

WITTGENSTEIN AND EMPIRICISM ABOUT OTHER MINDS

by

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M.A. Thesis Abstract

Title: "Wittgenstein and Empiricism about Other Minds".

Description:

I compare two approaches to the refutation of skepticism about other minds. One is due to Wittgenstein, the other stems from the writings of such philosophers as Rorty, Putnam and the identity-theorists; the latter view I call empirical realism.

The Wittgensteinian approach has been taken by its opponents to rest on the claim that psychological terms are governed by criteria, largely because of the writings of such as Malcolm and Strawson. I argue that the Wittgensteinian refutation of skepticism is independent of this claim, and also works as a refutation of some of the central tenets of empirical realism. This requires a reinterpretation or at least a new version of the private language argument, and one which makes no appeal to the notion of "criterion". Here I draw on and attempt to develop a version suggested by Lawrence Resnick. In passing I assess the relevance of this argument to other forms of skepticism.

As preliminaries to this major aim I consider in detail an argument in favour of skepticism about other minds and chart the logic of the two approaches under consider-

ation. I then consider a batch of arguments developed by Putnam against the Wittgensteinian position and show that they apply only to some misinterpretations of Wittgenstein by Malcolm. Alongside the main conclusion of the essay I try to develop a notion of "criterion" which will avoid the objections of Putnam and Rorty and enable me to preserve the claim that psychological terms are for the most part governed by criteria. A major element in this attempt is the denial of what I take to be the Malcolmian thesis that terms must be governed by criteria in order for them to have meaning. Instead, I suggest that it is closer to both Wittgenstein and the truth to say that, as a matter of fact, some expressions are governed by criteria and that this is sufficient to guarantee them meaning. I make some speculative remarks about how the distinction between expressions governed by criteria and those not so-governed might be made out.

I conclude the essay with a brief adjudication of the dispute between the two approaches, coming out in favour of that of Wittgenstein.

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A. Introduction

This essay is an investigation into Wittgenstein's approach to the Other Minds problem. It is an attempt to separate out and to indicate the connections between two strands of thought which have been widely regarded as central to this approach, but which have been widely confused one with the other in much contemporary literature. The first is the refutation of skepticism about other minds through the private language argument; the second is the claim that mental terms are governed by criteria. The currently most familiar picture of Wittgenstein's approach to this problem is that the refutation of skepticism depends upon the claim about criteria in one of two ways. Either it takes form A:

- A: (i) It is essential to the meaning of mental terms that they can safely be applied to others on the basis of behavioural criteria.
- (ii) The skeptic denies (i). Therefore,
- (iii) The skeptic denies a necessary condition for the meaningfulness of mental language.
- (iv) However, the use of an argument by the skeptic presupposes that mental language is meaningful, since it occurs in his argument. Therefore,
- (v) Skepticism is self-defeating, since the

skeptic denies a necessary condition of the meaningfulness of his argument.

or it takes form B:

- B: (i) The skeptic is committed to claiming to have a logically private language.
- (ii) For such a language there can be no criteria of correct usage.
- (iii) In order for there to be correct usage, there must be criteria for correct usage.
- Therefore,
- (iv) There can be no such thing as correct usage in a logically private language. Therefore,
- (v) Such an alleged language cannot actually be a language at all, since it is essential to the notion of a language that one can use it correctly. Therefore,
- (vi) The skeptic is committed to the possibility of a language which is not a language, and hence his position is incoherent.

I express the two forms here with extreme brevity because I only want to bring out their use of the notion of "criterion". Form A uses the claim that all mental terms are governed by criteria, while Form B uses the restricted claim that expressions such as "uses... correctly", which make up one subset of mental predicates,

are governed by criteria. Both forms of argument are, however, question-begging, since these claims about criteria are exactly what are being disputed by the skeptic.

My central aim in this essay is, then, to show that Wittgenstein's refutation of skepticism about other minds is what it has to be, namely independent of his claim that mental expressions are governed by criteria, although I accept that this latter claim is true and plays an important role in Wittgenstein's general philosophy of mind. I shall spend some time trying to clarify what this role is.

Towards the end of this section I give an argument in favour of skepticism about other minds which I have drawn loosely from a similar argument in V.C. Chappell's introduction to "The Philosophy of Mind"¹. In Section B, I lay out what has traditionally been taken as the Wittgensteinian approach to such arguments. I show that the notion of pretence is misplaced in the argument, amend it accordingly, and then go on to give the private language argument as originally conceived, in which form it resembles the brief version of form B above. I note some of its deficiencies.

In Section C, I introduce a different response to skeptical arguments which I call empirical realism, after

Putnam², Dauer³ and others. In current literature this view is the main opponent to that of Wittgenstein, and in Section D I consider a number of empirical realist objections to the Wittgensteinian approach. Most of these are aimed at either Form A or Form B and at some other confused theses about criteria. I attempt to lay out some of the real tenets of the Wittgensteinian position by contrasting them with the targets of Putnam's criticisms, which are largely misinterpretations of Wittgenstein by Malcolm. I try to show that Wittgenstein can avoid the objections which have widely been taken as decisive refutations of his views.

In Section E I develop a new version of the private language argument originally suggested by Lawrence Resnick. I am not sure to what extent he agrees with my formulation, but the central insight, that it is the skeptic's demand for incorrigibility which renders his notion of a private language incoherent, is his. I shall not here expand on the details of this complex argument. In the text I attempt to assess the relevance of the argument to other forms of skepticism and try to focus clearly on the scope of its applicability.

In the final substantive section, Section F, I summarise most of the major features of the notion of

"criterion" which I had developed in response to Putnam's objections in Section D . Section G , the conclusion, contains a summary and some speculative adjudication of the dispute between Wittgensteinians and empirical realists.

Before the argument for skepticism, I need to introduce some terminology and indicate some assumptions upon which what follows is based. First of all, I refer to skepticism about other minds as "solipsism", reserving "skepticism" simpliciter for skepticism about the existence of the external world. Sometimes, for greater clarity, I use the longer titles. Secondly, I regard it as a trivial consequence of the truth of statements literally ascribing psychological properties to some X that X has a mind. Here I am simply going to ignore the view that minds are essentially Cartesian substances which can exist independently of body. If this view is true, then I am a skeptic about the existence of any minds, other or not. So, when I say that X has a mind, or has mental states, I mean no more than that certain psychological predicates are true of him in their literal sense. The reader should be cautioned against being misled by, in particular, my broad use of "mental state".

Thirdly, I use the expressions "having a meaning",

"having meaning", "being meaningful", "having a use" and their cognates (as applied to linguistic items) as synonymous. Thus I do not suppose that a meaning is an object or a set of necessary and sufficient conditions: there are many types of meaning. I also speak of a person's "knowing the meaning of some expression" and of his "knowing the correct use of an expression". In almost all of their occurrences these predicates indicate only that their subject has the ability to use the relevant expressions correctly, and not that he can give any account of his use of them nor that he has any beliefs about meanings, correct uses etc.. On the few occasions in which the predicates are used in the second sense, this is noted.

Here, then, is the initial argument for solipsism, which I shall call Argument 1:

- 1) People have pains; I have them and so, perhaps, do others.
- 2) I make judgments about the pains of others on the basis of their behaviour.
- 3) Sometimes people successfully pretend to have pains.
- 4) In some such cases, the pretender's behaviour may be indistinguishable from what it would be if he did have a pain.

- 5) Any particular case in which I judge that another person has a pain could be a case of successful pretence.
- 6) Pain and behaviour may be, for example, causally related, but at any rate their relation is at most contingent - otherwise successful pretence would be logically impossible.
- 7) Behaviour is insufficient to show with absolute certainty that another person is in pain.
- 8) I cannot directly apprehend another person's pain, nor for this reason can I establish a correlation between it and some other indicator, for example brain-states.
- 9) Hence in no case can I be absolutely certain, can I know, that another person is in pain.
- 10) The argument so far can be repeated for all mental states.
- 11) So I can never know that another person has any mental states.
- 12) Therefore, I can never know that other people have minds.

Implicit in Argument 1 is a certain set of epistemological scruples which I shall take as characteristic of the form of solipsism with which I am concerned. If there are any other interesting forms, these are not the

subject of this essay. The scruples consist in the requirement that for someone to know that p , where p is a statement ascribing a psychological property to a person, p must be indubitable. And this has to mean more than simply that it is psychologically impossible for the knowledge-claimant to bring himself to doubt that p , for then the skeptic would have no grounds for ruling out knowledge-claims made with a great deal of conviction. The usual interpretation of indubitability in these contexts is such that if p is indubitable for a person X , it makes no sense to talk of X 's doubting whether p : in some informal sense of "logical", it is logically impossible for X to doubt that p . For some skeptics it is a condition of p 's indubitability for X that it be logically impossible for X to make a mistake about whether p is true. For my purposes, it does not matter much whether this condition is taken as essential to the solipsist position or not: what does matter is the class of psychological statements which the solipsist regards as living up to his indubitability requirement. This includes only sincere, first-person present-tense ascriptions of certain mental states, such as having thoughts and sensations. Thus I can't doubt that I am in pain (when I am) provided that I understand what pain is. Any expression of doubt on my part would be taken as evidence that I don't yet understand exactly what pain is, or what

the word "pain" means. So provided that I am sincere and understand the words I am using, it makes no sense to suppose that at the time I make it I might doubt whether some first-person present-tense ascription of a sensation is true.

The inclusion of this form of the indubitability requirement in the analysis of knowledge is of course extremely contentious and would be rejected by Wittgensteinians and empirical realists alike. Simple rejection, however, would be simple question-begging. It is one of the advantages of the Wittgensteinian position, in my opinion, that it provides a rationale for this rejection: what follows is an account of that rationale. Accordingly, I begin the next section with a criticism of Argument 1 .

B. The Wittgensteinian Approach

The first objection I wish to make against Argument 1 for solipsism is concerned with the role played in it by the concept of pretence. If this first line of attack is successful, then the argument will have to be modified accordingly, and, as it happens, in such a way as to bring out, in the form of further objections, that which is distinctive about the Wittgensteinian approach to the solution of the Other Minds problem.

It should be noted first that the solipsist cannot claim to know that other people pretend to have pains or not to have them, for this would entail knowing, on any particular occasion, whether or not the pretender was in pain. At most, he can suggest the hypothesis that other people sometimes pretend to have pains when they don't and vice versa. Furthermore, if his argument is to have any bite, then this hypothesis must at least make sense. It is at this juncture that Wittgensteinians have typically wielded arguments to do with the conditions for the application of polar concepts. The claim is that it would not make sense even to suppose that people can pretend to be in pain unless we have a way of distinguishing between cases of pretended pain and cases of real pain. This line of argument has been attacked by empirical realists on the grounds that it is unduly verificationist. In general, I

shall be sympathetic to such objections, although I shall try to show that within a certain conceptual area the so-called verificationist arguments may be justified.

Even without an appeal to such arguments, however, it can be shown that the notion of pretence is misplaced in an argument for solipsism. In the first case, one who pretends to be in pain must know, or have beliefs about, what behaviour is normally associated with pain. He must mimic pain-behaviour in such a way that it is possible for observers to be deceived by his act, and he must intend that they are so deceived, although they do not actually have to notice his pretence in every particular case. The outcome of this unpacking of the concept of pretence is important, since in carrying it out I have had to ascribe to the pretender such mental states as knowledge or belief, an ability to mimic and intentions. So if it is the case that people pretend to have pains, then they must have mental states, and so the possibility of pretence can be no ground for the general solipsist conclusion that, as far as I can know, others do not have minds.

If this is correct, then the solipsist cannot make use of even the possibility of pretence in formulating his argument. What, then, is he left with? My arguments so far allow him to express his position in the following

way:

Argument 2:

- 1) In my own case I know when I have a pain independently of any knowledge of the kind of behaviour which sometimes accompanies my pains (although if I try hard I can observe my pain-behaviour as well).
- 2) In the case of other human figures, all I can observe is their behaviour, and since correlations between pain and behaviour don't always hold in my own case, I have no right to assume that they hold at all in the case of others.
- 3) In that case I can never know that another human figure has a pain, nor any other mental state, nor, therefore, a mind.

This argument, like the first, has been extended to cover all types of mental state, and so to cover the question of whether other human figures have minds. I have assumed that the solipsist can get an idea of the disparity between pain and pain-behaviour, if at all, only from his own case; otherwise, indeed, it is hard to see what grounds he could have for disputing the crude behaviourist claim that pain is identical to pain-behaviour. A result of this is that Argument 2 is safe against any crude versions of the argument from analogy, since the correlations which would purportedly justify an application

of the latter argument are, ex hypothesi, not held to hold. Still, it is not safe from a more sophisticated attack along these lines, as will be seen later. Be that as it may, both this argument for solipsism and the first rely on the supposition that one can know what pain is entirely from one's own case. Further, their intelligent use by a serious solipsist relies on the supposition that he knows what the word "pain" means without knowing under what circumstances he can ascribe pains to others. (I phrase it this way to avoid, for the moment at least, identifying "what pain is" with "what the word 'pain' means". My grounds for insisting that he know the second are independent of those I have given for insisting that he know the first, since I am recommending that we pay attention to his argument only if in stating it he uses all the words ("pain" included) to mean what they do mean.) The stage is now set for the entry of the private language argument, perhaps one of the most controversial and certainly one of the most misunderstood weapons of the Wittgensteinian approach.

