

Wittgenstein's phenomenological phase

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A I no longer have phenomenological language, or "primary language" as I used to call it, in mind as my goal. ... The assumption that a phenomenological language is possible and that only it would really say what we want to express in philosophy is – I believe – absurd. We must make do with our ordinary language and only understand it aright, i.e. we must not let it mislead us into thinking nonsense. ... A knowledge of what is essential to our language and what is inessential to it for representation, what parts of our language are free-running wheels, comes to the same thing as the construction of a phenomenological language. (Wittgenstein, 29th Nov. 1929, MS107 p205-6)

B Everyone is presented to himself in a special and primitive way, in which he is presented to no one else. So, when Dr Lauben has the thought that he was wounded, he will probably be basing it on this primitive way in which he is presented to himself. And only Dr Lauben himself can grasp thoughts specified in this way. (Frege, 'Thoughts', 1919)

C The word 'white' ordinarily makes us think of a certain sensation, which is, of course, entirely subjective; but even in ordinary everyday speech, it often bears, I think, an objective sense. When we call snow white, we mean to refer to an objective quality which we recognize, in ordinary daylight, by a certain sensation. If the snow is being seen in a coloured light, we take that into account in our judgement and say, for instance, 'It appears red at present, but it is white.' Even a colour-blind man can speak of red and green, in spite of the fact that he does not distinguish between these colors in his sensations; he recognizes the distinction by the fact that others make it, or perhaps by making a physical experiment. Often, therefore, a colour word does not signify our subjective sensation, which we cannot know to agree with anyone else's (for obviously calling things by the same name does not guarantee as much), but rather an objective quality. (Frege, *Grundlagen*, §26)

D When one uses the word "sense datum", one should be clear about the peculiarity of its grammar. ... It was said, e.g., that if two things seem to be equal, there must be two somethings which are equal. ... Queerly enough, the introduction of this new phraesology has deluded people into thinking they had discovered new entities, new elements of the structure of the world, as though to say "I believe that there are sense data" were similar to saying "I believe that matter consists of electrons". (*Blue Book*, p. 70)

E When you speak about a private language game you are in fact thinking of a language game which a Robinson Crusoe played with himself. But you would not say that he played a language game with himself unless he went through acts analogous to those which make up a language game played between one man and another. (Wittgenstein, autumn 1935 (?), in *Dictating Philosophy*, pp 177-8)

F 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. (Wittgenstein, *Investigations*, §243)

G You can keep 'this' going for about a minute or two. ... If you argue quickly, you can get some little way before it is finished. I think things last for a finite time, a matter of some seconds or minutes or whatever it may happen to be. (Russell, 1918, in *Collected Papers*, VIII, 180)