CHAPTER-V
CRITERIOLOGY, LANGUAGE AND OTHERS MINDS

From the preceding chapter it seems important to note that the role of criteria is very significant in our account of the knowledge of other’s mental states. For, it is that pointer to knowledge the presence of which would guarantee the possession of mental states by others. However, the deceptive or real occurrence of any fact or phenomenon neither is associated with, nor affect, our application of criteria in the ascription of mental states to persons other than oneself. The word “criterion” is, thus, a technical word that has application chiefly as the linguistic order of the explanation of some facts. In this sense, it is related to the meanings of assertions say, of ascription of mental states, such that it provides ground for the meaningfulness of assertions, although it hardly offers meaning to assertions. It is, thus, the very ground, the logic, the reason, the grammar, the basis, of ascription of the occurrence of mental predicates to persons. Here, from this grammatical character of criteria we find an intimate connection between criteria and language in our account of knowing other minds. Hence, in this chapter we would step forward to point out the criteriological statement of the other minds issue as notable in the recent writings of thinkers of ‘knowledge’ along with an account of language as a clue to the concerned issue. This would provide us with the total picture of criteria application and knowledge of other minds. So, there would be two broad sections here—

(5.1) Criteriology in Knowing Other Minds

[143]
Let us consider these as follows:

Section (5.1)—Criteriology in Knowing Other Minds:

To replace the argument from analogy and that from behavioural dispositions the criteriological theory is developed according to which it is neither analogy from one’s own case nor any behavioural tendency in others that justify the ascription of mental states in others and the resultant claims of knowledge in this regard. Rather, it is the ‘criteria’ involving all the possible variety of behavioural patterns in the human sphere that is the pointer to the presence of mental states in others. Thus, the advocates of Criteriology suggest that to understand the meaning of ascription of mental states to persons there are and must be criteria that would ‘provide us with absolutely conclusive ways of telling that other beings possess conscious states and processes’\(^1\). Wittgenstein, Malcolm, Strawson and others are some important names as associated with this criteriological theory. According to Malcolm, for instance,

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\text{It will not make sense for one to suppose that another person is not in pain if one’s criterion of his being in pain is satisfied.}^2
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For Strawson also, observation of appropriate physical and mental criteria is the basis of our ascription of respective mental predicates to others as persons. To Wittgenstein, again, a criterion presents the way of understanding the meaning of assertions. In this sense, it is the presupposition of meaningful predication. Thus, for example, in our ascription of someone’s having a certain sensation, say headache, the assertive form that “He has a headache” is very
relevant as well as meaningful in so far the person concerned displays the conventionally agreed pattern of behaviour as associative of headache. In other words, the conventional pattern of displaying behaviour as caused by headache forms the 'criteria' of predicking the occurrence of headache. There is, however, no specific or fixed behavioural order of displaying any mental states like the sensation of 'headache' but only the variety of circumstantial responses which are natural (Malcolm) manifestation of the particular immaterial content of sensation. ‘Pain’ is thus not merely expressed in crying or grimacing, but in the form of linguistic assertion of pain. There is, in fact, a variety in the manifestation of pain or similar behavioural patterns with many similarities with the conventional order of behaving under different circumstantial experiences. This is a “token” similarity of the “type” identity in behaving. In simple terms, there is no identical order of behaviour to be noted in our assertion of mental states to others but only similarity and resemblances that form a kind of family resemblances (Wittgenstein) helping thereby the discovery of the criteria of mental predication. From this we may understand the game that a criterion plays with our assertions of states of minds to others. This game is the grammatical game of explaining the meanings of assertions. That means the way the rules of a language guide the functioning of it the application of criteria provide the proper grammar of the meaningfulness of an assertion. From the above it is clear that criteria are detonated to the meanings of assertions and not to the truth of these. Criteria, thus, provide the linguistic grounds of events, although it in itself does not fall within the jurisdiction of language.