It is worthwhile first of all to get an idea of the kind of private language which Wittgenstein is attacking, and of exactly what he is denying when he claims to have shown that such a language is impossible. In "Philosophical Investigations"⁴ he makes it clear that we do use words to

refer to and to describe sensations ((244)), rather than, for instance, to describe behaviour, but such uses do not exemplify private language if it is possible for others to understand them, for which he regards it as sufficient that reports and descriptions of sensations be associated in some way with what he calls the natural expressions of sensation ((256)). (This last claim raises questions about criteria which I wish to disregard for the moment; they are not important in clarifying what is here the target of Wittgenstein's argument). The language that we use now is in this sense not a private language, even when we use it to talk about sensations. For a language to be private, it must be impossible for anyone else to understand it, in the strong sense that it must be logically impossible for someone else to identify the referents of my sensation-words. This is the force of the requirement of the solipsist argument that I must learn the use of sensation-words from my own case. And what this means is not that I must go through certain learning-processes in order to find out how to use a word, but that what learning the use of sensation-words is, on the solipsist account, is learning to "associate names with sensations and use these names in descriptions". ((256)). Since I am the only person who can have my sensations, and since these are the only sensations I can have (both grammatical remarks), nobody else can associate words with my sensations in the

way in which the solipsist claims I do, and so no one can learn the use of my sensation-words in the way in which the solipsist claims I do. This picture of sensation-language is what makes it a private language in the relevant sense.

And so to the argument, or at least to the version of it which has gained most currency. The solipsist account cannot be a correct account of what it is to learn sensation-words, for in order to say that someone has learned the use of a word, we must be able to say that he now uses the word correctly. In the case of a private language, there can be no criterion of correctness, for, ex hypothesi, the referents of a person's sensation-words are not available to others. Nor is it any good saying that at least I myself know when I am using sensation-words correctly, since I have no means of distinguishing this case from that in which it merely seems to me that I am using words correctly. By the theory of polar concepts, the failure of the reality/appearance distinction with respect to the correctness of my uses of words is sufficient grounds for denying that it makes sense to speak of "correct" in this context ((258)). And so a private language is not a language at all.

Careful attention to the details of the above argument

will show that it has nothing to do with the causal conditions and processes which as a matter of fact underlie the learning of words. The discussion is about what counts as the learning of words, the end-product of these processes. Nor is the argument concerned with the justification of my first-person sensation-statements, except in so far as it attempts to show that for a private language, questions of justification do not arise. The conclusion, then, is that the solipsist account of the use of sensation-words is inadequate, since on that account there could be no question of using words correctly or incorrectly. Clearly we are able to make this distinction in ordinary life, and, what is more, it is a presupposition of the intelligibility of the solipsist's general argument that he uses the words in which it is expressed correctly. It can be seen that the private language argument can be used against the argument from analogy, since this also presupposes that I know what "pain" means from my own case, but, more importantly, it shows that the latter argument is unnecessary. In any case, there must be some other account of what it is to be able to use sensation-words.

I wish to stress, however, that the Wittgensteinian reply to solipsism does not depend on a specification of this alternative account. The logic of the reply is as follows: in formulating his argument, the solipsist uses

words, some of which are sensation-words, which he assumes have a use (if they are to express his beliefs). His account of how sensation-words come to have a use (or what it is to use them) is such that the extension of the application of sensation-words to the sensations of others appears unwarranted, or at least tenuous. However, if the private language argument is correct, this account is mistaken, as must be any account which supposes that sensation-words get their use from one's own case. Therefore, the solipsist is not entitled to the assumption (or rather the presupposition of the intelligibility of his argument), that sensation-words have a use, unless he can provide some account which is not subject to the private language argument. But fulfilling this requirement will remove the air of difficulty about applying sensation-words to others, and once again his argument will fail to get off the ground.

This shows that this version of the Wittgensteinian answer to the problem of Other Minds is to some extent independent of the claim that behaviour is the criterion for mental states. It is not, however, independent of the general notion of "criterion", since in laying it out I have spoken of "what counts as the learning of words" and "criterion of correctness" (in the use of words), both of which are to be explicated via the interrelated concepts of "criterion" and "rule of language". The notion of

"criterion" has recently come under severe attack from empirical realists, and so I must enquire into the salience of this attack before attempting an assessment of the above version of the private language argument. First, however, I shall say what empirical realism is.

C. Empirical Realism

The most sophisticated statement of the empirical realist position on the problem of Other Minds is that of Putnam². Although his position differs markedly from those of other relevant realists (e.g. Ziff⁵), it retains an outlook which is distinctly at odds with the Wittgensteinian approach, and which is distinctively realist in conception. I shall therefore rely heavily on Putnam's account for the positive specification of the empirical realist approach.

Empirical realism, then, is in this context the view that statements about the existence of other minds are supported by experience in much the same way as that in which any scientific theory is supported by observational data. Putnam says "in much the same way" because he does not think that the two ways are exactly the same. Instead, there are analogies and disanalogies between them, and the analogies are strong enough to be instructive. In isolating the disanalogies, Putnam shows how his position is more sophisticated than those of some other realists: in the first place, he claims that the existence of other minds is a consequence of the "host of specific hypotheses, theories, laws, and garden variety empirical statements that we accept" ⁶, rather than a theory for which the latter provide inductive support. The "host of specific hypotheses" etc. includes such statements as that "other

people are on occasion egotistical, angry, suspicious, lustful, tired, sad" ⁷, and none of these is consistent with any theory which claims that other people do not have minds. Putnam wants to say that mind-theory has never been tested against no-mind-theory, and so has never been directly confirmed. What has happened is that some mind-theories have been tested against alternative mind-theories, and that the success of this procedure has provided indirect confirmation of the statement "Other people have minds.". The second disanalogy is that the relevant observation-language is not neutral with respect to the theoretical duel between mind-theory and no-mind-theory; rather it is built into the language used to report observations of behaviour that other people have mental states.

This disanalogy is of course closely related to the first, and a single illustration should serve to show that both are pertinent. While riding in the cabin of a locomotive I ask of the driver, "Why did he pull that lever?", and receive from my friend the reply, "Because he wanted to slow down the train". Both my question and its answer imply that the driver has a mind, since otherwise it would have been more appropriate for me to ask, "Why did the arm engage with the lever in such a way as to change the position of the lever from 'OFF' to 'ON'?", (and my friend's reply would doubtless have included some remarks about

physiology and probably nothing about the intended result of the movement).

The disanalogies seem to me to be compelling, and they are more or less in agreement with the spirit of Wittgenstein's thought in this area. What, then, of the analogies? I quote Putnam in full: ⁶

It ((our acceptance of the proposition that others have mental states)) is analogous ((to the acceptance of ordinary empirical theories on the basis of explanatory induction)), however, in that part of the justification for the assertion that other people have mental states is that to give up that proposition would require giving up all of the theories, statements etc., that we accept implying that proposition; and those statements do have, many of them, the kind of explanatory role that the inductivist stresses. It is also analogous in that many empirical theories are accepted today precisely for the two reasons that (a) they, or theories that presuppose them, provide plausible explanations of many phenomena, and (b) no alternative is today in the field. ((Bracketed phrases added.))

The heart of the empirical realist answer to skepticism about other minds is contained in the final sentence of this quotation. Mind-theory seems (at least) to explain the behaviour of the human figures which I see around me, and it is the best theory I have so far. What is wrong with skepticism, on this view, is that nobody has elaborated in sufficient detail a no-mind-theory which would explain the same data. We are justified in

sticking to our mind-theory until such an alternative is presented, and this methodology is not suspect, since it seems to be the most we can do in many quite legitimate areas of science. According to Putnam, those of us who hold the mind-theory are not compelled to invent no-mind-theories to test our theory against, any more than any scientist is compelled to do this, but it is of course allowed that anyone may try to carry out such a crucial experiment. He thinks it unlikely that this will happen, because the no-mind-theory is a "silly" theory, and if it constructed so that there are no testable differences between it and mind-theory, as is usually the case with skeptical possibilities, then it is irrational to believe such a theory when the more plausible mind-theory is available. To insist that we are compelled to answer skepticism with a proof, or even with experiments, is analogous to insisting that nuclear physicists should cease their experiments in order to evaluate theories such as that the average decay-time of mu-mesons is determined by the number of days (excluding week-ends) for which the current President of the United States has been in office. Our justification for regarding such theories as this and the no-mind-theory as silly will be constituted by the success of these assumptions; and what further justification could there be?

In treating the empirical realist approach, it should

be borne in mind that it is not essential to the approach that there could never be an alternative no-mind-theory of human behaviour. On the contrary, there must be the possibility of such an alternative if the present mind-theory is to count as justified empirically in the way that Putnam suggests. Thus Rorty ⁸ argues that it is possible that sooner or later an advanced theory of neurophysiology will enter the field and, because of its greater predictive power, triumph over the loose, informal mind-theory. It is interesting that Rorty regards it as a condition of this triumph, not only that science comes up with the requisite explanations, but also that these explanations must be adopted in common usage by the man in the street.

I shall now consider some empirical realist arguments against the Wittgensteinian approach, especially against the role played in it by the notion of "criterion".

D. Empirical Realist Argument against the Wittgensteinian Approach.

Putnam does not of course content himself with a positive account of empirical realism, but presents a number of arguments designed to show that there is something fundamentally mistaken about what he calls the "modish" treatment in terms of behavioural criteria. Some of these occur in the section of the "Other Minds" paper entitled "Shoemaker's Criticisms of Ziff", and some in the paper "Dreaming and Depth Grammar".⁹ A third paper, "Brains and Behaviour"¹⁰ is marginally relevant, since in it Putnam attacks logical behaviourism and it is clear from some comments in "Other Minds"¹¹ that he does not think there is any important difference between this view and that of the Wittgensteinians. Because I think such a difference does exist, I shall concentrate on the first two papers, which are clearly addressed to adherents to the Wittgensteinian approach.

The view which Putnam criticises in "Other Minds" seems to be constituted out of a number of statements typically made by Wittgensteinians in the exposition of their views. Unfortunately there is little evidence that he has understood the logic of these views or the role which the particular statements he chooses as targets have to play in that exposition. Since, however, his remarks are widely taken as refuting the Wittgensteinian approach,

it will be useful to consider his arguments as a step to elucidating just how this approach works. Putnam, then, sums up Shoemaker's objections to empirical realism as the claim that knowing the meaning of psychological predicates (viz predicates that are used in the ordinary-language explanation of behaviour) involves knowing that behaviour entitles us to apply them; and that otherwise we could not learn the meaning of these words. He remarks then that it is possible to construct models of language in which it is not essential that words are governed by criteria; this part of his reply I shall discuss along with "Dreaming and Depth Grammar", in which the models are elaborated. For the moment I shall concern myself with Putnam's treatment of the question "whether someone could understand the meaning of a psychological word, say 'angry', without knowing that certain forms of behaviour entitle one to apply that word to another person". 12

This question, according to Putnam, is ambiguous between:

- (a) Could someone learn the meaning of, say, 'angry' without learning that certain form of behaviour are thought to entitle one to use it?; and
- (b) Are we in fact entitled to use behavioural

indicators for the application of, say, 'angry'? Putnam's answer to (a) is "Yes", for the following reasons: first of all it is not essential that one learn the meanings of psychological words at all, since it is conceivable that one should have been born with the ability to use them. In the second place, even if one did have to learn the meanings of psychological words, behavioural criteria would not be necessary, since criteria based on neurophysiology or some other psychological theory would suffice. Thirdly, even if behavioural criteria were necessary, it would not follow that the ones which we actually use are necessary: in a certain conceivable culture, grimacing could be a criterion of happiness.

