

PRIVACY AND PRIVATE LANGUAGE

PART II

25. Let us now turn to the second mistake that the supporter of 'private language' makes, namely, that sensation-specifying terms acquire meaning, that they can be taught and used, by private ostensive definition. We can make a list of sensation-specifying terms, or the terms, or words, that mean kinds of sensations : 'Itch', 'ache', 'pain', 'toothache', 'headache', 'stomachache', 'muscular ache', 'smarting or throbbing pain', 'burning sensation', 'dizziness', 'tickle', 'tingling', 'bitter taste', 'nausea', 'surmising sensation', 'fluish feeling', 'ringing in the ears', 'bright image'. One can add many more. All these are quite familiar and are of long standing. For the reasons already stated in section III, we shall take the example of 'pain'.

Wittgenstein's criticism of the mistake can be divided into two parts :

(i) The first part is concerned with the concept formation or acquisition of a concept.

(ii) The second part is concerned with the retention of a concept. The first mistake that a private linguist makes is the claim that he can name his sensation by a private ostensive definition he can form a concept *S* of a sensation by means of associating a word 'S' with the occurrence of the sensation *S*. The word 'S' was hitherto indefinable, but he gives it a stipulative definition by mental ostentation. From this it follows that he treats the sensation *S* as the object, and the word 'S' as its name.¹

26. Wittgenstein objects to this account on two grounds. First naming that is, forming a new concept bringing a particular object or the incarnation of some general characteristics under a general concept expressed by means of words, presupposes a variety of complex conditions. As Wittgenstein says :

"What does it mean to say that he has 'named his pain'—How has he done the naming of pain? And whatever he did, what was its purpose?—When one says "He gave a name to his sensations" one forgets that a great deal of

This is the Concluding part of Shri Ashok Vohra's article, the first Part of which was published in IPQ Vol III no. 4

stage setting in the language is presupposed if the mere act of naming is to make a sense. And when we speak of someone's having given a name to pain, what is presupposed is the existence of the grammar of the word "pain" it shows the post where the new word is stationed" (PI 257).

In the case of private linguist there *is ex hypothesi* no such stage-setting, there is no grammar to show us the 'post' where the new word say 'S' which names the sensations is to be stationed. Therefore, 'naming' in a private linguist's theory makes no sense. (In the course of this discussion, I shall show, also that even if naming in a private linguist's theory had made some sense, he would have been able to consistently use it.

Secondly, Wittgenstein denies that words such as 'pain', 'itch', 'tickle', and the like name private sensations. In *Zettel* Wittgenstein's wayward self says "joy" surely designates an inward thing, and his sterner self replies "No", "Joy" designates nothing. Neither any inward nor any outward thing" (Z 487). We must, however, make it clear that he is not denying that there is a trivial sense in which 'pain' is the name of a sensation. In this sense 'pain' denotes a sensation as 'five' denotes a number or as 'understanding' denotes a mental process and as obviously every word denotes something or the other. For instance, 'pain' is a sensation word; and it has uses closely allied to the other sensation words, as for instance, 'itch' and 'tickle', just as 'five' is a number word and has uses closely allied to other number words, as for example 'One', 'Two', 'Three' and 'Four'.

27. The genesis of the idea that 'pain' is the name of a sensation is that we talk about pains very much as we talk about colours, sounds, and textures. For example, we refer to people and attribute sensations to them as in the locations 'He is in pain', 'You are in pain', 'I am in pain' in the same way as we refer to objects and attribute colours to them in 'That is red', 'This book is red'. So, we come to think that the naming relation in the two must be very much the same.

The first absurd consequence of the idea that 'pain' is the name of a private sensation is that the proposition 'He is in pain' assumes that the person referred to has a particular sensation

before his consciousness, which I cannot have or feel. Since I cannot have his sensation of pain, I can never know whether he has pain or not. We have shown earlier that it is quite possible for us to know with almost the same certainty with which we know " $2 \times 2 = 4$ ", that another person is in pain.

