

## **Logical Investigations 1.1 : "Essential Distinctions"**

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**GOAL:** In this chapter, Husserl develops a philosophy of language along two poles: a). expression of b). sense as object-intention. The function of language is conceived as oriented to the speaking subject for whom linguistic signs express subjectively constituted sense. Because of this focus on the expressive speaker, Husserl will privilege univocal representational signs which do not interfere with, but merely and clearly document subjectively constituted sense. In this scheme, the essence of meaning or good sense becomes the essence of the name: the intentional pointing to an object able to be intuitively presented in fulfillment.

**STRUCTURE:** One can distinguish five sections to the chapter. Husserl first functionally distinguishes within "sign" between "indication" and "expression" (1), then after a brief consideration of indication (2-4), moves to define expression as meaningful sign (5). The process of isolating the essence of expression involves bracketing any indicative-communicative function between persons and concentrating on internal monologue (6-8). Once this realm has been reached Husserl can develop a long series of distinctions necessary for precision in his theory of meaning (9-16).

**NARRATIVE:** Indications [*Anzeichen*] are signs [*Zeichen*] which motivate, not cause, a thinking subject to move from belief in one state of affairs to belief in another (2). Indications are blind motives or hints [*Hinweisen*], as opposed to the insightful inferences of demonstrations [*Beweisen*] (3). They function by association, a felt connection of states of consciousness that turns mere co-existence into mutual pertinence; association is creative of unity: "all empirical unity: thing, event, relation" (4). Indication is at work in communication: words taken as physical signs indicate [*anzeigen*] the presence in another person of sense-giving acts. In Husserl's terminology (7) words function indicatively when they intimate [*Kundgabe*] to another who receives [*Kundnahme*].

Expressions [*Ausdrucke*], on the other hand, are meaningful signs [*bedeutsamen Zeichen*]; this preliminary definition excludes gestures, which are meaningful only in the wide sense in which they are interpreted by others as indications (5). An analysis of names allows Husserl to refine the usual distinction between physical sign and mental event into a three-fold structure of meaningful signs: a) manifestation of mental states; b) meaning (sense or content); c) object meant (6). An important question is whether or not Husserl choice of naming as his point of departure doesn't set up his determination of the essence of language as object-presentation. In "solitary life" or inner monologue expression can be essentially, *de jure*, isolated from its *de facto* interweaving with indication in communication. Husserl first shows that an expression as sign directs attention away from itself and points to [*hinzeigen*] the sense expressed in meaning-intention. Such pointing is not indicative pointing [*anzeigen*], because our use of imagined, non-existent words in inner monologue entails no indicative belief in existence. Indication is useless in inner monologue because of the self-identity of consciousness in its temporal form, which Husserl will later in his career call the "living present." This self-identity is evoked in the last two sentences of #8: "In a monologue words can perform no function of indicating the existence of mental acts, since such indication would there be quite purposeless. For the acts in question are themselves experienced by us at that very moment."

Husserl now embarks on a long series of important distinctions. The first (9-10) is between meaning-intention and meaning-fulfillment. The very concept of an empty meaning-intention, one that could be disappointed, entails that an actual meaning-fulfilling presentation of an object is never essential to meaning. Nonetheless, Husserl seems to allow the *telos* of possible fulfillment to dictate the *eidos* of meaning, whereby good sense is preformation of sense to allow the presentation of an object. Next (11) Husserl defines ideal objectivity as indefinite repeatability with no reference to the actual existence of mental acts. However, this is no Platonism,

for Husserl always insists on identity in difference, the constitution of such ideal objectivities in subjectivity as the identical point intended by numerous acts either intra-subjectively or inter-subjectively. In #12-14 Husserl further refines the notion of intentional correlate, distinguishing by means of a type of linguistic analysis, various combinations of expression, meaning, and object. Finally in #15 Husserl distinguishes various senses of "senseless," "meaningless," and "objectless." The key is that a meaningful expression constitutes a relation to an object; because of this preformation of sense we slide toward a position in which expression seems to get its meaning from the telos of fulfillment rather than from pure meaning-intention.