

Chapter I
Introduction
Word-World Relationship: A Fundamental Problem
In
Philosophy of Language

Man's preoccupation with language has had a long history. Language matters to philosophers as it does to the poet, the novelist, the linguist, the grammarian and others interested in language. Yet the philosopher's concern with language goes to a basic level. Philosophers have been concerned with the mysticism enshrined in language, and baffled by it. Now, poets and mystics may also be baffled by the workings of language. What, however, marks out the philosopher's distinctive approach to language is that he seeks his way out of the mystery, and attempt to arrive at an understanding of language, its nature and function. Hence, the philosopher's problem at the basic level is not how we form a well-formed formula, but the singularly surprising phenomenon of what renders a licit concatenation of signs express meaning. How is it that the employment of a well-formed sentence means such and such a state of affairs; how to read off from another sentence, even in advance *what will make it true*; how is it possible for the 'mere signs' of language to be intentional, that is, for a name to reach up to the very object itself of which the name is the name and for a sentence, to a state of affairs? These questions were raised by Plato himself but these are vigorously discussed in the analytical tradition, be it conceptual analysis or analysis of language which goes by the name 'linguistic philosophy'.

Let us digress for a while to clarify these notions. Conceptual analysis, instead of words, or without looking at words attends to concepts or universals which words signify; the reason could be that words are inadequate to express concepts. Language analysis or linguistic philosophy has been broadly classified into ideal language philosophy and the ordinary language philosophy. The ideal language is an improved language free from the vicissitudes of ordinary, common sense language. The formulation of ideal language as the ‘logical syntax’ of ordinary sentences, i.e. a logically correct language, was initiated by Rudolf Carnap in *The Logical Syntax of Language*.¹ Ordinary language philosophy, on the other hand, claims that ordinary language with its historic-grammatical syntax is well-equipped to analyse typical philosophical problems of knowledge, being, object, other mind, and so on. For both types of linguistic philosophy, it has been said that “... the only difference between Ideal Language Philosophers and Ordinary Language Philosophers is a disagreement about which language is Ideal.”² Such a characterization of linguistic philosophy is also made by Gustav Bergmann³ in the following passage:

All linguistic philosophers talk about the world by means of talking about a suitable language. This is the linguistic turn, the fundamental gambit as to method, on which ordinary and ideal language philosophers (OLP, ILP) agree. Equally fundamentally, they disagree on what is in this sense a “language” and what makes it “suitable”.

One thing more to be clarified is that the three studies (1) Philosophy of Language, (2) Linguistic Philosophy and (3) Analytic Philosophy are three overlapping philosophical methods. A full account of their checkered career is beyond our present purpose. We simply note that despite subtle distinctions between them they are used interchangeably, and we also propose to so use them whenever the occasion arises.

The purpose of making the digression is that it lays bare the linguistic orientation of philosophy or the linguistic turn which has been the corner stone of analytic philosophy. This linguistic orientation is basically the search for the root of our understanding of word-world relationship.

Since our present concern is the word-world relationship, let us make an attempt to concentrate on the two very important elements in man's experiential framework – language and reality. Language, broadly speaking, stands for any system of signs, verbal and non-verbal. It is defined as an abstract system of symbols and their modes of combination. To put it in more concrete terms, language is the medium of human communication that people use to express thought, emotions, attitudes, etc. Viewed in this way, language is basically a set of words (vocabulary), used following a set of rules and conventions. 'Reality' is a heavily loaded word. 'Reality' is often used to mean that which is the ultimate substratum, the ultimate cause or the essence of the phenomena. Absolute, Brahman, any eternal being, God signify 'reality' in this sense. 'Reality' also means the phenomenal, changing world where we live, move and have our being. Accordingly, which view of reality one subscribes to will determine how he will formulate the language-reality or the word-world relationship.

