

Wittgenstein on the Impossibility of Private Language

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Abstract

The argument against the private language is one of the key parts of his Philosophical Investigations. The main purpose of this work is to present Wittgenstein's understanding of private language and to outline a number of problems associated with it within Philosophical Investigations, and which have been pinpointed by some of the most prominent interpreters of Ludwig Wittgenstein.

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The main purpose of this work is to present Wittgenstein's understanding of private language and to outline a number of problems associated with it within *Philosophical Investigations*, and which have been pinpointed by some of the most prominent interpreters of Ludwig Wittgenstein. The argument against the private language is one of the key parts of his *Philosophical Investigations*. The central argument against the private language has been outlined by the author in paras 244-271, although, arguing broadly; private language is discussed in paras 243-315. Within the paragraph 243 Wittgenstein says: "The words of this language should refer to that on which only the speaker can have the knowledge; his very private emotions. Hence, somebody else cannot possibly understand this language". In the following paragraphs Wittgenstein denies the possibility of existence of one such private language, but let us first see the reason why the issue of private language has importance. The importance of this issue is manifold. Namely, much before the introduction of the argument of private language in his *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein highlights that the importance of the existence of rules that govern the use of language and enable communication between people is dependent upon agreements in human behavior. An example of this is a normal human reaction that enables that children are trained to watch an object or in a certain direction when they are shown to do so, while animals respond randomly to different ways of directing. One of the functions of argument against the private language, as pointed out by Candlish and Wrisley, is to show the possibilities of existence of language and the formation of concepts that are dependent on such convention.¹

The second function is to falsify the idea that metaphysical entities are understandable with our abilities to understand the world as it is in essence. In other words, this assertion implies that our understanding is correct and any other way of conceptualizing is not. Within a philosophical tradition, it was believed that numbers and sense are examples of such absolute entities that by themselves imply the rules and regulations of their naming. In the case of the senses, for example, itch, traditional metaphysics argues for the following line of reasoning. A person senses itch directly; if he or she names the sense, the rules and regulations for the use of this given name are determined by the sense itself. Wittgenstein attempts to show that such an impression is an illusion that evens the identity of itch stems from the use of the given expression, reaction on it and the use of language. If itch was a metaphysical entity, that imposes its identity, then the practice of the use of the expression would be irrelevant to the concept of itch. The nature of itch would be revealed in the unique mental act of naming and the facts that follow, and are related to the use of name, would be irrelevant to what this name means, the name could be private. The argument against the private language should show that these facts are relevant, that the names cannot be private and that the real meaning of genuine sense cannot only relate to the moment of – getting acquainted-with the sense. Similarly, if the impossibility of existence of private language appeared as an option, then the foundations of many traditions within the philosophy of mind would be shaken, and the basic assumptions of some of these would prove incorrect.

¹ Candlish, Stewart and Wrisley, George, (2012) Private Language [Online] Available: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/private-language/>

Wittgenstein opines that the idea of a private language rests on two erroneous assumptions, one of which refers to the nature of experience and the second one refers to the nature of language.² The first assumption that refers to the experience is the belief that experiences are private, and the second that refers to the nature of language refers to the belief that we can adopt the meaning of words with pure ostensive definitions. Firstly, we can discuss Wittgenstein's understanding of language in order to be able to understand which his objection to the argumentation on private language is. The attempt to discredit the nature of languages is discussed in *Investigations* until paragraph 244. In paragraph 26 we can see the following attitude "There is an opinion that the learning of languages is basically about naming the objects. To be more specific: shapes, colors, pains, moods, numbers etc."³ Hence, language is learned by being in direct contact with an object. Somebody can teach us what is the meaning of a specific word, but one has to do that by pointing to us either the object that is being made or to show the relationship, to put us in a position where we can get acquainted with the object. Wittgenstein critiques the understanding that we can name words by ostensive definition. Such critique we find within the first paragraphs of *Investigations*. As he says in para 40. We have to make clear that the word 'meaning' is used mistakenly when we name the object that corresponds to the word.

