Filosofia Contemporânea

Wittgenstein: an expressivist approach about emotions

Wittgenstein: uma abordagem expressivista sobre as emoções

* Juliano Santos do Carmo

Abstract: This paper aims to show that Wittgenstein's approach to the concepts of sensation and emotion can shed light on many philosophical dilemmas that remain present in the contemporary debate. My analysis will start by characterizing Jesse Prinz's approach to emotions (heavily influenced by the physiological theory of William James) and, then, it will proceed to show that Prinz is subject to the same criticisms that Wittgenstein expressed about William James's theory. Finally, I will argue that Wittgenstein, in *Philosophical Investigations*, advocated for a peculiar kind of expressivism that, while having profound differences from traditional expressivism, is able to appear as a non-cognitivist position. I will argue further that William James's error (and hence also Prinz's) is disregarding the multiple uses of psychological terms (that is, to think that psychological terms have a uniform use).

Keywords: Ludwig Wittgenstein. Emotivism. Expressivism. Philosophy of Psychology.

Resumo: Neste trabalho, tem-se a intenção de mostrar que a abordagem de Wittgenstein sobre os conceitos de sensação e emoção pode lançar luz sobre muitos dilemas filosóficos que permanecem presentes no debate contemporâneo. A minha análise tem como ponto de partida a abordagem de Jesse Prinz sobre as emoções, a qual é fortemente influenciada pela teoria fisiológica de William James. Nesse sentido, procurarei mostrar que Prinz está sujeito as mesmas críticas que Wittgenstein endereçou à teoria de William James. Por fim, eu argumentarei que Wittgenstein, nas *Investigações filosóficas*, defendeu um tipo peculiar de expressivismo que, apesar de manter profundas

* PhD. in Philosophy (PUCRS), Associate Professor of the Department of Philosophy at the Federal University of Pelotas. <juliano.ufpel@gmail.com>.

diferenças com o expressivismo tradicional, é capaz de figurar como uma posição não-cognitivista. Argumentarei, adicionalmente, que o erro na teoria de William James (e, portanto, também o erro de Prinz) é não considerar os múltiplos usos dos termos psicológicos (ou seja, pensar que os termos psicológicos possuem um uso uniforme).

Palavras-chave: Ludwig Wittgenstein. Emotivismo. Expressivismo. Filosofia da psicologia.

1   Jesse Prinz and the Non-cognitive Theory of Emotions

In the early chapters of *The Emotional Construction of Morals* (2007), Jesse Prinz offers a brief overview of the extensive debate on the nature of emotions and on how the various theoretical positions include the role of emotions with respect to moral psychology. Prinz explicitly argues that a non-cognitive theory along the lines of the James-Lange theory of emotions would be most appropriate to his purpose, since it treats the emotional states as "immediate response" for bodily stimuli: "Emotions are felt perceptions of bodily changes."[1]

The name "James-Lange theory of emotions" is due to the well-known fact that William James (1884) and the Danish physiologist Carl Lange (1885) developed – allegedly independently – very similar theories about the nature of emotions. It is not surprising that the chapter on emotions of James's book *Principles of Psychology* begins precisely with a long quote from Carl Lange to show what he (James) thought about the phenomenon of "grief." In this emblematic passage, James describes grief in terms of expressive bodily behaviors, such as "walking slowly," the "wobble," the "dragging of feet," the "weak voice," and the "tendency to cry softly," for example. After listing a series of typical behaviors that accompany grief, James concludes: "It is clear that grief is a bodily phenomenon, with their tears, red eyes and so on."[2]

William James's theory also sought to account for the way in which we externalize emotions through typical behaviors, such as facial expressions, skeletal-muscle changes and other conventional patterns of activities. "Fear," for example, was regarded as an emotion often preceded by the characteristic behavior of "astonishment," that is, "eyes and mouth open," "raised eyebrows," "dry salivary glands," "cold sweat," "tremors," etc. In this respect, therefore, James's position seems much more comprehensive than Lange's, since Lange gave priority to

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[1]   PRINZ, J. *The Emotional Construction of Morals*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

[2]   JAMES, W. *The Principles of Psychology*. New York: Cosimo, 2007, p. 1059-1060.

strictly physical aspects, such as the change in "blood vasculature,"[3] for example. The emphasis in typical expressive behaviors, as we shall see, is a key element that allows us to consider a convergence between the positions of James and Wittgenstein.