Putnam takes these three points to be at least partly decisive against the Wittgensteinian approach, but it is not clear that they are. As I mentioned earlier, no one is claiming that there must be certain kinds of causal conditions before anyone can use a word correctly, so no one denies Putnam's first point. The Wittgensteinian claim is only that we do not say of anyone that he knows how to use psychological words unless he applies them on the basis of certain behavioural criteria. This is not to deny that some day we might allow that people know the use of such words when they base their application upon neurophysiological or other criteria; indeed we might even

base our judgment about their knowledge on such criteria. And Wittgenstein insists that criteria can change in this way, although he thinks that the relevant circumstances arise mainly in science ((79)). It remains true, however, that at the moment neurophysiological facts are not relevant (except in strange circumstances) to the ascription of psychological predicates to others. In order to satisfy the criteria for "knowing the meaning/use of 'angry'", a person has to use 'angry' in the same kinds of ways in the same kinds of circumstances as those recognised as relevant by most members of his linguistic community. It is important to Wittgenstein's conception of these problems that this latter statement (allowing for its expression in technical jargon) is not a philosophical thesis but merely a report about the human behaviour which typically surrounds the teaching and learning of words. We are being reminded of the circumstances in which it would be natural to assert that someone does or doesn't know how to use a word. Furthermore, it is not an implication of this position that fulfillment of the normal criteria for knowing the use of a word is either necessary or sufficient for knowing the use of the word: one can get round either form of condition provided one has a further story to tell.

In reply to Putnam's third objection, that even if behavioural criteria were necessary for the ascription of

mental states to others, it would not follow that the ones we actually use are necessary (grimacing as a criterion of happiness in a different culture), there are a number of points to be made. First of all, it is not at all clear that grimacing could be a criterion of happiness; Putnam is obviously thinking of a particular arrangement of the facial tissues which generally is called grimacing in our culture, and supposing that in other cultures this arrangement would count as a criterion of happiness. (Perhaps chimpanzees pull faces like this when they are happy). What I wish to dispute is that such an arrangement, if it were a criterion of happiness, would rightly be described as a grimace rather than as a smile. Wouldn't we be more inclined to say that in this culture people smile differently? I do not expect this suggestion to be conclusive, but in any case that is not essential to my purpose. If the question is going to have any answer at all, that will depend upon the answers to more general questions. One of these is whether behavioural criteria for mental states are rightly described in purely physical terms (the arrangement of facial tissues), and hence are neutral with respect to which mental states they are criteria for. I think that this is not the case. When I come to the conclusion that someone is happy (if I can do such a thing!) because he is smiling, I do not first note the topology of his face, decide that this constitutes a smile and then

infer that its bearer is happy. Either I straightaway observe that he is happy, or I straightaway observe his smile -- in most cases the topology does not enter into the judgment at all, except as a causal condition of its being made. It is indeed rather difficult to describe a smile in purely topological terms (if you don't believe me, try it!), although I can describe it as happy, radiant, cruel etc., I am inclined to say that the language in which we express behavioural criteria for mental states is in some sense "loaded" in advance: it is not neutral with respect to which mental states particular "pieces" of behaviour are criteria for. Empirical realists in general would wish to deny this, but this will involve denying my common-sense description of what happens when I see that someone is happy, and replacing it with an account which appeals to the notion of an implicit inference from the physical characteristics of a face to a description of the face as smiling, grimacing etc..

There is one way in which my discussion of the case of smiling/grimacing so far is off the point, and that is that it is improbable that Wittgenstein would claim that either of these is a criterion for any mental state at all. They appear to be much closer to what he calls symptoms; and if this is correct, then Putnam's criticisms are not directed against the criteriological approach of Wittgen-

stein. What does count as a criterion of happiness comes out, as it happens, later in Putnam's article,¹³ where he admits that it might be semantically deviant to suppose that someone could dislike being happy. Putnam suggests that if there is any kind of "analytic relationship" here, it is not a relationship between a psychological state and a behavioural indicator, but one between two mental states which are different. No reason is given for the deviance of this supposition, and it is indeed difficult to know how Putnam could offer one. The Wittgensteinian explanation would be that the behavioural criteria for disliking being in a certain mental state are generally the same as those for being unhappy when one is in that state, and so in most circumstances, anyone who dislikes being in a certain mental state, and is in it, will also satisfy the criteria for being unhappy. And in that case he can't also be happy.

None of this can be taken to deny Putnam's claim that:¹³

The fact that it is strongly semantically deviant to believe that one's neighbours dislike being happy does not mean that under no conditions can one believe that one's neighbours dislike being happy; it only means that one would have to tell a considerable story to succeed in convincing us that there was such a belief, with no change in the meaning of 'happy' involved.

That there is no conflict between this and the Wittgensteinian account draws one's attention to a most impor-

tant feature of the conception of the conception of "criterion", namely that criteria provide neither necessary nor sufficient conditions for the application of a term.

I have said that smiling is more of a symptom of happiness than a criterion; what then might be the criterion? The answer to this question is to be found in the general forms of behaviour which underlie our ascription of happiness -- a zest which enlivens our actions, a certain playfulness, freedom from (absence of) the behaviour characteristic of dejection and worry (moping, anxious tones of voice and so on). The biggest mistake here is to expect a short, simple description of the requisite criteria, for the phenomena of happiness are not of a kind which allows for such a description. On the contrary, they are rich in diversities and have many connections with the criteria for other mental states. The kinds of behaviour which stand as criteria for happiness will be different in different circumstances, even in different cultures; they will depend on what Wittgenstein calls "the whole history of the incident", on the causes, and in some cases the objects, of happiness, as well as on whether the subject also fulfills criteria for other mental states. If, in the midst of grief, someone smiles, jokes and acts with a certain vitality for ten seconds, only to resume his state of mourning, we should not usually say that he was happy for those ten seconds; "manic" might be a more

appropriate notion here. On the other hand, given a more specific description of what was happening around this time, for example that the mourner glimpsed the futility of his grief, became reconciled with the fact that "death comes to us all" and so on, only to be once more overtaken by sorrow, there might be some grounds for wanting to speak of happiness here. All the same, ten seconds is a very short time for all those things to happen (a grammatical remark, as Wittgenstien would say). It is interesting that neurophysiological data would at present be irrelevant to settling questions like these, despite the fact that whatever brain-states are found to be generally correlated with happiness can or can fail to appear in the situation envisaged.

I think that what I have said is sufficient to counter Putnam's objections to the Wittgensteinian answer to the question (a): "Could someone learn the meaning of, say, 'angry' without learning that certain forms of behaviour are thought to entitle one to use it?". Putnam, as I said before, wishes to distinguish this question from (b) "Are we in fact entitled to use behavioural indicators for the application of, say, 'angry'?". A negative answer to this question serves as a commitment to skepticism about other minds, and seems of course quite consistent with a negative answer to the first question, at least as

far as empirical realists are concerned. From the Wittgensteinian point of view, however, there are strong reasons for denying that there is any difference between everybody's thinking we are justified in applying mental terms on the basis of behavioural criteria and our being in fact justified. This needs explanation.

It is worth noting, first of all, that no question can arise about whether most people in a particular linguistic community might be mistaken in using a word or a sentence in a particular way, since what the correct use is to be explicated in terms of the ways in which most people in the relevant linguistic community use the word or sentence. What shows that a word or sentence has a use in a particular linguistic community is that the behaviour of the members of the community is ordered in some consistent way around the utterances of the expression under consideration. By this I mean that, for instance, "There's food in the cave" spoken to a hungry man doesn't produce at one time the reaction of going into the cave, at another that of running ten miles away and rain-dancing, at another no reaction at all, unless there is in each case a further story to tell about why each particular reaction would be appropriate. Just as it is important here that every case can't be a normal case, so it is important that every case can't be a special case. (Other-

wise there is no reason why we shouldn't say that tables understand - and even have the ability to speak -- English, but are enormously secretive about their powers.)

Now, I have already pointed out that it is a condition of the intelligibility of the skeptic's argument that the words in it have uses, and so (if my last claims are right), that people react more or less consistently to typical statements, commands etc. which involve mental words, and utter them in a way which is generally consistent with respect to their surroundings. Given that all this is the case, what further question can arise about whether this use is justified? Isn't this just like the question of whether the rule of baseball "Three strikes make an out" is justified? And when this question is asked, it might preface a suggestion that the rule be replaced (and there might be good reasons for this, for instance that pitchers are becoming so good that too few runs are being scored). In such a case, however, it would be wrong to say that our present rule was mistaken, that we were deceived in using it. With some qualifications to be discussed later, I wish to extend this view to the rules which govern the use of words.

At this point, the objection arises that although people may use mental words correctly, they may never-

theless be mistaken in all or most of their particular ascriptions of mental predicates to others. If we actually supposed that this was true of some linguistic community whose language we were trying to translate, our supposition might equally well be replaced by the supposition that the members of this community did not use mental words at all, but sometimes emitted noises which bore no relation to the state of the world around them (we all do this sometimes in any case). It seems that only Ockham's Razor could decide this issue. But if people do believe that behavioural indicators entitle us to apply mental words to others, and on the basis of this belief go ahead to use mental words in this way, then a correct description of the use of these words will have to include the fact that statements involving them are justified by an appeal to behavioural criteria. This will be what the use is, and it will not be necessary to talk of an inner mental content at all. It is only because the skeptic sees it as the main part of the meaning of, say, 'angry', that it refer to a private mental content, that he supposes that we might never be justified in ascribing anger to another. Wittgenstein observes that the recognition of a private mental content plays no part in the justification of ascriptions of anger to others, although inner feelings may be part of what is ascribed. He concludes that there is something wrong with the empiri-

cist account of the meaning of mental terms according to which they are affixed to the feelings themselves in such a way that the only real justification for using them on a particular occasion is having the requisite feeling.

(The beetle and the box ((293)).) This account appears to leave unclear how we are to explain first-person uses of mental terms, but this can be investigated later. For the moment I will draw the tentative conclusion that it makes no sense to suppose that everyone might be mistaken in applying certain words according to certain criteria, although they may formulate false beliefs about the ways in which they use words. It follows that it makes no sense to say that everyone is justified in applying words according to criteria (although questions of justification may arise in particular cases) -- it just so happens that they do!

It is, however, worth reminding ourselves that the skeptic about other minds does not claim that we are not justified in using mental terms to describe others; or, if he does, he means that perhaps we are not the kind of things that can have justification (cf. tables). He certainly cannot hold that we lack justification, that we are deceived into thinking we have it, for then he would be committed to the existence of other minds, namely ours. What gives the Other Minds problem its particular flavour

is that the skeptic doubts whether he is justified in ascribing mental predicates to others. Part of this way of looking at the matter is the claim that one knows the meaning of mental terms from one's own case. And so the private language argument forms an important part of the arsenal of weapons used to combat skepticism.

Although I have disputed the claim that there is some important difference between Putnam's questions (a) and (b), my latter remarks on skepticism necessitate a consideration of his treatment of (b). Here the Wittgensteinian approach is characterised as accusing the skeptic of "making a logical blunder ((denying the very critical relationships ... upon which the customary understanding of psychological terms depends)) or using words with a different meaning or anything of that kind".¹⁴ Putnam thinks that this line of attack is insufficient, and for good reasons if the argument is of the form: a skeptic denies that what we take to be paradigm cases of, say, anger can be known to be such, therefore he does not understand the meaning of "angry". For "understands the meaning of 'angry'" is a psychological predicate, for which the criterion is correct application to paradigm cases. But as both Putnam and Wittgenstein have stressed, a criterion provides neither necessary nor sufficient conditions for that for which it is the criterion. So, provided we tell

a further story, we can admit that someone does understand the meaning of "angry" without committing himself on paradigm cases, and in some situations the further story will consist in the information that the person concerned is a skeptic. The situation is indeed more complicated than this, since verbal expression of doubt is insufficient, in this context, for showing that one does doubt. The bonafide skeptic must act in such a way as to indicate that he has doubts about the existence of other minds, that he only has strong beliefs and lacks knowledge, but these considerations I shall ignore for the moment.

It seems to me that if the above were a correct characterisation of the Wittgensteinian attack on skepticism, Putnam would have a strong case against it; unfortunately, it is not. Wittgenstein is concerned with the conditions for mental words' having a correct use, and his claim is that if the skeptics doubts were justified, if his epistemological scruples were the correct ones, then these conditions could not be fulfilled. This again brings us to the private language argument.

I now wish to turn to Putnam's paper "Dreaming and Depth Grammar" 9, in which he discusses some of the claims about language which underlie Malcolm's approach to the

solution of skeptical problems. Malcolm, of course, addresses himself in his book "Dreaming"¹⁵ to the Cartesian arguments having to do with skepticism about the existence of the physical world, but many of the tools he uses can be applied to skepticism about other minds. It should be kept in mind, however, that Malcolm is not always loyal to the spirit of Wittgensteinian thought in this area and, as Putnam's opening remarks suggest, the empirical realist must be wary of shooting at straw men.

Putnam, then, selects the following theses for discussion:¹⁶

"...Criteria are ways of settling a question with certainty...; their connection with a concept is logical, not empirical; they are related to the way we teach and learn the use of an expression; if they are all fulfilled we have a 'paradigmatic case'; it is nonsense to speak of an inductive inference unless the sentence used to express the alleged conclusion of the inference is one whose application is governed by criteria. Thus, language is criterion-governed; learning and teaching a language is, in large part, learning and teaching conformity to criteria."

