PRIVACY AND PRIVATE LANGUAGE

Part I

I. Generally, a distinction is made between different notions of a private language.

(i) There is the notion of a language which is private in the sense that it is understood by one person or a group of persons, for example a code which is adopted by one person to write his views for his private use, or a code which a group of people employ for the exclusive use of that group, as in the army. But this sort of code is not to be identified with private language, rather it is a method of transcribing some given language.

A private language of this sort presents no philosophical problems, for it is dervied from public language; and even if it were not, it will still be translatable into some public language. Its being private is just a matter of enough people knowing how to translate it. A ' private language ' of this sort is not about which philosophers talk, when they talk about private language.

(ii) There is the notion of a private language such that no one other than the speaker could understand it even if all the experiences of the speaker were available to others. This would be a language some features or other of which, irrespective of what the language is about, would make it logically impossible that any one other than the speaker should understand it or follow its rules. Though it is indeed hard to see how a language could possibly be such as to determine logically who should be capable of understanding it, and do that irrespective of what a person's experience were[1]. This too is not the notion about which philosophers talk, when they speak about private language.

(iii) There is the notion of a private language which cannot be taught to or learned by anyone other than the speaker, becaue it is a language which a particular person employs to refer only to his own private experiences. It is often held that a language is public if it refers to what is publically observable; if a person could limit himself to describing his own sensations or feelings, then strictly speaking he alone would be able to understand what he

was saying. This is the notion which philosophers in general, and Wittgenstein in particular, have in mind when they talk about private language. That Wittgenstein speaks about this notion of private language in the *Philosophical Investigations*[2] can be seen from the following two passages :

" The individual words of this language are to refer to what can only be known to the person speaking; to his immediate private sensations. So another person cannot understand the language " (PI 243). " .... the language which describes my inner experiences and which only I myself can understand " (PI 256). The ' cannot ' used in PI 243 is a logical ' cannot '. A private language is not the language of an imaginary soliloquist (Solitary or in groups) but one whose concepts, rules, and opinions are essentially unsharable rather than contingently unshared. The essential characteristics of a private language thus are :

(*a*) The words of the language are to refer to what can only be known to the speaker.

(*b*) The words of the language are to refer to the speaker's immediate private sensations.

(*c*) Another person cannot understand the language.

2. We are now in a position to give a first approximation of our definition of ' private language ' :

Private language is a language that refers to the experiences of which only the speaker is aware and of which it is not merely the case that it is not understood by anyone other than the speaker, but more, that it is logically impossible that it should be understood by anyone other than the speaker. In PI 243 and 256 from which this definition is derived, it is not explicitly mentioned that the private language cannot have a single word in common with public language. But, Wittgenstein suggests this in PI 261.

> What reason have we for calling " S " the sign for a sensation ? For " sensation " is a word of our common language, not of one intelligible to me alone. And it would not help either to say that it need not be a *sensation*; that when he writes " S " he has something —— and that is all that can be said. " Has " and " something " also belong to our common language.

In fact, we may think of a private language having the same alphabets as ours. But having the words of our language is *ex hypothesi* ruled out. For, a word is not merely a collection of letters, but a collection whose use in the language is governed by syntactical and semantical rules of the language. A word can be compared with an atom. An atom consists of a central part called nucleus around which electrons revolve in a number of orbits. Similarly, a word consists of a sign or a sound or a collection of letters around which the rules revolve. These rules are part of the language game to which words belong. In order to understand the language one necessarily has to learn them. For example, it is necessary for one who wishes to learn Hindi that he learns the rules which govern the use of Hindi words.

Just as electrons are the integral part of the atom, so are rules the integral part of the word (or language). And, since a private language, logically, cannot be understood by anyone other than the speaker, therefore its ' words ' or ' expressions ' cannot have public rules[3]. But words of our language have public rules. Therefore private language cannot have any word in common with our public language.

3. We have, now, one more characteristic of a private language, namely, that *it cannot have a single word in common with the public language.* To include this characteristic explicitly, we restate our definition of ' private language ' as follows :

A private language is a language :

(*a*) Which refers to the experience to which only its speaker has a privileged access;

(*b*) of which it is not merely the case that it is not understood by any one other than the speaker, but more, that it is logically impossible that it should be understood by anyone other than the speaker, and

(*c*) which cannot have a single word in common with the public language.

