

excerpts from PHILOSOPHICAL INVESTIGATIONS

Philosophical Investigations; the English text of the third edition.

Translated by G. E. M. Anscombe. New York, Macmillan [1968, c1958]

1. "When they (my elders) named some object, and accordingly moved towards something, I saw this and I grasped that that the thing was called by the sound they uttered when they meant to point it out. Their intention was shown by their bodily movements, as it were the natural language of all peoples; the expression of the face, the play of the eyes, the movement of other parts of the body, and the tone of the voice which expresses our state of mind in seeking, having, rejecting, or avoiding something. Thus, as I heard words repeatedly used in their proper places in various sentences, I gradually learnt to understand what objects they signified; and after I had trained my mouth to form these signs, I used them to express my own desires."

These words, it seems to me, give us a particular picture of the essence of human language. It is this: the individual words in language name objects--sentences are combinations of such names.--In this picture of language we find the roots of the following idea: Every word has a meaning. The meaning is correlated with the word. It is the object for which the word stands.

Augustine does not speak of there being any difference between kinds of word. If you describe the learning of language in this way you are, I believe, thinking primarily of nouns like 'table', 'chair', 'bread', and of people's names, and only secondarily of the names of certain actions and properties; and of the remaining kinds of word as something that will take care of itself.

Now think of the following use of language: I send someone shopping. I give him a slip marked 'five red apples'. He takes the slip to the

shopkeeper, who opens the drawer marked 'apples', then he looks up the word 'red' in a table and finds a colour sample opposite it; then he says the series of cardinal numbers--I assume that he knows them by heart--up to the word 'five' and for each number he takes an apple of the same colour as the sample out of the drawer.--It is in this and similar ways that one operates with words--"But how does he know where and how he is to look up the word 'red' and what he is to do with the word 'five'?" ---Well, I assume that he 'acts' as I have described. Explanations come to an end somewhere.--But what is the meaning of the word 'five'? --No such thing was in question here, only how the word 'five' is used.

2. That philosophical concept of meaning has its place in a primitive idea of the way language functions. But one can also say that it is the idea of a language more primitive than ours.

Let us imagine a language ...The language is meant to serve for communication between a builder A and an assistant B. A is building with building-stones; there are blocks, pillars, slabs and beams. B has to pass the stones, and that in the order in which A needs them. For this purpose they use a language consisting of the words 'block', 'pillar', 'slab', 'beam'. A calls them out; --B brings the stone which he has learnt to bring at such-and-such a call. -- Conceive this as a complete primitive language.

3. Augustine, we might say, does describe a system of communication; only not everything that we call language is this system. And one has to say this in many cases where the question arises 'Is this an appropriate description or not?' The answer is: 'Yes, it is appropriate, but only for this narrowly circumscribed region, not for the whole of what you were claiming to describe.'

It is as if someone were to say: "A game consists in moving objects about on a surface according to certain rules..." --and we replied: You seem to be thinking of board games, but there are others. You can make your definition correct by expressly restricting it to those games.

122. A main source of our failure to understand is that we do not 'command a clear view' of the use of our words.

109 Philosophy is a battle against the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of a language.

94.

'A proposition is a queer thing!' Here we have in germ the subliming of our whole account of logic. The tendency to assume a pure intermediary between the propositional signs and the facts. Or even to try to purify, to sublime, the signs themselves. -- For our forms of expression prevent us in all sorts of ways from seeing that nothing out of the ordinary is involved, by sending us in pursuit of chimeras.

95.

"Thought must be something unique." When we say, and mean, that such-and-such is the case, we -- and our meaning -- do not stop anywhere short of the fact; but we mean: this -- is -- so. But this paradox (which has the form of a truism) can also be expressed in this way: Thought can be of what is not the case.

96.

Other illusions come from various quarters to attach themselves to the special one spoken of here. Thought, language, now appear to us as the unique correlate, picture, of the world. These concepts: proposition, language, thought, world, stand in line one behind the other, each equivalent to each. (But what are these words to be used for now? The language-game in which they are to be applied is missing.)

97.

Thought is surrounded by a halo. -- Its essence, logic, presents an order, in fact the a priori order of the world: that is, the order of possibilities, which must be common to both world and thought. But this order, it seems, must be utterly simple. It is prior to all experience, must run through all experience; no empirical cloudiness or uncertainty can be allowed to affect it. -- It must rather be of the purest crystal. But this crystal does not appear as an abstraction; but as something concrete, indeed, as the most concrete -- as it were the hardest thing there is (Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus No. 5.5563).

We are under the illusion that what is peculiar, profound, essential, in our investigation, resides in its trying to grasp the incomparable essence of language. That is, the order existing between the concepts of proposition, word, proof, truth, experience, and so on. This order is a super -- order between -- so to speak -- super -- concepts. Whereas, of course, if the words "language", "experience", "world", have a use, it must be as humble a one as that of the words "table", "lamp", "door".

98.

On the one hand it is clear that every sentence in our language is in order as it is. That is to say, we are not striving after an ideal, as if our ordinary vague sentences had not yet got a quite unexceptionable sense, and a perfect language awaited construction by us. -- On the other hand it seems clear that where there is sense there must be perfect order. So there must be perfect order even in the vaguest sentence.

99.

The sense of a sentence -- one would like to say -- may, of course, leave this or that open, but the sentence must nevertheless have a definite sense. An indefinite sense -- that would really not be a sense at all. -- This is like: An indefinite boundary is not really a boundary at all. Here one thinks perhaps: if I say "I have locked the man up fast in the room -- there is only one door left open" -- then I simply haven't locked him in at all; his being locked in is a sham. One would be inclined to say here: "You haven't done anything at all". An enclosure with a hole in it is as good as none. -- But is that true?