James was convinced, however, that the traditional research about emotions had focused only on "cataloging emotions," but that no position sought to provide a kind of "generative principle" or the "source" of emotions[4]. James's aim, therefore, was to offer this principle from a physiological perspective, endorsing a kind of reductionist naturalism. The great novelty consisted of the idea that primitive emotions (fear, anger and sadness, for example) do not cause bodily variations, but rather bodily expressions or variations are causes of gross emotions. This is clearly apparent in the following passage from *Principles of Psychology*:

Our natural way of thinking about these coarser emotions is that the mental perception of some fact excites the mental affection called the emotion, and that this latter state of mind gives rise to the bodily expression. My theory, on the contrary, is that the bodily changes follow directly the perception of the exciting fact, and that our feeling of the same changes as they occur is the emotion. Common sense says we lose our fortune, are sorry and weep; we meet a bear, are frightened and run; we are insulted by a rival, are angry and strike. The hypothesis here to be defended says that this order of sequence is incorrect… [Which the correct order is] is that we feel sorry because we cry, angry because we strike, afraid because we tremble[5].

Clearly, this way of conceiving of emotions is extremely attractive for any naturalistic position, since it potentially reduces all expressive behaviors that denote emotions to stimuli and bodily processes. Moreover, it also seems to offer "the generative principle" that distinguishes James's position from the traditional positions. Another interesting aspect of this theory is the fact that it seems to involve a kind of exercise in mental subtraction[6], and it is precisely this aspect that the contemporary naturalists want to rescue, since it would represent a very promising type of non-cognitivism[7].

Wittgenstein's criticisms of James's theory, however, were concentrated on two basic methodological aspects:

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[3] PRINZ, J., op. cit., p. 53.

[4] JAMES, W., op. cit., p. 1064.

[5] Ibid., p. 1065-1066.

[6] In James's words (see ibid., p. 1067): "If we removed all the bodily sensations of our consciousness of the intense emotion, we would not find anything that we left behind." "All that will be left," he adds, "is just a cold and neutral state of intellectual perception." (See ibid., p. 1068): "A heartless cognition that certain circumstances are deplorable and nothing else".

[7] PRINZ, J., op. cit., p. 60.

(1) Although the body is the central aspect of James's theory, the introspective method (mental subtraction), which is used to arrive at such conclusions, is highly doubtful to Wittgenstein, since it is far from being an adequate scientific research method.

(2) From a strictly philosophical point of view, James's theory seems to take a wrong type of access to the "inner experience" by not considering the logical connection between sensations and emotions.

In this sense, I think that, by endorsing the James-Lange theory of emotions, Jesse Prinz seems to be creating the same difficulties for himself. Before, however, addressing the minute aspects of Wittgenstein's criticism, I would like to emphasize here some additional features of the James-Lange theory of emotions which are very favorable to Jesse Prinz's purposes.

Insofar as emotional states are completely materialized (embodied), the James-Lange theory is a kind of non-cognitivism able to account for the immediacy of certain emotions, for instance, in cases where emotional responses are so immediate that it would be difficult to assume the intermediation of concepts, judgments or thoughts. There are many examples of this type of emotional responses, especially those that are triggered by visual perception, as a visual stimulus can trigger anger or compassion, for example. The James-Lange perspective, in this case, seems to corroborate Jesse Prinz's hypothesis that somatic signals are necessary and sufficient for emotions, a hypothesis also endorsed by Paul Griffiths and Craig DeLancey.

The immediacy of certain emotions is obviously one of the main challenges faced by cognitive theories of emotions. In contrast, the contemporary cognitivists, especially Robert Solomon, William Lyons, Martha Nussbaum, and George Pitcher, often claim that, in order to deny the cognitive nature of emotions, non-cognitivist philosophers fail to explain the "intentionality" inherent in them. In other words, the cognitivists cannot explain how cognitions may be involved in immediate emotional responses; the non-cognitivists, moreover, cannot explain the alleged intentionality of emotions.