The line of attack on this version of Malcolm's position begins with the claim that it is a species of verificationism. According to Putnam, Malcolm confuses the notion of a set of truth-conditions for the application of some expression with that of a way of settling with certainty questions in which that expression occurs: he uses

"criterion" ambiguously to cover both of these notions, although only the second is important to his analysis of intelligibility. A rough account of this analysis is that a statement can be senseless or unintelligible purely on account of its lacking a possible method of verification. Malcolm claims that there is an important sense of "senseless" for which this analysis holds, while Putnam denies this, and offers an alternative account of the concept of intelligibility. This last is of interest, but does not show that Malcolm is wrong, since he may admit that both analyses are correct, but are analyses of different senses of "intelligibility". It seems that only careful and unbiased attention to examples could settle this question.

Before proceeding to the meat of Putnam's attack, it is important to impose some restrictions on the generality of Malcolm's claims about language. It is possible that in doing this I may distort his actual position and so render Putnam's arguments unsound. However, my interest is in whether empirical realist arguments are successful against Wittgenstein's approach to the philosophy of mind, and I do not think I shall misrepresent his views in introducing these restrictions. First of all, then, neither Wittgenstein nor Malcolm believe that all expressions are governed by criteria; however, since I wish to discuss Malcolm's claims in relation to mental language, which with

the exception of some first-person utterances is criterion-governed, this qualification is only important because it might rule out counter-examples to the claims which are drawn from areas of language which are not governed by criteria.

Secondly, when Malcolm says that "criteria are ways of settling a question with certainty", he is not talking about the kind of certainty which supports the move from the premises to the conclusion of a (formal or informal) valid deductive argument. To give an adequate account of certainty would take me beyond the scope of this essay, so for the moment I will confine myself to the following rough characterisation: to say that criteria are ways of settling a question with certainty is to say that the criteria for the use of an expression are what as a matter of fact we appeal to when we want to settle a question in particular circumstances, and what as a matter of fact we accept as settling the question in those circumstances. So, in the laboratory situation, the criterion of a substance's being water is that it is composed of H₂O molecules and related ions. It is clear that this criterion plays no role in the everyday use of "water", although if any dispute arose about whether some substance was or was not water it could in principle be settled by reference to the criterion, which here serves as the ultimate court of

appeal. Nothing I have said here implies that at a later date the decision of this court cannot be overruled.

This brings me to the third qualification, which has to do with the claim that the connection of criteria with a concept is logical and not empirical. This claim can be taken in many ways: one is that criteria function as sets of necessary and sufficient conditions for the application of a concept, but we have already seen that this is false. Another might be that it is a necessary truth that a certain concept has certain criteria; this interpretation strikes me as close to Malcolm's position as expressed in his remarks that if the criteria for the application of an expression change, then the expression must be associated with a new concept, which "remotely resembles the old one".¹⁷ I don't think that Wittgenstein is committed to this position; to come to recognise this is to find out something important about his conception of criteria. In so far as Wittgenstein is committed to any view that might be expressed as "that the connection of criteria with a concept is logical and not empirical", I suggest that this is the view that, if the application of a concept is governed by criteria, then in order to explain to someone its application in normal circumstances, one would have to explain the role played by the criteria in this application. In addition, someone would be said to

understand the application of a criteria-governed concept (or the use of a criteria-governed expression), only if he regarded certain criteria as centrally important in settling questions about the application of such a concept. Of course, these last two claims allow of exceptions, where a special explanation can be offered, but the fact that such an explanation is required to justify our admission that someone understands the application of a criteria-governed concept without knowing anything about the importance of the relevant criteria in settling questions about that application, shows that normally (where there is no special explanation) such knowledge is necessary. This is the form of the "rules of language" so often talked about in discussions of criteria: they are rules that hold in normal circumstances (which of course is all that is necessary to the successful functioning of language) and they leave open the possibility that they may be overridden in unusual circumstances. Although this feature was not included in the specification of the inference-rules of the propositional calculus, it is not a surprising feature of rules, since it is found in many ordinary kinds of rules. The rules of baseball, for instance, do not have to commit themselves on whether a catch has been made if, after being struck by the batter, the ball orbited the earth or turned into a pigeon before coming to rest in the hands of the left-fielder. How odd

that the game could be played with so much left undecided!

Before I go on, let me offer a rough illustration of the distinction between logical and empirical connections with a concept, which will run parallel with the distinction between criteria and symptoms used by Wittgenstein in, for example, the Blue Book.¹⁸ That there are droplets of water falling from the sky is a criterion of its raining; it is not a sufficient condition for rain, since the water may be being ejected from a number of aeroplanes circling just above the low cloud-cover; in normal cases, however, this would be taken to settle the question of whether it is raining; furthermore, one could not explain to someone what the concept of rain is without describing the role of this criterion, and someone who thought that the fact that water-droplets were falling from the sky was not centrally relevant to the question of whether it was raining would not be said to understand the concept of "rain". On the other hand, that a barometer gives a certain reading is merely a symptom of rain which would give some indication that, but not settle the question whether, it was in fact raining; one could explain to someone the application of the concept of 'rain' without talking about barometers, and someone who believed that barometer-readings were not centrally relevant to the question of whether it is raining would not therefore be said to lack an understanding of the

concept of rain.

I admit that this case may be too clear-cut to be representative of the application of criteria-governed concepts, but it serves its present purpose of elucidating the notion of a criterion. Whether it be the same with pain as with rain can be settled later. For the moment, note that the distinction between criteria and symptoms is based on that between relatively important and relatively unimportant, a distinction which clearly admits of degrees.

Let me at last turn to Putnam's arguments against Malcolm. His first one addresses itself to the claim that change in the criteria for the application of an expression results in a change in the meaning of that expression, and utilises the example of the expression "multiple sclerosis". Judgments about whether patients are suffering from this disease are at present based upon a family of symptoms (in the medical sense) many of which also occur in cases of other neurological diseases. Now suppose it is discovered that a particular virus causes multiple sclerosis, and that the presence of this in the body becomes the criterion for the use of the term "multiple sclerosis" (at least, its use in attributing the disease to people). According to Putnam, Malcolm is committed to the view that the meaning of "multiple sclerosis" has changed, that we are now dealing

with a new concept. Here I think Putnam is right, and it is clear that, with the case as described, Malcolm's view comes out as implausible. There is, however, a way out of the implausibility and although this escape may be blocked for Malcolm, I see no reason why Wittgenstein cannot take it. The move is to deny that the present use of "multiple sclerosis" is governed by criteria at all, for the description of the case indicates that at the moment there is no way of settling with certainty whether or not a particular patient has multiple sclerosis. By abandoning the claim that all expressions are governed by criteria, one could even preserve the claim that change in criteria results in change in meaning, although I shall not try to do that, since I think there are independent reasons for regarding this as a muddled view.

Putnam, of course, would be delighted by such a move, since it is part of his thesis that one can have indications of the presence of some item (in this case, a state) without also having criteria for its presence. Here "indication" does the work of "symptom" in the medical sense. "Symptom" in Wittgenstein's sense refers to something different, for a symptom by definition is something which experience teaches us is correlated with some item which is identified via criteria, and so in this technical sense of "symptom" one cannot have symptoms without criteria. This is of course consistent with Putnam's thesis about

indications once one drops the principle that all expressions are governed by criteria. Because Malcolm appears to cling to this principle he is led to a rather inadequate analysis of induction, justly criticised by Putnam¹⁹ and by Chihara and Fodor^{20,21}. Because there are more jobs for induction than merely supplying grounds for the correlation of symptoms with criteria, what Wittgenstein says about this use can still be true, and consistent with Putnam's description of how induction enters into the postulation of theoretical "entities" such as multiple sclerosis.

I shall accept this description and with it certain of the arguments against Malcolm, but this is because I think Wittgenstein can accommodate it within his general approach. It is important to notice that, on this description of the multiple sclerosis example, there are no such things as "paradigmatic cases"; at least, which cases are paradigmatic cannot be decided until a virological criterion is adopted, presumably after the discovery of a particular virus in the bodies of a large number of patients hypothesised to be suffering from multiple sclerosis. So, recognition of paradigm cases cannot be part of learning the application of this concept. However, this amendment to Malcolm's stated view leaves it open whether recognition of paradigm cases is centrally

important as a criterion of understanding the uses of expressions that are governed by criteria, and whether the realm of the mental is represented by such expressions.

Putnam has a second example, that of the history of the term "acid", which he claims is a clear case of the change of criteria without change of concept. As such it counts against the view that any change in criteria results in a new concept, only remotely related to its predecessor, but again it is consistent with all that Wittgenstein says about criteria in the Investigations. Malcolm's view, according to Putnam, is wrong because it obscures what it is important to stress, that there are strong connections between the concept of "acid" employed by eighteenth-century chemists (with criteria such as sour taste, solubility in water, ability to redden blue litmus) and that employed by chemists now, which appeals to the notion of "proton-donor". This is of course true, and relies on the fact that most acids are such that for them both sets of criteria are satisfied, for if there were hardly any substances which satisfied both sets of criteria, we should have no reason for insisting on such a connection -- we should say instead that the meaning of the term "acid" had changed.

A number of points are raised here, to some of which

I can devote only passing attention. These general considerations about conceptual change set the stage for an extension of the distinction between numerical and qualitative identity to concepts. Thus it would seem reasonable to say that, although the eighteenth-century concept of "acid" is numerically the same as that of today (the grounds for this lie in the history of the concept), it is nevertheless qualitatively different, in so far as it had different criteria for its application. (Predicates of the form "has such-and-such criteria of application" can clearly and trivially be used to ascribe a certain property to a concept.) Here the distinction between qualitative and numerical difference would appear to be one of degree, since it depends on the proportions of items satisfying each set of criteria which also satisfy both. If the proportion is high, we will talk about qualitative difference, whereas if it is low we will talk about numerical difference. The fact that there is no clear and categorical distinction here should not mislead us into thinking there is no distinction at all, for if this were right there would be no distinction between red and orange.

A second point of interest is that, roughly speaking, the eighteenth-century criteria for "acid" are those employed today by most people who know little of chemistry. If a cab-driver wants to be certain that the liquid oozing out of his battery is acid and not something else, he does

not carry out experiments to determine whether the liquid is a proton-donor. On the contrary, he makes appeal to taste or litmus paper (although only if there is some doubt about the constitution of the battery). This shows not that the cab-driver has a different concept of acid from that possessed by contemporary chemists, nor that he is using risky indicators, but that criteria operate within a context. I want to say that there are no such things as the criteria tout court of "acid", but that in different situations, there are different ways of settling with certainty whether a certain substance is an acid. The cab-drivers tests would be taken as sufficient (though not logically sufficient) unless there were some reason to suppose that the substance was a non-acid with certain acid-like properties. In that case, if he were sufficiently determined to find out whether the liquid was an acid, then of course the cab-driver would submit it to chemists in order that they may ascertain whether or not the liquid was a proton-donor. The simple fact which I wish to emphasise is that this appeal is not necessary in a wide variety of circumstances.

My third point is related to the first, and concerns the question of whether a change in the criteria for the application of a concept reflects a change of meaning or simply the fact that new knowledge has been gained about

the items which fall under the concept. Putnam accuses Malcolm of leaning exclusively on the former, and whether or not Putnam's interpretation of Malcolm is correct, there is clearly something wrong with Malcolm's stated account. However, the suggestion is that one should lean instead on the latter alternative to the exclusion of the former. This comes out in Putnam's proposals for models of semantic abilities, which he fashions in such a way as to avoid as far as possible the notion of meaning. This position is paralleled by the view expressed in "Other Minds" that the skeptic, or one who says strange things about material objects or other people, should not be described as using the relevant expressions with different meanings, but merely as having different beliefs about the referents of those expressions. I shall consider the second of these views in the confidence that what I have to say about it can be applied, mutatis mutandis, to the first.

The reason for Putnam's holding the second view is that with it he can support his claim that knowledge of the criteria for the use of an expression is not necessary for understanding (the meaning of) the expression. His argument ²² for it is of a certain general kind, examples of which occur often in the criticism by empiricists of traditional distinctions. First, a certain distinction,

in this case that between on the one hand knowing what "X" means and having odd beliefs about X's, and on the other hand not knowing what "X" means, or using it with a different meaning, is represented as marking out a difference of degree rather than one of kind. (This is permissible, although the two kinds of difference are not incompatible. The crucial point here is that it is the number of odd beliefs which determines on which side of the distinction some language-user is with regards to some expression. The greater this number, the more inclined we will be to say that he uses the expression with a different meaning). Next, some cases are found in which it is unclear which side of the distinction applies -- borderline cases, in other words. From this, the conclusion is drawn that in these cases it is arbitrary whether to lean on one side of the distinction or the other. (Although this seems to me like a misuse of "arbitrary", at least until more details of the case are provided, I shall pass over that criticism). The ultimate conclusion is then that in all cases it is somewhat arbitrary to insist on one side or the other, but that since one side relies on the philosophically suspect notion of "meaning" (whatever that expression means!), it would be better on the whole to regard all cases on the continuum as different degrees of the other side of the distinction.