From this it follows that only one person, that is, the speaker of the language alone can be said to know the ' rules ' of a private language. This is so because knowing a language entails knowing the rules of the language.

II

4. Carnap in his study *The Unity of Science*[4] gives the name ' Protocol language ' to any set of sentences which are used to give a ' direct record ' of one's own experiences. He argues : " In general every statement in any person's protocol language would have sense for that person alone .... Even when the same words and sentences occur in various protocol languages, their sense would be different, they could not even be compared. Every protocol language could therefore be applied solipsistically : there would be no intersubjective protocol language. This is the consequence obtained by consistent adherence to the usual view and terminology (rejected by the author)"[5]. Since Carnap wishes to maintain that protocol sentences should be understood by people, as this is the necessary condition for what he calls a ' physical language ', he draws the conclusion that " protocol language is a part of physical language ". That is, he concludes that sentences, which *prima-facie* refer to private experiences, must be logically equivalent to sentences which describe the physical state of the subject. There are many other philosophers who have followed him in giving a physicalist interpretation to the statements that one makes about the experiences of others. They however, have not extended it to all the statements that one may make about one's own experiences. They prefer to hold that certain sentences do serve only to describe the speaker's private experiences and that, this being so, they have a different meaning for him from any that they can possibly have for anyone else.

5. Wittgenstein goes much further than this. He holds the view that one who attempts to use a private language not only fails to communicate his meaning to others, but also does not have a meaning to communicate even to himself; in other words, he does not succeed in saying anything at all.

6. Wittgenstein considered that the notion of a private language rested on two fundamental mistakes. They are :

(i) Mistake about the nature of experience; and

(ii) Mistake about the nature of language.

Mistake about the nature of experience is the belief that experiences are private; that is, no one can know that another person is in

pain or is dizzy or has any other sensation. For, sensations are thought to be private in the sense that no one can experience or be acquainted with another person's sensations[6].

This mistake leads to the mistake about language, namely, the belief that words acquire meaning by bare ostensive definition; that is, no one can be taught the names of sensations unless he has those sensations himself. On this view, each one of us must give the sensation words meaning from one's own case independently of other people's use of similar words. From this, it follows that anyone who says anything, (or who uses any sound or sign) about his sensations says something which he alone can understand. Therefore, ' names ' of sensations or sensation words, the word ' sensation ' itself, and the expression " same sensation " will have no public but only a private use.

III

7. According to Wittgenstein, the belief that experiences (sensations) are private rests on a confusion of two senses of ' privacy '. The first sense of ' privacy ' has to do with *knowledge*. In this sense, something is private to me if and only if I alone can know about it (vide PI 246). The second sense of privacy has to do with *possession*. In this sense, something is private to me if and only if I can have it. The first sense of privacy may be abbreviated as *incommunicability* and the second sense as *inalienability*. The question ' Are sensations private ? ' then, breaks up into two sub-questions :

(i) ' Are sensations incommunicable ? '

(ii) ' Are sensations inalienable ? '

We shall now try to answer these questions one by one.

8. The line of argument of those who hold that sensations are incommunicable may be formulated as follows :

(i) Any one who has a sensation knows that he has it because he feels it; and whatever can be known to exist by being felt cannot be known (in the same sense of ' know ') to exist in any other way.

(ii) The proper and necessary means of coming to know what sensations another person is having is to feel (have) that person's sensations.

(iii) No one can feel (experience, or be acquainted with) another person's sensations. Therefore :

(iv) No one can know what sensations another person is having.

Let us call this argument (A). It is clear that premises at (i) and (ii) are the crux of the argument. We shall try to show that (i) and (ii) make a spurious use of the verb ' to know ' and therefore, are false. Since the conclusion stated at (iv) also makes use of ' know ' in the same sense, therefore, this too is false.

9. For clarity's sake, Wittgenstein considers a particular sensation, namely, pain in the argument against the possibility of private language. He takes this example because pain is the commonest sensation and, in many ways, the most difficult of all the sensations to deal with. It is also one of the first such words to be learnt, and one which may well form a basis for the future extension of sensation vocabulary[7].

