Namely, we should take into account his subsequent shots, his past record, his explanations or excuses, the advice he gave to his neighbour and a host of other clues of various sorts. There is no one signal of a man's knowing how to shoot, but a modest assemblage of heterogeneous performances generally suffices to establish beyond reasonable doubt whether he knows how to shoot or not. Only then, if at all, can it be decided whether he hit the bull's eye because he was lucky, or whether he hit it because he was marksman enough to succeed when he tried. (Ryle 1949: 33)

Different performances on different occasions give one reasons to attribute ability. Paraphrasing Aristotle, one swallow does not make a summer, and neither is one performance enough to attribute an ability to so perform. One ϕ -ing is not sufficient for attribution of the ability to ϕ , but a modest assemblage of cases is sufficient to establish the presence of the ability. But once there are some reasons to attribute the ability —precisely the reasons to attribute knowledge how— a single case where it seems that there is no ability is more reasonably understood as an instance where there is either some internal interference with the subject's exercise of their ability, or an external lack of opportunity for the subject to exercise their ability. In either case, had the world and internal conditions been appropriate, the subject could have exercised the relevant ability.

7.3.3.2 *Response to able knowers*

The examples that purport to be cases of subjects who do not know how to ϕ but are able to ϕ are best understood in the light of a distinction between different ways in which one may be able to perform. That is, different ways in which one might talk about the ability to ϕ , for it is only the absence of the relevant ability to ϕ that could pose a problem to the view.

The relevant ability is an ability to ϕ where ϕ -ing is at the same time is an instance of thinking. What does it make it an instance of thinking? That it is governed, generally, by rules of rationality and, specifically, by rules and criteria proper of the domain of ϕ . In this respect, Ryle says that:

The boxer, the surgeon, the poet and the salesman apply their special criteria in the performance of their special tasks, for they are trying to get things right; and they are appraised as clever, skilful, inspired or shrewd not for the ways in which they consider, if they consider at all, prescriptions for conducting their special performances, but for the ways in which they conduct those performances themselves. Whether or not the boxer plans his manoeuvres before executing them, his cleverness at boxing is decided in the light of how

he fights. If he is a Hamlet of the ring, he will be condemned as an inferior fighter, though perhaps a brilliant theorist or critic. Cleverness at fighting is exhibited in the giving and parrying of blows, not in the acceptance or rejection of propositions about blows, just as ability at reasoning is exhibited in the construction of valid arguments and the detection of fallacies, not in the avowal of logicians' formulae. Nor does the surgeon's skill function in his tongue uttering medical truths but only in his hands making the correct movements.(Ryle 1949: 36)

Just as theoretical thinking is governed by rules of rationality —plausibly, rules of truth and knowledge—, instances of ϕ -ing that are instances of thinking are also governed by the relevant rules and criteria. The Intellectualist tends to think that following rules in practice is to be understood as a double operation, an internal rule-following element and a practical rule-following occurrence. But we have seen that this is an arbitrary distinction. There is no reason not to think that practical occurrences can themselves be intelligent in so far they governed by rules of rationality not unlike the way judgement is governed by rules of truth or knowledge. And there are good advantages to think that practical occurrences are themselves instances of thinking.

The difference between abilities to ϕ the exercises of which are instances of thinking and abilities to ϕ the exercises of which are not instances of thinking can be illustrated with the following quote from Ryle.

The ability to give by rote the correct solutions of multiplication problems differs in certain important respects from the ability to solve them by calculating. When we describe someone as doing something by pure or blind habit, we mean that he does it automatically and without having to mind what he is doing. He does not exercise care, vigilance, or criticism. After the toddling-age we walk on pavements without minding our steps. But a mountaineer walking over ice-covered rocks in a high wind in the dark does not move his limbs by blind habit; he thinks what he is doing, he is ready for emergencies, he

economises in effort, he makes tests and experiments; in short he walks with some degree of skill and judgment. If he makes a mistake, he is inclined not to repeat it, and if he finds a new trick effective he is inclined to continue to use it and to improve on it. He is concomitantly walking and teaching himself how to walk in conditions of this sort. (Ryle 1949: 30)

Compare the two sets of abilities Ryle describes here, one of giving the answer by rote and one by calculating. Though, at some level of specification, both are abilities to ϕ , one is not an ability to ϕ intelligently. Giving an answer by rote is done automatically in a way that it is not minding what they are doing—it is an instance of ϕ -ing that is not also an instance thinking. Exercises of an ability to answer correctly *by rote* are, according to Ryle, not intelligent, and, thus, a subject who has such an ability is not in a state of knowing how to answer correctly. In contrast, exercises of an ability to answer correctly *by calculating*, exercising care, vigilance, or self-criticism, are governed by rules of rationality and, thus, a subject who has such an ability is in a state of knowing how to answer correctly. Similarly, ordinary exercises of an ability to walk are, according to Ryle, not intelligent, and, thus, a subject who (only) has such an ability to walk is not properly in a state of knowing how to walk. In contrast, the mountaineer's exercise of an ability to walk, exercises care, vigilance and criticism that rote walking does not. Thus, a subject who has such an ability is in a state that can properly be called knowing how to walk.²

So we have that there are different abilities to ϕ and different ways in which one might exercise such abilities. We can thus return to the features of abilities presented earlier:

Different levels of specificity in talk about abilities to ϕ : Since, for an exercise of agency ϕ , it is possible to talk about more than one kind of ability to ϕ , talk about *the* ability to ϕ independently of a particular occasion does not determine a specific ability. We need additional information on the basis of which identify what kind of ability to ϕ we are talking about.