100.

"But still, it isn't a game, if there is some vagueness in the rules." -- But does this prevent its being a game? -- "Perhaps you'll call it a game, but at any rate it certainly isn't a perfect game." This means it has impurities, and what I am interested in at present is the pure article. -- But I want to say: we misunderstand the role of the ideal in our language. That is to say: we too should call it a game, only we are dazzled by the ideal and therefore fail to see clearly the actual use of the word game.

101.

We want to say that there can't be any vagueness in logic. The idea now absorbs us, that the ideal 'must' be found in reality. Mean while we do not as yet see how it occurs there, nor do we understand the nature of this "must". We think it must be in reality: for we think we already see it there.

102.

The strict and clear rules of the logical structure of propositions appear to us as something in the background -- hidden in the medium of the understanding. I already see them (even though through a medium): for I understand the propositional sign, I use it to say something.

103.

The ideal, as we think of it, is unshakable. You can never get outside it; you must always turn back. There is no outside; outside you cannot breathe. -- Where does this idea come from? It is like a pair of glasses on our nose through which we see whatever we look at. It never occurs to us to take them off.

106.

Here it is difficult as it were to keep our heads up, -- to see that we must stick to the subjects of our everyday thinking, and not go astray and imagine that we have to describe extreme subtleties, which in turn we are after all quite unable to describe with the means at our disposal. We feel as if we had to repair a torn spider's web with our fingers.

107.

The more narrowly we examine actual language, the sharper becomes the conflict between it and our requirement. (For the crystalline purity of logic was, of course, not a result of investigation: it was a requirement.) The conflict becomes intolerable; the requirement is now in danger of becoming empty. -- We have got on to slippery ice where there is no friction and so in a certain sense the conditions are ideal, but also, just because of that, we are unable to walk. We want to walk: so we need friction. Back to the rough ground!

108.

We see that what we call "sentence" and "language" has not the formal unity that I imagined, but is the family of structures more or less related to one another. -- But what becomes of logic now? Its rigor seems to be giving way here. -- But in that case doesn't logic altogether disappear? -- For how can it lose its rigor? Of course not by our bargaining any of its rigor out of it. -- The preconceived idea of crystalline purity can only be removed by turning our whole examination around. (One might say: the axis of reference of our examination must be rotated, but about the fixed point of our real need.)

The philosophy of logic speaks of sentences and words in exactly the sense in which we speak of them in ordinary life when we say e.g. "Here is a Chinese sentence", or "No, that only looks like writing; it is actually just an ornament" and so on.

We are talking about the spatial and temporal phenomenon of language, not about some non -- spatial, non -- temporal phantasm. [Note in margin: Only it is possible to be interested in a phenomenon in a variety of ways]. But we talk about it as we do about the pieces in chess when we are stating the rules of the game, not describing their physical properties.

The question "What is a word really?" is analogous to "What is a piece in chess?"

109.

It was true to say that our considerations could not be scientific ones. It was not

of any possible interest to us to find out empirically that, contrary to our preconceived ideas, it is possible to think such-and-such -- whatever that may mean. (The conception of thought as a gaseous medium.) And we may not advance any kind of theory. There must not be anything hypothetical in our considerations. We must do away with all explanation, and description alone must take its place. And this description gets its light, that is to say its purpose, from the philosophical problems. These are, of course, not empirical problems, they are solved, rather, by looking into the workings of our language, and that in such a way as to make us recognize those workings: in despite of an urge to misunderstand them. The problems are solved, not by giving new information, but by arranging what we have always known. Philosophy is a battle against the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of language.

110.

Language (or thought?) is something unique" -- this proves to be a superstition (not a mistake!), itself produced by grammatical illusions.

And now the impressiveness retreats to these illusions, to the problems.

111.

The problems arising through a misinterpretation of our forms of language have the character of depth. They are deep disquietudes; their roots are as deep in us as the forms of our language and their significance is as great as the importance of our language. Let us ask ourselves: why do we feel a grammatical joke to be deep? (And that is what the depth of philosophy is.)

112.

A simile that has been absorbed into the forms of our language produces a false appearance, and this disquiets us. "But this isn't how it is!" -- we say. "Yet this is how it has to be!"

113.

"But this is how it is --" I say to myself over and over again. I feel as though, if only I could fix my gaze absolutely sharply on this fact, get it in focus, I must grasp the essence of the matter.

114.

(*Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, 4.5): "The general form of propositions is: This is how things are." That is the kind of proposition that one repeats to oneself countless times. One thinks that one is tracing the outline of the thing's nature over and over again, and one is merely tracing round the frame through which we look at it.

115.

A picture held us captive. And we could not get outside it, for it lay in our language and language seemed to repeat it to us inexorably.

116.

When philosophers use a word -- "knowledge", "being", "object", "I", "proposition",

"name" -- and try to grasp the essence of the thing, one must always ask oneself: is the word ever actually used in this way in the language which is its original home? --

What we do is to bring words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use.

117.

You say to me: "You understand this expression, don't you? Well then -- I am using it in the sense you are familiar with." -- As if the sense were an atmosphere accompanying the word, which it carried with it into every kind of application.

If, for example, someone says that the sentence "This is here" (saying which he points to an object in front of him) makes sense to him then he should ask himself in what special circumstances this sentence is actually used. There it does make sense.

118.