28. Next, if 'pain' is the name of a sensation which I only experience in the privacy of my consciousness, then the proposition 'He is in pain' or 'You are in pain' would be unintelligible to me. For, if 'pain' denotes an item of my consciousness, for me, then pain can exist only when I am aware of it. It makes no sense to say that I no longer feel the pain yet it is going on all the same. On this view, therefore, the essential characteristics of pain is that I feel it, and I would be guilty of contradicting myself if I said that there is pain which I do not feel, but which another person feels. One possible objection to this view may be that though it is true that I only know what pain is from my own case but, surely, I can imagine that someone else feels the same as I feel when I have pain, when he says 'I am in pain', or 'He is in pain'. Wittgenstein replies to this :

But if I suppose that someone has a pain, then I am simply supposing that he has just the same as I have so often had "—That gets us no further. It is as if I were to say : " You surely know what 'it is 5 o'clock here means; so you also know what 'It is 5 O'clock on the sun means. It means simply that it is just the same time there as it is here when it is 5 o'clock". The explanation by means of identity does not work here. For I know well enough that one can call 5 O'clock here and 5 O'clock there "the same time", but what I do not know is in what case one is to speak of its being the same time here and there.

In exactly the same way, it is no explanation to say that he has a pain is simply the supposition that he has the same as I. For that part of grammar is quite clear to me that is, that one will say that the stove has the same experience as I, *If* one says it is in pain and I am in pain (PI 350).

The reason for our inability to imagine what it would be like 5 O'clock in the afternoon on the sun is that the very notion of being a certain time of being 5 o'clock, or 7 o'clock, presupposes a

system of time zones. And, one can speak of its being a particular time only for a particular time-zone, as for example, 5 o'clock in the afternoon in India, in America, or in France. But we cannot talk of its being 5 o'clock in the afternoon on the earth. In short, the concept '5 o'clock in the afternoon on the sun' does not have a stage setting in the language-game. We do not know where the concept is stationed. Similarly, if 'pain' is the name of a sensation, then I cannot conceive that another person feels the same sensation as I do when I feel pain, though I may imagine all sorts of images in connection with those words. Part of my imagining that another person experiences the same private sensation which I feel when I have pain is that I imagine him feeling a private sensation. But, how can I do this? We might say that he has the private sensation which I feel when I have pain, But,

... this is not too easy a thing to do : for I have to imagine pain which I do not feel on the mode of the pain which *I do feel*. That is, what I have to do is not simply to make a transition in imagination from one place of pain to another. As, from pain in the hand to pain in the arm. For I am not to imagine that I feel pain in some region of his body (which would also be possible) (PI 302).

There are no specifiable condition under which I could determine that another person feels the same sensation as I do. For to feel that, I have to feel his pain. But this is impossible in the sense in which it is impossible to have his sneeze. There are no states of affairs that would count as his feeling the same sensation as I do when I have pain, just as there are no states of affairs which would count as its being 5 o'clock in the afternoon on the sun. Since there is no criterion for determining the truth of the assertion 'He feels the same as I do when I have pain,' the assertion is unintelligible.

Someone may still insist that though I am not able to specify the exact conditions yet I mean something when I say I can imagine your pain on the model of my own. To this Wittgenstein replies:

... the phrase "I think I mean something by it", or "I am sure, I mean something by it", which we so often hear in philosophical discussions to justify the use of an expression is for us no justification at all. We ask: "What do you

mean?", i.e., "How do you use this expression?" If someone taught me the word "bench" and said that he sometimes or always put a stroke over it thus : bench and that this meant something to him, I should say : I do not know what sort of idea you associate with this stroke, but it does not interest me unless you show me that there is a use for the stroke in the kind of calculus in which you wish to use the word "bench",—I want to play chess, and a man gives the white king a paper crown, leaving the use of the piece unaltered, but telling me that the crown has a meaning to him in the game, which he cannot express by rules. I say : "as long as it does not alter the use of the piece, it has not what I call a meaning" (BB 65).

Thus, if the view namely that pain is the name of a sensation is right, then this assertion that another person is in pain is unintelligible. But this is absurd; because the propositions "you have pain", "He has pain" are perfectly intelligible to us. It follows that pain is not the name of a sensation.