The premises at (i) and (ii) can, then, be reconstructed as : (ir) Any one who has pain knows that he has it because he feels it, and whatever can be known to exist by being felt cannot be known (in the same sense of ' know ') to exist in any other way. (iir) The proper and necessary means of coming to know the pain another person is having is to feel (have) that person's pain. From these premises, it follows that I can know that I am in pain because I feel my pain, and that if anybody else wants to know about my being in pain, then the only way for him is to feel my pain. These expressions, thus, presuppose that there is a genuine use of the verb ' to know ' as an expression of certainty in the first person psychological statements. This forms the foundations of the argument, since the conclusion (iv) says that no one can know in the sense of first person assertion of ' know ' the sensations which the other person is having. If we are able to prove that this is a spurious use of the verb ' to know ', then we should reject not only (i) and (ii) but also the conclusion of the argument.

10. Consider a case in which ' I know that ' becomes an expression of certainty. It is rainy season. You have come to my place to play chess with me. This game is about to finish. You, while still absrobed in the game, ask my younger brother who is sitting near the window ' Is it raining ? ' He says, ' It is '.

And then you ask 'Are you certain ?' He might reply, 'Yes', I know it is raining, I am looking out of the window'. Now, the function of the words 'I know' here is that in answering the question 'Is it raining ?' one (in this case, my brother) is not merely guessing or taking someone's words for granted, or is not judging from what one saw ten minutes ago, but that he is in a position, as one would want, to answer this question. The addition of the word 'I know' here makes it an expression of certainty, for it is quite intelligible for someone else to suppose that the speaker is not in as good a position as is required for answering the question 'Is it raining ?'

Let us now imagine another case. We have finished the game of chess. It is time for you to leave. You ask my younger brother who is sitting near the window, 'Is it raining ?' You look at him. He opens the window, puts his hand out, and as he closes the window, wiping the drops from his hand says 'Yes, it is raining'. Now, since you have seen him taking the necessary pains to answer your question, you would have nothing to gain by asking 'Are you certain ?' or 'Do you really know that it is raining ?' For the same reason, he would not be telling you anything more by addition of the words 'I know that....' because the addition of the words 'I know' properly means "There is no such thing as a doubt in this case" or "The expression 'I do not know' makes no sense in this case". And of course it follows from this "I know" makes no sense either[8]. Therefore, the addition of the words 'I know' is pointless and redundant. Hence for 'I know that ....' to be an expression of certainty, it should at least be conceivable in some circumstances that the sense of the sentence filling in the blanks allows the speaker to be ignorant of the truth-value of the statements made by the use of the sentence. The addition of the words 'I know' makes sense only when a doubt is possible. In the cases in which no doubt is possible the use of the words 'I know' is pointless. Moreover, we can use 'I know' profitably, only in the cases in which it makes sense to ask the question 'How do you know ?' This question, generally, is asked in those cases in which the question of learning is involved. For example, in the case of 'It is raining', a person can, if he has not seen the speaker taking

the necessary pains, before making the reply, ask, ' How do you know that it is raining ? ' or ' how do you learn that it is raining ? '

11. In the light of the above discussion, let us now try to see whether the use of ' I know ' in the case of first person present tense psychological expressions, for example, ' I am in pain ', can be an expression of certainty as is supposed by the premises (ir) and (iir) of the argument.

At the outset, it must be made clear that there are some non-philosophical contexts in which ' I know, I am in pain ' is not unintelligible. For instance, a man has been complaining for several days that he has a severe pain in his throat, but has not sought any relief from it. His wife has been constantly nagging him " you're in pain; so why not see a doctor?" He may sometimes say to her in exasperation, ' I know, I am in pain, but we cannot afford a doctor '. No one would like to maintain that this expression of exasperation was unintelligible. What we want to show however, is not that words ' I know ' in the first person psychological sentences can be used as an expression of exasperation, but that they cannot be used as an expression of certainty.

Now, for ' I know ' to qualify as an expression of certainty, the following conditions should be satisfied :

(i) There could, in principle, be a doubt about the ignorance of the speaker about the truth-value of the statement expressed by the sentence attached with it, that is, there could be a doubt about the assertion.