This argument for the abolition of a distinction is

invalid. From the fact that there are borderline cases with respect to some distinction, it does not follow that there is no distinction to be made out, nor that there is no difference between central cases of each pole of the distinction. Indeed, the very characterisation of the troublesome cases as borderline implies that there are central cases around which the distinction pivots. And this, of course, is all that is necessary for there to be a distinction in the first place.

Although it seems to me that the argument I have just criticised runs as an undercurrent through much of Putnam's thinking on these matters, it would be unfair to attribute it to him in so gross a form. In "Dreaming and Depth Grammar" he does consider cases which seem to him clear cases of change of meaning, and suggests a criterion for distinguishing these cases from those in which merely new knowledge has been gained about the members of some kind. This is that, in change-of-meaning cases predictions about new sentences made on the basis of the old meaning often go away, and that a new entry in the (sic!) lexicon is required. Putnam seems to regard the second condition as independent of the first, although he offers no grounds for this; for myself, I can see no other reason for it being required that a new entry be made in this important tome except some conflict between it and common usage,

which clash Putnam wishes to describe in terms of failure of predictions. So I regard the second condition as boiling down to the first.

If we look at the kinds of predictions which Putnam thinks will settle questions about change of meaning, we can see what truth there is in his claim, although I am skeptical about the role of theory, rather than detailed hypotheses about the detailed use of language, in the settling of such questions. The predictions will concern that sentences will be uttered in what kinds of situation and what kinds of effect will result from what kinds of utterance. The truth of claims about these will provide evidence, or at least justification, for claims about change of meaning, whether or not they were originally suggested as predictions. Translated into Wittgensteinian terminology, questions about meaning-identity and difference are to be settled by looking at the circumstances and surroundings in which the use of an expression is appropriate and at what follows (although not merely what follows logically) from such a use. It seems that, as regards Putnam's particular objection against Malcolm's claim that "dreaming" must change its meaning when the criteria for its application change, all the materials which support this objection are to be found in the above explication in Wittgensteinian terminology.

There is one final reason why Putnam's appeal to predictions about usage is insufficient to show that a word has changed its meaning, and that is that in any particular case the success or failure of such predictions could reflect widely-spread changes in beliefs about X's as much as a change in the meaning of "X". This is a point close to Putnam's heart, of course, and it is unclear why he should neglect it for the purpose of supporting the above objection to Malcolm. Of course, I still wish to contend that the point is less dangerous to the Wittgensteinian approach than Putnam believes, but that is another matter.

It remains for me to consider the models for the semantic abilities of native speakers which Putnam proposes as alternatives to the kinds of description of language-use offered by Wittgenstein. I shall not discuss these models, which are derived from Reichenbach and Carnap, in any detail, but will confine myself to a single general criticism of their usefulness. Putnam admits that the models, which consist largely in the ascription to language-users of deductive and inductive logics and some form of value/preference system, can deal only with scientific or "quasi-scientific" uses of language. He claims, however, that this drawback, along with several others to which he draws our attention, can be ignored in the interests of simplicity in theory-construction. The details,

as it were, can be filled in later. But this is to gloss over one of the most central points of controversy between empirical realists and Wittgensteinians, for if there is anything that Wittgenstein has shown, it is that there are enormous differences between the use of ordinary language in ordinary contexts and the use of scientific language in scientific contexts. I shall not here repeat either his arguments or his results, but it is to be emphasised that the notion of "criterion" was introduced to explain the use of ordinary language, although it does have some application in the realm of science. It is therefore illegitimate for Putnam to insist that the models which he thinks work only for "quasi-scientific" language must have application, once a few details are added, to ordinary language, unless he argues against Wittgenstein's contention that this is impossible.

He at least attempts an assault on the claim, which he attributes to Malcolm, that one learns the meaning/use of expressions from paradigm cases. This he takes as an empirical claim which is false, since it cannot account easily for "projective" uses of language, those in which a new meaningful sentence is constructed out of old familiar words. Malcolm, however, is not committed to this claim if it is to be taken as a hypothesis about some causal condition for language-learning; what he says is that

the ability correctly to describe paradigm cases is a criterion, in most circumstances, of understanding the use of an expression. Since "understands the use of an expression" is itself a mental predicate, it is not of course surprising, on a Wittgensteinian view, that its application is governed by criteria. A further point about paradigm cases is that the ability to recognise them is a criterion of understanding some term, but not, in general, of understanding a whole sentence. Since Putnam's "projective" uses are largely new sentences constructed out of old terms, this criticism of Malcolm's remarks about paradigm cases fails.

Let me now summarise my treatment of Putnam's objections to the Wittgensteinian approach. The view which he takes it upon himself to criticise in "Other Minds" might be expressed as some combination of the theses:

- (1) Knowing the meaning of psychological terms involves knowing that behavioural criteria entitle us to apply them to others.
- (2) No one can learn the meaning of psychological terms without learning that behavioural criteria entitle us to apply them to others.
- (3) For a word to have meaning, there must be criteria for its application.
- (4) Anyone, such as a skeptic, who refuses to commit himself upon the question of whether others

have mental states does not understand the meaning of psychological terms.

Against (1) and (2) Putnam argues that:

- (a) It is not necessary to learn words at all; it is logically possible that one should be born with the ability to speak.
- (b) Even if (a) were false, we would not have to use behavioural criteria for psychological states, since in other circumstances neuro-physiological ones would do just as well.
- (c) Even if both (a) and (b) were false, we would not have to use the specific behavioural criteria which we do use; grimacing as a criterion of happiness in a different culture.

(a) is irrelevant since (1) is not intended to be a claim about the causal conditions for learning or using language, but rather to draw our attention to the present criteria for "knowing the meaning of ..." predicates, and since (2) is a conditional whose antecedent is of the form "If someone learns the meaning of psychological terms".

(b) may work against Malcolm, who sometimes holds that change in criteria means change in concept, but not against Wittgenstein who openly denies this latter claim.

(c) misses the mark because it does not take into account the fact that criteria differ from one circumstance to

the next, and because the criteria for mental states are not to be given a pure physical description, but rather one which is, in some sense, psychologically "loaded". These objections have the form of counter-examples to some theses about the criteria for expressions like "knows the meaning of 'angry'". They can only be successful if Wittgenstein is committed to the view that the fulfillment of a criterion logically guarantees the presence of that for which it is a criterion. He is not committed to this view.

I accept, in the main, Putnam's arguments against (3) and (4), but wish to point out that again these are not theses supported by Wittgenstein. Instead of (3), Wittgenstein holds that as a matter of fact some expressions are used according to criteria, and that this is sufficient to give them meaning. Instead of (4), Wittgenstein holds that if the skeptic or the solipsist is right, then he cannot understand the meanings of the words he uses in his argument. This is shown by the private language argument, which is the subject of the next section.

In "Dreaming and Depth Grammar", Putnam criticises the position expressed by Malcolm in "Dreaming" for the following reasons:

(d) Malcolm's position is verificationist, since

he is committed to (3) above.

- (e) Malcolm claims that the connection between criteria and the concept for whose application they are criteria is logical, not empirical, but the fulfillment of a criterion does not entail the presence of that for which it is the criterion.
- (f) Malcolm claims that if the criteria for the use of some expression change, then we have a new concept, but the examples of "multiple sclerosis" and "acid" belie this claim.
- (g) Malcolm claims that one must acquire the ability to recognise paradigm cases if one is to learn the use of an expression, but this view cannot account for the projective uses of language.
- (h) One can fashion models for the semantic abilities of native speakers which make no appeal to the notions "criterion", "rule of language", "meaning", etc..

The criticism (d) I regard as justified, but it should be remembered that Wittgenstein is not a verificationist, as will become clear in the next section. For words which, as a matter of fact, are used according to criteria, however, such a weak verificationism may be justified, as long as its scope is carefully limited. (e) can be avoided by a reinterpretation of the notion of "logical connection with a concept" whereby to say that criteria are so-con-

nected with a concept or expression is to say something like that if an expression is governed by criteria, one has to describe these in order to give an adequate account of the meaning of the relevant expression. I accept the general line of the criticism (f), although the multiple sclerosis example is inadequate, as it is also insufficient to bolster (g). Clarity on the distinction between "symptom" in the medical and in Wittgenstein's technical sense should dispel any doubts here. Likewise (g) can be countered by the thesis that criteria are criteria for the application of terms, not of sentences. As regards (h), Putnam's own admission that the models provided can deal only with scientific and quasi-scientific language shows that the models have no relevance to language that is in the main governed by criteria. It remains to be settled whether mental language is of this type or is of the quasi-scientific type.

This ends my criticism of Putnam's objections to some versions of the Wittgensteinian approach. Since the views which Putnam has set out to attack are in the main distortions of Wittgenstein's thought, I have in the main contented myself with showing that the objections are rarely objections to Wittgenstein himself. This places limits on what I have been able to accomplish, but in so far as the writings of Malcolm and others have been taken to be ac-

curately representative of Wittgenstein's remarks, my procedure is justified if it dispels this mistaken belief, and diverts the general attention away from the more "available" writings of Malcolm back to the original remarks themselves.

My qualifications of the Wittgensteinian theses about criteria render the claim that mental words are criteria-governed viable, but insufficient to counter skepticism about the existence of other minds. So now I have to show that Wittgenstein has a case against solipsism which is independent of this claim, even in so far as it applies to expressions such as "knows the meaning of ...", "uses... correctly", etc., which is one inadequacy in the version of the private language argument as laid out in Section B. Now I need a new version.

E. The Private Language Argument

Paragraph 258 of the Philosophical Investigations contains what has been taken to be the core of the private language argument. I quote it in full:

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 a 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 concentration of my attention; for in this way I impress upon myself the connexion between the sign and the sensation. -- But "I impress it upon myself" can only mean: this process brings it about that I remember the connexion 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'.

Before embarking on an assessment of this paragraph (a tiny fragment of the argument as it is), allow me to reiterate some of my earlier remarks about what it is that is the target of this assault. Wittgenstein is arguing against the possibility of a language such that it is logically impossible for more than one person to understand it. He is not concerned with denying the possibility of secret codes or of a language developed by some congenital Robinson Crusoe, since there is no reason to

suppose that these could not be understood by large numbers of people. The notion of a private language which has to be shown to be incoherent is one which Wittgenstein thinks is essential to skepticism, both about other minds and about the physical world. What these positions have in common is the thesis that, as one might say, experience is the given. More precisely, each view is committed to the thesis that one can know the meanings of (e.g.) sensation-words from one's own case, that what knowing the meaning of pain amounts to is being able to identify and describe one's own pains; the attribution of sensations to others is, of course, unwarranted.

That the use of sensation-words, on this theory of their meaning, constitutes a private language in the relevant sense can be seen by considering the privacy of sensations. If having my sensations is what gives meaning to my sensation-words, then no one else can know what my sensation-words mean without having my sensations. According to the solipsist position as expressed in Stage (8) of Argument 1 and stage (2) of argument 2, it is logically impossible for someone else to have my sensations. So, on these views, it is logically impossible for someone else to know the meanings of my sensation-words. Thus my sensation-words constitute a logically private language. I think that it is a condition of the truth of the views

listed above as targets of the private language argument that such a language is possessed by us all, but all that it is necessary for me or for Wittgenstein to claim is that it is a condition of the truth of these views that such a logically private language is possible, and this is something that the above views are clearly committed to.

What has been taken as the Wittgensteinian argument against such a possibility is distilled from a narrow reading of Paragraph 258, and runs as follows: suppose I have a private language and baptise some sensation as being of kind S -- for the present purpose it does not matter whether I baptise particular sensations or the kinds to which they belong, for in either case the baptism will be of no use to me unless it brings it about that I use "S" consistently in the future. Now consider some such future occasion on which I feel inclined to utter "S" while having some sensation (if "S" is a kind-word) or remembering the sensation which occurred at the baptism (if "S" is the name of that particular sensation only). In such a situation I have no way of settling with certainty whether I am using "S" correctly or whether it merely seems to me that I am using "S" correctly. I have no criterion of correctness. Therefore it is nonsense to speak of a correct use of "S" in these circumstances and so "S" cannot be a word in a language. It follows that

there could be no such thing as a private language, since these considerations will apply to all alleged words in such an alleged language.