29. Finally, if the private linguist claims that it is from his own case, his own experiences, that he knows what the word 'pain', which is the name of a sensation, means, and others only know what pain means from their own case, their own experiences, then we could never be sure that the word 'pain' stands for the same sensation for all of them. Consequently, they shall never be able to communicate with each other. The position of a group of people who somehow may succeed in communicating with one another, shall, on the private linguist's model, be analogous to the following case :

Suppose, every one had a box with something in it; we call it a "beetle". No one, can look into anyone else's box and every one says he knows what a beetle is only by looking at *his* beetle—Here it would be quite possible for every one to have something different in his box. One might even imagine such a thing constantly changing. But suppose that word "beetle" had a use in these people's language?—If so, it would not be used as the name of a thing. The thing in the box has no place in the language-game at all; not even as a *something* : for the box might even be empty. No one can

'divide through' by the thing in the box; it cancels out whatever it is. That is to say : if we construe the grammar of the expression of sensations on the model of 'object and designation' the object drops out of consideration as irrelevant (PI 293).

Moreover, if the private linguist were right in holding that one learns the meaning of the word 'pain' from his own experiences or from his own case, then a person who had never experienced a pain would never be able to use the word 'pain' in the language. But this is not so; because the sensation pain does not play any part in the language; what matters in the language-game is the grammar of the word 'pain'. This can be illustrated by the following example :

"We may say that a blind man does not see anything. But not only do we say so but he too says that he does not see. I do not mean "he agrees with us that he does not see—he does not dispute it", but rather—he too describes the facts in this way, having learned the same language as we have". On the private linguist's thesis, a blind man should never have been able to use the word 'see' in language, because he is never able to experience what we call 'seeing' himself which alone, on the private linguist's theory, lends meaning to the word 'seeing'. But, this in fact is not the case. Therefore, the supposition that 'pain' is the name of a sensation is wrong. Hence, 'pain' is not the name of a sensation, but merely a word in the language the use of which like all others requires us to know its grammar. Knowing the grammar of the word does not involve knowing the object but only the language-game in which this word occurs.

VI

30. So far, we have considered only the absurd consequences of holding the view that 'pain' is the name of a sensation. Now, we shall examine the view itself.

The teaching of names consists in pointing out examples to the learner, or making him observe what these words are applied to, and then making him apply these words to further examples. The test whether the pupil has got it right or not is his ability to apply these words to the appropriate or inappropriate objects; and the

only way of telling which is the case is for the people to confirm his application when it is correct or rebut when his application is wrong. But nothing of this sort is available in the case of a private linguist. The pupil may continually apply the word 'pain' to a wrong sensation, and no one could possibly tell him that he was wrong. That means the pupil could not learn the correct use of the word 'pain'.

31. Moreover, what sort of examples can we point to in order to teach the pupil the name 'pain'. Of course, one thing is perfectly certain, namely, that if people showed no outward signs of pain or no overt expression of pain, that if people just inwardly had pain but did not cry, groan, or plead for help, then there would conceivably be no way in which anyone could learn the use of the word 'pain'². So we have to agree that pain behaviour plays an indispensable part in the teaching, or learning of the word 'pain'. By pain-behaviour we mean the behavioural reactions which the subject is inclined to make to mean his sensations³. For example, scratching is the typical reaction to an itch; a certain sort of cry, and attention to the affected part is the typical reaction to a certain kind of sharp intense pain; and a different sort of vocal expression like meaning and a different sort of attention like gentle rubbing to the affected part constitute the typical behavioural reaction to an ache. In fact, it is that this general agreement in the pain-behaviour, which essentially is an agreement in the form of life, that makes the teaching and learning of sensation language possible (Cf PI 241).

32. But someone may object here and say that even if there were no overt behaviour, you could teach a child the use of the word 'pain' by sticking a pin in his hand or by putting a flame under his hand, and telling him that this is what is called 'pain'. This method is called 'indirect ostensive teaching'. The objection, however, is not valid.

In the *first* place, in the absence of any overt behaviour on the part of the child, there is no guarantee that he felt anything, just as we do not have the idea in the case of stones or plants. Wittgenstein expresses this idea in the following passage :

what gives us *so much as the idea* that living beings, things, can feel ?

Is it that my education has led me to it by drawing my attention to feelings in myself, and now I transfer the idea to the objects outside myself? That I recognise that there is something there (in me) which I can call "pain" without getting into conflict with the way other people use this word? I do not transfer my idea to stones, plants, etc.. Only of what behaves like a human beings can one say that it *has* pains (PI 283).