When a particular person dies, it is said that the bearer of the name died but not the meaning.⁴ We can see that the meaning of the name and the bearer of the name are different, but the meaning can be explained by referring to the bearer of the name, this is ostensive explanation. He insists that getting acquainted with the object that the word names is not the same as the meaning of the word. Wittgenstein underlines that ostensive definition explains the meaning of the word when we already know which role this word has in our language. The problem appears when we do not know exactly what we refer to when we try to explain a certain word with ostensive definition that we have not got acquainted with before. When we say 'This is called sepia', and if we know that somebody wishes to explain the world of colors, ostensive definition can assist us in understanding this word. Still, is ostensive definition always sufficient? It seems that the answer to this question is negative because this definition can be understood in different ways. If we say –this is a bottle- do we speak of the shape, color, or the size of the object we refer to ? The fact that we are acquainted with the bearer of the name does not give us sufficient information about the meaning of the word as in the situation when we know that this word is being used. Hence, Wittgenstein's critique of the ostensive definition within *Philosophical Investigation* is directed to the idea that it is not possible to understand the language as a sum of words that have meaning by calling only on ostensive definition, but we also need to master the use of the words. Or, to be more specific, knowing a specific word means knowing to use this in a meaningful manner.

It is not only that Wittgenstein calls for the public use of the ostensive definition when we speak of shapes and colors etc., but he explains the private use when we speak of moods and feelings. To be able to speak of private language, the way it is understood and made possible, it is necessary to accept this basic assumption: If there is the possibility for an individual to refer to private sensations, but the words are not necessarily ostensively learned from private senses.⁵ Private language could be learned by private senses, but not ostensively but the private analogous use of words. "But could one imagine language where we could write down, for pure private use, our inner experiences like emotions and moods?-Can't we do that using our ordinary language? But this is not what I wish to refer to here. The words of this language should refer to that that is only known to the speaker; his inner private emotions. Hence, somebody else cannot understand this language."⁶ Private language, as we can conclude, refers to the speaker's own experience and nobody else but he can understand this. Speaker's experiences are 'inner', 'private' and 'direct' and only the speaker can know their nature. In para 244, Wittgenstein goes on to the discussion of the relationship between words and sense and we find a question therein: 'How words refer to our emotions?'. We speak about emotions and name them and there is a question how a man learns what the names of emotions mean.⁷ One of the possibilities that Wittgenstein gives is that the word pain is a substitution for 'ancient, natural expression of emotions'. Hence, when a child is injured and is in the state of pain he or she cries and screams. This is a primitive, natural 'behavior in pain'.

² Kenny, A., (1971). Verification Principle and the Private Language Argument. Jones, pp.205

³ Wittgenstein, L. (1969). *Philosophical Investigation* (1st Ed.). Belgrade: Nolit, pp.53

⁴ Wittgenstein, L. (1969). *Philosophical Investigation* (1st Ed.). Belgrade: Nolit, pp.60

⁵ Kenny, A., (1971). Verification Principle and the Private Language Argument. Jones, pp.207

⁶ Wittgenstein, L. (1969). *Philosophical Investigation* (1st Ed.). Belgrade: Nolit, pp.123

⁷ Wittgenstein, L. (1969). *Philosophical Investigation* (1st Ed.). Belgrade: Nolit, pp.125

A child will be taught by the elders, the ones that have mastered the word 'pain', one right 'behavior in pain'. This word, according to Wittgenstein, is not a description of scream, but its substitute. Still, he will argue, to be more precise in para 293, that "when the grammar of the expression for sensations is being constructed, modelling 'object and signifier' that the object is excluded from the consideration as irrelevant."⁸ Anthony Kenny concludes that from the preceding argumentation 'pain' should not be seen as the name of the object. Nonetheless, he also says we can reconcile these paragraphs in the light of the rebuttal of ostensive definition⁹. Here we should mention in passing the different use of words that refer to the private sense. Namely, Wittgenstein, makes a distinction between two uses of the word 'private'. From one side, there is a talk of privacy in the sense of knowledge, that my sense is only available to myself, but on the other, there is the talk of privacy in the sense that only I can have that. Wittgenstein explicates such understandings when he says that only I can know whether I really feel pain, while somebody else can only guess this, and in another passage he argues that another person cannot have my pains. This work will elaborate further on such issues, but now we will turn to the consideration of the relationship between words and senses. The model of 'object and name' is a model that refers to the speaker's understanding of name by getting acquainted with the bearer of such name. If anyone knew what is pain from one's own experience there is the question how somebody can teach someone the meaning of the word 'pain'? We therefore conclude that the speakers should define the name of the sense via private ostensive definition. Such understanding has been considered in the passages above and concluded that it is not adequate for our understanding of the meaning of the name. It is apparent that Wittgenstein refutes such view; the view that somebody knows what pain is from one's own experience. As he says, language must be refined in order for naming to be meaningful, when we speak of pain the grammar of the word is prepared and it underlines the position within the framework where new word will be set.¹⁰ It is worth bearing in mind that Wittgenstein does not exclude the possibility of naming the sense, but highlights that there must be preparedness in language itself for the new word to be meaningful. Such preparedness exists in public speech when there are rules that everyone understands and accepts, but there is no such a possibility in private language. If we accepted that pain signifies sense, and we know that we cannot conceptualize their relationship by ostensive definition we must see how 'pain' is related to sense?