Where does our investigation get its importance from, since it seems only to destroy everything interesting, that is, all that is great and important? (As it were all the buildings, leaving behind only bits of stone and rubble.) What we are destroying is nothing but houses of cards and we are clearing up the ground of language on which they stand.

119.

The results of philosophy are the uncovering of one or another piece of plain nonsense and of bumps that the understanding has got by running its head up against the limits of language. These bumps make us see the value of the discovery.

120.

When I talk about language (words, sentences, etc.) I must speak the language of every day. Is this language somehow too coarse and material for what we want to say? Then how is another one to be constructed? -- And how strange that we should be able to do anything at all with the one we travel

In giving explanations I already have to use language full -- blown (not some sort of preparatory, provisional one); this by itself shows that I can adduce only exterior facts about language.

Yes, but then how can these explanations satisfy us? -- Well, your very questions were framed in this language; they had to be expressed in this language, if there was anything to ask!

And your scruples are misunderstandings.

Your questions refer to words; so I have to talk about words.

You say: the point isn't the word, but its meaning, and you think of the meaning as a thing of the same kind as the word, though also different from the word. Here the word, there the meaning. The money, and the cow that you can buy with it. (But contrast: money, and its use.)

121.

One might think: if philosophy speaks of the use of the word "philosophy" there must be a second -- order philosophy. But it is not so: it is, rather, like the case of orthography, which deals with the word "orthography" among others without then being second -- order.

122.

A main source of our failure to understand is that we do not command a clear view of the use of our words. -- Our grammar is lacking in just this sort of perspicuity. A perspicuous representation produces just that understanding which consists in 'seeing connections'. Hence the importance of finding and inventing intermediate cases.

The concept of a perspicuous representation is of fundamental significance for us. It earmarks the form of account we give, the way we look at things. (Is this a 'Weltanschauung'?)

123.

A philosophical problem has the form: "I don't know my way around."

124.

Philosophy may in no way interfere with the actual use of language, it can in the end only describe it.

For it cannot give it any foundation either.

It leaves everything as it is.

It also leaves mathematics as it is, and no mathematical discovery can advance it. A "leading problem of mathematical logic" is for us a problem of mathematics like any other.

125.

It is the business of philosophy, not to resolve a contradiction by means of a mathematical or logico -- mathematical discovery, but to make it possible for us to get a clear view of the state of mathematics that troubles us: the state of affairs before the contradiction is resolved. (And this does not mean that one is sidestepping a difficulty.)

The fundamental fact here is that we lay down rules, a technique, for a game, and that then when we follow the rules, things do not turn out as we had assumed.

That we are therefore as it were entangled in our own rules.

This entanglement in our rules is what we want to understand (i.e. get a clear view of).

It throws light on our concept of meaning something. For in those cases things turn out otherwise than we had meant, foreseen. That is just what we say when, for example, a contradiction appears: "I didn't mean it like that."

The civil status of a contradiction, or its status in civil life: there is the philosophical problem.

126.

Philosophy simply puts everything before us, and neither explains nor deduces anything. -- Since everything lies open to view there is nothing to explain. For what is hidden, for example, is of no interest to us.

One might also give the name "philosophy" to what is possible before all new discoveries and inventions.

127.

The work of the philosopher consists in assembling reminders for a particular purpose.

128.

If one tried to advance theses in philosophy, it would never be possible to debate them, because everyone would agree to them.

129.

The aspects of things that are most important for us are hidden because of their simplicity and familiarity. (One is unable to notice something -- because it is always before one's eyes.) The real foundations of his inquiry do not strike a man at all. Unless that fact has at some time struck him. -- And this means: we fail to be struck by what, once seen, is most striking and most powerful.

130.

Our clear and simple language-games are not preparatory studies for a future regularization of language -- as it were first approximations, ignoring friction and air -- resistance. The language-games are rather set up as objects of comparison which are meant to throw light on the facts of our language by way not only of similarities, but also of dissimilarities.

131.

For we can avoid ineptness or emptiness in our assertions only by presenting the model as what it is, as an object of comparison -- as, so to speak, a measuring -- rod; not as a preconceived idea to which reality must correspond. (The dogmatism into which we fall so easily in doing philosophy.)

132.

We want to establish an order in our knowledge of the use of language: an order with a particular end in view, one out of many possible orders; not the order. To this end we shall constantly be giving prominence to distinctions which our ordinary forms of language easily make us overlook. This may make it look as if we saw it as our task to reform language.

Such a reform for particular practical purposes, an improvement in our terminology designed to prevent misunderstandings in practice, is perfectly possible. But these are not the cases we have to do with. The confusions which occupy us arise when language is like an engine idling, not when it is doing work.

133.

It is not our aim to refine or complete the system of rules for the use of our words in unheard-of ways.

For the clarity that we are aiming at is indeed complete clarity. But this simply means that the philosophical problems should completely disappear.

The real discovery is the one that makes me capable of stopping doing philosophy when I want to. -- The one that gives philosophy peace, so that it is no longer tormented by questions which bring in question. -- Instead, we now demonstrate a method, by examples; and the series of examples can be broken off. -- Problems are solved (difficulties eliminated), not a single problem.

There is not a philosophical method, though there are indeed methods, like different therapies.

134.

Let us examine the proposition: "This is how things are." -- How can I say that this is the general form of propositions? -- It is first and foremost itself a proposition, an English sentence, for it has a subject and a predicate. But how is this sentence applied -- that is, in our everyday language? For I got it from there and nowhere else.