In the second place, there is no guarantee that he (the child) interprets our indirect ostensive definition correctly, that he does not take 'pain' to mean sticking of pin in his flesh or damaging the flesh by putting the flame under his hand. One possible way for the elimination of these alternative interpretations of our ostensive definition is to tell him that it does not mean any overt action or state of affairs which everyone can observe, but that it only means the private sensation that he alone can feel. But, this explanation is not enough. For, how can the child understand what we mean by 'sensation' and 'feeling'? Wittgenstein illustrates this point by taking the case in which a child is taught the name of the colour not by directly pointing at the colour but by making him see a white paper through different coloured spectacles. The different coloured spectacles are of different shapes. For instance, the red one is round, the green one elliptical, and so on. Now, there is no guarantee that he means by 'red' the round spectacles. Even if we tell him that 'red' is not the spectacles that he puts on his nose but the colour that he sees when he looks through it, it is quite clear that he will not be in a position to understand us, because he does not know what 'colour' means. So the whole act of this ostensive teaching does not make sense to a person who does not possess a language. (We shall discuss this point in detail a little later).

Lastly, even if we suppose that he understands 'sensation' and feeling how can we be sure that he feels the same sensation, of pain when the pin is struck into his hand? He may have felt only the piercing of the pin into his hand or something else.

All this, however, does not show that pain is not the name of a sensation; it only shows that the overt manifestations are a must for teaching or learning the word 'pain'. A child sees others groaning, crying, jerking their hands, when it touches a hot plate,

and claiming that it is painful. The child experiences what he himself feels when he touches hot things, or cries, or groans. In other words, the child learns that certain modes of behaviour are correlated with the inner sensations which are called pain. Thus, outward manifestations are necessary for a child to learn what pain is. He learns that pain is the sensation correlated with such overt manifestations, but that the overt manifestations are not identical with the pain or any part of it.

33. If 'pain' were the name of a sensation, then we could teach the use of 'pain' by an ostensive method, as we do in the case of names of physical object, for example, teaching of 'fan', or physical properties like 'red'. The connection between the name of a public object, for example, 'tree' and the object which it denotes is established by certain modes of human behaviour, e.g., in pointing to the trees, in counting them, making pictures of them, planting them, and the like. None of these games can be played with the word 'pain'. For example, I cannot point to the pain (though what I can show you is overt behaviour), nor draw a picture of pain. In fact, I can do practically nothing with the word 'pain' that I can do with the physical objects, colours, or shapes, in short with the publically observable properties. Thus none of the modes of human behaviour that constitutes the connection between the name of something and the thing named is available in the case of 'pain'. It follows then that 'pain' cannot be the name of a sensation.

Furthermore, the procedure of private ostensive definition, or mental ostentation, which on the private linguist's theory gives meaning to the word seems to be a possible procedure precisely because we do have the concepts of the object in question. For example, we do know what 'table' means, that it is a thing; or what 'red' means, that it is a colour. Therefore, when one gives us an ostensive definition of a certain concept, we understand (pick out) its meaning. Ostensive definition, as such, is a possible procedure for conveying or establishing the meaning of a word only for people already in possession of a language. The learner of a new language⁴ is in a position to follow an ostensive definition, but the learner of an initial language⁵ is not. In the case of 'pain'

also, a private ostensive definition or subjective ostensive definition seems possible to us, because we do know what 'pain' means. We are under the illusion that one could always 'pick out' the sensation pain from the stream of one's consciousness and name it. But we forget that 'picking out' itself presupposes that we possess the concept of sensation, and therefore it cannot serve to explain our acquisition of it. A concept is not formed merely by looking at a thing, or a colour. To have a concept means to know how the word is used; it is to know the rules which govern the use of the word in the language game.

34. The foregoing discussion shows that if by 'pain' one means the word whose meaning is learnt by ostensive definition, then 'pain' is not the name of a sensation; and that private ostensive definition or mental ostentation cannot help a private linguist to acquire a concept. The only means available to him for acquiring a concept is private ostensive definition. But, acquisition of a concept, on the private linguist's theory, does not make any sense, with the result that a private language can never get started.

VII

35. In the preceding section, we discussed the notion of concept acquisition. Let us suppose, for argument's sake, that a private linguist is somehow able to acquire a sensation-specifying concept. We can ask him the question: 'Is it possible to retain the concept?' By retention of a concept we mean using it correctly on future occasions. On the private linguist's theory, namely, that sensation-specifying terms are names of sensations, possessing a concept is like having one mental filing cabinet in which examples are correlated with labels, that is, a name is put on each example or a sample of a sensation. The justification for using the 'name' again is its resemblance with the sample in the mental cabinet.

