

WITTGENSTEIN *PHILOSOPHICAL INVESTIGATIONS* LECTURE 12

1. The point of *PI* 302 should now be clear. Transference depends on conceiving first-person ascriptions of pain as *relations* between two things, a pain and its bearer; we can then understand third-person ascriptions on the basis of first-personal avowals by varying the second component only. But now the ideas of a bearer and of its relation to pain have been undercut: 'I have a pain' could be written: 'It's paining' on the model of 'It's raining'. So when we move from the first- to the third-person case there is nothing to transfer the pain *to* or *from*. And neither do the causal or locational criteria for assigning ownership help. This gets me no further in extrapolating from my own pain to *another's pain* as opposed to pain that *I* feel *in the other's body* or that *I* feel to be *caused* by vicissitudes of the other (cf. a voodoo doll).
2. So the 'transference' model fails. What caused the mistake in the first place? The decisive move in the conjuring trick was the idea that 'pain' always denoted some inner state or process (*PI* 308). But all we really have here is our *use* of 'pain' and similar words: and we need *not* think of this on the model of object and designation. Here the appearance of a common predicate in both pain avowals and pain ascriptions is misleading; and W. discusses a less misleading form of language at *Philosophical Remarks* 58-64. Not that he is proposing any reform—the point is that this alternative language does as much justice to the facts as the way we talk now.
3. One source of resistance to that language is the truism 'pain is pain'—whether I have it or he has it. So 'I am in pain' must be ascribing the same quality to *me* as 'He is in pain' ascribes to *him*. I don't think that W. means to deny the truism. Instead he is rejecting the philosophical picture that it seems to force upon us in the form of the doctrine that identity of predication rests on predication of identity. According to that picture, knowing what pain is from your own case, and that 'pain is pain', we seem already to have settled what demand 'He is in pain' makes upon that part of mental reality; and yet (in that picture) we can only access it by behavioural proxy. 'We see the straight highway before us, but of course we cannot use it, because it is permanently closed' (*PI* 426; see also 516). You can certainly accept the truism without thinking that *it* settles 'what is in question' when we ascribe pains to another (see McDowell, 'On "The Reality of the Past"' in his *Meaning, Knowledge & Reality*). In a sense we *all* know 'what is in question': but nothing in logic warrants the picture of it as a hidden tract of reality.
4. W.'s *positive* semantics for third-personal mental state ascriptions is not really behaviourism: that is, he does not claim that behaviour or behavioural dispositions exhaust the issue whether e.g. someone is in pain. At various places (e.g. *PI* 269, 344, 580) W. describes the relation between behaviour and third-person psychological ascriptions as being *criteria* i.e. the behaviour is a criterion for the inner state. What does this mean?

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5. *PI* 354 draws an implicit distinction between criteria and symptoms. There are different kinds of evidence for rain: there is the falling of the barometer, but there are also the visual impressions of rain. And the first is merely symptomatic but the second is criterial. This suggests that X is a criterion for Y if and only if X's status as evidence for Y is a matter of convention. That is what he means by saying that the point about sense-impressions is that we understand their language; whereas it is *experience* that teaches us to treat the falling of the barometer as evidence for rain. (See e.g. Baker in *Ratio* 1974.)
6. Applied to mental states the idea is that pain-behaviour is criterial for pain (cf. *PI* 344). Part of what you learn when you learn the meaning of third-personal psychological ascriptions is the sorts of behavioural states and events that defeasibly warrant their assertion. On this conception of criteria, they are *defeasible* but *not* defeasibly relevant: it seems as though somebody could satisfy criteria for being in pain and yet *not* be in pain; but that type of event could not fail to have evidential *bearing* on the correctness of a pain-ascription.
7. On this view we also have some grounds for seeing in W. the germ of Dummett's challenge to classical logic, which certainly owes something to his work. If one's understanding of 'X is in pain' and 'X is not in pain' is a grasp of their criterial bases, then nothing in our understanding of these statements demands our thinking of them as descriptions of some hidden region of reality that either does or does not obtain independently of the evidence. But then (as with fictional statements) we should not accept the law of excluded middle in these cases.
8. W.'s line on third-personal psychological ascriptions had an historical influence upon this anti-realism. Whether it is what *he* intended is another question: *PI* 353 suggests that he accepts the classical laws and rejects only the picture that we associate with it (cf. 'pain is pain'): this is more in keeping with his general anti-revisionary stance.
9. McDowell ('Criteria, Defeasibility and Knowledge' in *MKR*) reads W. differently. For him criteria are indefeasible: criteria include pain-behaviour *that expresses pain* but *not* externally indistinguishable pretence. Read back into *PI* 354: visual impressions of rain are criterial for rain in non-misleading cases. But in misleading cases we only *seem* to have the criteria. 'But surely the possibility of pretence shows that all we are ever *given* is behaviour; so if criteria play an epistemological role they must be behaviour'. But McDowell rejects this idea of the given, based as it is on an 'objectifying conception of the human'. We are *given* the whole human being; bodily movements are a Cartesian artefact; there is no way to recover our conception of the human from the factors into which science and philosophy analyze it. Here again we hear a Hegelian note.