

'...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"' ('Philosophical Investigations' Para 258). - How effective, in your view, is Wittgenstein's Private Language Argument in attacking the notion of a 'quale'?

That extra something, in addition to the physical processes I experience, is there or at least I think it is there. Its existence is only apparent to me and me alone. No other person can question my incommunicable subjective sensations as I am the only person that has them. How do I know of them? If they are there, I must be able to identify them and differentiate amongst them regularly, but Wittgenstein's Private Language Argument questions our ability to express that extra something, putting its existence into doubt.

To further investigate this claim, firstly, qualia, which represent that extra something, will be defined and the role they play addressed. Secondly, Wittgenstein's Private Language Argument will be explored with a specific emphasis on paragraph 258. Finally, the repercussions of refuting a private language on qualia will be presented.

A quale may be defined as, "the belief that there is an incommunicable 'something present to me now', something 'given' in addition to the physical."

Qualia are subjective. In other words, the same object may appear differently to different people. Moreover, the fact that qualia are 'incommunicable' and only present to 'me' implies that they cannot be criticized. They are intrinsic appearances expressed by ordinary language. For example, when I refer to something as *my red*, I can only understand what that means. I cannot teach anyone or explain to anyone what *my red* means. There is no other person that can experience the qualia I experience and there is nothing I can compare my qualia to. Additionally, my qualia cannot affect anyone and is of no consequence to anything out there. It is merely an awareness I possess. To me, this immediate awareness of *my red* is the same as the red out there. Essentially, 'subject' and 'object' are one.

Another important term in the definition of qualia that should be addressed before moving on is the word 'now', something present to me now. The only thing present to me is my seeming memory of a quale. It is the current impression that I am having that represents my qualia. Thus I am likely to find it extremely difficult to identify specific qualia as according to the above, the ability to identify and re-identify is not clear. A private language may be able to address this dilemma.

Ludwig Wittgenstein defines a private language in paragraph 243 of his *Philosophical Investigations*, which was published posthumously in 1953, "The words of this language are to refer to what can be known only to the speaker; to his immediate, private, sensations. So another cannot understand the language." Thus a private language is different from a public language and as a result has to have a different set of relations and networks to establish association and meaning.

The definition of a private language is a prelude to what is commonly referred to as the 'Private Language Argument' which starts on paragraph 244 and ends on paragraph 271. The quote, '...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'' is located in paragraph 258 which represents a crucial part of the argument.

In paragraph 258, Wittgenstein explores the notion of keeping a diary regarding the recurrence of a sensation. He associates this sensation with "S". To Wittgenstein, "S" is a subjective quality, a quality that would present itself to consciousness on its own, without having to correspond to something objective. Consequently, it is similar to a quale.

Wittgenstein goes on to state that a definition for "S" cannot be formulated. Formulating such a definition would require the use of a public language. Therefore, Wittgenstein says "S" can be given an ostensive definition, conveying meaning of a term by pointing out an example. This can be accomplished by concentrating on the sensation, but meanings of terms are not made up as one goes along. Usually a definition is formulated prior to identifying examples of it. This means that I cannot be sure of what I am concentrating on. What is the 'criterion of correctness'?

How can I be sure that the mental picture I have has not altered. A series of examples would also be inadequate as they cannot contain the conditions of their application. Thus there is no way to establish regularity in a private language. Nothing can establish the vital aspects for regularity and/or similarity except my subjective impression, which is unreliable at best.

Furthermore, in paragraph 242, Wittgenstein states, "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." Thus, to be correct about a sensation the possibility of being incorrect has to be present. This conveys the need for a network to identify meaning, a network similar to one present in a public language in which verification is possible. In the case of a private language such a network does not exist and therefore, 'here we can't talk about "right"'.

Without a private language, expressing one's qualia seems to be near impossible. More importantly, their mercurial and unidentifiable nature threatens their certainty and reliability. A reality, the Cartesian dualist cannot ignore. The Cartesian claims that the immaterial soul is an absolute certainty. Yet if it is not possible to even identify qualia, then it is no longer only a matter of certainty, but the existence of such an independent soul comes into question.

The parallels between a private and public language versus an independent Cartesian soul and one that is embedded in a greater whole, in context, are evident. The independence of a soul is in question, but that may simply mean that it should be viewed from a different perspective, one that places it within a 'network', as part of a whole that can only function within that whole.

In conclusion, Wittgenstein's Private Language Argument effectively attacks the notion of qualia by questioning our ability to identify and express them. How useful are incommunicable subjective sensations that I cannot express? They may be a mere illusion or an integral part of life that can only be understood in context of life on earth. Additionally, such an effective attack also presents a challenge to the Cartesian dualist as it successfully establishes our inability to identify qualia and thus challenges the certainty with which Descartes identified an independent immaterial soul.