(ii) The question ' How do you know ? ' could be asked about the contents of the sentence attached with ' I know '; and, an answer could be given to this question. For example, in the case of ' It is raining ', one can ask ' How do you know?' The answer can be ' I know, because I see from the window that it is raining ' or that ' my hands became wet, when I put them out of the window '.

However, in the case of first person psychological assertions, for example, ' I am in pain ', there cannot, in principle, be a doubt that the speaker of these words is ignorant about the truth-value of the contents, viz. his being in pain. He knows, when he says it, whether he has a pain or he is only saying it without having the pain. A doubt can arise in those cases only in which one is

learning. For example, in the case of continuing the series 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, ..., one can doubt not only whether the persons has learnt how to go on but also whether he himself shall be able to go on correctly.

But the case of sensations is different. In their case " I cannot be said to learn of them. I have them " (PI 246). And I cannot doubt those things which I have. For example, I cannot doubt whether there is a pen in my pocket if I have it in my pocket. " It makes sense to say about other people that they doubt whether I am in pain but not to say it about myself " (PI 246). For other people this (doubt) makes sense, because they learn of my being in pain either from my behaviour and/or from my sincere utterrances of the words ' I am in pain '. But in my own case it does not make sense, because I do not learn of them, I have them. As in the case of ' It is raining ', it makes no sense for the person who sees from the window or who is walking in the rain to doubt whether it is raining.

12. To further clarify our position let us look at the way we teach a child the usage of the word ' pain '. A child whenever he has pain cries; the adults who already know ' pain ', after looking at the symptoms of pain, tell him to use the word ' pain ', whenever he has pain which he expressed by crying previously. The word ' pain ' replaces the primitive natural expression of pain, that is, a cry. Thus the sentence ' I am in pain ' instead of being a description of a mental state, is more like a cry of complaint (vide PI, page 189, part ii). Since ' I am in pain ' is like a cry of complaint therefore ' I doubt whether I am in pain ' is senselss in the same way as ' I doubt whether ouch '; or ' I doubt whether Hurrah'. In the situation in which it is senseless to say ' I doubt whether....' it always is equally senseless to say ' I know that....'. This can be seen if we compare ' I am in pain ' with an order, an exclamation or a wish; e.g., ' Shut the door '; ' Good Morning;', or ' Hurrah;'. ' I doubt whether good morning ' is as senseless as ' I know that Good Morning ', and ' I doubt whether shut the door ' is as senseless as ' I know that shut the door ', and ' I doubt whether Hurrah ' is as senseless as ' I know that Hurrah '. Because in the case of ' Good Morning; ' it is not just psychologically, but logically impossible to doubt whether Good Morning. Therefore, it does not make sense to talk of knowledge and certainty of Good

Morning. Similarly, in the case of 'I am in pain', It is not just psychologically but logically impossible to doubt whether I am in pain. Therefore, it is senseless to talk of knowledge and certainty of 'I am in pain'.

13. Since it is out of place to talk of knowledge and certainty in the case of 'I am in pain', the question 'How do you know?' also becomes senseless. For, a question can sensibly be asked when there is a context of knowledge or learning. For example, in the case of continuing the series, 1, 3, 5, 7, 9,.... we can ask 'How do you know?' The answer can be 'by working on the formula $a + (n - 1)d$'. But in the case of 'I am in pain' the question 'How do you know?' cannot be asked. For it can be asked in those cases only in which a doubt exists; and in which "an answer exists and an answer (can exist) only where something can be said" (TLP, 6.51). We have already seen that there is no place of doubt in the case of 'I am in pain'. And what sort of answer can we imagine to the question 'How do you know that you are in pain?' The difficulty in answering this question is analogous to the following example :

> If a blind man were to ask me "Have you got two hands?" I should not make sure by looking. If I were to have any doubt of it, then I do not know why I should trust my eyes. For, why should not I test my *eyes* by looking to find out whether I see my two hands? *What* is to be tested for *what*? (Who decides what stands fast).
>
> And what does it mean to say that such and such stands fast? (OC 125)

In fact, in 'I am in pain' there simply is not the question 'how' as in 'why do I not satisfy myself that I have two feet when I want to get up from a chair? There is no why. I simply do not. This is how I act." (OC 148)

14. However, one of the answers that may be suggested to the question 'How do you know that you are in pain' is 'I know that I am in pain by feeling it'. Let us now consider this answer. We shall concentrate on the grammar of the verb 'feel'.