36. Now a private linguist acquires a concept say 'S' by a private ostensive definition. On his theory, there is no other way to acquire the concept. The question then arises 'How shall he use the concept 'S' on a future occasion?' that is, 'How shall he know on a future occasion what he meant by 'S'?' For, to

apply the concept 'S' on a future occasion means that he must know the meaning of 'S'. But this is impossible in the private language. Wittgenstein says :

Let us imagine a table (something like a dictionary) that exists only in our imagination. A dictionary can be used to justify the translation of a word X by a word Y. But are we also to call it a justification if such a table is to be looked up only in the imagination?—"Well, yes; then it is a subjective justification"—But justification consists in appealing to something independent.—"But surely I can appeal from one memory to another. For example, I do not know if I have remembered the time of departure of a train right and to check it I call to mind how a page of the time table looked. Is not it the same here?"—No; for this process has got to produce a memory which is actually *correct*. If the mental image of the time table could not itself be tested for correctness, how could it confirm the correctness of the first memory? (As if someone were to buy several copies of the morning paper to assure himself that what it said was true).

Looking up a table in imagination is no more looking up a table than the image of the result of an imagined experiment is the result of an experiment (PI 265).

The only justification available to a private linguist for the use of 'S' on any occasion is his remembering the connection between 'S' and the object S. But, merely remembering the connection between a 'sign' and a 'sensation' does not always mean identifying the sensation correctly. But simply remembering which sensation the sign means and attaching meaning to a name does not mean acquiring infallibility in its use. For example, knowing what the word 'women' means does not guarantee that one will never mistake woman for a man, or knowing what 'toothache' means does not guarantee that one will never mistake a toothache for a gumache.

The justification, on a private linguist's theory, for using 'S' is his saying that it is 'S'. But, if having the same pain means the same as saying that one has the same pain then 'I have the same pain' means the same as 'I say I have the same pain' and the exclamation 'oh!' means I say oh!⁶.

The justification for using 'S' then is a subjective justification. But, the private linguist forgets that appealing for the justification of something is to ask for (objective) criterion; otherwise, whatever I think is right shall be right. As Wittgenstein puts it: "Whatever is going to seem right to me is right. And that only means that here we cannot talk about 'right'" (PI 258). In such circumstances not only is it impossible for the private linguist to identify a correct sign exemplar, but it is also impossible for him to distinguish a correct from an incorrect correlation. He would not be able to use the word 'same' for, he cannot distinguish between its correct and incorrect use.

37. One possible objection to this account can be that we do not generally ask for justification when we are engaged in our daily discourse. Then why should we so much emphasize on the requirement of justification in the case of a private language? In our day-to-day life, we do not consciously follow the rules, that we do not first look at the rule and then make an assertion; we just develop habits of speech which rules describe. Thus, our following a rule is a matter of speech-habit. From this, it follows that our use of 'same' in the day-to-day speech is a matter of habit. In the same way, a private linguist could also use the same word for something even if he did not know the rules governing the use of 'same'. He does not necessarily face any problem when he uses the word 'same' because he acts out of a habit⁷.

This objection is invalid on two accounts. In the *first* place, we are said to be in the habit of doing a thing only when we do the same thing regularly. For example, I am said to be having the habit of putting my hand on my nose whenever I speak only if people see me putting my hand on my nose whenever I speak to them. Now, I am said to have this habit only if someone has seen me putting my hand on my nose a number of times on the occasions on which I spoke to him or to anyone else. The criterion for anyone knowing whether I am in the habit of doing so is to see my hand on my nose on any occasion on which I spoke. We can further illustrate this by taking another example. I am said to be in the habit of uttering 'No' after every sentence that I use in discourse with you only if people observed me doing this when I am engaged in talking with them. The criterion for knowing whether I am in the habit of saying 'No' after each sentence is to see me talking to the people.

If someone finds me consistently using the word 'No' after each sentence, then he can assume that I have this habit. So, doing a thing consistently culminates in what we call a habit. But a private linguist cannot use the same word for the same thing consistently and hence cannot form the habit of using them.