For Wittgenstein, this does not present a problem-"Here is a possibility-the words are link with ancient, natural expression of emotions and are put in their place. A child gets hurt and screams; the elders then tell and direct them towards screams and then sentences. They teach the child towards a new model of 'behavior in pain'.¹¹ He rightly argues that verbal manifestation of pain equals the expression of pain (painfulness, being in pain). Nonetheless, there is the following problem. We can have pain without showing, without communicating to anybody that we have pain, but on the other we must have pain in order to say we have pain, we can lie about having pain. Wittgenstein accepts that we can accept words 'being in pain' by saying 'A is in pain, but he does not show it'. Nonetheless, he insists that we have no use of the expression if its application is detached from behavioral criterion. What matters in the wordplay with the word 'pain' is that people that do it behave in a manner that we label as showing pain, and sometimes more or less hide their pain.¹² If a man is in pain he shows that pain, we could label his pain as private experience. This is done by experience that is available only to him, and we do not have the reason to conclude that he is in pain. But if a man is in pain and he shows that we deduce that he is in pain. We can pose a question, how can we label pain private? Following the examples mentioned above, the only thing that is reasonable to say is that some pains are private and some of these are not. This mode of reasoning leads us not to deduce implication from fact that some of our experiences are private that all of our experiences are private. Or as Kenny illustrates with an example: 'some banknotes are a fake, but it cannot possibly be that all banknotes are fake". Pain and 'behavior in pain' are different things. The word pain does not depict scream or crying, it is their replacement. Words are intimately interlinked with natural instinctive expressions of pain by being learned in connection with these expressions. If we accepted that this relationship is the only way of understanding words and sensation, then any embedded or innate knowledge of the word 'pain' would not be possible.

⁸ Kenny, A. (1971). *Verification Principle and the Private Language Argument*. Jones, pp.208

⁹ Wittgenstein, L. (1969). *Philosophical Investigation* (1st ed.). Belgrade: Nolit, pp.135

¹⁰ Wittgenstein speaks on this in paragraph 257

¹¹ Wittgenstein, L. (1969). *Philosophical Investigation* (1st ed.). Belgrade: Nolit, pp.125

¹² Kenny, A., (1971). *Verification Principle and the Private Language Argument*. Jones, pp.210

Kenny, quite understandable, highlights that Wittgenstein did not refute the possibility of such knowledge. He agrees that such knowledge would require the existence of a relationship with the natural expression of sense. Our knowledge of the words would have to rely on the use of words and be in accordance with symptoms and circumstances of pain, for example the inflammation of nerves. There must be a relationship of the state in which the sense of pain occurred and the use of the word, whether this knowledge is innate, or this relationship is learned. From what we have learned so far, we can see that our word 'pain' does not belong to the private language. But, from paragraph 258, Wittgenstein introduces the new argument that is not based on pain, but pseudo pain, that is to say the sensation that should be like pain but is different from it because it cannot be communicated. The name of the pseudo pain must be taught through ostensive definition. This is not the process of naming pain because there are no external indicators of pain, and the latter is a part of private experience while the naming of pain is a part of wordplay.