There is a perceptual sense of the verb 'to feel' as in 'I feel a stone in my shoe'. But, when we use the verb 'feel' in the first person psychological assertions, e.g., in 'I feel a slight pain

in my knee when I bend it ', it is not used in the perceptual sense; for the words ' I feel ' can easily be substituted by the words ' there is ' or ' I have '. Such a substitution is not possible in the case of ' I feel a stone in my shoe ' by ' There is a stone in my shoe '. While the former implies the latter, it does not mean the same. Whereas the assertion, ' There was a stone in my shoe but I did not feel it makes sense, the assertion ' There was a pain in my knee but I did not feel it ' makes no sense. Further, If we try to answer ' How do you know that you are in pain ? ' by ' Because I feel it ', then we enter into a vicious circle, and give no explanation at all. As Wittgenstein put it :

> " How do you know that you have pain ? ". Because " I feel them ". But I feel them means the same as " I have them ". Therefore, this was no explanation at all " (**BB** p. 68).

In fact, our knowing that we are in pain is sufficient criterion for our knowing that we are in pain. As can be seen from the following parallel example :

> " How do you know that you have raised your arm ?"— " I feel it ". So what you recognise is the feeling ? And are you certain that you recognise it right ?— You are certain that you have raised your arm; isn't this the criterion, the measure, of recognition (PI, 625).

The reason for entering into this vicious circle is that when we ask ' how ' we make a mistake of looking " for an explanation where we ought to look at what happens as " Proto-phenomenon '. That is, when we ought to have said : *this language game is played* " (PI 654).

We have been able to show that the sensation words cannot be the objects of the verbs of perception in the first person psychological statements. Therefore, the arguments given by those who hold that sensations are private in the sense that nobody other than the one who feels them becomes quite unplausible.

15. In our discussion so far, we have shown that the alleged use of the expression ' I know ' as an expression of certainty is a spurious use. It follows, then that the premises (i) and (ii) of the argument (A) are false. Since the conclusion at (iv) also makes use of the same sense of ' know ' that (i) and (ii)

do, it also is false. In the ordinary sense of 'know', people know when I am in pain and also I know when other people are in pain. This can easily be seen from our day-to-day experiences when we pass judgement on the 'inner states' of others and are right. Judgements of this kind depend upon the good evidence available to us.

One of the reasons for he sceptic to say that we can never pass correct judgements about the 'inner states' of others is the possibility of pretence, or shamming by other persons. To this, Wittgenstein would reply that some types of behaviour cannot be said to fall under the concept of pretending or shamming. One's ground for judgement of such acts can be empirical. For example, there can be no doubt of pretence about the pain of a man who after being crushed under a car is lying in a pool of blood and is crying 'I am in pain'.

Pretence or shamming which characterise the pretended action for example, pain behaviour, is an acquired skill. Only those who are already familiar with the forms of behaviour, can pretend to have pain when in fact they do not have it. Since infants and animals lack the mastery of those skills, the supposition of pretence is senseless in their case; and "to suppose that all behaviour might always be pretence is to suppose that the concept of pretending might lack behavioural criteria and that is not possible" (Z 571). Or as Ryle puts it :

> The menace of shamming is an empty menance. We know what shamming is. It is deliberately behaving in ways in which other people behave who are not shamming.[9]

16. Now, the sceptic may say, 'Granted that I can know 'inner states' of others. Can I know them with the same certainty with which I know other things?' To this the reply is "I can be as *certain* of someone else's sensation as of any fact" (PI Part II, P. 254). This certainty is of a different kind from the one expressed in the propositions '$25 \times 25 = 625$' and '$3'' \times 18''$ would not go to $3'$. The difference is not psychological but logical. The feeling of certainty, the absence of doubt, may well be the same. The criterion for our feeling certain about a matter lies in our behaviour, and so far as that is concerned

we are no less certain in general about the "inner states' of others than about the mathematical judgements of the sort 'Twice two is four'.