[145]
That means criteria may work as “defining criteria” (as Wittgenstein refers) of facts or events or concepts. But, it itself lacks any definition in so far it is the point of definitions. However, strictly speaking, criteria cannot form the definitions of events but they merely state the occurrence of an event. For, were it able to provide definitions of events the presence of it would hardly falsify the occurrence of the respective event. But, the way criteria are used to offer justification of the occurrence of events in a conventional order the fake-play of this occurrence does also fall under the same conventions of human’s world. So, criteria are not to be considered as ‘defining criteria’ of events. They are the grammatical order that help in formulating definitions of events etc. In this sense, they are the ‘universal justification condition’ as distinct from ‘essential justification condition’ as notable in Pollock⁴. As such, they are “…those conditions that are part of the justification conditions of the concept, not by virtue of its being the particular concept that it is, but by virtue of the nature of justification per se”⁵. Therefore, unlike the essential justification conditions of a concept they do not form the essence of the concept. For instance, one universal justification condition of the concept of a man is his being a two-footed animal. In other words, it is a criterial feature of a man. But, this in no way forms either the definition or the essential justification condition of a human being in the sense that there can be man who might possess more than or less than two legs. Moreover, there are other living creatures like the monkeys, kangaroos, and different birds etc., that are biped. Hence, criteria suit only to the notion of universal justification condition and

[146]
not to that of the essential ones. Even then if we urge for the 'essentiality' to be involved in 'criterial relation' to a particular concept, there would be a special sense in which the two may be regarded as co-extensive.

With the above outline of the basic order of criteria we may point out after the advocates of Criteriology that in our deal of the point of mental ascription to other persons when the argument from analogy or from behaviour lapses, the theory of criteria is the only alternative left. That there are what John Pollock notes as "prima facie reasons" of mental ascriptions to other persons that can meaningfully justify such ascriptions on our part. But, the problem we encounter is with regard to the point of criteria application in cases of self-ascription or first-person ascription and other-ascription or third-person ascription of mental states. Because, the basis of self-ascription differs from that of other-ascription, although there is intimate relation between the two, as Prof. Strawson also points out, in so far the self-ascription of mental predicates is meaningful only when the possibility of other-ascription is considered. Strawson, in this regard, holds that the criteria for other-ascription of mental predicates is notable from the observation of behaviors of others as reflected in their external physical postures, while the criteria for self-ascription is anything but this mode of behavioural observation. Here, Strawson fails to offer clearly the criteria of self-ascription of mental predicates, which he technically names as P-predicates. To him, the criteria of self-ascription can be understood from the way P-predicates are applied in cases of persons where the two-dimensional uses of P-predicates involve the self- and other-asscriptions with the notice of how the
others self-ascribe. Here, it seems that though the criteria of the two-dimensional ascriptions of mental orders differ under the unique functionality of the P-predicates, there is an intimate connection between the two modes of criterial ascription of P-predicates. This is obvious from the fact that both are meaningfully applied from the point of view of their sameness of reference as persons. That is why despite the difference of criteria of mental ascription in both 1st person and 3rd person the context of reference remains the same, e.g., the sensation of pain, for instance. This sameness in the referent implies the “coherence” of the P-concepts in both stations of ascriptions. By coherence of P-concepts is meant that in both cases of 1st and 3rd persons’ mental predications the mental occurrences, i.e., the P-concepts, are capable of producing the same results. And, this coherence is learnt from our conventional order of mental ascriptions. This conventional framework is, again, built by the method of induction based on observation that may include self-observation or introspection, of particular instances. From this it may be remarked that we do not deduce but induce mental states from its respective criteria manifestations in others, while in our own case we personally experience the occurrence of a mental event along with the understanding of the criteria of others ascriptions. Here, in order to self-ascribe mental or P-states one is to know from inductive criteria the link between the respective material (M) and the mental (P) states in one’s own case. Thus, we note the appropriate means of 1st and 3rd person ascriptions from a kind of inductive generalization. Therefore, the point of coherence in self and other ascriptions lie in the inductive discovery of the
criteria of the mental in both cases. Hence, the argument from criteria falls back on the argument from analogy in the sense of the discovery of criteria of P-states being dependent on inductive match of self-referring with other-referring. Here, the criteriologists may argue, as Prof. Pollock points out, that in the ascription of mental predicates to persons our starting point as well as the prime base is the 'criteria' and not self-ascription. To this there is the reply that to establish the official statement of criteria the point of criterial coherence in persons (both 1st and 3rd) is very significant that rests on the ultimate ground of induction.