In the *second* place, in case of doubt about the usage of a word in a public language where we habitually follow rules, we can always refer to the rules governing its use. Rules are something which are observed. Merely thinking that one is following or observing a rule is not observing it. Rules are objective and not subjective. A rule is not something which one follows once and once only in one's life time. It is what one does regularly. That is why we can always appeal to them for justification. It is because of their objective character that we are able to appeal to them when in doubt.

In the case of the private linguist, one gives oneself the 'private' rule 'I will call the same thing 'S' whenever it occurs'. After having given this 'rule', one can do anything with it; for, there is no objective check on its use. A rule always points towards the way in which it should be followed. The 'private rule' does not point in any direction. The 'private linguist' is the sole arbiter for deciding whether he has correctly used the rule or not. No restriction can be imposed upon his application of the rule. His saying 'This is different now', and after sometimes 'This is the same now', or his uttering nothing, does not make any difference whatsoever. This is not the question about his trusting his memory. It is a question whether remembering makes a sense on his theory. If he doubts his memory, then he can look for a confirmation. But, confirmation makes sense only in the case of public language. There can be neither a question of confirmation nor of doubt in the case of private language. For, there is just no rule for what is the same and what is not the same; there is no distinction between correct and incorrect. It is for this reason that what the private linguist says does not make any difference. And, this implies that he does not say anything; because if he said anything, it should make a difference.

38. A private linguist may say that "I speak or write the sign down, and at the same time I concentrate my attention on the sensation...in this way I impress on myself the connection between the sign and the sensation". (PI 258). Thus impressing,

or concentrating one's attention on the sensation that accompanies when he wishes to say 'S' may be another justification offered by a private linguist for his use of 'S'. For example, whenever, he uses the word 'S' he has a particular sensation, and it is this particular sensation 'in' him which makes him say 'S'. He may say that "The occurrence of this sensation is the justification for my using 'S'. To this Wittgenstein's reply is: "The very fact that we should so much like to say: "This is the important thing"—while we point privately to the sensation—is enough to show how much we are inclined to say something which gives no information". (PI 298).

39. A third alternative is that a private linguist correlates his use of 'S' with a publically observable phenomenon. Consider the following example of Wittgenstein's:

Let us now imagine a use for the entry of the sign 'S' in my diary. I discover that whenever I have a particular sensation a manometer shows that my blood-pressure rises. So I shall be able to say that my blood-pressure is rising without using any apparatus. This is a useful result. And now it seems quite indifferent whether I have recognised the sensation *right* or not. Let us suppose I regularly identify it wrong, it does not matter in the least, and that alone shows that the hypothesis that I make a mistake is mere show. (We, as it were, turned a knob which looked as if it could be used to turn on some part of the machine; but it was a mere ornament, not connected with the mechanism at all.) (PI 270).

In this case, there is a check on my use of 'S' namely, seeing that whenever I used 'S' my blood-pressure rises. To see whether I remember the meaning of 'S' right I do not have merely to rely on my memory but can check it up by seeing the mercury rising in the manometer. Here, then, 'S' has a genuine use, but not as a part of private language, because in private language any person other than the speaker cannot know that the speaker is having a sensation. But in such a situation, 'S' tantamounts to a 'sensation which means my blood-pressure is rising'. If the private linguist tries to justify his use of 'S' by associating it with a public referent, then 'S' is not a word in a private language; but it is a word that tantamounts to a sensation which means 'so and so' a public referent.

40. We have shown that the only means for a private linguist to justify his use of 'S' is to appeal to his memory. But, as we have discussed above, memory alone is not a sufficient criterion for our consistent use of 'S'. From this, it follows that there is no way in which he could consistently use 'S'. It seems then that, on his theory, any assertion if at all it is possible to make one, would have to perform two functions simultaneously. *One*: it must perform the function of a statement, and *Two*: it must at the same time serve as a definition in that, the speaker shall have to specify the meaning of 'S' everytime he uses it. But, this is impossible; for making a statement and giving a definition are two different speech acts. They cannot simultaneously be combined in one and the same act of asserting. Thus, on the private linguist's theory, even retention of a concept does not make sense. It follows then that even if, *per impossible*, a private language could ever get started, it could never persist.