The sceptic confuses the logical kinds of certainty, for instance, the deductive proof of the justification of a mathematical theorem, with the different kinds, or a degrees of psychological certainty. He forgets that mathematical certainty is not a psychological concept. And that the kind of certainty that is required in different language games depends upon the kind of language-game involved, e.g., the kind of certainty required in continuing the series 1, 2, 3,.... upto 10 is my success in continuing it (cf. PI, Part II, P. 224).

To sum up : we have so far shown that senstations are not incommunicable; that is, we can know when others are in pain or what sensations, if any, they are having, and also that others can know what sensations, if, any, I am having.

IV

17. Let us now turn to the inalienability sense of 'privacy' according to which my sensations are private to me in the sense that only I can have them. This sense is expressed in the premise (iii) of the argument (A) where it is said that 'No one can feel (have) another's sensations'. Here Wittgenstein asks two questions :—

(i) "Which are my pains ?"

(ii) "What counts as criterion of identity here ?" (PI 253).

The first question is a request for the criterion of possessing pain, whereas the second question asks for the criterion of identity of pain.

The question (i) is like the question about a material object, e.g., 'which is my room ?' 'which is my table ?', 'which is my coat ?' The answers can be 'The room near the staircase on the third floor is your room', 'The table near the window in that room is your table', and 'The second coat in the wardrobe is your coat'. In such questions, therefore, the spatial location of the material object provides, in general, a principle of individuation for the object in question. Thus, in reply to the ques-

tion (i), one is apt to answer 'my pains are the pains felt in my body', or 'Any pains which I feel are my pains'. This is the answer against which Wittgenstein constantly argues. According to him, it rests on two mistakes :

(i) It supposes that this is a truth about the nature of pains or of human beings, that only one in whose body it is located can feel it.

(ii) It supposes that the word 'mine' is a possessive of ownship as 'my' in 'He has my coat'.

18. Against the first mistake Wittgenstein argued repeatedly and held that one could quite conceivably feel pain in someone else's body[10]. That the first supposition is a mistake, and that one can feel pain is someone else's body can easily be seen from the following consideration : It is perfectly conceivable that one could feel pain in someone else's body. There is no logical contradiction involved in it. Further more, in actual life and language we do come across cases where such locations are meaningful. For example, when I see a man crushed under a car and bleeding profusely, I say, 'Oh ! It is painful'. I say the same thing when a man with an injured left hand comes to me. But, when I am asked to touch the spot of pain, I touch the injured part of the person who has been hit by the car or the left hand of the person in the latter case. This would naturally be the pain felt in another's body. So my pain is not necessarily the pain felt in my body. The criterion of ownership of pain, therefore, is not given by the location of the pain in the body, but by the pain behaviour of the person who gives it expression. *He who manifests pain is its owner.* And, the pain which I manifest may single out a place outside my body.

19. Let us now consider the second mistake. 'My pain', 'His pain', 'Your pain', look like possessive of ownership because of the surface similarity with 'My coat', 'His coat', 'Your coat'. But this analogy is false; because in order to use a possessive of ownership as in 'His coat', 'My coat', and the like, and to make true statement, we must identify correctly the owner of the article. It is this identification which makes a difference between 'His coat is too large for him' and saying that 'That coat is too large for him'. If I had without identi-

fying correctly said ' His coat is too large for him ', then I could be corrected by saying ' That is not his coat, it is his father's '. Here ' He ' and ' His ' are not performing the same function. ' He ' shows the person, whereas ' His ' shows the onwner, the possessor.

In the case of sensations, in order to be in a position to use correctly the expression ' his sensations ' it is sufficient to know who is in pain. There is no other step required comparable to that of the correct identification of the owner as in ' his coat '. In fact the question of identification does not have a place in the language game :

> There is no question of recognising a person when I say I have a tooth-ache. To ask ' Are you sure that it is *you* who have pain ? " would be non-sensical. Now, when in this case no error is possible, it is because the move which we might be inclined to think of as an error a ' bad move ' is no move of the game at all. (We distinguish in chess between a good and bad moves, and we call it a mistake if we expose the queen to a bishop. But it is no mistake to promote a pawn to a king. (BB 67).