Further, the question before us is the ascription of mental predicates. So, it does not matter whether one starts from self-predication or from criteria observation. Rather, what matters is the identification of the recurrence of the mental order which is distinctly to be marked within one's one experience. For, without identifying the mental as different from the physical and etc. there would be no question of ascription of the same to either case of persons as mentioned above. And, to identify this mental order one is left to depend on its experience in one's own region. Thus, it is from this region of oneself that the application of criteria is developed and the ascription of mental predicates is made. In this regard, it is noteworthy that before the discovery of criteria and the ways of applying it in the ascription of mental predicates when we are capable of identifying the recurrence of the states of mind there seems no value of criteria application. But, this way of disvaluing the criteriological statement cannot be accepted in toto. For, even in identifying the recurrence
of certain P-concepts within one’s personal experience one has to remember the points of similarity or identity by means of some criterial notice; otherwise, the identification cannot be made. So, absolute disjunction of criterial reference cannot be supported wholeheartedly. Moreover, our ways of identifying or reidentifying of any concepts like the P-concepts is possible within our basic linguistic structure. Hence, any ascription of a new mental order should not stand in contrast to this conventional structure of our language, but may enrich the same. This support of the conventional linguistic structure may provide some impetus to the original criteriological theory without which (the former) the latter cannot walk smoothly. For, according to the original assumption of the criteriological theory, the ascription of mental states to persons is based on the observation of relevant criteria that may characteristically justify the occurrence of the same state of mind within the personal realm of the person. The strength that this criterial justification receives is that from the order of human convention as notable in the physical manifestation of behaviour and the way we use our language. But, this conventional order seems not necessary of its being so. For instance, a certain four footed animal with its essential and accidental features is called a ‘cow’ instead of a ‘horse’ and this is captured within our conventional framework. But, the same animal could have been called ‘horse’ instead of ‘cow’ and vice versa or something else that could also have formed our linguistic convention and could serve our purpose of naming the animal in order to distinguish it from the rest of animals due to its unique features.

[150]
Now, the unique feature of every thing and beings in this world is to be discovered with the notice of some criteria of identifying each as distinct from the rest. Hence, we cannot forget this role of criteria application in catching objects or subjects of reference, which is, however, neither necessary nor sufficient nor any causal ground of our ways of predicating. It is only contingent reason, though very relevant one from the standpoint of our conventions. Therefore, the role of criteria in the projection of mental states is contingent and not necessary. From this angle, the discovery as well as the ascription of mental states also becomes contingent. In this sense, our learning of a P-concept is also contingently related to self (1st person) experience of relevant P-state or the reference to other’s (3rd person) cases of P-states. That is why the observation of certain M-states as related to certain P-states in the criterial relation is only contingent. This does not mean that there are no M-states as criteria to certain P-states; rather, it means that there are P-states that are exclusive of definite M-states or even of any M-states. Such P-states are quoted by Pollock as ‘phenomenological states’\(^{10}\). Being non-inclusive of any bodily states in themselves the so-called phenomenological states stay beyond the jurisdiction of any criteria application. For example, the awareness of the colour ‘blue’, the awareness of the ‘beauty’ of a flower etc., are P-states that are inclusive of only phenomenological attributes and as such are non-criterial of any means of material order. Hence, the problem before the philosophers is to ascribe such a P-state to a 3rd person’s case. Here, this argument seems to be crossing the boarder of criteriological statement. But, this is not so. For,
there we find various orders of representing a phenomenological state. Thus, our ostensive order of language or the way we agree in the mode of attributing some adjective to some noun etc., (e.g., that pink rose is ‘beautiful’) can well be considered to be the ground of assertion of the phenomenological states. Taken in this sense, our mode of phenomenological agreement in the stating of a mental phenomenon or of positing ostensive definitions to outward contents of experience and the like are the grounds of conveying or understanding the phenomenological states. Hence, the contexts of these modes of conveying contain the criteria of our representation of phenomenological states. In fact, at least so far there is the question of identifying or reidentifying of phenomenological states we need criteria of pointing to the sameness of phenomenological occurrence. Otherwise, we cannot dissect these states as unique from the other P-states involving physical features to which criteria are applied.