This argument is verificationist, and has been criticised for this reason by, among others, Rorth²³ and J.J. Thomson²⁴. I do not know if it is the argument which Wittgenstein had in mind when he wrote the passage of which it is one interpretation. In any case, it is not necessary to appeal to this argument to formulate the Wittgensteinian case against private languages. This has been shown recently by Lawrence Resnick, following a preliminary attempt by Moreland Perkins.²⁵ What is dubious about the above version of the private language argument is the move from "I have no criterion of correctness" to "It is nonsense to speak of correctness in this context", and this is the move which might seem to rely on some verificationist premises. To see what replaces this move in the revised argument, we need to look first at the notion of incorrigibility.

The views against which the private language argument is aimed typically make the claim that my present-tense statements about my sensations are incorrigible. What does this mean? What it doesn't mean is that sensations occur in some private theatre of which I command such a

good view that it is psychologically impossible for me to go wrong in describing events upon the stage. I am not under a psychological compulsion to get right the description of my inner world; the compulsion is, rather, logical: given that I am being sincere and that I understand the words I am using, then it makes no sense to suppose that I might be mistaken about whether my first-person present-tense sensation-statement is true. In other words, the only ways I can go wrong in describing my present sensations are by either being untruthful or by misusing language.

It is a consequence of this analysis of incorrigibility that the truth-conditions for the statements "I am in pain" and "I seem to be (think I am) in pain" differ only in the case where I do not use correctly the word "pain", as for instance when I misidentify what I have as a pain. However, the skeptic or solipsist who claims indubitable knowledge of his sensations and other mental states needs a stronger kind of indubitability than this, for he cannot allow that his claims to knowledge about his own sensations may be false because he does not understand the English word "pain". Statements about the meanings of words in English are of course dubitable for both the skeptic and the solipsist, since they rely on facts about other language-users, whose very existence is doubted by

both kinds of skeptic. The role of the allegedly private language is precisely to provide a medium for the expression of the skeptic's knowledge about his own sensations which is not subject to misuse, and which consequently guarantees the skeptic's statements against mistaken use of language. Suppose that "I am in pain" is a sentence in his private language: then what he means by pain when he utters the sentence sincerely is the sensation, or one of the same type, as the one he is having at the time. He need not worry about making a false claim about his present sensations by misusing language because he has an exemplar of pain before his mind whenever he sincerely ascribes pain to himself. But this shows that it makes no sense to suppose that he could ever use, in this case, "pain" incorrectly in a sincere statement about his present sensations, since this term will always mean whatever sensation he has at the time, and it is guaranteed that he will have some sensation by the fact that his statement is sincere.

Thus the price for indubitability is the unintelligibility of the possibility of using expressions in the private language incorrectly when they are used sincerely. And this, of course, is the site of the solipsist's downfall. Here I have to appeal to the notion of language as a rule-governed activity. Since I do not intend to argue

for this, it can be re-expressed as the notion that in languages there are rules for determining which uses are and which are not semantically deviant (or grammatically deviant) -- in Wittgensteinian terminology, correct or incorrect. If I am following a rule of correct usage in using an expression, and it is unintelligible that I should use the expression incorrectly, then I am following a rule which it is unintelligible that I should fail to follow. However, it is part of the concept of a rule that it be possible to break it, part of the concept of language that it be possible for some uses of language to be incorrect or semantically deviant. And so, the allegedly private language is not a language at all.

An important objection has been raised at this point. Although it may be part of the concept of a language that it be possible for some uses of language to be incorrect, does it follow that it must also be possible for some sincere uses to be incorrect? Steven Davis has suggested that the possessor of a private language could speak incorrectly, for example as a joke, or even with the deliberate intention of misusing language, and so the above argument would fail of application. I am not sure that I can give a decisive refutation of this objection - there seems to be room for much work in this area - but I will attempt to indicate the lines along which a reply might run. It is a consequence of the above saving clause to-

gether with the epistemological scruples of the solipsist and his account of private language, that all his sincere statements in the private language must be true, and must exemplify the correct use of language, whereas all his insincere statements must be either false or senseless. But this only shows that the concept of sincerity is inapplicable in this area, for where the concept is applicable, sincerity is no guarantee of truth: the distinction between truth and truthfulness as applied to existential statements rests on the possibility that truthful statements can be false. If the distinction between sincere and insincere statements is inapplicable, then the solipsist cannot divide his utterances into these two categories, and so cannot distinguish between those which are true and those which are not. Thus the result of opting for the suggested saving clause is that the solipsist loses his grip on his knowledge of his own mental states. But this conflicts with his insistence that he has strongly incorrigible knowledge of these, and so renders his position inconsistent.

The only way for the private-language theorist to escape this reductio is for him to reject incorrigibility in the form described above. This is a heavy price to pay, however, since it involves abandoning the indubitability of his statements about his own mental states, and,

for the solipsist, the privileged epistemological access to his own mental states. It is this direct access which is supposed to guarantee that he can have knowledge of his own mental states, while at the same time making it impossible for him to know about the mental states of others (since the paradigm justification for knowledge-claims about mental states is lacking in their case). Once this paradigm has been undermined, the solipsist has no warrant for his skepticism about other minds, since he cannot force an epistemological wedge between his sensations and those of others.

Let me digress for a moment to review the role which this version of the private language argument can play in the argument against skepticism about the existence of the physical world. The epistemological scruples of this skeptic are somewhat stronger than those of the solipsist. To count as indubitable for the skeptic, a statement must be true in virtue either of the laws of logic or of some truth about the skeptic's sensations. In each case, however, the skeptic can only claim knowledge if he has some guarantee that he is not using words incorrectly in expressing his knowledge-claim, and, as I have already noted, it is a presupposition of the intelligibility of the skeptic's argument that the words used in it have meaning. If the skeptic claims to know the meanings of these words, then

he must submit this claim to his normal epistemological scruples. The claim will not survive if meaning is simply usage in public language, for that a certain word has a certain use is as dubitable, for the skeptic, as any other claim about the external world. The skeptic then has a temporary refuge in private language, although he is not, as yet, committed to the impossibility of anyone else understanding his language, except as regards those words whose function it is to refer to and classify his sensations. He is committed, however, to furnishing some support for his claim to know that he uses words correctly. This can be that it follows from some fact about his present sensations that he uses words correctly, but this form of support is question-begging since in order to know that he has expressed the relevant fact correctly, he has to assume that he uses his private language correctly. Or it could be that it follows from the laws of logic that he uses words correctly, in which case it makes no sense to suppose that he could ever use them incorrectly in a sincere statement. This path leads to the conclusion of the private language argument.

On the other hand, the skeptic could deny that he knows the meanings of his words, or that he knows that he is using them correctly in presenting his argument. But this would leave him without any warrant for some of his

important premises, including his analysis of knowledge and his claim that dubitability is incompatible with knowledge. A further consequence of his choosing this horn of the dilemma is that the skeptic can no longer claim to know that his statements have anything to do with what we take them to -- perhaps "knowledge" means "elephant" -- who knows?

The Wittgensteinian attack on skepticism is not intended to show that the existence of physical objects is a necessary truth, or anything of that sort. If the skeptic merely maintains, as a bare empirical truth, that there are no physical objects, other people etc., or even in the same way that he has no knowledge of these items, then what he says is false. It is here that the empirical realist approach of Putnam finds application. However, what is distinctive about the philosophical skeptic is that he offers arguments in favour of the above claims, nowadays usually only in favour of the second. And what Wittgenstein has done, it seems to me, is to show that each of a large class of such arguments is self-defeating, since the indubitability renders it impossible for the skeptic to know what the conclusion of his argument means. This impossibility follows fairly quickly from Wittgenstein's general account of language, and the role of the private language argument is to show that a particular alter-

native account, in which I have incorrigible knowledge of the meanings of the relevant words, is incoherent, once one assumes the skeptic's analysis of knowledge as incompatible with dubitability. It is of course left open to the skeptic to come up with account of language and an argument which avoids Wittgenstein's objections, or to desist from giving an argument at all. But then there is no reason for philosophers to pay any attention to him.

Much the same can be said about the skeptic about other minds, or the solipsist, as I have been referring to him. He must reject any public language account of the meanings of the words used in his argument, since such an account would commit him to the existence of other language-users and therefore to that of other minds. So typical solipsists have taken refuge in private language; but if Wittgenstein is right this is no haven since the notion of using this language correctly evaporates if it is logically impossible for the solipsist to go wrong in using words which refer to mental states. At the same time, he must use these words (or some of them) to express his argument, and it is a presupposition of the intelligibility of the argument that the words are used correctly. So either the solipsist must accept a public-language account of meaning or he must develop another which leaves his position tenable.

This version of the private language argument is not verificationist, nor does it appeal to the notion of criterion or the fact that mental words in particular are governed by criteria. To see this is to see that its scope is limited, since it can only show that a number of philosophical positions are incoherent, but this is no great drawback when nothing more was intended. We are now in a position to see that the Wittgensteinian attack on the form of solipsism of which the argument of Section A of this essay is representative is independent of the claim that mental language is governed by behavioural criteria. This fact renders much of the criticism of the Wittgensteinian approach obsolete, except perhaps as criticism of one of Malcolm's positions.

What am I to say, then, about the verificationist version of the private language argument? Is it to be rejected as unsound, or as irrelevant? The best answer I can give to these questions suggests that the first version is question-begging, in the following manner. If it is true, as a matter of fact, that mental words are used according to criteria, then it is true that the expression "uses words correctly", which is a mental predicate, is used according to criteria. It then follows from a description of how this expression is used that there are ways of settling with certainty (not logical certainty) whether

the expression is applicable to particular cases. This is tantamount to saying that a mild verificationism is justified with respect to this expression, and so the original private language argument appears to go through. However, the private language theorist disputes the claim that expressions such as this are governed by criteria, since he regards first-person present-tense uses of mental predicates as primary, and even Wittgenstein agrees that these are not governed by criteria. That is why the second version of the private language argument is required to show that there is something amiss with the solipsist's account of language-use. As far as I can see, this version is utterly compelling.

F. Criteria

Now that I have shown how the Wittgensteinian attack on solipsism is independent of the claim that mental words are governed by criteria, I wish to draw together the strands of the notion of "criterion" which I developed in Section D in response to the criticisms of Putnam. The various positions which have been taken on this question and which are current in the literature fall into four rough classes. Accordingly I distinguish between four "views", although I am aware that adherents to each of these views may differ radically on related topics. What I shall call the C-view is the view that there is no special relationship between a criterion and that for which it is a criterion, over and above the contingent relationship between a symptom and that for which it is a symptom -- in each case the relationship between indicator and indicated is established by some form of explanatory induction. This view, common to Putnam, Rorty and other empirical realists, amounts to a denial that there are any criteria in the sense suggested by Wittgenstein as anti-thetical to the notion of symptom. The E-view is the view that the fulfillment of a criterion (either on its own or in conjunction with some storable set of background conditions) entails the presence of that for which it is a criterion. I am not sure that this position has ever been seriously entertained, but it has been attacked, e.g. by Rorty ²⁶ and Canfield ²⁷. The N-view is the view

that if X is a criterion for Y, then it is necessarily true that X is evidence for Y. This view is held by Kenny²⁸, Lycan²⁹ and Shoemaker³⁰. Lastly, there is the V-view, which is that criteria are ways of verifying (sc. "settling with non-logical certainty") statements about the presence of some item. This view belongs to Malcolm³¹ and arguably to Wittgenstein himself. I believe the V-view can be made compatible with the accounts of Albritton³² and Canfield²⁷. In the form in which I shall present it, it is a moot point whether the N-view and the V-view are compatible, or what the precise relation between the two is.

There is no knockdown argument against the C-view, although I hope that this essay as a whole forms part of the case against the motives for holding it. The E-view can be attacked more easily by reference to some of Wittgenstein's examples. Thus the fact that there is water falling from the sky does not entail that it is raining, although in most circumstances it is a criterion of rain. The fact that writhing, screaming and moaning are criteria for the ascription of pain to others does not mean that if anyone writhes, screams or moans he must be in pain. A general appeal can be made in cases like this to the theoretical possibility of our discovering some fact which will lead us to reverse a judgment based on criteria.

The N-view is more slippery and consequently difficult

to assess. If an expression is governed by criteria, then this fact will be part of the description of the use of the expression. It will then follow from this description that the particular criteria act as evidence for statements about the referent of the expression. It will be a necessary truth, then, that if X is a criterion of Y , X is evidence for Y ; this much is assured by the explanation of the notion of "criterion" which Wittgenstein gives when he introduces the term in the Blue Book ¹⁸. If this is all that is claimed by the N-view, then what it claims is correct. However, it appears that the story is more complicated than this. The N-view in its strong form is the claim that if X is a criterion of Y , then it is a necessary truth that X is evidence for Y , so that it is logically impossible for X to come to fail to be evidence for Y . Putnam's example of the world of congenital stoics (in "Brains and Behaviour" ¹⁰) is supposed to defeat this claim, on the grounds that even though all the members of some culture should fail to manifest pain, we could still have good neurophysiological grounds for ascribing pains to them. Moreover, this creeping stoicism could beset the human race, with the result that behaviour would no longer provide evidence for people's being in pain. The classical Malcolmian defence to alleged counter-examples of this kind is to insist that if X 's cease to be criteria for Y 's, and Z 's become criteria for

Y's instead, that the meaning of "Y" has changed. We have already seen from the case of dreaming in Section D, that this is correct under one interpretation, since if "Y" is criteria-governed, the correct description of its use will have changed. The temptation that must be avoided is that of requiring that the new concept of "Y" be totally different from its original counterpart, such that the two "only remotely resemble one another", and of attempting to get some philosophical mileage out of this claim.