In the case of sensations, the talk of correct identification of the possessor is senseless (non-sensical), not because a particular combination of words is ruled out in the language-game, but because an attempt is being made to make a move with the help of this group of words in a language-game whereas it in fact belonged to the other language-game. As Wittgenstein is said to have remarked :

> Where we say ' this makes no sense ', we always mean ' This makes non-sense *in this particular game* '; and in answer to the question ' why do we call it " non-sense " ? ' ' What does it mean to call it so?' said that when we call a sentence ' non-sense ', it is ' because of some similarity to sentences which have sense ', and that ' non-sense always arises from forming symbols analogous to certain uses, where they have no use '[11].

Moreover, in ' My pain is quite severe ', the word ' My ' is performing the same function as ' I ' in ' I am in severe pain '. But as we have seen in the case of possessive of ownership, ' My '

and 'I' are to perform different functions. Therefore, the word 'mine' in 'The pains that I have are mine' is not the possessive of ownership. Hence 'The pains that I have are mine' can be replaced by 'my pains'. Thus the word 'my' in 'my pain' is not to be thought of as a possessive of ownership.

If the question 'which are my pains?' prompts us to answer it by saying 'Any pain that I have is mine', then both the questions and the answer should be recognised as spurious, as not belonging to the language-game. 'My pains' (not in the sense of possessive of ownership) are the pains which I express, or perhaps the pains which if expressed would necessarily be expressed by me (Cf. PI 302).

20. The question 'what is the criterion of identity for pains?' implies 'How are the pains, such as toothache, headache and others distinguished from each other?' The answer is : By their phenomenal characteristics like their intensity and location. If these phenomenal characteristics are the same, then it is possible for both of us, or for that matter for all of us, to have the same pain. For example, if both of us feel a sharp pain in the upper abdomen an hour after taking the same food, then it is perfectly natural for both of us to say that we have the same pain.

It may be objected that this is not absolutely correct, since the pains are not felt literally in the same place but only in corresponding places in two different bodies. To this Wittgenstein would reply that it is possible for the Siamese twins to have the pain exactly in the same place, namely, the place where they are joined together. Besides, it is not in the least logically incorrect to say that two persons have pain in the same place. Here, it may again be objected by a sceptic that pains are not specifically the same in the sense that they are numerically different; for one is Tweedledee's pain and the other is Tweedledum's pain. But we point out, this is making the possessor a chasacteristic of pain which, as we have shown above, is a mistake. Therefore, the criterion of counting pains as 'My pains', 'His pain', 'Tweedeldee's pains', 'Tweedledum's pain' is wrong. When one counts pains one counts differently. One counts in a way in which he counts habits, gaits and the like, we count in these cases with more or less detailed descriptions. This can be illustrated by taking the following example.

A five gaited horse is one that can embulate in five descriptions of foot movements; and two horses have the same gait if these foot movements fit the same relevant description. To say that they are performing two gaits which are exactly alike does not make sense. What would count as two gaits is some difference in the foot movements of two horses. Similarly, a person has the same pain, if he fits the same (relevant) description; and if hundred people fit the same description then all of them have the same pain.

21. The confusion about identity lies in the mistake to think that the same is same; that the use of the word ' same ' is governed by the same fixed rule irrespective of the context; whether we may be talking of ' coats ', ' tables ', ' pains ', ' gaits ', or ' sensations '. This is the mistake made by Ayer when he wrotes : " physical objects are public because it makes sense to say of different people that they are perceiving the same physical Object; mental images are private because it does not make sense to say of different people that they are having the same mental image, they can be imagining the same thing but it is impossible that their respective images should be literally the same "[12].

The talk of ' literally being the same ' makes the use of the word ' same ' as if it had one and the same meaning in all contexts. The mistake lies in not seeing the ' same ' must always be understood not in an abstract and pure sense but together with some general term such as pain, or coat, and that the criterion of identity in any particular case is determined by the general term involved. For example, when we talk of the identity of chairs (physical objects), we use ' same ' and ' exactly alike ' interchangeably, as in ' This chair is identical with that ', ' This chair is exactly like that, or ' This chair is the same as that '. Here we are talking of two chairs. When we talk of the identity of physical objects we talk of two or more things. But, in the case of the identity of colours, when we say ' This colour here is exactly like the colour over there ' or ' This is the same colour here as over there ', whichever of them we say, there is but one colour say red and it would be a mistake to say ' There cannot be only one colour there '.