From the above we may sum up that whatever P-state we encounter, either purely phenomenological or states associative of observable physical behaviour, we cannot ignore the criterial role that help in understanding our ways of ascribing, rejecting, or associating mental predicates to the appropriate physical or observable order of existences and thereby in approaching knowledge of these orders of existences at least meaningfully. So, the role of criteria consists in describing the ways of our conventional patterns of living such that by following these descriptions we can meaningfully judge the right application of our mental assertions. Whether the actual occurrence of these ascribed mental
states takes place or not is not included in the task of the criteria application. Criteria, thus, justify only that whether certain expression or assertion is made correctly as per the given order of convention. If the order is followed, the applied criteria for the assertion concerned are justified, even though the assertive context may remain empty of the real phenomenon. Similarly, if the criteria are not satisfied as per the conventional norms, it need not imply the absolute non-occurrence of the event concerned. Thus, when someone behaves in an appropriate manner to reflect pain-behaviour his so behaving is our criteria of ascribing pain to him, even when he may not really is in pain. He might be pretending to attain sympathy from others or to fulfill his other intentions. But, that is not the fault with regard to our criteria of ascription. For, our application of the criteria of one's being in pain is followed here as per the convention of pain-behaviour. It may be reminded here as noted earlier that there is no specific order or definitions of pain-behaviour. There are only conventions associative of pain-behaviour that, for instance, are also open to be refreshed with new modes of behaving in one's painful states. Of course, that should not contradict our original conventions. Otherwise, the total conventional structure of our world would have to be changed.

Thus, again, when someone does not behave to reflect his actual painful state we find no criteria to apply for ascribing pain to him. It seems that due to the lack of appropriate criteria to offer appropriate mental ascriptions we cannot judge his state of mind. But, this is also not true. For, one may not display his actual mental state. But, one has to display some other mode of behaviour to
conceal his real state of mind. In that case, his mode of displaying would be our criteria for mental ascription to him. So, instead of saying that there are no appropriate criteria of evaluating states of mind of another person we should say that there is lack of appropriate mode of behaving that could be caught as criteria of the actual occurrence of someone’s mental states. Actually, what is more important in our criterial application is the consideration of the surrounding circumstances along with that of the preconditions of criterial use. For, the preconditions, in this regard, are the presuppositions of criterial use. In other words, they pave the way for criterial use. These preconditions include for instance, the subject of ascription, the recognition of the order of ascription, etc. On the other hand, the variation in the surrounding circumstances may (often positively) lead to the variation in the occurrence. This in turn may bring apparent variation in the order of criterial use.

With the consideration of all these a criterion serves as the central point of justifying the meanings of a concept. This point of justification is essential justification condition in context of meaning of the concept, and is the universal justification condition in context of the “justification per se”. Under the former point of justification condition criteria provide conclusive reasons of justifying P-concepts as claimed by the criteriologists in the earlier passages; while in the second condition of justification, a criterion neither aspires to be providing conclusive reasoning of a facts occurring nor is there any provision of the same within the criterial application. And, for this, the role of criteria in explaining the way of our meaningful assertions cannot be charged with. For, it grants
only the way of using sensation words like "pain", "headache", etc., or predicative adjectives like "jolly", "timid" and etc. That means criteria points to the occasions under which these words are meaningfully applied. But, they cannot account for the intellectual games played behind their uses. But, that is also not our concern. For, what is significant for our predication of mental states is the understanding of the meanings of assertions with their components which are words of our language, and not the other orders of truth or falsity that are external to the meanings of the respective assertions. Hence, to account for our meaningful assertion and justification of the ascription of mental states to persons other than oneself the role of criteria is very notable, although it would hardly entertain the skeptical question of the truth element of infallible sense of knowledge instances.

The above discussion of the criteriological argument of our ascription of mental states to others reveals in a significant way the role of language as to be very relevant in our deal of the knowledge of others state of mind. It is, thus, we would proceed now to visit this relevance of language to the problem of other minds in the following section.