We may say e.g.: "He explained his position to me, said that this was how things were, and that therefore he needed an advance". So far, then, one can say that that sentence stands for any statement. It is employed as a propositional schema, but only because it has the construction of an English sentence. It would be possible to say instead "such and such is the case", "this is the situation", and so on. It would also be possible here simply to use a letter, a variable, as in symbolic logic. But no one is going to call the letter "p" the general form of propositions. To repeat: "This is how things are" had that position only because it is itself what one calls an English sentence. But though it is a proposition, still it gets employed as a propositional variable. To say that this proposition agrees (or does not agree)

with reality would be obvious nonsense. Thus it illustrates the fact that one feature of our concept of a proposition is, sounding like a proposition.

135.

But haven't we got a concept of what a proposition is, of what we take "proposition" to mean? -- Yes; just as we also have a concept of what we mean by "game". Asked what a proposition is -- whether it is another person or ourselves that we have to answer -- we shall give examples and these will include what one may call inductively defined series of propositions. This is the kind of way in which we have such a concept as proposition'. (Compare the concept of a proposition with the concept of number.)

136.

At bottom, giving "This is how things are" as the general form of propositions is the same as giving the definition: a proposition is whatever can be true or false. For instead of "This is how things are" I could have said "This is true". (Or again "This is false".) But we have

'p' is true = p

'p' is false = not-p.

And to say that a proposition is whatever can be true or false amounts to saying: we call something a proposition when in our language we apply the calculus of truth functions to it.

Now it looks as if the definition -- a proposition is whatever can be true or false -- determined what a proposition was, by saying: what fits the concept 'true', or what the concept 'true' fits, is a proposition. So it is as if we had a concept of true and false, which we could use to determine what is and what is not a proposition. What engages with the concept of truth (as with a cogwheel) is a proposition.

But this is a bad picture. It is as if one were to say "The king in chess is the piece that one can check." But this can mean no more than that in our game of chess we only check the king. Just as the proposition that only a proposition can be true or false can say no more than that we only predicate "true" and "false" of what we call a proposition. And what a proposition is is in one sense determined by the rules of sentence formation (in English for example), and in another sense by the use of the sign in the language-game. And the use of the words "true" and "false" may be among the constituent parts of this v game; and if so it belongs to our concept 'Proposition' but does not AS we might also say, check belongs to our concept of the king in chess (as so to speak a constituent part of it). To say that check did not it our concept of the pawns, would mean that a game in which pawns were checked, in which, say, the players who lost their pawns lost, would be uninteresting or stupid or too complicated or something of the kind.

137.

What about learning to determine the subject of a sentence by means of the question "Who or what?" -- Here, surely, there is such a thing as the subject's 'fitting' this question; for otherwise how should we find out what the subject was by means of the question? We find it out much as we find out which letter of the alphabet comes after 'K' by saying the alphabet up to 'K' to ourselves. Now in what sense does 'L' fit on to this series of letters? -- In that sense "true" and "false" could be said to fit propositions; and a child might be taught to distinguish between propositions and other expressions by being told "Ask yourself if you can say 'is true' after it. If these words fit it's a proposition." (And in the same way one might have said: Ask yourself if you can put the words "This is how things are:" in front of it.)

138.

But can't the meaning of a word that I understand fit the sense of a sentence that I understand? Or the meaning of one word fit the meaning of another? Of course, if the meaning is the use we make of the word, it makes no sense to speak of such 'fitting'. But we understand the meaning of a word when we hear or say it; we grasp it in a flash, and what we grasp in this way is surely something different from the use which is extended in time!

...

239.

How is he to know what color he is to pick out when he hears "red"? -- Quite simple: he is to take the color whose image occurs to him when he hears the word. -- But how is he to know which color it is 'whose image occurs to him'? Is a further criterion needed for that? (There is indeed such a procedure as choosing the color which occurs to one when one hears the word "...")

"'Red' means the color that occurs to me when I hear the word 'red'" -- would be a definition. Not an explanation of what it is to use a word as a name.

240.

Disputes do not break out (among mathematicians, say) over the question whether a rule has been obeyed or not. People don't come to blows over it, for example. That is part of the framework on which the working of our language is based (for example, in giving descriptions).

241.

"So you are saying that human agreement decides what is true and what is false?" -- It is what human beings say that is true and false, and they agree in the language they use. That is not agreement in opinions but in form of life.

242.

If language is to be a means of communication there must be agreement not only in definitions but also (queer as this may sound) in judgments. This seems to abolish logic, but does not do so. -- It is one thing to describe methods of measurement,

and another to obtain and state results of measurement. But what we call "measuring" is partly determined by a certain constancy in results of measurement.

243.

A human being can encourage himself, give himself orders, obey, blame and punish himself, he can ask himself a question and answer it. We could even imagine human beings who spoke only in monologue; who accompanied their activities by talking to themselves. -- An explorer who watched them and listened to their talk might succeed in translating their language into ours. (This would enable him to predict these people's actions correctly, for he also hears them making resolutions and decisions.)

But could we also imagine a language in which a person could write down or give vocal expression to his inner experiences -- his feelings, moods, and the rest -- for his private use? Well, can't we do so in our ordinary language? -- But that is not what I mean. 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.

244.

How do words refer to sensations? -- There doesn't seem to be any problem here; don't we talk about sensations every day, and give them names? But how is the connection between the name and the thing named set up? This question is the same as: how does a human being learn the meaning of the names of sensations? -- of the word "pain" for example. Here is one possibility: words are connected with the primitive, the natural, expressions of the sensation and used in their place. A child has hurt himself and he cries; and then adults talk to him and teach him exclamations and, later, sentences. They teach the child new pain -- behavior.