The non-cognitivist philosopher should also explain the cases in which cognition seems to be involved in emotional responses, especially those that do not seem immediate. Therefore, Jesse Prinz believes that the James-Lange theory of emotions must face at least two problems to be entirely non-cognitivist:

(1) The first problem (which Prinz calls the "Rational Assessment Problem"[8]) consists precisely of dispelling the suspicion that our usual way of talking about emotions necessarily involves typically rational or

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[8] PRINZ, J., op. cit., p. 60.

cognitive "words" (i.e., we talk about "justified emotions" or "non-justified emotions," "adequate" or "inadequate," "warranted" or "unwarranted,"[9] etc.). According to Prinz, this could suggest that emotions have a cognitive dimension while there is evidence that cognition is not necessary for an emotion. As suggested by Prinz[10], the solution to this dilemma involves adopting a naturalistic theory of representation, primarily along the lines of Fred Dretske's position, but which also finds support in the positions of Jerry Fodor and Ruth Millikan, for example.

The general aim is to maintain that emotions are "natural representations" which, as such, are designed for a specific purpose (in this case, they would represent "concerns"), the same manner as smoke detectors are designed for the purpose, or function, of reliably indicating the presence of fire. In this point of view, "pain," for example, would represent "physical disease," insofar as physical diseases reliably trigger pain, but also because this device has been selected (evolutionarily) for this purpose. The idea of a natural representation (as a representation that occurs outside the mind) involves adopting a computational theory of the mind (with "mental files" and "calibration mechanisms," etc.), which, however, I will not present here[11].

(2) The second problem (which Prinz calls the "Somatic Similarity Problem"[12]) consists of providing a satisfactory answer to the apparent lack of "bodily patterns" to account for the numerous "somatic signs," that is, "different emotions are often associated with the same somatic changes." For example, "anger" and "indignation" are different emotions, because someone might be angry and not be indignant, but usually they are associated to the same patterns of expressive behavior[13]. If there was a single body pattern for each emotion, then we would expect that "anger" and "indignation" possessed different somatic signs. This, however, is also evidence that emotions and other internal processes have very peculiar characteristics.

The solution offered by Prinz for the "Somatic Similarity Problem" also involves the idea of "emotion-as-natural-representation-for-a-particular-purpose," because, insofar as similar signals may represent different mechanisms, a somatic signal of the same bodily pattern can have different meanings in different occasions. The meaning of the somatic signal of a bodily pattern would depend on the mental mechanism that

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9   PRINZ, J., op. cit., p. 60.
10   Ibid., p. 64-66.
11   DRETSKE, F. *Explaining Behaviour:* Reasons in a World of Causes. Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1988; MILLIKAN, R. *White Queen Psychology and Other Essays for Alice.* Cambridge: MIT Press, 1995.
12   PRINZ, J., op. cit., p. 65.
13   GOODMAN, R. *Wittgenstein and William James.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, p. 61.

generated the pattern. Nevertheless, it is not my purpose to outline in detail the solution to both problems detected by Prinz in the James-Lange theory of emotions, but my purpose is to show that his interest is reworking certain aspects of this theory so that it can appear as entirely non-cognitivist. My hypothesis is that this commitment to rehabilitate James's theory makes Jesse Prinz subject (regardless of being successful in his venture) to the same criticisms that Wittgenstein expressed about James.

2   Wittgenstein's Expressivism in *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology*

The notes Wittgenstein composed during the years of 1946-1948, compiled and published in two volumes under the title *Remarks on Philosophy of Psychology*, admittedly attest that Wittgenstein felt very encouraged by the James's theory, particularly by the emphasis on expressive behaviors. Most of his criticisms, however, intended to show that James had confused the logical connection between emotions and sensations (studied by the philosopher) with the empirical connection between emotions and sensations (object of study of science). The references to *Principles of Psychology* are quite numerous and appear in several works by Wittgenstein.[14]

In an important passage from a manuscript dating from the early 1930's, Wittgenstein says:

> How necessary is the work of philosophy is shown by the psychology of James. Psychology, he says, is a science, but James hardly discusses scientific issues. His movements are mere attempts to extricate himself of the webs of metaphysics in which he is stuck. He still cannot walk or fly, but only move. Not that it is not interesting. Just is not a scientific activity.[15]

This passage gives us an interesting diagnosis of what Wittgenstein thought about James's approach regarding the nature of emotions. What James does, Wittgenstein says, is not "science," but something closer to philosophy. Moreover, as a philosophical position, it should take into account some important features regarding the use of psychological or emotional terms, especially about addressing the problem of so-called

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[14] At least in the *Philosophical Grammar*, in the *Brown Book*, in the two volumes of *Remarks on Philosophy of Psychology*, in the *Last Writings on the Philosophy of Psychology* and in the *Philosophical Investigations*.