We cannot present the argument as we find it in paragraph §258. Let us imagine that we wish to have a diary about the repetition of a putative sense. This sense is linked with the sign O. Whenever I feel this sense I write down this sign in the diary. IT is important to highlight that the definition cannot be said. This means that it cannot be defined in the sense of understanding the interlocutor, but it has to be defined for my own self via private ostensive definition. By writing and saying this sign, I direct my attention to sense. By directing attention the meaning of a sign is enabled, and the definition, the process of 'inscription within my own cognition of the relationship of sign with sense'. Wittgenstein highlights that this process enables that I recall this relationship correctly in the future. But the problem is that I have no criterion for correctness. Nonetheless, he says that correct is what seems correct to me in a given moment.¹³ This paragraph is normally remembered bearing in mind the existence of such a relationship. If we argue 'I exactly recall this relationship' means 'I use O when I really possess O'. The question that is being asked how can we determine with any degree of certainty that we recall well that what we should label sense O? Although our memory regarding public language can be erroneous, linked to some external objects, in private language, linked to our sense, this becomes impossible. This is the mode of reasoning that defenders of Wittgenstein employ to refute the arguments against him.

Nonetheless, Kenny has a different idea, thinking than paragraph 258 is understood mistakenly. According to him, Wittgenstein argues that 'the next time I label something O, how can I justifiably know that this is exactly O? Or "When I label something O, how can I know what do I mean by O? Even If I mistakenly understand something by O, I have to know the meaning of it. And this is exactly what Wittgenstein holds for impossible in private language."¹⁴ To be able to understand what Wittgenstein has in mind, we will call on the following quote: "Imagine a table that exists as our mental representation: for instance a dictionary. With the use of dictionary we can justify the translation of word X with the word Y. Still, should it be labeled as justification when we use this table only as our mental representation-well this is subjective justification- but the very nature of justification consists in calling on an independent spot "Nonetheless, I can turn from one memory to the other. For example, I know whether I remembered the departure time of the train and as a check I try to recall memory of the station and the departure times. Do we not have a similar case" No; because by this act we need to recall the accurate remembrance. If the picture of the departure times as a representation could not be checked, how could it be in accordance with the accuracy of our memory? (As if somebody bought more specimens of today's newspapers to ascertain that their reports are in accordance with the truth)"¹⁵ There are two issues that can cause confusion regarding this matter;¹⁶ 1. Why Wittgenstein says that memory must be correct, instead of saying that it must be corrigible 2. He should compare the process not with the purchase of all copies of the same brand of newspapers, but by buying the newspapers from the same issuer, because the memories of two private objects would be two distinct memories although both come from the same unreliable source. Calling on the mental table within which memory samples of private objects of different kind are related with symbols we justify the private sense O. It must be borne in mind to use this table correctly with a view not to incite inappropriate memories.

¹³ Wittgenstein, L. (1969). *Philosophical Investigation* (1st Ed.). Belgrade: Nolit, pp.128

¹⁴ Kenny, A., (1971). *Verification Principle and the Private Language Argument*. Jones, pp.218

¹⁵ Wittgenstein, L. (1969). *Philosophical Investigation* (1st Ed.). Belgrade: Nolit, pp.129

¹⁶ Kenny, A., (1971). *Verification Principle and the Private Language Argument*. Jones, pp.218

Since the table is imaginary, there is no way which sample goes with O, to recall what O means. But this is exactly what the table should ascertain.¹⁷ The memory of the meaning of O is used to ascertain itself. This is the solution of the logical paradox 2.