"So you are saying that the word 'pain' really means crying?" -- On the contrary: the verbal expression of pain replaces crying and does not describe it.

245.

For how can I go so far as to try to use language to get between pain and its expression?

246.

In what sense are my sensations private? -- Well, only I can know whether I am really in pain; another person can only surmise it. -- In one way this is wrong, and in another nonsense. If we are using the word "to know" as it is normally used (and how else are we to use it?), then other people very often know when I am in pain. -- Yes, but all the same not with the certainty with which I know it myself! -- It can't be said of me at all (except perhaps as a joke) that I now I am in pain. What is it supposed to mean -- except perhaps that I am in pain?

Other people cannot be said to learn of my sensations only from my behavior -- for I cannot be said to learn of them. I have them.

The truth is: it makes sense to say about other people that they doubt whether I am in pain; but not to say it about myself.

247.

"Only you can know if you had that intention." One might tell someone this when one was explaining the meaning of the word "intention" to him. For then it means: that is how we use it.

(And here "know", means that the expression of uncertainty is senseless.)

248.

The proposition "Sensations are private" is comparable to; "One plays patience by oneself".

249.

Are we perhaps over -- hasty in our assumption that the smile of an unweaned infant is not a presence? -- And on what experience is our assumption based?

(Lying is a language-game that needs to be learned like any other one.)

250.

Why can't a dog simulate pain? Is he too honest? Could one teach a dog to simulate pain? Perhaps it is possible to teach him to howl on particular occasions as if he were in pain, even when he is not. But the surroundings which are necessary for this behavior to be real simulation are missing.

251.

What does it mean when we say: "I can't imagine the opposite of this" or "What would it be like, if it were otherwise?" -- For example, when someone has said that my images are private, or that only I myself can know whether I am feeling pain, and similar things.

Of course, here "I can't imagine the opposite" doesn't mean: my powers of imagination are unequal to the task. These words are a defense against something' whose form makes it look like an empirical proposition, but which is really a grammatical one.

But why do we say: "I can't imagine the opposite"? Why not: "I can't imagine the thing itself"?

Example: "Every rod has a length." That means something like: we call something (or this) "the length of a rod" -- but nothing "the length of a sphere." Now can I imagine 'every rod having a length'? Well, I simply imagine a rod. Only this picture, in connection with this proposition, has a quite different role from one used in

connection with the proposition "This table has the same length as the one over there". For here I understand what it means to have a picture of the opposite (nor need it be a mental picture).

But the picture attaching to the grammatical proposition could only show, say, what is called "the length of a rod". And what should the opposite picture be ?

(Remark about the negation of an a priori proposition.)

252.

"This body has extension." To this we might reply: "Nonsense!" -- but are inclined to reply "Of course!" Why is this?

253.

"Another person can't have my pains." -- Which are my pains? What counts as a criterion of identity here? Consider what makes it possible in the case of physical objects to speak of "two exactly the same", for example, to say "This chair is not the one you saw here yesterday, but is exactly the same as it".

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. (And it would also be imaginable for two people to feel pain in the same -- not just the corresponding -- place. That might be the case with Siamese twins, for instance.)

I have seen a person in a discussion on this subject strike himself on the breast and say: "But surely another person can't have THIS pain!" -- The answer to this is that one does not define a criterion of identity by emphatic stressing of the word "this". Rather, what the emphasis does is to suggest the case in which we are familiar with such a criterion of identity, but have to be reminded of it.

254.

The substitution of "identical" for "the same" (for instance) is another typical expedient in philosophy. As if we were talking about shades of meaning and all that were in question were to find words to hit on the correct nuance. That is in question in philosophy only where we have to give a psychologically exact account of the temptation to use a particular kind of expression. What we 'are tempted to say' in such a case is, of course, not philosophy; but it is its raw material. Thus, for example, what a mathematician is inclined to say about the objectivity and reality of mathematical facts, is not a philosophy of mathematics, but something for philosophical treatment.

255.

The philosopher treats a question; like an illness.

256.

Now, what about the language which describes my inner experiences and which only I myself can understand? How do I use words to stand for my sensations? --

As we ordinarily do? Then are my words for sensations tied up with my natural expressions of sensation? In that case my language is not a 'private' one. Someone else might understand it as well as I. -- But suppose I didn't have any natural expression for the sensation, but only had the sensation? And now I simply associate names with sensations and use these names in descriptions.

257.

"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 use of the word 'tooth -- ache'." -- Well, let's assume the child is a genius and itself invents a name for the sensation! -- But then, of course, he couldn't make himself understood when he used the word. -- So does he understand the name, without being able to explain its meaning to anyone? -- But what does it mean to say that he has 'named his pain'? -- How has he done this naming of pain?! And whatever he did, what was its purpose? -- When one says "He gave a name to his sensation" one forgets that a great deal of stage -- setting in the language is presupposed if the mere act of naming is to make 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.

258.

Let us imagine the following case. I want to keep a diary about the recurrence of a certain sensation.

To this end I associate it with the sign "S" and write this sign in a calendar for every day on which I have the 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 I concentrate my attention on the sensation -- and so, as it were, point to it inwardly. -- But what is this ceremony for? for that is all it seems to be! A definition surely serves to establish the meaning of a sign. -- Well, that is done precisely by the concentrating of my attention; for in this way I impress on myself the connection between the sign and the sensation. -- But "I impress it on myself" can only mean: this process brings it about that I remember the connection right in the future. But in the present case I have no criterion of correctness. One would like to say: whatever is going to seem right to me is right. And that only means that here we can't talk about 'right'.

259.