The present problem of word-world relationship has been variously discussed in the yester years under the rubric of thought and reality, or language and reality, the idea being that language encodes thought or thought is enshrined in language. The relationship between the two sides is by no means straightforward as it appears to be. There are, on the one hand, philosophers who have planted high hopes in the powers of language, its magic; there are, on the other, many philosophers who are skeptical about the nature and working of language in relation to reality. Perhaps the earliest manifestation of the skepticism is found in Plato's *Gorgias*: Being *is*. It never becomes. It is inapprehensible and unknowable by man down earth. Even when it is knowable it is but incommunicable. Elsewhere, also, Plato condemned language as incapable of expressing those things which reason has contemplated. Less strong statements about the inability of language to read reality are made by Henri Bergson and A.N. Whitehead. Reality for Bergson is a creative force charged with becoming or continuity.⁴ Language is not molded on reality. It is designed for the practical purpose of manipulating reality. It cannot manipulate without turning the duration into static states. The remedy, therefore, is to give up language, and settle for some form of intuition.⁵ A closely related view is maintained by Professor Whitehead in his *Process and Reality*.⁶ Like Bergson he too believed that language is not molded on reality. He thinks that language has been affected by the subject-predicate analysis of proposition in Aristotelian logic and as such turns even a changing process into a substance. He, of course, did not write off the power of language to read reality. To be more adequate, he thinks, language should be redesigned. In his words, "Philosophy must redesign language in the way that in the physical science pre-existing

physical appliances are redesigned.”⁷ In the present context, by reality we understand the world which we inhabit with others and in which we act in relation to others. The ‘others’ includes not only other human beings but also animals and things.

Any talk of relationship presupposes a gap, a distance between the terms to be related and hence, the attempts to cross over the gap, the distance. In case of language and reality, to bridge the gap does not mean obliterating the space between language and the world. Arthur Danto in his *Analytical Philosophy of Knowledge*⁸ has spoken of a space of an extra-worldly sort between language and the world. The world is an external world only in the respect that relations between the world and description of the world are not intra-worldly. They are not bits of the world.⁹ Danto further says that the ‘Essential separation of language from the world’ has created the structure of philosophical skepticism. And philosophers have sought to close off this gap in their battle against skepticism.¹⁰ Danto refers to J.L. Austin in this connection who, in spite of his stress on performatives in his discussion of language and anti-descriptive stance, holds that “There must be something other than the words, which the words are to be used to communicate about: this may be called the world. There is no reason why the world should not include the words, in every sense except the sense of the actual statement itself which on any particular occasion is being made about the world.”¹¹

There are, of course, naturalistic analyses of language. As such language is a phenomenon for linguists, a subject matter for a science. It is a subject matter of philosophy in so far as it is *not* in the world. The semantical questions about language like truth, reference, meaning, have developed because there is a world to know, to refer to, a world meant or

about which truth claims are made. The bifurcation of language and reality (world) is the basic presupposition for a philosophy of language.

What demands philosophical elucidation is the language-world relationship. The relationship is worth-studying. Ontologically, language and the world are different. There is hardly any semblance between the word 'chair' and the piece of furniture over there. There is nothing in language that makes it somehow normatively relate to something that is essentially foreign to it. Yet language is about the world. It describes, interprets, articulates the nature of different items of the world, and in whatever degree this relationship is achieved is the result of an attempt to bridge the distance between the two. The question then is of wording our world.

Language is defined as an abstract system of symbols and the rules of their combination; in other words, language consists of vocabulary and grammar. What is important for our purpose is that we learn a language and use it. What we acquire in learning a language is both a concrete body of repertoire and a kind of virtual embodiment through which one 'moves' through one's verbally articulated circumstances with ease. The language one acquires is thus not only a determinate formal structure but a practical mastery of discursive practices situated in their publicly accessible surroundings. It matters both that we inhabit a world to which we reach out through our words, a 'wordy world' and live a verbally expressive life on the one hand; on the other, the talk that goes on around us is an integral part of the world we inhabit.

It has been realized long before by Western philosophers that the problems of truth and meaning lie at the core of understanding the relation between language and the world. Meaning, one might say,

emerges right from the beginning of our encounter with the world. That is why as we reach for suitable metaphors, it is more appropriate to talk of the world as the background or the setting for the particular things we say. Our words are set against, and not over against a world which is what it is in virtue of practices – linguistic ones included – whereby things stand out and take on their identities.

Wittgenstein begins *The Blue Book* by asking the question, “What is the meaning of a word?”¹² In William Alston’s formulation the question is, “What are we saying about a linguistic expression when we specify its meaning?”¹³ John Searle opens his book *Speech Acts* with the question: “How do words relate to the world?”¹⁴ All such questions centre round the theme of relationship between language and the world. The talk of relation arises when there is a distance or difference. The difference is due to the fact that what is non-linguistic is said to be known by language. Language is seldom self-referential. It is used to talk, refer, indicate or mean, etc., objects or states-of-affairs transcending it.