[15] HILMY, S. *The Later Wittgenstein*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987, apud GOODMAN, R., op. cit., p. 63.

"privacy" of the internal or mental phenomena. In other words, a first objection to James's theory is that it is committed to a mistaken view about the access to the "subjective mental states." Indeed, James seems to endorse the description-expression dichotomy, where these categories are self-exclusive. As we shall see in the next section, there are strong reasons to believe that James's error was to assume a descriptivist position about the internal processes that completely exclude the possibility of considering the expressiveness of mental states.

Considerations about the nature of the mind as if it were an "inner world" to which only the owner has access are commonly found in philosophical literature. Now, if only the "possessor" may have a given experience, it seems plausible that only he or she can know that experience, and thus someone else would logically be prevented from having the same experience or taking "a peek into other people's minds."[16] The private ownership of the experience, however, is an illusion. The "epistemic privacy," as Peter Hacker says, "is equally illusory, but there are various props that keeps it standing, and each of these deceiver pillars must be removed."[17] However, the access to "subjective mental states" is different from the access to common sensory data, such as when we have sensory access to an apple, for example. In addition, there are deep differences between the grammatical usage of psychological verbs in the first and the third persons that James seems not to have noticed.

> Psychological verbs are characterized by the fact that the third person of the present is to be identified by observation, the first person not. Sentences in third person of the present: information. In the first person present, expression. (Not quite right).[18]

It is possible to argue, therefore, that James's mistake was to think that we can (perceptually) observe the evolution of our pains (or fluctuation of our emotions), when in fact we can only report the way we feel. It follows that it is impossible for someone to state something like "He feels terrible pains, but unfortunately he is not aware of them" or "I feel terrible pains, but as I am not aware of them, it is very yummy feel them."[19] According to Wittgenstein, emotions are conceptually distinct from "sensations" and "emotional dispositions" and can be divided into two groups: "direct emotions" (with object) e "indirect emotions" (without object),

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[16] NEVES FILHO, E. *O Paradoxo de Moore:* uma análise de diferentes soluções. Pelotas: Edufpel, 2012.

[17] HACKER, P. *Wittgenstein:* On Human Nature. New York: Routledge, 1999, p 10-14.

[18] WITTGENSTEIN, L. *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology.* Oxford: Basil Blackwell, Vol. II, 1991, § 63.

[19] GOODMAN, R. *Wittgenstein and William James.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

the common criteria being "genuine duration," "typical course," and "typical behaviors" (crying when you are sad, for example).[20] Emotional concepts applied in the first person singular do not tell anything about the external world. Psychological words aim to report how we feel about something.

The central idea is that subjective mental states are intersubjectively accessible *in most cases* by observing the characteristic expressive behavior. That is, we can have some access to emotional states of others from the way they behave and from the use of psychological terms that replace "primitive natural expressions." This point is directly related to the idea that, when it comes to "psychological verbs" in the third person, "we have information," and therefore verification (i.e., they can be verified by facts), but when it comes to "psychological verbs" in the first person "we have expression,"[21] and therefore no verification, but adequacy to habitual behaviors. In this sense, Wittgenstein seems to be closer to traditional expressivism, since he emphasizes the non-informative expressiveness of mental states.

In the *Philosophical Investigations*, however, Wittgenstein is especially clear about what he thought about the linguistic private possession of experiences or internal sensations:

> A human being can encourage himself, give himself orders, obey, blame and punish himself; he can ask himself a question and answer it [...]. But is it also conceivable that there be language in which a person could write down or give voice to his inner experiences, his feelings, moods, and so on a for his own use? – Well, can't we do so in our ordinary language? – But that is not what I mean. The words of this language are to refer to what only the speaker can know – to his immediate private sensations. Therefore, another person cannot understand the language.[22]

A private language would be what a speaker has and only he or she can have. However, if the psychological terms do not "describe" internal emotional states (in most cases) in the same way that we describe "an apple," then it would be a mistake to think that a philosophical approach (which is descriptive, and not explanatory) could explain any essential feature of emotions. James's misconception would be caught up in a common mistake of philosophers: "describe all internal events in the same way that science often describe external objects, or even, to think that emotional states can be analyzed atomically. The correct way of thinking that would be paying attention to expressive behaviors. As Schulte says, "there is something that can be regarded as mediating between the