Are the rules of the private language impressions of rules? -- The balance on which impressions are weighed is not the impression of a balance.

260.

"Well, I believe that this is the sensation S again." -- Perhaps you believe that you believe it!

Then did the man who made the entry in the calendar make a note of nothing whatever? -- Don't consider it a matter of course that a person is making a note of something when he makes a mark -- say in a calendar. For a note has a function, and this "S" so far has none.

(One can talk to oneself. -- If a person speaks when no one else is present, does that mean he is speaking to himself?)

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. So the use of this word stands in need of a justification which everybody understands. -- 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. -- So in the end when one is doing philosophy one gets to the point where one would like just to emit an inarticulate sound. -- But such a sound is an expression only as it occurs in a particular language-game, which should now be described.

262.

It might be said: if you have given yourself a private definition of a word, then you must inwardly undertake to use the word in such-and-such a way. And how do you undertake that? Is it to be assumed that you invent the technique of using the word; or that you found it ready -- made?

263.

"But I can (inwardly) undertake to call THIS 'pain' in the future." -- "But is it certain that you have undertaken it? Are you sure that it was enough for this purpose to concentrate your attention on your feeling?" -- A queer question. --

264.

"Once you know what the word stands for, you understand it, you know its whole use."

265.

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 don't 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. Isn't 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 the imagination is no more looking up a table than the image of the result of an imagined experiment is the result of an experiment.

266.

I can look at the clock to see what time it is: but I can also look at the dial of a clock in order to "Mess what time it is; or for the same purpose move the hand of a clock till its position strikes me as right. So the look of a clock may serve to determine the time in more than one way. "Looking at the clock in imagination.)

267.

Suppose I wanted to justify the choice of dimensions for a bridge which I imagine to be building, by making loading tests on the material of the bridge in my imagination. This would, of course, be to imagine what is called justifying the choice of dimensions for a bridge. But should we also call it justifying an imagined choice of dimensions?

268.

Why can't my right hand give my left hand money? -- My right hand can put it into my left hand. My right hand can write a deed of gift and my left hand a receipt. -- But the further practical consequences would not be those of a gift. When the left hand has taken the money from the right, etc., we shall ask: "Well, and what of it?" And the same could be asked if a person had given himself a private definition of a word; I mean, if he has said the word to himself and at the same time has directed his attention to a sensation.

269.

Let us remember that there are certain criteria in a man's behavior for the fact that he does not understand a word: that it means nothing to him, that he can do nothing with it. And criteria for his 'thinking he understands', attaching some meaning to the word, but not the right one. And, lastly, criteria for his understanding the word right. In the second case one might speak of a subjective understanding. And sounds which no one else understands but which I 'appear to understand' might be called a "private language".

270.

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 recognized the sensation right or not. Let us suppose I regularly identify it wrong, it does not matter in the least. And that alone shows he 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.)

And what is our reason for calling "S" the name of a sensation here? Perhaps the kind of way this sign is employed in this language-game. -- And why a "particular

sensation," that is, the same one every time? Well, aren't we supposing that we write "S" every time?

271.

"Imagine a person whose memory could not retain what the word 'pain' meant -- so that he constantly called different things by that name -- but nevertheless used the word in a way fitting in with the usual symptoms and presuppositions of pain" -- in short he uses it as we all do. Here I should like to say: a wheel that can be turned though nothing else moves with it, is not part of the mechanism.

272.

The essential thing about private experience is really not that each person possesses his own exemplar, but that nobody knows whether other people also have this or something else. The assumption would thus be possible -- though unverifiable -- that one section of mankind had one sensation of red and another section another.

273.

What am I to say about the word "red"? -- that it means something 'confronting us all' and that everyone should really have another word, besides this one, to mean his own sensation of red? Or is it like this: the word "red" means something known to everyone; and in addition, for each person, it means something known only to him? (Or perhaps rather: it refers to something known only to him.)

274.

Of course, saying that the word "red" "refers to" instead of "means" something private does not help us in the least to grasp its function; but it is the more psychologically apt expression for a particular experience in doing philosophy. It is as if when I uttered the word I cast a sidelong glance at the private sensation, as it were in order to say to myself: I know all right what I mean by it.

275.

Look at the blue of the sky and say to yourself "How blue the sky is!" -- When you do it spontaneously -- without philosophical intentions -- the idea never crosses your mind that this impression of color belongs only to you. And you have no hesitation in exclaiming that to someone else. And if you point at anything as you say the words you point at the sky. I am saying: you have not the feeling of pointing -- into -- yourself which often accompanies 'naming the sensation' when one is thinking about 'private language'. Nor do you think that really you ought not to point to the color with your hand, but with your attention. (Consider what it means "to point to something with the attention".)

276.

But don't we at least mean something: quite definite when we look at a color and name our color -- impression? It is as if we detached the color -- impression from the object, like a membrane. (This ought to arouse our suspicions.)

277.

But how is even possible for us to be tempted to think that we use a word to

mean at one time the color known to everyone -- and at another the 'visual impression' which I am getting now? How can there be so much as a temptation here? I don't turn the same kind of attention on the color in the two cases. When I mean the color impression that (as I should like to say) belongs to me alone I immerse myself in the color -- rather like when I 'cannot get my fill of a color'. Hence it is easier to produce this experience when one is looking at a bright color, or at an impressive color -- scheme.

278.

"I know how the color green looks to me" -- surely that makes sense! -- Certainly: what use of the proposition are you thinking of?

279.

Imagine someone saying: "But I know how tall I am!" and laying his hand on top of his head to prove it.