I should be happy to accept some form of the weak version of the N-view, since it strikes me as trivial enough to be incontestable, and also because in this form it is compatible with, indeed constitutes a substantial part of, the V-view, which I wish to espouse. What the V-view says is that criteria are ways of settling with certainty whether some item is or is not present, for example, whether my neighbour is in pain. The certainty in question is, however, something other than logical certainty, because of the falsity of the E-view.

This remark should not be taken as debasing this form of certainty, which is simply the certainty with which anybody knows any empirical truth for which there is overwhelming evidence. In this context I fail to see the point of Malcolm's insistence that settling a question by appeal

to criteria is fundamentally different from settling it by appeal to some looser sort of evidence. The distinction between criteria and symptoms is to be made out in terms of which evidence is most important in the widest variety of instances and in terms of which one would mention in explaining the use of a criteria-governed expression. As a result, the distinction is rough and fluctuating, especially since criteria operate within circumstances and what is a criterion of Y in one circumstance may not be a criterion of Y in another. To go back to my battery-acid example, tests for proton-donorship will furnish criteria for some substances being an acid in a laboratory situation, but will not in general be necessary (although always theoretically available) in more day-to-day circumstances. This is so because in the latter kinds of situation it doesn't often happen that we have to distinguish between two substances, one of which fails the litmus paper test although both are proton-donors. Such substances are not usually found outside the laboratory; no doubt if they were, the criteria for the application of "acid" in most circumstances would be slightly different.

Such a conception of criteria might be thought to be epistemologically useless. This is correct if the aim of epistemology is the refutation of skepticism, since know-

ledge-claims based on criteria do not live up to the epistemic standards demanded by the skeptic. (This is why Wittgenstein needs an independent argument against skepticism, as supplied, I believe, by the new version of the private language argument.) It is incorrect, however, if part of the job of epistemology is to explain in detail how people know particular kinds of things, what they base their knowledge-claims on and how their knowledge-claims can be justified in particular cases. It is not, of course, to be expected that an appeal to the notion of "criterion" can under-write a single general justification for all our knowledge, since this enterprise, dear as it is to empiricists, is one which Wittgenstein regards as fundamentally misguided.

I can now turn to what is the most important part of this section, and to the question of on what grounds the distinction between criteria-governed expressions and those not so-governed can be made. Here I want to deny both the view that Malcolm sometimes appears to fall into, that in order for an expression to have meaning there must be criteria for its application, and the empiricist view that there are no such things as criteria. So I need to delineate, albeit roughly, the considerations which will lead us to say of some expression that its use is governed by criteria.

Doing this requires stepping back to some of the more basic elements in Wittgensteinian thought, especially the criticism of the view that all expressions have strict definitions which consist of sets of necessary and sufficient conditions for the application of the expression. A couple of examples will help elucidate this criticism. Let us begin with the expression "chair"; the starting-point is the impossibility of formulating a definition of "chair" in terms of the necessary and sufficient conditions for something's being a chair. There are two major responses to this impasse: the first, which might be called the Socratic response, is to take the impasse as evidence that we lack insight into the concept of "chair", that although we use the word "chair", we don't really know what it means. Here the definition exists, but is hidden from us. This response has a host of unpleasant consequences, such as that we lack a rationale for excluding elephants from the extension of the term "chair", that it becomes mysterious how we can distinguish so well between chairs and tables, and that all of us may, for all we know, be using all words incorrectly.

The second response is, of course, that of denying that there are such definitions as those envisaged by the Socratic response. A consequence of this Wittgensteinian response is that now it will not be the case that all

questions of the form "Is X a chair?" are theoretically decidable from considerations about the present meaning, or even agreed extension of "chair". There will be borderline cases where the issue, if it is decided at all, will be decided more by whim and pragmatic considerations than by objective grounds which might become clear on "analysis". It seems that even if we try to formulate a definition in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions, it would take only a little ingenuity to find examples which either pass or fail these conditions while it is unclear whether we would want to call them chairs.

So far, however, this is insufficient to justify the claim that "chair" is governed by criteria, for that is not the only alternative to the account criticised above. It would indeed be odd to talk of settling with certainty whether some object was or was not a chair. In most circumstances there is no procedure I can go through which will satisfy this description. To think of "chair" as governed by criteria is to think of a language-game in which "chair" plays a role and in which it is important for us to settle with non-logical certainty questions about which things are and which things are not chairs. There must also be some difficulty about settling some such questions, in the sense that the answer must not be open to simple inspection. It seems to me that it is the

general failure of the second condition in the case of "chair" which is more important in leading to the denial that this term is governed by criteria. This condition links the notion of "criterion" to that of "finding out", and so underlines the epistemic role of criteria. It will be remembered that Wittgenstein sometimes denies that I can know that I am in pain (in the same sense as that in which I know I am in peril) because there is no sense to be made, in most circumstances, of the notion of my finding out I am in pain, and this because in first-person present-tense ascriptions "pain" is not governed by criteria.

These two conditions are in general satisfied for well-established disease-terms, such as "measles". (The qualification is necessary to allow for expressions like "multiple sclerosis" which. At the point in their history considered by Putnam, are not governed by criteria, although this particular one may come to be so-governed as more is discovered about neurological disease.) The criteria for someone's having measles are made up, in most circumstances, from an indefinite quorum of a particular set of symptoms, and in some circumstances the presence of a certain kind of microbe in the body of the patient. Neither of these criteria entail that someone for whom they are fulfilled has measles, as can be seen by con-

sidering the following set of cases:

- (a) Smith has some of the symptoms of measles which are also met in cases of German measles. Tests show that his blood contains German measles bacilli, so Smith is treated for this disease.
- (b) In the course of a blood test to determine blood-type, it is discovered that Jones' blood contains the measles microbe. Jones is, however, in good health and shows none of the symptoms of measles.
- (c) Brown has some typical symptoms of measles and the relevant microbe is found in his blood. However, he does not respond to the normal treatment for measles. Acting on a hunch, the doctor prescribes medication suitable for the treatment of German measles, and Brown recovers.

It seems to me that a good case could be made out in each of these three cases for denying that the patients have measles. Case (c) is of special interest, since an accumulation of such instances could lead, via further research, to some changes in the criteria for measles. In these kinds of cases, we can see that successful treatment emerges as one criterion where others fail, although

still there is no entailment between the success of treatment and the ascription of the disease for which it is the recognised treatment. There is no reason to expect that in such a case there should be a definite answer to the question of whether the patient has measles. Such an answer may have to wait upon new discoveries about measles which no amount of investigation of the patient's condition will unearth at present. It does not follow from this that the meaning of "measles" is unclear, or hidden from us; it simply means that it is used in such a way as to leave certain questions open, a feature which is characteristic of more than just criteria-governed expressions (cf. "chair").

The fact that we wish to treat diseases and relieve suffering makes it important for us to distinguish between diseases in terms of their characteristic causes, which is why our criteria for disease-terms revolve around these. There is also a clear sense in which one cannot tell "at a glance" whether a person has measles, as one can tell whether a person has arms. Given that my two suggested conditions are satisfied, I think it is reasonable to conclude that "measles" is in fact governed by criteria. Now I wish to say the same thing about ascriptions of mental states, with the exception of first-person present-tense ascriptions of what have been called

occurrent states, such as being in pain, seeing red and thinking about childbirth. There are a huge variety of reasons why, as human beings, we find it important to ascribe with certainty mental states to others. Some of these have to do with predicting and controlling behaviour, but this is not all. I am not interested in another's beliefs (say, about the Other Minds problem) merely so that I can know in advance what he will say in discussion. It would be pointless to list all the reasons we have for ascribing mental states to others because such a list would be as long as the list of human social activities in all their variety. At the same time, it is not always possible to tell "at a glance" whether or not someone else is in a certain mental state (the root indeed of the Other Minds problem). There is such a thing as setting out to find out whether another is in pain, or bored, or intending to marry, although this is not true in all cases of , for example, pain.

I am afraid that at present I can say little more about what distinguishes criteria-governed expressions from those not so-governed. The notions of the importance of settling questions with certainty, lack of availability to direct inspection and the possibility of finding out, where this is a process which typically requires deliberation, are relevant to this distinction,

but they are not the whole story. The only satisfactory way of making this distinction would, it seems, be to take each term individually and undertake a prolonged and detailed analysis of its use. If this task were over completed, I would guess that the class of criteria-governed expressions must include at least the following: those used in second- and third-person ascriptions of mental states (with the possibility of adding first-person ascriptions of some dispositional states, e.g. intelligence); well-established expressions referring to unobservables; expressions formed from an attributive adjective and a kind-term (e.g. "a good knife", "the same person", and so on). Incomplete as this list is, I shall not here argue for the inclusion in it of the above items. I can only hope that on some intuitive level, reflection on the use of such expressions will yield the conclusion that they are governed by criteria.

Of the kinds of expressions which are not governed by criteria, those referring to ordinary physical objects, theoretical entities at an early stage in their history and those used in first-person ascriptions of mental states are representative. Mention of the last class brings with it an important qualification on what I mean when I talk about expressions governed by criteria, for the predicates and state-terms in this class are governed by criteria in

their second- and third-person uses. So I ought really to talk of certain expressions being governed by criteria in certain uses; when I say that an expression is governed by criteria I mean that in most, or in an important class of its uses it is governed by criteria. Facts about context and circumstances will clearly be relevant to deciding whether a particular use is or is not governed by criteria.

Consideration of the class of expressions whose uses are in the main not governed by criteria provides an important insight into the motivation behind the empirical realist denial that there are such things as criteria. On one count, empirical realists regard first-person ascriptions of mental states, especially sensations, as primary and other ascriptions as secondary, a more or less justified extension of the non-criterially-governed use. On another count, they are interested, so to speak, in material objects and more interested in theoretical entities, the class of which in some views contains that of material objects. So the preferred entities in their ontology are those for which statements about their presence or absence are not in general made on the basis of criteria. For Wittgensteinians, whose ontology resembles a lush and varied landscape, there is not the same temptation to regard criteria-governed concepts as parasitic

upon or logical or theoretical constructs out of ones not so-governed; both types share a peaceful co-existence.

These diagnostic remarks are somewhat polemical, but they serve to introduce the question of whether mental states are sufficiently like theoretical entities to justify the empirical realist position on the Other Minds problem. A version of this position is argued for by Rorty in his paper "Criteria and Necessity" ²⁶, and I owe his arguments at least a brief consideration. Rorty's campaign against the notions of "criterion" and "necessity" consists largely of criticisms of the E-view and the strong form of the N-view, so I shall accept his objections to those at the moment. His positive account stresses the analogies between mental states and theoretical entities via the claims that both types of item are unobservable, and that what we are here concerned with are the conditions for discourse about unobservables. Part of the justification for this restriction of the subject matter parallels my claim that mental states (and now by extension theoretical entities) are not available to direct inspection. Does this make them unobservable? I am not sure of the answer to this question: certainly I want to say that molecules are sometimes observed by scientists using electron-microscopes, and that one's melancholy is sometimes observed by one's friends. In neither case need the

judgments about molecules or melancholy be mediated by other judgments about complex instruments or behaviour, as far as the psychological history of those making the judgments goes. So in one sense, behaviour is not used as a criterion in the case I am imagining. However, if the scientists or the friends were asked afterwards to justify their judgments about molecules or melancholy, no doubt they would appeal to intermediary judgments of these kinds. The possibility of the relevance of such an appeal stands on the ability of the latter class of statements to act as criteria, in a large number of circumstances, for those of the former class.