As we compare the purchase of two copies of the same type of newspaper, so we should understand the repeated use of one and the same memory, the memory the sample of which corresponds with O. In such a manner, it is not always necessary to determine what the sensation in question is but we only need to remember which sensation is depicted by which sign. Wittgenstein wishes to show that private ostensive definition 'this is labelled as O' cannot ascribe meaning to non O. On this assumption we can hypothesize that the speaker after a certain period of time says "This is again O". It is opportune to ask what he understands by O. Speaker can respond "I refer to this"; he can call on private memory of the of sample or, or, can call on correlate of O. Wittgenstein opposes these possible answers. If the speaker said "By O I refer to this", showing his very own state, it is clear that this statement can be accurate or inaccurate. Here we can cite Wittgenstein that "we do not have criteria for correctness". It is correct what seems correct to me. What gives contents to it is what gives truthfulness to it.¹⁸ The next option that the speaker can say "By O I refer to the feeling that I labelled as O in the past". Since he has not feeling that he had in the past, the only thing that he can do is rely on memory. He does so by calling a sample of memory of the sensation P and compares it to the current sensation in order to see if these are similar. But correct memory must be invoked? Still, the problem appears when the question is asked whether incorrect memory can be invoked? If the answer to this question is negative, then O means that any memory that appears in connection with O is accurate. Everything that appears to be correct is correct. On the other, if the answer is correct, then the speaker does not know exactly what he or she refers to. The mere belief that that something is again the sensation O requires the knowledge of what O means.¹⁹ Third and the last answer is found in paragraph 270, where Wittgenstein gives the following case. We add sign O as an input in the diary and enable the following experience. Whenever I feel certain sensation, menometer shows that my blood pressure rises. By this I become conscious and able to foretell the rise in pressure without the use of menometer. In this case it becomes irrelevant whether I recognized the sensation correctly or not. It would not matter if I identified wrongly the sensation in each particular case. Here O is not a part of private language but it correlates with "the sensation means that my blood pressure rises." Wittgenstein argues that within this case there cannot possibly be mistakes. It is possible to say that I have the sensation O. and that by checking I ascertain that my blood pressure does not rise. This is a mistake, but it is not what Wittgenstein refutes. He speaks of the step that connects the having of sensation with the sensation of a particular kind and the memory that the sensation of such kind shows the rise in blood pressure. Even if the sensation O happens, and the blood pressure does not rise, this does not mean that I identified the sensation wrongly, but that I do not remember which kind of sensation is related to the rise in blood pressure. If we should not accept, then the sensation of O would be in the domain of public language, because "identification of sensation" would mean "identification as a sensation that rises the blood pressure", which is not the case here.

Following *Philosophical Investigations* we return from "This is O" to "This is pain". What is the status of these claims? With regard to the first, we cannot say that this claim is true or false. When we say "This is O" we are speaking about something that only the speaker can understand and hence it becomes meaningless to ask whether this is truth or falsehood. While the second claim can be true or false, there are criteria according to which we can reasonably speak about the truthfulness of this assumption. Nonetheless, Wittgenstein refutes that "This is pain" is a declarative sentence and the description of conscious state. Within §293, he says that fact should not be replicated into words according to rules and regulations. Even in *Tractatus* we encounter the same attitude; "His eyes are black" is a picture in that sense. A comparison could be made with genuine eyes to see if this assumption is correct. With regard to the claim that I am in the state of pain, it cannot be compared with the above mentioned example. Namely, there are criteria according to which we can speak about the truthfulness of the claim whether a specific person is in pain or not, but we do not have a direct insight into pain itself, so we can speak of manifestations of pain (for example how a specific person behaves), still we cannot say with any certainty whether an individual is in a state of pain. Even if we employ the scientific method, for example to incite our own C-tissues, we can hypothesize that she can have a cognitive disorder so she does not feel such pain, but tell to us that she does so. In that case we cannot verify with direct insight the truthfulness of the claim "This is pain".

¹⁷ Kenny, A., (1971). Verification Principle and the Private Language Argument. Jones, pp.219

¹⁸ Kenny, A., (1971). Verification Principle and the Private Language Argument. Jones, pp.219

¹⁹ Kenny, A., (1971). Verification Principle and the Private Language Argument. Jones, pp.220

In wordplay, there is no comparison of the picture of pain with pain itself. According to him, if we say "He is in pain", we are tempted to introduce into our wordplay not only the picture of behavior in pain, but the picture of pain itself. Within that claim, we do not use only a sample of "behavior in pain" as a paradigm for comparison with his behavior, but we require the picture of pain.