II

Any theory of meaning is an attempt at making sense of the word-world relationship. Different theories of truth are also the products of a search for this relationship. Since the truth of a proposition is parasitical upon its relation with the reality, the theories of truth like correspondence, coherence and pragmatic, emerged. We shall begin with the theories of truth.

According to the correspondence theory of truth a proposition is true if it corresponds with a fact and false if it does not. For example, if a person says “My pen is red” and if it is a fact that his pen is red then his statement is true because it corresponds with the fact. However, there is no correspondence between the proposition and state of affairs in the sense of resemblance or copying. What is meant by “correspondence” is that the state of affairs which is expressed in the proposition is what is the case or an actual state of affairs. In other words, a proposition if it is to be true there must be something other than the proposition, something to which it corresponds, and this something is the fact or the actual state of affairs and not a fiction or fantasy. Truth is a relation between a proposition and something which is not a proposition, i.e., a state of affairs.

A certain picture of our relationship to the world is intuitively appealing. According to this picture, the world is a mind-independent structure; it consists of objects whose existence, character, and relations are fixed independently of what we happen to say, believe, or desire. We, in turn, respond to that world by forming beliefs and making statements about it. These beliefs and statements are assertoric; they make claims about the world, saying that things are this way or that. Since beliefs and statements are in this way assertoric, each is determinately true or false; and on this picture, truth involves a certain kind of fit or match between a belief/ statement and the world it is about. If the belief/ statement gets the world right, if things are as the belief/statement asserts them to be then the belief/ statement is true; otherwise it is false. So truth is correspondence with a mind-independent world; whereas falsehood is failure of correspondence.

The ideas making up this picture are intuitively attractive. Together they constitute something like the traditional picture of our relationship to the world. Virtually every major thinker in the ancient, medieval, and early modern periods endorsed the themes making up the picture. Indeed, the picture provided something like the framework within which traditional philosophical inquiry took place.

The correspondence theory of truth gives a realist notion of truth. The theory has received a sophisticated form in the hands of Alfred Tarski. Tarski argued roughly that “S” is true if and only if S. To use a concrete example, “Snow is white” if and only if snow is white. In this famous example, “‘Snow is white’ is true” will come out as equivalent to “Snow is white”. What this procedure does is to define ‘true’ so that saying that a statement is true is equivalent to assenting to the statement; truth, as defined by Tarski, is not a property of a statement at all, but a syncategorematic notion which enables us to ‘assent semantically’, i.e., to talk about sentences instead of objects. However, what makes Tarski’s theory a version of the correspondence theory is that the truth of an utterance depends on just two things; what the words as spoken mean, and how the world is arranged. There is no need to refer to a conceptual scheme, a way of viewing things, a perspective. “Two interpreters, as unlike in culture, language and point of view as you please, can disagree over whether an utterance is true, but only if they differ *on how things are in the world* they share, or what the utterance means.”¹⁵

The coherence theory of truth is the one we have from absolutistic idealism and it is intimately connected with the idealism of Hegel and Bradley. But some of the neo-positivists like Hempel also accept coherence as the nature and test of truth also defending a coherence

theory of justification/knowledge. . According to this theory, to say that a proposition p (idealists usually call it a judgement), is true or false is to say that it coheres or fails to cohere with a system of other propositions. Coherence of propositions with one another constitutes the truth of the proposition. "Coherence is a relation among propositions and not a relation between a proposition and something else (a state of affairs) which is not a proposition."¹⁶ The truth of a proposition is said to consist, not in the fact that the proposition "corresponds" with something which is not itself a proposition, but in the fact that it fits consistently into a certain more general system of proposition.