I doubt if anything clear can emerge from this discussion except perhaps that nothing general can be said about whether mental states and theoretical entities are observable. This question seems to depend on the circumstances of any particular case. As a general terminological strategy, I should like to restrict the use of "observable" in such a way that the limits of the observable are allowed to widen as scientists, for instance, invent better measuring and detection instruments, and reserve "available to direct inspection" for the sense in which molecules, melancholy, magnetic fields and monotony are unobservable whereas men, melons and measles-spots are not. But I don't expect anything of import to hang on

this whim, except the clarity which might result from drawing attention to the distinction. Given what has been rather tortuously expressed here, I think I can say that the fact that the mental states of others are "unobservable" in some sense is insufficient ground for regarding them as theoretical entities, since this is a feature they share with a whole host of other things which are not theoretical entities: danger, economic depression and political peace being examples. I wish to postpone the remainder of this discussion until the next section and finish by noting Rorty's admission that in a trivial sense there must be criteria for the presence of unobservables in order for talk about them to get off the ground. What he means is that there must be some evidence for their existence, some phenomenon which they are brought in to explain. As the unobservables become more deeply embedded in theory, however, the "original criterion", as Rorty dubs it, may cease to have anything like a strong evidential role in deciding whether there are any here now. This he takes to be incompatible with the notion of "criterion" which stems from Wittgenstein. It is indeed incompatible with the strong form of the N-view, but I don't think it is incompatible with the V-view, the position which in my opinion Wittgenstein himself held.

There is one qualification which I wish to add to

the above yielding of ground to empirical realism. I have noted that, for Wittgenstein, the criteria for the application of some concept can change without producing a change of any radical sort in the concept itself, or a change of meaning in the correlative expression. I do not wish to say, however, that this is true of all changes of criteria, as Putnam and Borty seem sometimes to wish to claim. If the criterion of rain was at one time that water was falling in droplets from the sky, and at a later time that ice-crystals were falling from the sky, then I should be strongly inclined to say that the meaning of "rain" had changed, and not, for example, that we had discovered something new about rain. I suggest that there is a continuum between such cases and those where it is implausible to speak of a change in meaning.

What I have said so far about criteria may leave the impression that there is no difference whatsoever between a criterion and a piece of strong evidence. So now I have to suggest ways in which this difference might be made out. First of all, one person alone may have strong evidence for some proposition without it appearing to be strong evidence to most other people; a criterion, on the other hand, is shared: it is by convention that satisfaction of the criterion is strong evidence. Secondly, if X is a criterion of Y, then the evidential relationship

between X and Y is either one which is not established by recording correlations between X and Y, or, if it is thus established, it is adopted instead of some other criterial relationship, between, say, Z and Y. Some of the second class of cases will include those in which the meaning of "Y" changes, some not. What this condition is intended to rule out are those cases in which Y is identified via some necessary and sufficient conditions for its presence, and correlations are then recorded between Y, so identified, and X. For the claim that "Y" is governed by criteria is an alternative to the claim that an adequate account of the meaning of "Y" can be given in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions.

So far, however, these conditions do not distinguish between criteria-governed expressions and those referring to, for example, theoretical entities for whose presence one cannot give necessary and sufficient conditions. The distinction between these kinds of expressions comes out when one considers the epistemic role of criteria. For although, if X is a criterion of Y, the satisfaction of X on some particular occasion does not entail the presence of Y, it does entail that Y's exist, whereas the fact that there is strong evidence for Y does not have that entailment. So it is only if Y's have been accepted into our ontology and occupy a well-established position there that we can speak of there being criteria for their presence. This is

not the case with theoretical entities which are new on the scientific scene, and so these are not in general identified via criteria. Since admission into our ontology is a gradual process, so is the process by which an expression comes to be governed by criteria when it was not before.

It can now be seen that there are two ways in which the notion of "criterion" here explicated is useless in the refutation of skepticism. The first, already noted, is that the satisfaction of a criterion does not entail the presence of that for which it is the criterion. The second is that in order to say that a criterion has been satisfied, it has to have been established that that for which it is a criterion does exist, or has existed at some time, which is the very claim disputed by the skeptic. So adoption of the belief that there are criteria for mental states is begging the question against the solipsist, and a solipsist position cannot be generated once this belief is accepted.

These speculative remarks are, then, all I have to say for the moment about the notion of "criterion". Let me reiterate the major points:

- (a) Criteria are ways of settling with non-logical certainty questions about the presence or ab-

sence of some item.

- (b) The satisfaction of a criterion does not entail the presence of that for which it is the criterion, but it does entail that that for which it is a criterion has existed at some time.
- (c) Criteria operate in particular circumstances and against a background of facts; they are always shared by the majority of members of the relevant linguistic community.
- (d) What is now a criterion for the presence of some item may not be at some other time, without necessitating a change in the relevant concept.
- (e) It is not necessary that an expression be governed by criteria in order for it to have a meaning, but it is sufficient.
- (f) Criteria play an epistemic role (they are linked to the notions of "discovering", "finding out") but not an epistemological one (they afford no prophylactic against skepticism).

G. Conclusion

In this section I wish to summarise my results so far and make some brief remarks on how, if at all, the dispute between Wittgensteinians and empirical realists may be adjudicated.

The main thrust of this essay has been to distil out and separate two important strands in Wittgenstein's philosophy of mind. One is his attack on skepticism with regard to other minds, or on what I have called solipsism; the other is his elaboration of the claim that second- and third-person ascriptions of mental states are governed by criteria. My major point is that the second of these plays no role in the first. Whether or not this ascription is faithful to Wittgenstein is a question about which I am not concerned. It will be sufficient for my purposes if I have shown that a good refutation of skepticism can be formulated which is clearly Wittgensteinian in conception.

I began, then, with a somewhat patchy argument for solipsism whose major flaws I attempted to repair. One method of repair was the eradication of the notion of pretence, on the grounds that if there are any instances of this activity, amongst others, then there are other minds. This ground is different from the one which traditionally has been taken as characteristic of the Wittgensteinian

approach, which has the form: in order for the concept of pretence to have a use, there must be ways of settling with certainty when someone is pretending and when he is not. This appeal to the need for verification-procedures for the application of polar concepts has been criticised as being verificationist, and I have not questioned this criticism.

I then reconstructed the argument in favour of solipsism in such a way as to avoid the above criticisms and to enable me to bring to bear on it the most important weapon of Wittgenstein in this area, namely the private language argument. Again, this has traditionally been held to rest on the claims that some expressions, typically "understands the meaning of", "knows the correct use of" or "uses --- correctly", are governed by criteria and that since criteria are lacking in the case of a purportedly private language, there can be no such thing as using an expression correctly or understanding the meaning of an expression when this is an element of a private language. This version of the private language argument has also been accused of verificationism. I have attempted to show that a viable version of the argument can be formulated which avoids this charge but still works as a refutation of most forms of skepticism.

This new version involves taking seriously the typical

solipsist thesis that he has incorrigible knowledge of his own mental states. For this knowledge to pass the strict epistemological standards espoused by the skeptic, there must be a logical guarantee that he expresses his knowledge correctly in his private language. But such a guarantee turns out to be no guarantee at all, since it is otiose to describe some activity as correctly performed if it is logically impossible for one to go wrong in performing it. The notion of language as a rule-governed activity becomes relevant here. If the solipsist selects the option of abandoning his incorrigibility thesis, then he can no longer know that he is presenting an argument, since he cannot know that he is using words with a consistent meaning, nor with any meaning at all, nor that he is even thinking. Thus the private language argument only has relevance to arguments for solipsism, since one who presents such an argument presupposes, in some sense, that his argument is meaningful. I think that the Wittgensteinian approach best brings out in this way the intuitive feeling that skepticism is in some sense self-defeating.

The only way for the solipsist to avoid this dangerous dilemma is for him to abandon his strict standards for the assessment of knowledge-claims. (It is clear that the private language argument works only against those versions of skepticism which include such a strong requirement as

indubitability). But in that case, the solipsist is left without a justification for, or an argument in favour of, his skepticism and his claim about the non-existence of other minds or about his lack of knowledge of their existence must stand unsupported as empirical hypotheses. Treated as such, they are clearly seen to be false. Here the methodology for assessing theories which is advocated by the empirical realists really does become relevant, but that is only because "philosophical" argument he dropped out of the picture.

The freeing of the private language argument from claims about criteria is necessary also because typical skeptics dispute the Wittgensteinian account of the use of mental expressions. It would be question-begging in the extreme to attempt to refute solipsism by appealing to the fact that "uses --- correctly", which is a mental expression, is governed by criteria, firstly because the solipsist offers an entirely different account and secondly because he is concerned only with first-person present-tense ascriptions and it is problematic whether these are governed by criteria even on a Wittgensteinian view. This feature of the logical situation underlines how right Strawson was to deny that his descriptive metaphysics, especially that part of it which occurs in the "Persons" chapter in "Individuals"³³, afforded any arguments against

solipsism, for he too relies heavily on the notion of a logically adequate criterion. Of course, on the accounts which Strawson and Wittgenstein give of the use of mental predicates, a solipsistic position cannot be generated. Wittgenstein goes one step further than Strawson in trying to show that the typical solipsist account of the use of mental language is inconsistent with his claims about incorrigibility. So one kind of argument which leads to solipsism has been taken out of the running - it remains open to future solipsists to re-enter with a new account of mental language, but there is some reason to think that they will be unable to do this while still supporting an interestingly solipsistic viewpoint.

In the course of my argument for the main conclusion of the essay, I discussed various objections to the Wittgensteinian approach. These objections were found to be aimed, for the most part, at the views of Malcolm and other interpreters of Wittgenstein. I argued that these latter views were misrepresentations of Wittgenstein's own thought on these matters and attempted to bring out a Wittgensteinian position which would avoid the relevant criticisms. An important part of this move was re-analysing the notion of criterion in such a way as to show both that it is extremely plausible that there are criteria for the use of certain expressions and that any appeal to

the notion of "criterion" is useless in the attack on solipsism or skepticism.

I now come to the issue of adjudication between the Wittgensteinian approach and empirical realism. As I see it, the major difference of opinion between the two views can be elucidated by considering their different answers to the following question: Are there criteria for the use of psychological expressions or merely strong evidence for their correct application?

According to empirical realism, we have merely strong evidence for the existence of mental states in others. The issue between solipsism and empirical realism then turns on the question of how strong this evidence is. By all the methodological tests which are appropriate for assessing the strength of such evidence, it looks as if the common belief that others have minds comes out on top of the hypothesis that they don't. However, the solipsist is not content with making hypotheses; he provides an argument in favour of his view that we cannot know that others have minds, and he is likely to dispute the methodological principles upon which the empirical realist position is based. One focus of dispute is the solipsist's notion of privileged access which is supposed to guarantee knowledge of at least some mental states and which is set

up as the paradigm of a means of knowing about mental states, so that any other purported means of knowing will not in fact result in knowledge. I suggest that the empirical realist position, as detailed so far, is inadequate to deal with the arguments offered by the solipsist, since it grants them no cognizance.

Skepticism aside, the other differences between empirical realism and the Wittgensteinian approach on the above question revolve around the typical realist claim that we are at liberty to revise, in the light of future experience, our theory that others have mental states of the kind which we normally attribute to them. This is what is implied by an acceptance of the claim that behaviour is strong evidence for a person's being in some mental state while denying that this evidence is criterial. It will be remembered that at the end of Section F I adduced the conclusion that if there are criteria for mental states then mental states have a secure place in our ontology. The empirical realist (here I am thinking especially of Rorty) denies this by emphasising the analogies between mental states and theoretical entities of a fairly recent kind, which do not have such a secure position.

Wittgensteinians, on the other hand, will emphasise different analogies. If theoretical entities are to

function as analogues, then they will call upon those which are well-established in scientific knowledge; perhaps, for example, the notion of magnetic field will serve. It seems to me that it is too late for us to abandon either mental states or magnetic fields no matter what evidence turns up in the future, for there will always be a way of interpreting such evidence as telling us something new, and perhaps surprising, about mental states or magnetic fields. Whether Wittgensteinians or empirical realists are right on this question, however, is something which cannot be settled at this time; we lack a sufficiently broad overview of the development of our concepts. Perhaps one small point in favour of the Wittgensteinian approach is the fact that we have not abandoned minds although we have abandoned most of the Cartesian theories about them.

This unequivocal ontological commitment to mental states is what acts as a ground for the Wittgensteinian claim that psychological expressions are governed by behavioural criteria, and it is what distinguishes this claim from the empirical realist claim that behaviour is strong evidence for the existence of mental states. As I have tried to show, however, the dispute between Wittgenstein and solipsism is not simply over the question of whether there are or are not criteria for the ascription

of mental states to others. For Wittgenstein has an argument, the private language argument, which purports to show that there are incoherences in the solipsist's position. Wittgenstein does not regard the solipsist as making mere hypotheses which lack inductive support. He gives one account of the use of psychological expressions on which solipsism cannot be generated. He then considers the solipsist's account of mental language and the skeptical argument which goes with it, and demonstrates that these are incompatible. The solipsist is beaten, as it were, both on his home ground and on that of his opponents.

It is this feature of the Wittgensteinian position which constitutes my reason for regarding it as superior to the empirical realist approach to skepticism. I do not, however, have any direct arguments against empirical realism when it is restricted to the philosophy of mind. I hope, by my clarification of the Wittgensteinian approach, to have answered some of the weak arguments in favour of empirical realism which are based on misunderstandings of Wittgenstein's thought.

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