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[20] WITTGENSTEIN, L. *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology*, § 63.
[21] Idem, *Zettel*, London: Basil Blackwell, 1967, § 472.
[22] Idem, *Philosophical Investigations*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 2009, § 243.

subjective and the objective, between the inner and the outer, namely our typical expressive behavior."[23]

The typical expressive behaviors, according to Wittgenstein, are logically (or conceptually, grammatically, but not physically) connected to certain emotions. This might suggest that Wittgenstein was mistakenly advocating here for some kind of cognitivism about emotions. However, one must note that the conceptual element claimed by Wittgenstein applies only to the relationship between a characteristic expressive behavior and an emotion. There is no problem in considering emotions as fundamentally natural, or even in response to stimuli or bodily changes. The problem is the grammatical illusions to which we are subject when supposedly "describing" these phenomena.

One of the most famous passages of Wittgenstein's work regarding the description-expression dichotomy is the comparison of "a cry of fear" with a statement in the first person such as "I'm scared." This important passage of the *Philosophical Investigations* is responsible, according to David Macarthur,[24] for leading a number of influential commentators to consider the Austrian philosopher as an expressivist along traditional lines. The misconception of these commentators is, as we shall see, not taking into consideration the fact that traditional expressivism ends up endorsing some of the assumptions of his main opponent, descriptivism. Moreover, in the second part of the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein explicitly defends the wide variety of uses of psychological terms in language games, something that both expressivists and descriptivists would be unwilling to endorse.

On the other hand, we can consider this particular way of conceiving of the use of psychological verbs as a kind of naturalism. Contemporary philosophers generally agree that there are at least two kinds of naturalism – reductive and the non-reductive. Wittgensteinian philosophers, such José Medina (2004)[25], are convinced that there is in *On Certainty* a very promising form of non-reductive naturalism that is heavily focused on the social. Medina has argued that social naturalism (inspired by the idea of "second nature") has several advantages over other kinds of naturalism (such as Quine's, for example). The main advantage, Medina argues, is precisely the fact that social naturalism is based on a kind of *methodological pluralism*, rather than

[23] SCHULTE, J. *Experience and Expression:* Wittgenstein's Philosophy of Psychology. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995, p. 36.

[24] MACARTHUR, D. "Wittgenstein and Expressivism". In: WHITING, D. (Ed.). *The Later Wittgenstein on Language*. London: Palgrave, 2009, p. 81-95.

[25] MEDINA, J. "Wittgenstein's Social Naturalism: The Idea of 'Second Nature' after the *Philosophical Investigations*". In: MOYAL-SHARROCK, D. (Ed.). *The Third Wittgenstein*. New York: Ashgate, 2004, p. 79-92.

a *methodological monism* derived from the positivist thesis of the unity of science.

> The philosophy of the later Wittgenstein has inspired a naturalism that avoids the pitfalls of reductionism. The later Wittgenstein rejects the idea that there is a single method, or set of rules, that defines the study of human behaviour, thus advocating a methodological pluralism. He argues that our rule-following practices constitute a sui generis domain that is not reducible to causal regularities.[26]

An interesting aspect of "Wittgenstein's social naturalism" about the use of "psychological verbs" is the fact that the concepts seem to be inextricably linked to the phenomena – they "emerge," so to speak, from our forms of life and are expressed in our language-games.[27] This is especially clear in the famous passage of the *Philosophical Investigations*: "What we are supplying are really remarks on the natural history of human beings, not curiosities, however, but facts that no one has doubted which have escaped notice only because they are always before our eyes."[28]

My suspicion is that it seems possible to show that Wittgenstein also endorses a kind of naturalism in the *Philosophical Investigations*, especially when he discusses the biological roots of our concepts and the crucial role played by the laws of nature. Many concepts depend on the laws of nature. What would be the concept of "weight," Wittgenstein asks, if the mass of the objects was inexplicably variable? The distinctive peculiarity of Wittgenstein's approach is the assertion that philosophy should not attempt to explain the formation of the concepts by facts of nature, but instead, philosophy should seek to emphasize the very "contingency of our concepts."[29]

Concepts are as "human tools" naturally developed within culture itself. The rules of language arise in the use of language, and not before it. The concepts are "rules" that express their own logic of articulation and license, so to speak, the necessary connections between them. While for James and Prinz everything is reducible to experience, for Wittgenstein, human life is inextricably linked to concepts, meanings and rules, or, to use one of Wittgenstein's favorite words, human life is inextricably attached to a "grammar." It is in this sense that grammar seems to determine "the kind of thing that some object is." Therefore,

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[26] MEDINA, J. "Wittgenstein's Social Naturalism: The Idea of 'Second Nature' after the *Philosophical Investigations*". In: MOYAL-SHARROCK, D. (Ed.). *The Third Wittgenstein*. New York: Ashgate, 2004, p. 81.