The pain does not have to be genuine pain, but we have to recall its representation within our consciousness. In order to have guarantees that it is genuine pain, we need to have the concept of pain. We need to master the right use of the word "pain". We will now present another example in order to illustrate what Wittgenstein claims. "When the water boils in the pot, the vapor is given off, and pictured vapor is given off from a pictured pot. But what would happen if we would like to say that something boils in a pictured pot?"²⁰ According to Kenny, Wittgenstein believes that sensations enter into wordplay. Wordplay is also the play of expression of sensations.²¹ And as we have seen, what Wittgenstein refutes, is that sensations enter into wordplay but the picture of sensations. Using the above mentioned metaphor water is the pain; vapor is the behavior in pain, while the pot is the body of one that is in pain. In the wordplay of pain, we have the picture of behavior and the one that is in pain, but not the pain itself. We see that when we speak in the third person, "He feels pain". It is not the picture that linked with the fact that "he" feels pain or not, but the one whether "he" behaves in accordance with that assumption or not. Similarly, when we speak in the first person, "I feel pain", we should ascertain the truthfulness of this claim based on whether I behave in accordance with feeling pain, and not according to the fact that I feel pain. By stating "I am in pain", I describe the state in which I find myself and behave in accordance with the factual situation that I have pain. Still, Wittgenstein, within his *Philosophical Investigations*, refutes that claim that when I say "I am in pain" that I describe the state I am in and determine the sensation that I have. I, according to him, do not determine the sensation that I have, but only used the expression that I have learned. Still, it is worth having in mind that the end of the wordplay is not the sensation that I describe. If, for instance, we compare the description of a certain person and its mental state we see that these descriptions differ. While the description of the person is not the criterion of determining what this person is, the description of the mental state is the criterion of what they are like. Wordplay of the description of a particular person starts with the perception of that person while the wordplay of the description of sensation starts with the criterion of sensation. In some instances "I am in pain" is the description of the state as when we are visiting a doctor. This, however, does not mean that we have added something in relation to our inner, mental state. Treating the expression of pain as the description of pain must be detached from the pain itself. To illustrate with Kenny's example, that is similar to the situation when we travel on a car and hurry to reach a certain place, so we instinctively press something in front of us (of course not the gas pedal) as though we can push the car from the inside. The depiction must be detached from that which we make comparison with if it wants to be judged as adequate or inadequate. "I am in pain" is the expression for my conscious state, it is not independent from it, and hence it cannot be described as "he has black eyes" when we describe a certain person.

What we can deduce for the passages above is that the nature of the act of speech "I am in pain" is not, in every meaning, a description.²² We know that the expression "I am in pain" does not necessarily imply that this person complains. He or she can be in an office of a medical doctor and these may be information for the purpose of treatment, and not complaints. Strictly speaking, this is not the description, because a medical doctor can get this information from a twitch that the person does when a certain spot in his or her's body is pressurized. This unconscious twitch does the same function of the description of the inner state of the patient. Wittgenstein refutes the idea that when I am in pain, I know that I am in pain. This relies on his understanding of knowledge. Namely, the defined knowledge is the possession of the accurate description of the state of affairs. Because of that, within *Tractatus* he argues that the knowledge of tautology is not possible because these are not pictures of the states of affairs. When we say "I know that I am in pain" is not the adequate description in a conventional sense because the truthfulness of assumption "I am in pain" corresponds to its truthfulness and there is not the possibility of making a mistake. We can speak coherently about knowledge if there is a possibility of mistake or doubt. Since there is no sense having doubts over whether we are in pain, then it follows with certainty, that we cannot say that we know that we are in pain. Wittgenstein does not want to label such claim as knowledge or the expression of knowledge.

²⁰ Wittgenstein, L. (1969). *Philosophical Investigation* (1st Ed.). Belgrade: Nolit, pp.136

²¹ Kenny, A., (1971). *Verification Principle and the Private Language Argument*. Jones, pp.224

²² Kenny, A., (1971). *Verification Principle and the Private Language Argument*. Jones, pp.226

The problem of sensations is one of the main problems that Wittgenstein encounters in his *Philosophical Investigations*. Namely, different persons can say "I have a sensation O" or "He has sensation O" and by doing that expressing the same claim. If I am in pain and say "I have pain". And some other individual says "He is in pain", and then we have made the same assumption. We can now turn to the illustration on how sensation can be manifested by the discussion of various points of view related to their understanding.