² In the case of knowing how to walk it might be true that people who have one ability also have the other, that is, that people who ordinarily, as were, rote walk can also walk intelligently. Thus, the possibly puzzling consequence that ordinary subject's do not know how to walk is avoided.

Different ways of exercising the ability to ϕ : It is possible for two manifestations of the same ability to be, at one level of specificity, of a different kind. So, an instance of ϕ -ing and an instance of ψ -ing might both be manifestations of the same ability, even though at some level of specificity these instances are different in kind.

On the basis of them, we can now say the following about the purported counter examples.

(10) Examples presented by Snowden (2003)

- a. *A man trapped in a room does not yet know how to get out but can get out.*

This is best understood as an example of a subject who has an ability to get out but the exercise of such an ability is not an instance of thinking, for as the case describes it, no epistemic interaction with the room has happened whatsoever. There are no reasons to think that the man could exercise his powers to think with respect to his getting out of the room, thus no wonder we would not attribute know-how.

- b. *The smallest member of the Australian gymnastic team can squeeze through the window in my kitchen but they do not know how to get through the window in my kitchen.*

This is best understood as an example of a subject who has at best, an ability to get out of the kitchen similar to the ordinary ability to walk, thus, it is not the relevant ability the having of which constitutes the state of know-how. They have the ability to ϕ but not to ϕ intelligently. Thus no wonder we would not attribute know-how.

- c. *Nairo can do fifty consecutive push-ups but it is weird to say that he knows how to do fifty consecutive push-ups.*

This is best understood as an example where the exercise of the ability is not intelligent and need not correspond to a state of know-how. It might be, though, that Nairo knows how to do pushups in virtue of his ability to do pushups, which on Mondays is exercised in one way and Tuesday is exercised

in another way. Though there are different manifestations on different days, this can be plausibly accounted for a reasonable differences in the exercise of one same ability. Just like the case of being able to walk, if it were the case that Nairo has the ability to do fifty pushups in a special manner, then it would not be implausible to claim that he has the relevant know-how. If Nairo could only do pushups in an ordinary manner, then it would not seem like he has the relevant knows-how.

- d. *Paul is able to sight-read but does not know how to sight-read that piece*

This is best understood as an example of a subject who has an ability to get out but the exercise of such an ability is not an instance of thinking, for as the case describes it, no epistemic interaction with the piece has happened. There are no reasons to think that the man could exercise his powers to think with respect to his sight-reading this room, thus no wonder we would not attribute know-how.

- (11) Examples presented by Hawley (2003) and Bengson and Moffett (2011b)

- a. *Sally does not know how to escape an avalanche and yet is able to escape.*

This is best understood as an example where there is an ability to escape but exercises of such ability are not instances of thinking. Sally can escape, but cannot do so intelligently. Thus, the subject is unsurprisingly not in the relevant state of know-how

- b. *Susy can annoy Joey by smoking but she does not know how to annoy Joey.*

This is best understood as an example where Susy has ability to annoy Joey but where the exercises of such ability are not instances of thinking. Susy would not react according to the circumstances if the context were to change. For instance, she might try to annoy Joey by smoking the pipe (who is only bothered by the box tapping). In such case, Susy would not exercise thought in her acting and thus would not be in the relevant state of know-how.

- c. *Shelley can bake a cake from whatever she finds in the cupboard but does not really know how to bake a cake.*

This is best understood as a case where there is some ability but not the relevant ability, for the subject would not be in a position to react critically in similar circumstances. Were there different items in the cupboard, it seems Shelley would act in the same way.

(12) Examples presented by Bengson and Moffett (2011b)

- a. *Irina is mistaken about how to do a Salchow, but is able to do a Salchow.* In so far as Irina is responsive in her Salchows, Irina is in a state of knowing how to do a Salchow. Just as the surgeon's ability does not need to manifest in their uttering medical truths but in their hands making the correct movements (Ryle 1949: 36), in the same way Irina's ability need only function in her skating even though she lacks the appropriate self-knowledge or at least she cannot manifest such knowledge.

7.4 Conclusion

Responding to the purported counter-examples has provided the framework against which I presented features of abilities that further developed the view that intelligent actions and activities are not the product of a mental element but rather that they are themselves instances of thinking and agency. Just as judgments are governed by rules of rationality and truth, and this does not mean that there is a further element behind them, intelligent actions and activities are governed by general rules of rationality and specific rules pertaining to their specific domain. Intelligent exercises of agency just are instances of thinking.

Ryle's view, I believe, does not fit neatly within the frameworks offered by readers like Stanley who tends to altogether excise the metaphysical picture from Ryle's remarks about the mind. Ryle's own view takes the form of $\langle \delta\text{-HYPOTHETICALS} \rangle$: he believes that actions and activities are intelligent simply because of the truth of hypothetical conditionals.

In so far the view I present does not commit to an account of dispositions in terms of hypothetical conditionals, the view is different from Ryle's. However, the view I have suggested respects Ryle's idiom and Ryle's own claims about the way in which intelligent exercises of agency are themselves moments in which thinking and acting come together.

In this thesis I have provided an interpretation and defence of Ryle's view about intelligent actions and activities that attempts to make sense of his general insight about the metaphysics of intelligent exercises of agency according to which the identity of what makes actions and activities intelligent is no other than the exercises of agency themselves. Further research can be thus carried out about the relation between the view I presented and other aspects of the contemporary debate on know-how that do not have to directly with Ryle but for which the view defended here might have consequences. For example, the issue about the application conditions of know-how ascriptions (See Glick 2012, Stanley 2011a) and the use of scientific approaches to the intelligent exercises of agency (See Glick 2011, Stanley and Krakauer 2013).

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