The case of pains is not like physical objects but is like colours. To assimilate pains to physical objects is to make a ' category

mistake '. It would be a mistake to think that when we talk of two people having the same pain, say pain in the upper abdomen, ' same pain ' here means ' two pains being exactly alike '. As Wittgenstein says : " In so far as it makes *sense* to say that my pain is the same as his, it is also possible for us both to have the same pain " (PI 253). Therefore, only I can have my pains.

The statement ' only I can have my pains ' is equivalent to ' if they are my pains, I have them '. But this is an analytic statement like " one plays patience by oneself " (PI 248). Therefore this statement is comparatively uniformative about pains. Moreover ' Only I can have my pains ' is not true particularly of pains but of many other things besides pains, e.g., blushes, sneezes, catches and the like. If you blush, then surely it is your blush, and if you sneeze, then surely it is your sneeze, it is not mine, nor of anybody else's. If on the cricket field the catch comes to mid on position, the position at which you are standing, then surely it is your catch and not mine or of any other player's. If somebody wants to maintain that blushes and sneezes are inalienable in this sense, then this is a very tenuous sort of privacy, and so is the case with the one who maintains that sensations are inalienable. This, however, does not make senations any more private than behaviour.

23. Someone may still object and say that there is one sense in which pains are more private than behaviour, namely, that they can be kept secret without being publicly manifested in anyway. If one wants to call on experience thus kept to oneself private, for example, a chess move considered and discarded in imagination then there clearly are such private expreiences. Nobody including Wittgenstein denies this sort of privacy to experience. From this, it follows that there are some experiences which are private because they are kept to oneself. But the fact that there are some such experiences does not entail that all experiences are private in this sense. If a man itches, but does not scratch or report his itch, we may call that a private experience. But, if he scratches or reports his itch, there is no reason for us to call his itch private. So in this sense of ' private ' some of our pains are private and the others are not. And, from the mere fact that some pains are private we can not conclude that all pains are private. " What sometimes

happens could always happen" is a fallacy (cf. PI 345). "Some money is forged but it could not be that all money was forged"[13]. These considerations are, thus, sufficient to prove the thesis that sensations have no special inalienability.

24. We have shown above that our answer to the question 'Are sensations incommunicable?' is 'No', not in any sense peculiar to sensations'. These two questions were part of the question 'Are sensations private?'.

Since our answer to both is in the negative, the answer to the question 'Are sensations private?' is also in the negative. It follows that our experiences are not private. It is quire possible for people to know that another person is in pain or is dizzy or has any other sensation.

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NOTES

1. cf. Jones, O. R. (ed.) *Private Language Argument*, Macmillan St. Martin's Press, 1970, Introduction.

2. Translated by G. E. M. Ascombe, Basil Blackweel, 1968, Third Edition, henceforth to be referred to as "PI".

3. It may appear, from this, as if there can be private rules in a private language. But I shall argue in the course of this paper that there can possibly be no rules which are followed privately for the expression 'private rule' itself involves a category mistake.

4. London, 1934.

5. *Ibid*, p. 80.

6. *cf.* Kenny, Anthony, *Wittgenstein*, Allane Lane, The Penguin Press (1973) p. 185.

7. *cf.* Manser, Anthony, "Pain and Private Language", *Studies in the Philosophy of Wittgenstein.* (ed.) Peter Winch, London; Routledge and Kegan Paul 1969, pp. 166-84.

8. Wittgenstein, L., *On certainty* ed. By G. E. M. Ascombe and G. H. Von Wright, translated by Dennis Paul and G. E. M. Anscombe, J. & J. Harper Editions, New York and Evanston, henceforth to be referred to as OC, 58.

9. cf. p. 166.

10. *The Blue and Brown Books*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford 1960, henceforth to be referred to as BB", pp. 49–55.

11. Moore, G. E. " Wittgenstein's Lectures in 1930–33 ", *Philosophical papers* London : George Allen and Unwin, 1959, pp. 273–74.

12. *The Problem of Knowledge*, Penguin Books, 1956.

13. Wittgenstein L, " Private Experience," (ed.) Rush Phees, *Philosophical Review*, LXXVII, 1968, p. 314.