Following that, we will recapitulate what we have discussed in the previous passage, with the slight difference that we will approach it differently, using the understanding of Alan Donegan. Namely, Donegan makes the distinction between the two positions which he labels as "Cartesianism" and "Behaviorism". The first position is what is known in the philosophy of mind as the "privileged approach". The fact is that every individual has direct experience of his or her's own sensations and that he cannot have erroneous judgments regarding these. Not only that he has these, but he directly knows that he has these. Other individuals can have the reason to believe that he or she has a specific sensation, but in these cases we operate with the degree of probability that never reaches absolute certainty. Since nobody can show his or her's emotions to somebody else, sensations can only be made by public ostensive definition. Hence, Cartesians, in order to name a specific sensation must wait to have that sensation, and only then ascribe it a private name. Sensations are, according to them. Private processes that do not take place within the body but within some "unexplored medium". Cartesian doctrine that nobody can know directly whether somebody directly knows whether he or she has sensation, that is to say pain has witnessed a rebuttal within contemporary theory and is depicted as lacking credibility. Wittgenstein refuted such claims, pointing out to the most obvious within paragraph 261: since words we use for sensations belong to the general language, their use requires justification that everyone understands. As an alternative, there is the behaviorist position. According to this we can know exactly whether somebody has a sensation or not. For instance, a child runs, steps on a nail, and starts crying. We then say "Child is in pain" and by doing that we do not add anything to what we can objectively see. So when we say "I am in pain", and when somebody else says "He is in pain", one and the same is stated, the same assumption is made. I claim something about the behavior and circumstances that others may be better able to comment than myself.²³ Nonetheless, this alternative is rejected as lacking credibility. The problem with sensations is the following: according to Cartesian position, knowledge of sensations that others have is not possible, and according to behaviorist alternative, a person can only know which are sensations by observing the behavior. Although he would not label himself a behaviorist, Wittgenstein has been ascribed a certain kind of behaviorism, although not explicit. Donegan gives the example of Pitcher who has, according to his own view, perfected the intellectual argumentation with the aid of which behaviorist elements are highlighted. We will not enter into detailed argumentation of Pitcher's intellectual position, but we will shortly outline on who it impacts the interpretation of Wittgenstein. Pitcher believes that when Wittgenstein speaks of sensations he critiques Cartesian position by claiming the following: 1. Words like "toothache" and "pain" are names, not in their non trivial sense of sensations that people sometimes have. 2. When I justifiably say "I have toothache" or "I am in pain" I describe a mental state 3. When I speak of somebody else "He has toothache" or "He is in pain", I describe that he experiences the same sensations as I do when I have toothache and pain.

If Wittgenstein accepts these claims, we reach an intellectual position where an individual cannot justifiably claim if somebody is in the state of pain, or imagine somebody's state of mind when one is in pain.²⁴ According to Pitcher, an even more important consequence, is Wittgenstein's rejection of the understanding that "pain" names something that the person that is in pain feels in a manner that is, at least a little, connected with the way the words name things that we can publicly perceive. If Pitcher was right, Wittgenstein claims that private, inner experiences exist (which Cartesians mistakenly describe as sensations), but that language neither has, nor has to possibility to have names for them. With regard to the sensations that we have words for an not names, they are a matter of behavior those who have them and the behavior of others towards them. According to Donegan, Wittgenstein accepts all three claims that Pitcher lists. Still Wittgenstein understands that part 3. Of the claim refers to the fact that "that he makes the same kind of sensation as I do" contains a logical trick. A sensation is normal when a man expresses it naturally and when his body is in a given state or in a relationship with a particular object. Hence, a sensation is defined by referring to it in relation to an external object. But this is not, according to Wittgenstein, possible to reduce on external circumstances: because these are defined as private and non dispositional occurrences.

²³ Donegan, A. (1968). Wittgenstein on Sensation, In: Pritcher, G., (Ed.). Wittgenstein. London: McMillan, pp.325

²⁴ Donegan, A. (1968). Wittgenstein on Sensation, In: Pritcher, G., (Ed.). Wittgenstein. London: McMillan, pp.328

It follows logically from this that two persons can have the same sensation, for an example toothache, if they feel something unpleasant that will find expression in a certain expression, for example gritting one's teeth or something similar. For the meaning of the word "toothache" it is purely irrelevant if the inner character of the two individuals is the same. Wittgenstein did not attempt to establish a link between a necessary link between behaviors and private occurrences; he thought that the relationship between these is purely contingent.

What he claims is that the meaning of sensation such as "pain" is such that if we are in pain we claim that we have something which we *de facto* express in a certain manner. It is possible not to express the sensation that we have in such a natural manner. Nevertheless, if this ceased to be the case (if this is not necessary) what we label as pain is no longer interlinked with the natural behavior in pain, then we could not apply the natural world "pain" on our very selves.²⁵

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²⁵ Donegan, A. (1968). Wittgenstein on Sensation, In: Pritcher, G., (Ed.). Wittgenstein. London: McMillan, pp.349