Section (5.2))—Language and Others:
In the process of human civilization, the use and invention of language serves the most instrumental and highly emancipating profile to satisfy human urge of expression. The natural need of expression and interaction, in this respect are at the root of the invention of language. The significance of language in human
life may also be noted on the point that by uttering a dignified statement one
can run (built) or even ruin an era. Furthermore, so far as the domain of
epistemology is concerned, language functions as the upholder of human world
of experience in the form of constant brain processes which construct a system
of thought, and it also externalizes the private and personal experiences in the
form of phonetic utterance. It is also the point of correlation of our past,
present and future experiences. In short, it is figuratively language that correlates
various modes of our thought and expression. Moreover, it is the most effective
tool of human communication and thereby can be a significant base of the
other minds issue. In fact, the simplest fact of a language’s being significant in
this context is grasable from the fact of a child’s inclusion in the expressive
world of humans. Speaking elaborately, when a child is born, he becomes a
part of community of his own as distinct from the rest of various world
creatures and that human community welcomes him by offering a particular
mode of language. In this way, the new born baby is included in the group of
phonetic users whereby he learns and acquires various experiences in the
world and attains knowledge about the world sometimes by way of inference,
sometimes by comparison, or sometimes by relying on some testimony and
the like. Hence, ultimately it appears that the life of a man is tinged with language
in one way or other. Language, thus, can be, as already notified, the key
source to unlock the door to our knowledge of minds and to clear up pebbles
on our way to find a solution to it. This is recognized by many philosophers
starting from Descartes, Berkeley, to Price, Russell, Stràwson and the like.
For all these thinkers of different times and of different temperaments the use of language is very significant in meaningful communication. This is, in fact, the point or order of stating one's personal segments of experience. Or, in other words, it is the language that is the most conceivable means of conveying the private to the public.

To note further, the relevance of language to the knowledge of others is also graspable from the fact that to argue anything for or against the authenticity of other peoples possessing a particular mental state, one has to argue by referring to the statements made by others on a particular context. Language, thus, appears to be the centre of the problem and has its own significance to point towards its solution which we are to justify and enlighten. So, let us explore the close relation between language and the other minds problem as follows:

One very relevant feature of the problem of other minds is the issue of self enclosed private experiences of different persons. Putting it in the Ayer's style of quotation,

how can a number of sets of private sense-data conceivably make up a common, public world? 11

This is the point in which solipsism shines and skepticism of other minds takes its seat in the philosophical branch called Epistemology. This particular usage, at the same time, as mentioned above, produces some apparently irremediable doubts in connection with our logico-philosophical treatment of other people. The problem, here, starts with the fact that we have no conceivable
ground to rely on others' *private* experiences, i.e., to rely on their mode of expression or on their psycho-physical behaviour as expressed typically in some form of assertions, in a word, to rely on their language. In other words, it is quite comprehensible that human beings are limited and finite; it is not possible for any person to have a supra-mental perception of other minds. Here, the sceptic beats the drum that our knowledge of other minds is an impossibility. But, it may be notable here that whatever may trouble our problem a meaningful communication via language could stand as a sound means to our knowledge of other minds. Actually, there appears no such strong alternative base to replace the linguistic intensity and skill in this regard. For, simply with the gymnasiuums of language or to echo with Wittgenstein that with the help of various 'language games' human beings dwell in the world by reflecting their personal views, culturing the intellectual discipline or even fighting for a cause etc. A language, in fact, is the unparallel mode of expression, which contains much more clarity than any other media of expression. As Prof. Ayer wrote,

> there are other ways of conveying information than by the use of language, though the use of language is the most important and, from my point of view at least, the most interesting to investigate.¹²

Relevantly again, Ben Jonson notes,

> Speech is the only benefit man hath to express his excellency of mind above other creatures.¹³