[27] Medina also tries to show that, in his later writings, Wittgenstein sketches a provocative kind of social naturalism with his remarks on 'natural history'. See ibid., p. 80.

[28] WITTGENSTEIN, L. *Philosophical Investigations*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 2009, § 415.

[29] Ibid., p. 221.

in a genuine philosophical research on emotions, we should focus on the inferential articulation of our concepts, that is, in what may or not "count" conceptually as an emotion.

3   A New Kind of Expressivism?

The psychological terms used to denote feelings and emotions are connected with what Wittgenstein called "characteristic expressive behavior," including facial expressions. As we said before, the psychological terms replace "primitive natural expressions." The term "natural expressions," however, appears in a key context of the *Philosophical Investigations*:

> Now, what about the language that describes my inner experiences and which only I myself can understand? How do I use words to stand for my sensations? – As we ordinarily do? Then are my words for sensations tied up with my natural expressions of sensation? In that case, my language is not a 'private' one. Someone else might understand it as well as I. – But suppose I didn't have any natural expression for the sensation, but only had the sensation? Now I simply associate names with sensations and use these names in descriptions.[30]

The idea is that in public language (the language that we all understand), words used to describe sensations (pains, tickles, colors, etc.) are connected with "natural expressions of sensations." Such expressions are, obviously, bodily expressions, like groans and grimaces of pain, for example. The nature of the connection between words and expressive behavior is indicated by how we learn such expressions through training or by the acquisition of primitive language. A mother, for example, knows when her child feels pain – and she is able to convey the use of the word "pain" – when the child points to one of his or her members when the mother asks "where does it hurt?" It seems obvious that the child learns to use the word "pain" in these and numerous other similar situations.

In this sense, the practices of the linguistic community, linked to natural expressions of pain, function as the background that ensures (licenses) that the word "pain" will play the role for which it was designed. Therefore, psychological and expressive terms such "pain," function as substitutes for "expressions of primitive and natural feelings." Psychological terms, as substitutes for natural expressions, acquire a new form of "expressive behavior," that is, they form what we call "second nature." The term "pain" acquires a new form of "pain behavior." This

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[30]   WITTGENSTEIN, L. *Philosophical Investigations*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 2009, § 256.

way of thinking about language does not imply the idea that "pain" signifies "cry," as James thought. The verbal expression of pain replaces the crying, but does not describe it.[31]

Of course, this could suggest that Wittgenstein is endorsing the *descriptivist fallacy*, according to which words show a uniform usage. However, this is certainly not the case, since, instead of considering the terms "description" and "expression" as mutually exclusive, Wittgenstein says, in the *Philosophical Investigations*, that they are members of the same inferential network.

Traditional expressivism often argues that some sentences that superficially appear as *descriptions* are actually *expressions*. Expressions have two basic characteristics: (1) the target-sentences are lacking in truth-values and (2) the target-sentences "express," but do not "describe," mental states or processes. David Macarthur, however, draws attention to the fact that Wittgenstein does not *identify* the sentence "I'm scared" with a cry of fear, but rather *compares* the description of the mental state with a cry of fear. The suggestion is that sometimes this kind of "speech act" is closer to a scream (an expression) and sometimes it (the act) is far from a cry (a description).

> If I tell you "I have been afraid of his arrival all day long" – I could, after all, go into detail: Immediately upon awakening I thought... Then I considered.... Time and again I looked out of the window, etc., etc. This could be called a report about fear. But if I then said to somebody, "I am afraid..." – would that be as it were a groan of fear, or an observation about my condition? – It could be either one, or the other: It might simply be a groan of fear; but I might also want to report to someone else how I have been spending the day. And if I were now to say to him: "I have spent the whole day in fear (here details might be added) and now too I am full of anxiety" – what are we to say about this mixture of report and statement? Well what should we say other than that, here we have the use of the word "fear" in front of us?[32]

The general idea seems to be that, instead of assuming the traditional description-expression dichotomy, where "being a description" naturally excludes "being an expression," Wittgenstein would have sought to show (in the second volume of *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology*, but more evidently in the *Philosophical Investigations*) that the error lies in trying to impose crystal clear grammatical limits to each of these expressions. According to Macarthur, the correct way of conceiving of

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[31] WITTGENSTEIN, L. *Philosophical Investigations*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 2009, § 244.
[32] Idem, *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1989, Vol. II, § 156.