280.

Someone paints a picture in order to show how he imagines a theater scene. And now I say: "This picture has a double function: it informs others, as pictures or words inform but for the one who gives the information it is a representation (or piece of information?) of another kind: for him it is the picture of his image, as it can't be for anyone else. To him his private impression of the picture means what he has imagined, in a sense in which the picture cannot mean this to others." -- And what right have I to speak in this second case of a representation or piece of information -- if these words were rightly used in the first case?

281.

"But doesn't what you say come to this: that there is no pain, for example, without pain -- behavior?" -- It comes to this: only of a living human being and what resembles (behaves like) a living human being can one say it has sensations; it sees: is blind; hears; is deaf; is conscious or unconscious.

282.

"But in a fairy tale the pot too can see and hear!" (Certainly; but it can also talk.)

"But the fairy tale only invents what is not the case: it does not talk nonsense." -- It is not as simple as that. Is it false or nonsensical to say that a pot talks? Have we a clear picture of the circumstances in which we should say of a pot that it talked? (Even a nonsense -- poem is not nonsense in the same way as the babbling of a child.)

We do indeed say of an inanimate thing that it is in pain: when playing with dolls for example. But this use of the concept of pain is a secondary one. Imagine a case in which people ascribed pain only to inanimate things; pitied only dolls! (When children play at trains their game is connected with their knowledge of trains.]It would nevertheless be possible for the children of a tribe unacquainted with trains to learn this game from others, and to play it without knowing that it was copied

from anything. One might say that the game did not make the same sense to them as to us.)

283.

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 feeling in myself, and now I transfer the idea to objects outside myself? That I recognize 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.

Couldn't I imagine having frightful pains and turning to stone while they lasted? Well, how do I know, if I shut my eyes, whether I have not turned into a stone? And if that has happened, in what sense will the stone have the pains? In what sense will they be ascribable to the stone? And why need the pain have a bearer at all here?!

And can one say of the stone that it has a soul and that is what has the pain? What has a soul, or pain, to do with a stone?

Only of what behaves like a human being can one say that it has pains.

For one has to say it of a body, or, if you like of a soul which some body had. And how can a body have a soul?

284.

Look at a stone and imagine it having sensations. -- One says to oneself: How could one so much as get the idea of ascribing a sensation to a thing? One might as well ascribe it to a number! -- And now look at a wriggling fly and at once these difficulties vanish and pain seems able to get a foothold here, where before everything was, so to speak, too smooth for it.

And so, too, a corpse seems to us quite inaccessible to pain. -- Our attitude to what is alive and to what is dead, is not the same. All our reactions are different. -- If anyone says: "That cannot simply come from the fact that a living thing moves about in such-and-such a way and a dead one not", then I want to intimate to him that this is a case of the transition 'from quantity to quality'.

285.

Think of the recognition of facial expressions. Or of the description of facial expressions -- which does not consist in giving the measurements of the face! Think, too, how one can imitate a man's face without seeing one's own in a mirror.

286.

But isn't it absurd to say of a body that it has pain? And why does one feel an

absurdity in that? In what sense is it true that my hand does not feel pain, but I in my hand?

What sort of issue is: Is it the body that feels pain? -- How is it to be decided? What makes it plausible to say that it is not the body? --

Well, something like this: if someone has a pain in his hand, then the hand does not say so (unless it writes it) and one does not comfort the hand, but the sufferer: one looks into his face.

287.

How am I filled with pity for this man? How does it come out what the object of my pity is? (Pity, one may say, is a form of conviction that someone else is in pain.)

288.

I turn to stone and my pain goes on. -- Suppose I were in error and it was no longer pain? -- But I can't be in error here; it means nothing to doubt whether I am in pain! -- That means: if anyone said "I do not know if what I have is a pain or something else", we should think something like, he does not know what the English word "pain" means: and we should explain it to him. -- How? Perhaps by means of gestures, or by pricking him with a pin and saying: "See, that's what pain is!" This explanation, like any other, he might understand right, wrong, or not at all. And he will show which he does by his use of the word, in this as in other cases.

If he now said, for example: "Oh, I know what 'pain' means; what I don't know is whether this, that I have now, is pain" -- we should merely shake our heads and be forced to regard his words as a queer reaction which we have no idea what to do with. (It would be rather as if we heard someone say seriously: "I distinctly remember that sometime before I was born I believed".)

That expression of doubt has no place in the language-game; but if we cut out human behavior, which is the expression of sensation, it looks as if I might legitimately begin to doubt afresh. My temptation to say that one might take a sensation for something other than what it is arises from this: if I assume the abrogation of the normal language-game with the expression of a sensation. I need a criterion of identity for the sensation; and then the possibility of error also exists.

289.

"When I say 'I am in pain' I am at any rate justified before myself." -- What does that mean? Does it mean: "If someone else could know what I am calling 'pain', he would admit that I was using the word correctly"?

To use a word without a justification does not mean to use it without right.

290.

What I do is not, of course, to identify my sensation by criteria: but to repeat an expression. But this is not the end of the language-game: it is the beginning.

But isn't the beginning the sensation -- which I describe? -- Perhaps this word "describe" tricks us here. I say "I describe my state of mind" and "I describe my room". You need to call to mind the differences between the language-games.

291.

What we call "descriptions" are instruments for particular uses. Think of a machine -- drawing, a cross-section, an elevation with various measurements, which an engineer has before him. Thinking of a description as a word -- picture of the facts has something misleading about it: one tends to think only of such pictures as hang on our walls: which seem simply to portray how a thing looks, what it is like. (These pictures are as it were idle.)