The role and function of language in our speech-acts is, thus, of immense significance. However, words, which are the main jams of any language, would
have no significance if we are unfamiliar with their conventional use in a particular language. Each sentence of a particular language is a series of mere auditory sensation which possesses its deserved meaningfulness if we are acquainted with it, and otherwise, each would appear to be a mere string of some unmeaning sounds. So, unless we acquire prior initiation and be familiar with the conventions of various languages, these languages would stand as mere absurd audition. To have justified and reasonable claim to our knowledge of other minds we are to be able to make out the relevance and significance of the persons utterance. This fact necessitates the observing of a linguistic interpretation of the other minds problem by noting, at least, implicitly the inter-relation between language and the problem and also pointing towards its consequent forwards. Briefing our theme of concern thus it may be highlighted that since language is our sole (conceivably) instrument of reasonable expression, it can be dignified to have held the status of a prime clue to meet all the queries concerning the human dialectic. In this context, the recent tendency of philosophers also intends to solve the intricate problems of philosophy by analyzing the concepts of philosophy. This process of analysis is out and out language-based. Moreover, in so far the expression of our inner segments or of various feelings of human world of experience is concerned, the force of language as a vital element in the domain of human knowledge or in the field of philosophical enquiry is also highly recognized by a set of philosophers well-known as the Viennese Circle. To this Circle, the speculative philosophy of tradition is simply meaningless and is urgently in need of a linguistic analysis.
of the concepts related to knowledge. Hence, in our attempt of a linguistic interpretation of the epistemological problem of other minds, time to time references to this Circle may be made in order to solidify the subject of our survey.

To start with we may note that a language is the methodical constitution of some words, signs, sentences and symbols. Thus, to reveal the glory of language we need to refer to these elements of a language. Like the three-constituent Gunas of Samkhya Prakriti, these elements of language perform the model role to dignify a language. So, let us explore how various words and sentences in a particular language work to focus on the clue to our knowledge of other minds as follows.

To take an instance when an entity characteristically reflecting to possess a like body of that of mine utters in front of me — "I have a headache" —the utterance contains no publicly observable phenomenon, but it does indicate something understandable on my part. That means when I hear someone saying that he is having a headache, the declaration on the part of the speaker appears to me to be meaningful in the sense that I at least understand (in so far I know the reference of the English word 'headache') what the speaker wants (intends) to mean by his 'headache' on the ground that the word 'headache' has got a meaning in the human world of experience, i.e., the word in its application does have a public base. By 'public base' we mean that it has got a common field of application. In other words, despite the various aspects of the pain caused by a 'headache', there is one point of parity in it which is linked with
some definite psycho—physical structure and thus so named and understood publicly. For, in the domain of so-called 'private language', the word 'headache' can not be meaningfully applied. 'I have a headache' uttered in an empty room is notably a mad utterance in the sense that if I am having it and if there is none to understand my private language, I need not describe my pain to add my suffering to my knowledge. I may simply groan or cry out of pain, but need not use a language descriptively or informatively.

However, the sceptic formulates the problem by noting down the private sensation and the private language of persons. But, whether such a private language is possible or not has been a matter of concern for many thinkers. Wittgenstein, for instance, shows in his 'Investigations' that there can be no private language in the sense that if there be anyone at all, that would be of no use. For, there can be no criterion of its future application in the sense that there is no other alternative left but our memory impression that would signify whether a particular sensation for which we are applying a private code has reoccurred. But, memory, though very useful in our everyday use of various experiences to carry on the various language games, yet, to stand as a solid criterion, would not be fruitful to provide certainty to the philosopher's doubt.

Here, it is maintained that the person himself well knows whether he is rightly recognizing his sensation and using the appropriate word. But here Wittgenstein reflects that in the domain of absolute private language (which Carnap designates as protocol language) we have no right to speak of "rightness". Hence, by discarding the notion of private language, Wittgenstein notes that we are to
bring back our language to its original home i.e., to its everyday use. And if it can be done, philosophical problems like the one we are discussing will disappear from the scene as mere non-sensical barriers to human knowledge. That is why he uttered a signified sentence that —

Philosophical problems arise when language goes on holiday.\textsuperscript{15}

Actually, in our communication there always involves an ‘intention’ on the part of the speaker which may or may not be satisfied; and it is on this factor of intention that the meaningfulness of communication depends. Just like J. L. Austin’s notation that the performative use of the word ‘promising’ is significantly made if the speaker really intends to keep his promise. But if he does not so intend and simply use the expression “I promise”, the meaning of the word would not be fulfilled and hence there would definitely remain a gap in our whole process of communication. To clarify this point from another angle, we may take a single stock of words that may be applied in different occasions, with different intentions. For example,

\begin{quote}
It is too hot water.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
It is too hot, water!
\end{quote}