The main tenet of the coherence theory is that we can speak of truth or falsity of a proposition with reference to the system of propositions or group of propositions that constitute a body of knowledge. A proposition by itself, completely isolated from other propositions, can neither be true nor false. A group of propositions is called a system when there is a relation of implication among such propositions and the propositions are mutually consistent, supporting each other. It thus defines truth as a matter of systematic consistency of beliefs or propositions. Pure mathematics is the paradigm case of a system of propositions. According to the coherence theory, the proposition "All material bodies gravitate" is true because it is coherent with the system of propositions, constituting the general knowledge about material bodies. Likewise, a proposition 'p is false' means that it is inconsistent, that is, the metaphysical supporters with the relevant system of propositions. According to the logical positivist supporters of the theory the system with which all true propositions must cohere is said to be that accepted by the scientists of the contemporary science culture circle. According to the

absolute idealists, that is, the metaphysical supporters the system of propositions cannot be partial and limited but will be all-comprehensive and all-coherent. According to them, the system of knowledge is constantly growing and so is becoming more and more comprehensive and consistent. The absolute is an ideal unattainable by human thought and coherence is a matter of degree, and truth also has degrees. The more a proposition is coherent with the growing system of our knowledge, the truer it is. However, a proposition coherent with the present system of knowledge may not be so in future because this coherence is subject to modification in the light of future extension of knowledge.

The pragmatic theory of truth is the view that “truth is what works, and a true proposition is one that works.”¹⁷ We often act upon our proposition and if one’s action according to a particular proposition leads to success or in other words, if the proposition works or is useful, the proposition is true. The approach of this theory is utilitarian. According to the pragmatic thinker William James, the criterion of determining truth of a proposition is its fruitfulness in experience. William James holds that truth is the acquired characteristics of men’s work. A statement by itself is neither true nor false but becomes true or false when verified in practice. All these are regarded as the characteristics of truth. For example, the statement “Here is a glass of water” is true if by acting according to this judgement we find the practical result that means if water is poured down in one’s throat one’s thirst is quenched.

Though the theory of truth is dealt with separately from the theory of meaning, these have also certain theories of meaning latent in them. From the point of view of the correspondence theory, meaning of a statement depends upon correspondence between word and fact. According to the

coherence theory, meaning depends on coherence among propositions. From the standpoint of pragmatism, meaning of a statement can be understood in terms of its workability. A theory of meaning is primarily concerned with the specification of the criteria of meaningfulness i.e., the conditions a sentence must satisfy in order to have meaning and specifying the conditions of synonym. According to Alston, it is an attempt to analyse what constitutes meaning of a linguistic expression. It is an analysis of what we are saying when we say that a linguistic expression has meaning. Are we taking into account the meaning of a word or the meaning of a sentence? A theory of meaning is a theory of meaning of linguistic expressions, both words and sentences taken together. There are different theories of meaning among which the main theories are the referential, the ideational, and the behavioral theories. Let us have a look at them.

III

The term 'meaning' in philosophy of language is intrinsic to language. Meaning is the essence of language and the two forms an inseparable relationship. It is due to this that we cannot conceive of a meaningless use of signs. Language, to be language, cannot allow within its system any place for meaningless signs. Even if we do, there will be just the production of some sounds without sense. What is meaning then? How do linguistic expressions get their meaning? These questions lead us to the problem of language and reality (word and the world). We know the world through language. A sentence acquires meaning when it says

something about the world. Since words get their meaning through their relation to the world, it has been claimed that reference to the world fixes meaning.

According to the referential theory of meaning, a word has meaning if it refers to some persons, objects, relations, properties in the world. For example, the proper name 'Jack' refers to a dog which bears the name 'Jack'. The word 'Jack' has meaning because it is the name of that dog. In this view it is supposed that every meaningful expression stands to something in the relation of naming, designating, labeling, referring, etc.¹⁸ The object which is referred to by a word or a linguistic expression need not always be a particular object, it could be a kind of thing like the common name 'man', a quality like 'redness', a state of affairs like 'democracy', a relationship like 'belongs' and so on. In general, the referential theory of meaning is the view that any meaningful expression has the meaning it has because it refers to some object or other. The criterion of determining meaning is the relation of reference between linguistic expressions and things in the world.

This innocent and simplistic statement should not make us oblivious of the controversies that raged in this area between Frege and Russell on sense and reference, and the further contribution to the debate by Saul Kripke¹⁹, Hillary²⁰ and their followers. As matters stand now Frege's theory of reference-fixing through sense has been reformulated by Kripke and Putnam who accord primacy to reference rather than sense.