292.

Don't always think that you read off what you say from the facts; that you portray these in words according to rules. For even so you would have to apply the rule in the particular case without guidance.

293.

If I say of myself that it is only from my own case that I know what the word "pain" means -- must I not say the same of other people too? And how can I generalize the one case so irresponsibly?

Now someone tells me that he knows what pain is only from his own case! Suppose everyone had a box with something in it: we call it a "beetle". No one can look into anyone else's box, and everyone says he knows what a beetle is only by looking at his beetle. -- Here it would be quite possible for everyone to have something different in his box. One might even imagine such a thing constantly changing. -- But suppose the 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 sensation on the model of 'object and designation' the object droops out of consideration as irrelevant.

294.

If you say he sees a private picture before him, which he is describing, you have still made an assumption about what he has before him. And that means that you can describe it or do describe it more closely. If you admit that you haven't any notion what kind of thing it might be that he has before him -- then what leads you into saying, in spite of that, that he has something before him? Isn't it as if I were

to say of someone: "He has something. But I don't know whether it is money, or debts, or an empty till."

295.

"I know only from my own case" -- what kind of proposition is this meant to be at all? An experiential one? No. -- A grammatical one?

Suppose everyone does say about himself that he knows what pain is only from his own pain. -- Not that people really say that, or are even prepared to say it. But if everybody said it -- it might be a kind of exclamation. And even if it gives no information, still it is a picture, and why should we not want to call up such a picture? Imagine an allegorical painting take the place of those words.

When we look into ourselves as we do philosophy, we often get to see just such a picture. A full -- blown pictorial representation of our grammar. Not facts; but as it were illustrated turns of speech.

296.

"Yes, but there is something there all the same accompanying my cry of pain. And it is on account of that that I utter it. And this something is what is important -- and frightful." -- Only whom are we informing of this? And on what occasion?

297.

Of course, if water boils in a pot, steam comes out of the pot and also pictured steam comes out of the pictured pot. But what if one insisted on saying that there must also be something boiling in the picture of the pot?

298.

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.

299.

Being unable -- when we surrender ourselves to philosophical thought -- to help saying such-and-such; being irresistibly inclined to say it -- does not mean being forced into an assumption, or having an immediate perception or knowledge of a state of affairs.

300.

It is -- we should like to say -- not merely the picture of the behavior that plays a part in the language-game with the words "he is in pain", but also the picture of the pain. Or, not merely the paradigm of the behavior, but also that of the pain. -- It is a misunderstanding to say "The picture of pain enters into the language-game with the word 'pain'." The image of pain is not a picture and this image is not replaceable in the language-game by anything that we should call a picture. -- The image of pain certainly enters into the language game in a sense; only not as a picture.

301.

An image is not a picture, but a picture can correspond to it.

302.

If one has to imagine someone else's pain on the model of one's own, this is none too easy a thing to do: for I have to imagine pain which I do not feel on the model 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.)

Pain -- behavior can point to a painful place -- but the subject of pain is the person who gives it expression.

303.

"I can only believe that someone else is in pain, but I know' it if I am." -- Yes: one can make the decision to say "I believe he is in pain" instead of "He is in pain". But that is all. What looks like an explanation here, or like a statement about a mental process, is in truth an exchange of one expression for another which, while we are doing philosophy, seems the more appropriate one.

Just try -- in a real case -- to doubt someone else's fear or pain.

304.

"But you will surely admit that there is a difference between pain -- behavior accompanied by pain and pain -- behavior without any pain?" -- Admit it? What greater difference could there be? -- "And yet you again and again reach the conclusion that the sensation itself is a nothing." -- Not at all. It is not a something, but not a nothing either! The conclusion was only that a nothing would serve just as well as a something about which nothing could be said. We have only rejected the grammar which tries to force itself on us here.

The paradox disappears only if we make a radical break with the idea that language always functions in one way, always serves the same purpose: to convey thoughts -- which may be about houses, pains, and evil, or anything else you please.

305.

"But you surely cannot deny that, for example, in remembering, an inner process takes place." -- What gives the impression that we want to deny anything? When one says "Still, an inner process does take place here" -- one wants to go on: "After all, you see it." And it is this inner process that one means by the word "remembering". -- The impression that we wanted to deny something arises from our setting our faces against the picture of the 'inner process'. What we deny is that the picture of the inner process gives us the correct idea of the use of the word "to remember". We say that this picture with its ramifications stands in the way of our seeing the use of the word as it is.

306.

Why should I deny that there is a mental process? But "There has just taken place in me the mental process of remembering...." means nothing more than: "I have just remembered". To deny the mental process would mean to deny the remembering; to deny that anyone ever remembers anything.

307.

"Are you not really a behaviorist in disguise? Aren't you at bottom really saying that everything except human behavior is a fiction?" -- If I do speak of a fiction, then it is of a grammatical fiction.

308.

How does the philosophical problem about mental processes and states and about behaviorism arise? The first step is the one that altogether escapes notice. We talk of processes and states and leave their nature undecided. Sometime perhaps we shall know more about them -- we think. But that is just what commits us to a particular way of looking at the matter. For we have a definite concept of what it means to learn to know a process better. (The decisive movement in the conjuring trick has been made, and it was the very one that we thought quite innocent.) -- And now the analogy which was to make us understand our thoughts falls to pieces. So we have to deny the yet uncomprehended process in the yet unexplored medium. And now it looks as if we had denied mental processes. And naturally we don't want to deny them.

309.

What is your aim in philosophy? -- To show the fly the way out of the fly-bottle.