Here, the 1\textsuperscript{st} utterance may be a description. It describes the “hotness” of water; while the second one is a report including a demand or an order or request. It, thus, reports about the “warm” weather and thereby making the subject ask for water (which, of course, is to be cold or normal water as distinct from hot water as stated in the previous example). But, how does one know their different modes of application? It is by noting the tone of voice

[162]
and the look and other external expression of the speaker with which the utterance is made are that which will short out the intended prospect of the speaker. Theoretically, with the use of ideograms and orally with some techniques in voice we understand whether a piece of utterance is information or a description or an exclamation etc. This affirmation of linguistic understanding is based on the ground that we interact with one another quite successfully in the sense that when someone utters about the beauty of the Himalayas, for instance, I understand his intended referent and also interact in being agreed to his utterances. But, if I am mistaken somewhere as marked by my counterpart, the latter will point to my loop-hole of understanding his stand point and would not stop doing it until I really approach to understand his point of view. Hence, success of communication can be notable on meaningful interactions between persons. In this context, we may state the instance of two persons who are complaining similar problems of pain in their abdomen. Here, when one is explaining his mode of suffering the other finding the formers expressions appropriate as he himself wants to use (the latter might in this connection be engaged earlier in searching for appropriate words to convey his thought).

This instance, again, points out that we sometimes depend on others use of a linguistic utterance to cope satisfactorily with our desire to express our inner feelings. The teacher often finds a word or a sentence appropriate as used by his fellow student to express or point to what he intends to teach. In this context, we may quote the following utterance from C.I. Lewis relevantly as

[163]
We use language to convey thought. If language really conveys anything, then there must be something which is identical in your mind and in mine when we understand each other.\textsuperscript{16}

Lewis assumes here that what is identical in two minds in communication is a certain mental state. Here, it should not be confused that in the interaction between two persons there is a single mind in the sense of identity. On the other hand, the two persons have the same referent of identical states. It is, however, the question of a criterion of identity, i.e., of identical experience, that troubles the sceptic much. But, he forgets the point that if we settle the principle of identity of two persons somehow, then the problem of other minds will knock in a trivial manner. That means, if we suppose for sometime that two persons should have numerically the identical mind in order to claim to know (in the strict sense of knowledge) one another’s mental states, then there would appear no way for the talk of different persons and their having separate mental states and similar conscious reflections and consequently there would be no problem of other minds as already formulated by the sceptic.

Avoiding such (as above) a contradictory formulation the sceptic should, in order to settle the problem and for the retaining of individuality of different persons, recognize persons as co-subjects of experience whose thought and feelings are communicated to one another in the sense of conveying information, of course, he should not ask the transfer of these states of minds to one another in their immediacy of experience.
Actually, what concerns the sceptic much is the fact of pretence. As he notes, in the interaction between two persons one may pretend his state of mind and may utter such words as in contrast to his exact mental state. To unfold this point, the sceptic charges that a person can conceal his mental state from another, its being absolutely private. While formulating such a view the philosophical sceptic misses the point that in order to pretend one must be a master of some definite skills. To be a master of some skills one need to apply one’s power of intelligence. And, man is the only being as found in this world to be blessed with superior intelligence. Hence, the very fact of pretence itself guarantees that the one who is pretending is a person, for it is observable that pretence is and can be made only by a genuine person and that is otherwise lacked by animals, infants, and every other inanimate thing. Moreover, the possibility of pretence demands the possibility of reality. Now, again, to decide who is a person who will pretend, we may follow the Strawsonian ascription of M- and P-predicates to settle down the issue in a literal manner as we have done in the previous chapter. Otherwise, we cannot proceed to justify the problem of other minds which involves not primarily the deal of a person’s existence, but the deal of the existence of various persons possessing similar mental states.

Hence, as Strawson notes, the self ascription of P-states necessarily involves its other ascription on the ground that in the bounds of language there is no separate meanings offered for the 1st and 3rd person’s use of a particular word (say, pain). Strawson also points out here that we use language primarily
to inform our counterparts about our having a particular mental state. Speaking differently, I use the sentence “I am in pain” to let my counterparts to know about the person who is in pain at that point of time as distinct from the rest of persons who are not in. The use of ‘I’ includes simultaneous understanding of ‘others’ as excluded from the ‘I’ in my use of ‘I am in pain’. As Wittgenstein also remarks that there is grammatical difference in 1st person and 3rd person use of being ‘in pain’.