41. I close this paper with two remarks :

One : The assumption that a private language is possible leads to the consequence that a language could be invented; for, the notion of a private language involves that each one of us invents a new language to report on his inner experiences. But this is absurd, because inventing a new language (in the sense that it involves inventing a new 'form of life') is impossible. To invent a language means to invent a new way of following rules, making promises, giving orders, and so on. All these presuppose usages, practices, conventions, rules and a host of other similar things. To invent a new language, thus, means to invent a new 'form of life'. Nobody would dispute the fact that a form of life cannot be invented but is evolved. Therefore, the supposition that a private language can be invented is false. Hence private language is impossible.

Two : Wittgenstein wanted to show not only that 'private language' is impossible, but also that those who hold the view that a language can be private, or that 'private language' is possible, are making a category mistake. They ignore the social nature of language. A language is a set of activities, or practices defined by certain rules which govern the various uses of the words in the language. In short, language is a 'form of life'. As Wittgenstein says : "to imagine a language is to imagine a form

of life" (PI 23). (Language) is not agreement in opinion but is a form of life" (PI 24), and "that the speaking of a language is part of the activity or of a form of life" (PI 23). Nobody would dispute the assertion 'that a 'form of life' cannot be private?' For, 'private' is not the concept which can be used with the concept 'form of life'. Those who allocate the concept 'private' to the concept 'language' have thus made a category mistake.

In writing this article I have profited from discussion with Dr. V. K. Bharadwaja.

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NOTES

In writing this article I have profited from discussion with Dr. V. R. Bharadwaja.

1. "I want to keep a diary about the recurrence of a certain sensation. To this end I associate it with the sign "S" and then write the sign in a calendar for every day on which I have a sensation. I will remark first of all that a definition of the sign cannot be formulated. But still I can give myself a kind of ostensive definition. How? Can I point to the sensation? Not in the ordinary sense. But I speak, or write the sign down, and at the same time concentrate my attention on the sensation. And so, as it were point it inwardly" (PI 258).

2. "private Experience", *op. Cit.*

3. "what would it be like if human beings showed no outward signs of pain (did not groan, grimace, etc.). Then it would be impossible to teach a child the word 'toothache'" (PI 125).

4. This includes not only the present short term bodily behaviour, but also the future and past behaviour.

5. By learning a new language is meant learning another language. For example, if I already know English and start learning French, then I shall be said to be learning a new language.

6. But if I do not know any language, then I shall be said to be learning the initial language. For example, a child when he learns his mother tongue, he is said to be learning the initial language.

7. Cf. "Private Experience", *op. cit.*

8. Cf. Todd, W., "Wittgenstein on Private Language", *Philosophical Quarterly*, 12 (1962).

PEIRCE, HARTSHORNE AND WEISS

Throughout his philosophical life, C. S. Peirce had one constant fascination—the triad. Throughout his collected works¹ Peirce spends a good deal of time to articulating and defending his view that the triad is the philosophical instrument par excellence. Having considered the nature and applicability of monads, dyads, triads, and tetrads as philosophical instruments, Peirce notes that although higher—and lower—numbers may present interesting configurations, they “cannot rise to the height of philosophical categories so fundamental as those” that have been constructed triadically (1.363).

It is interesting to note that the two editors of Peirce’s collected works, themselves distinguished systematic philosophers, have appraised Peirce’s defense of triads differently. In agreement with Peirce, Hartshorne asserts that “There is... a deep truth in Peirce’s contention that triads are incomparably more adequate than dyads and in a sense than tetrads, as intellectual instruments”.² In another place, he adds that “Peirce showed once and for all that the three categories form an irreducible minimum.”³

Paul Weiss, on the other hand, has utilized a tetradic instrument in *Modes of Being*. He argues there that “Being is diversely and exhaustively exhibited in four interlocked, irreducible modes.”⁴ We cannot have less than four modes without being confronted by insoluble problems. There are thus “no more and no less than four modes of being.”⁵ In partial response to Weiss, Hartshorne has said that Weiss’ tetradic ontology is a brilliant example of “how *not* to build a metaphysical system.”⁶ Thus whereas Hartshorne agrees with Peirce, Weiss differs with both of them.

In this article, I would like to examine this disagreement. What does Peirce have to say about and in defense of triads? Why does he reject tetrads and uphold triads? How do triads function as opposed to tetrads? If, as both Weiss and Hartshorne believe, the issue over triads versus tetrads is the fundamental difference between them, what is the nature and what are the consequences of the difference?