The ideational theory of meaning was propounded by John Locke in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*.²¹ According to this view, a word is meaningful if it arouses some idea or mental image. For example, a word like 'dog' or 'man' or 'cat' is meaningful because there are some

ideas corresponding to each. A word is a means of communicating thought because the utterance of the word arouses the same idea in the mind of the hearer which is its meaning. According to the ideational theory, a linguistic expression has meaning if it arouses some idea and the exchange of ideas makes communication possible. This theory holds that in order to express his thought the speaker uses a word which indicates the idea he has in his mind.²² A linguistic expression is the mark or indication of an idea and that idea is its meaning so that whenever that linguistic expression is used in that sense it indicates the presence of that idea.

The behavioral theory of meaning is also based on a view about what man is doing when he is using language in communication.²³ The difference between the ideational theory and behavioral theory is that according to the former the meaning of a linguistic expression is an internal state of mental image which is not publicly observable but the latter theory holds that the meaning of a linguistic expression has a publicly observable aspect. The behavioral theory holds that to say that a linguistic expression has meaning is to observe how it is being used by people or to observe the various sorts of behavior in which it is involved. The meaning of a word or a linguistic expression is the behavioral response which can be verified by public inspection. The meaning of a linguistic utterance is the connection between an observable stimulus which the utterance creates and the response to it. A meaningful utterance is a verbal stimulus in a situation to which there is some response in the form of behavioural disposition from the hearer. From this viewpoint the criterion of determining the meaning of a linguistic expression is the observation of the behaviour or behavioural disposition of the hearer. The

behavioural theory holds that the meaning of an utterance is the response or behavioural disposition to the utterance in a situation. The word 'oh!' means the behaviour or behavioural disposition of pain or irritation or wonderment of the speaker in a situation.

IV

Now, to come back to the fundamental issue of understanding a philosophy of language on the basis of its purpose to appropriate language to reality. These theories of meaning and truth sketched above are rather digressions in the sense that they depart from achieving such a goal. In these approaches language and reality fall apart, while the correspondence theory of truth and the referential theory of meaning keep the word and the world alien to each other coherence theory is confined to the system of propositions alone.

The correspondence between a proposition and the fact outside cannot be known. If the representationalist version of the realists is accepted then whenever a person tries to know the external fact he has an idea about it, that is to say, a mental representation of it. Hence, the person has only ideas about the fact and not the fact itself. According to Heidegger, problem arises out of the presumption that truth is a property of proposition, i.e., it is a property of an entity which lies between us and the world.²⁴ The question arises how such an entity can correspond to something in the world.

The correspondence theory presupposes that the facts are completely independent of the knowing mind—a metaphysical position

that may not be acceptable to many philosophers. According to this theory, when we make a true judgement we have certain image or picture of the real in our minds and our judgement is true because this picture is like the reality it represents. That means the picture or mental image copies or resembles reality. From this, it follows that a true judgement does not itself correspond to the physical thing or reality. But we can make a judgement without using any image or mental picture except words and words do not themselves correspond to the things which they represent. Following A.C. Ewing it can be said that “We must not understand ‘correspondence’ as meaning copying or even resemblance”.²⁵

The testimony of coherence is only evidence that a statement is true but it does not make it true. The truth of a proposition consists in the fact that the proposition describes an actual state of affairs. Coherence of a proposition points to the truth of a proposition without being what the truth of the proposition consists in.²⁶ A group of propositions may be quite compatible with the falsity of a particular proposition, and in that case the false proposition will be taken to be true.

The coherence theory of truth ultimately leads to the correspondence theory of truth. According to this view the truth of the proposition ‘A’ means that ‘A’ is coherent with the body of propositions C.D.E.F, and the truth of the propositions C.D.E.F depends on their coherence with other group of propositions. But this will lead to infinite regress. In order to avoid infinite regress, we have to leave coherence and come to correspondence, that is, to a relation between the proposition and a state of affairs in the world outside this proposition, or any body of propositions.

A body of propositions may be coherent, and yet not true. For example, there are various systems of geometry, which are systems of coherent propositions but not all of these systems of propositions can be true of the world. The truth of a group of propositions does not depend on the relation among the propositions but on the consideration whether any or all of the propositions reports an actual state of affairs in the world.