Further, as Wittgenstein unveils another aspect of the use of the word pain, that we should be able to understand, the difference between the language games performed by the use of the word ‘red’ and ‘pain’ in order that our knowledge claims can sustain fruitfully. Thus, ‘pain’ is not the name of a private sensation. Otherwise, none of us could have learnt of its application in the field of our separate but similar experiences. But as Hoffman observes, “I learn to use the word ‘pain’ when pain is ascribed to me in certain circumstances”. On the other hand, the use of ‘red’, though a physical object property, can not be ultimately defined ostensively in the sense that each of us have our own private sense-data of ‘red’, as Ayer points out, to which it is of course not possible to provide an ostensive definition in the strict sense.

To close up, we may note here that the knowledge of other minds, however, appear to be problematic basically to those who fuse knowledge with experience, i.e., the empiricists like Berkeley to whom ‘Esse ist percipii’. But, this is nothing but putting a limit to the word knowledge and is but to indulge into skeptical threats. Here, such a threat can be met with by understanding the
use of the word ‘knowledge’ with its diversity. In this connection, to have knowledge of some others mental state, I need not have it on my part, but should understand his referential content. To conclude on this linguistic line, thus, it may also be noted that if the two major purposes of language, i.e., expression and communication are ignored and not given their due importance, then language will cease to function in the manner as it usually does. Consequently, a significant clue to our knowledge of other minds would be challenged and the problem would remain unsolved. Since we are not windowless monads of Leibniz as is clear from the significance of criterial notice in the preceding section, hence, we can meaningfully communicate our thoughts and feelings to our counterparts and can, on obvious and sincere grounds, and naturally can claim to have knowledge of others mental states. As Russell states,

Words and ideas (mental abstractions of thought) are, in fact, interchangeable; both have meaning, and both have the same kind of causal relations to what they mean. The difference is that, in the case of words, the relation to what is meant is in the nature of a social convention, and is learnt by hearing speech, whereas in the case of ideas the relation is “natural”....

Section (5.3)—General Observations:
From the above it is clear that ideas, being interchangeable with words, can be presented by means of words. In fact, ideas are constitutive of some or other form of our language. That means without the function of language in
formulating ideas no ideas can be systematically there. However, the official
distinction between the two must remain in lieu of the fact that ideas are naturally
private, while the words (of language) being the public mode of understanding
the content or referent of the former. From this it becomes clear that language
can depict the picture of the mental. This picture may be that of one’s own
mind in case of expression or it may be the picture of other minds that is
revealed through successful communications. In fact, it is this aspect of
communication that makes our language to be social or public. In this regard,
the conventions that guide our uses of language play the most important role
of understanding the meanings of words or sentences of our language.

In the first section of this chapter, again, the role of conventions is marked to
be very relevant in discovering criteria and applying the same in our predications
of mental states to persons (other than oneself). These conventions state the
way we live, the way we behave, the way we construct our human world
within a typical framework. This typical framework is meaningfully related to
the way we discover and use our forms of language. Herein we find the relevance
of criteria and language in the knowing of others mental states where the use of
criteria as well as language presupposes the existence of mind in its plurality.
That means criteria, language, and ‘others’ signify one another. For, the former
two are meaningless if there is no ‘other’ to convey one’s states of mind or to
distinguish the mental occurrence as one’s own instead of someone else’s; on
the other hand, to justify the existence of the latter (the ‘other’) the former two
are very meaningful as shown in the previous sections.

[168]
Thus, in the above way we may understand some of the ways of mental predication to others as very relevant. Now, we may consider another very influential writing in context of language and its private possibility as well as the proper understanding of the word ‘criteria’ to follow a more precise way of exploring the true significance of both these two dimensions of human cognition with appropriate clarity. This write-up would be from Wittgenstein and his unique way of treating the problem concerned. Let us proceed in the next chapter with our consideration of the problem of other minds in Wittgenstein.

Notes and References:
2. Malcolm, N 1963, *Knowledge and Certainty*, p. 113
5. Ibid., p. 33
8. Pollock, 1974, p. 256
9. Ibid., p. 257
10. Ibid., p. 259

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