Wittgenstein's treatment of psychological terms is through a line ranging from a spontaneous response to a given situation (a cry of fear) to the highly specialized response that can be evaluated in terms of truth-values (a sentence like "I'm scared").

This suggests that some uses of sentences with psychological verbs in the first person sometimes function as expressions and sometimes function as descriptions. It is likely that everyone agrees that a cry of terror in the night is not a description of a mental state, but a spontaneous behavior whose purpose is to express the feeling of fear. However, it seems more difficult to reach a consensus about the equivocal uses of a sentence such as "I'm scared." What corroborates Macarthur's exegesis is precisely the idea that the sentence "I'm scared" does not always work as a description, but, in some occasions, has a content that can be evaluated in terms of truth or falsity and therefore can function as a description of somebody's mental state.

The error consists of not perceiving that in some cases the sentence "I'm scared" is used as a description of a mental state, and that, therefore, we are tempted to assume that it is always used as a description. When we are deceived by the surface grammar of psychological terms, we are subject to endorse, therefore, the descriptivist fallacy (the mistake of thinking that the term "description" has a uniform usage). According to Wittgenstein, when I use the sentence "I'm scared," I can be simply expressing my fear through a linguistic form of behavior, which can be evaluated in terms of truth or falsity. But I can also express my fear through something similar to an "Ouch!," which cannot be evaluated in terms of truth or falsity.

Macarthur's aim, then, is to show that Wittgenstein conceives of the intersubjective transmission of mental states in both modes: the descriptive mode and the expressive mode. Nevertheless, in normal cases, where a sentence like "I have a headache" is used without any process of reflection and self-observation, a mental state is being expressed and, therefore, this is not a genuine description.[33] In other words, the reports of my mental states have an *assertoric* dimension and an *expressive* dimension. On the far side of the scream (the assertoric dimension), it is possible to show that certain expressions of mental states function as descriptions.

Suppose that John is part of a group of climbers and that at some point, with the proximity of the most dangerous part of the climb, the leader, worried about the safety of the group, asks "How are you feeling?" In this case, if John replies "I'm scared," then the expression of his mental

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[33] CHILD, W. *Wittgenstein*. Porto Alegre: Artmed, 2013, p. 178.

state functions as a description, because the objective is to communicate to the leader how he is feeling with the proximity of the most dangerous section of the climb. In this example offered by David Macarthur, John's answer is more distant from the cry of fear. This is what Wittgenstein claimed to be the "difference of purpose" between the expression of fear "I'm scared!" and the description of fear "I'm scared."[34]

From a strictly Wittgensteinian point of view, the expressivist would be correct when he considers that the surface grammar of statements like "I'm scared" tends to lead us to the mistake of thinking that they always function as a description. However, the expressivist error is to assume that this kind of statement never functions as a description. By doing so, the expressivist is overlooking the deep grammar of the psychological terms and, therefore, tends to lose sight of the wide variety of uses that determine the meaning of certain expressions. According to Macarthur, the traditional expressivist seems to assume the dogma that to "be able to have a truth-value is equivalent to be a description, such that lose the descriptive functionality is to lose the possibility to have a truth value."

Wittgenstein's position in the *Philosophical Investigations*, therefore, is slightly different from the traditional expressivist position because (i) it assumes that the description-expression dichotomy is inadequate and (ii) it assumes that a mental state can be described, even though in very specific contexts. It is obvious that, to assume that the expression of mental states always works in the same way (in the same way that expressions with no truth-value such as "Ouch" or "Aargh!" work) is to ignore the logical and grammatical differences between them and the limiting cases (non-declaratives) like the scream of fear. Therefore, Wittgenstein cannot be regarded as a traditional expressivist, since, although he recognizes the expressive dimension of statements about mental states, the traditional expressivist does not recognize the assertoric dimension of these expressions and ignores the descriptive employment of mental states. The traditional expressivist sees as a difference in kind what is actually just a difference in degree[35].

Therefore, it is possible to show that Wittgenstein was not an expressivist in the traditional mold. However, this does not mean that Wittgenstein's stance is not expressivist in another sense. Expressions continue to have two basic characteristics: (1) some manifestations are lacking in truth-values and (2) some manifestations "express," but do not "describe" mental states or processes. Provided that expressivism is also a kind of naturalism, it seems possible to show that Wittgenstein

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[34] WITTGENSTEIN, L. *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology*, § 735.
[35] Ibid., § 737.

endorses a kind of naturalism (as suggested by Medina) about the use of psychological terms and how they are incorporated by replacing natural expressions (primitive behaviors) with language sentences.

Given the preliminary discussion, we can now turn to consider the position of James and Prinz about the use of psychological terms. In Wittgenstein's perspective (in the last writings), James's, and consequently also Prinz's, error was thinking that all "inner experiences" can be "described," because in fact *some* are immediately "expressed" by psychological terms that replace "primitive or natural behaviors." Instead of "crying" because he or she "feels pain," an adult and competent user of language simply says "I feel pain," even though crying and pain are obviously physiological in nature. That is why, in cases of pain, our "language-game" is an *extension* of a primitive behavior (it is an instinct)[36]. Therefore, emotions are not artificial devices for others to know our emotional states, but rather, emotions are natural devices.

The centrality of Wittgenstein's approach in the various uses of psychological terms leads us to recognize the impossibility of developing a theory of psychological concepts, since it would always remain incomplete. However, the "logical" or "grammar" sense of Wittgenstein's research (in contrast to the empirical sense of James's research) can be seen in the fact that "pain" is not a mere behavior or expression of pain – because there are significant differences between "feeling a pain" and "pretending to feel a pain." Nevertheless, pain remains connected to its expression, grammatically or logically. Here is an important difference: Wittgenstein's purpose is to investigate the logical or grammatical connections between expressive behaviors and psychological terms used to denote emotions. The interest of James and Prinz is to investigate the physical connections between expressive behaviors and emotions.

The grammatical meaning of Wittgenstein's research marks a major methodological difference in relation to James's work. Indeed, the typical behaviors expressive of grief, such as "hiccups," "chest tightness," "tears," etc., are actually "criteria" of grief, but "grief" itself is not composed of such feelings or sensations, as James had asserted. This is what allows us to say that "hope," for example, is not the sum of different sensations. A person who feels "depression" has not depressive feelings in parts of his or her body, although some expressive behaviors typical of depression are quite apparent. This means that depression (and the same goes for hope) is not the kind of thing that could be strictly localized in the same way that a knee pain is located in the knee[37]. The aim is

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[36] WITTGENSTEIN, L. *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology*, § 151.
[37] Ibid., §§ 438, 448, 449, 451.

to show what can be considered as an emotion or as a sensation. This aim, however, seems to be the same one found in the *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology* and in the *Philosophical Investigations*.

"Crying" is a criterion of sadness, but it is not a necessary or sufficient condition for sadness (someone can cry and not be sad or not be sad and cry). However, "crying" is logically associated with sadness, because the concept of "sadness" is necessary in contexts that include our natural propensity to cry in unfortunate situations. Bodily sensations are taken (grammatically) as criteria and not as parts that make up sadness. Prinz's difficulty (as a self-proclaimed heir to James) is linked to the fact that he confounds the conceptual aspects of emotions (from a purely philosophical point of view) with the physical aspects (from a scientific point of view). That is, when he takes a peculiar methodological monism (a peculiar kind of naturalism), he seems to be committed to a misconception about emotions.

If Wittgenstein is correct, Prinz's misconception lies precisely in thinking that expressive behaviors are necessary and sufficient to determine or identify an emotion. In Wittgenstein's perspective, expressive behaviors are criteria, but not necessary or sufficient conditions. Moreover, if Prinz intends to advocate for a kind of non-cognitivism to support the idea that emotional responses vary from culture to culture, so it does not seem necessary to endorse a kind of reductionist naturalism. Apparently "Wittgenstein's Social Naturalism" could serve equally well for this purpose, since a significant portion of the uses of psychological terms is entirely non-cognitivist.

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Endereço postal:
Juliano Santos do Carmo
Departamento de Filosofia
Universidade Federal de Pelotas
Rua Gomes Carneiro, 1 – Centro
96010-610 Pelotas, RS, Brasil