Though pragmatism comes little closer to the goal in terms of understanding a proposition by working upon it, in concrete cases, its action-based approach is coloured by a theory of reality. The pragmatist's view that a proposition is true if it is workable and false if it is not, is not a satisfactory criterion of determining truth or falsity of a proposition because there are many propositions which are true though not workable in the sense that they have no practical utility. And there may be false propositions which are useful or expedient. The usefulness of false propositions does not make them true. Moreover, if the pragmatic theory is taken for granted then truth will be a relative matter because what is useful or workable to an individual may not be so to another individual; what may be useful or workable with reference to certain community may not be so with reference to another community. Moreover, if workability or usefulness is regarded as the criterion of determining truth or falsity of propositions, religious propositions must be true because they make men act in certain ways. But nobody can insist that religious statements are true. Pragmatism offers a good taste of truth but it fails to describe the nature of truth.

The theories of meaning outlined above also suffer from the shortcomings that arise from a failure to bridge the gulf between language and reality.

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The referential theory of meaning is inadequate because meaning of an expression is not the object to which it refers. Two expressions may refer to the same object but they need not have the same meaning.²⁷ Russell's classic example of this point concerns 'Sir Walter Scott' and 'The author of Waverly'. Though these two expressions refer to the same individual they do not have the same meaning. Again the same individual can be referred to by different expressions which do not have the same meaning. For example John F. Kennedy can be referred to as 'the President of U.S.A. in 1962', 'the husband of Jacqueline Kennedy', 'the U.S. President assassinated in Dallas', etc. Again, there are some expressions which have single meaning but different referents. For example the indexical terms 'I', 'you', 'here', 'this' change their references with changes in the occasion of their utterance. But they do not change their meanings corresponding to these different referents. The very presupposition of referential theory that all meaningful linguistic expressions do refer to something is not acceptable because linguistic expressions like conjunction do not refer to anything. Words like 'and', 'if', 'is' and 'whereas' do not refer to anything. Similarly, general words like the noun 'pencil', the adjectives 'courageous' and the verb 'run' cannot be said to be meaningful if their meaningfulness is due to the fact they refer to concrete observable physical phenomena. It can be concluded that referring is only one of the functions that linguistic expressions perform which is assigned to some sort of expressions and not to others.

The ideational theory of meaning is inadequate because there need not always arise a distinguishable idea in the mind corresponding to the utterance of each meaningful linguistic expression.²⁸ For example, there

arises no idea in the mind corresponding to the utterance of the words like 'when', 'in', 'course', 'becomes'. It may be that the utterance of some words arouse ideas but those ideas may not be identifiable and producible without these words. From this it does not follow that they do not have meaning.

The difficulty with the ideational theory is that we are unable to spot 'ideas' in order to test the ideational theory. The ideational theory cannot give a satisfactory account of meaning because a word with a single meaning may give rise to different ideas in different situations. For example, the word 'dog' has a single meaning but on one occasion it may arouse the image of a 'collie'; on another, it may arouse the image of a 'beagle'; on one occasion the image of a dog sitting, on another, the image of a dog standing. From this it cannot be said that the word 'dog' has different meanings. Conversely, words with different meanings may have one indistinguishable image. For example the utterance of the words 'beagle', 'hound', 'dog', 'mammal', 'animal', 'organism', 'sports', 'hunting', may accompany the single image of a sleeping beagle.

The behavioural theory also fares no better. The behavioural dispositions may determine the meaning of utterances like imperative and declarative. For example, the declarative sentence, 'Your son is ill' may have a bearing on the hearer's future conduct, i.e., it may produce a disposition to go where the hearer believes his son to be if he has a great deal of concern for him. But the behavioural disposition does not determine the meaning of all kinds of utterance. It cannot determine the meaning of purely linguistic utterances.²⁷ For example, the utterance 'Mozart wrote *Idomeneo* at the age of twenty five', has no behavioural disposition which determines its meaning.

Moreover, behavioural disposition is produced by the utterance of a sentence provided that the hearer believes that the utterer is giving correct information, and the hearer has not previously acquired that information. But no such behavioural disposition can be produced by the utterance of a sentence if the hearer does not believe the utterer or if the hearer is already aware of the spoken fact. For example, if the hearer does not believe the speaker when he says, “Your son is ill”, the speaker’s utterance will certainly not produce any such disposition. Where the hearer is already acquainted with the information, he may reply, “You need not tell me that.”

Even if the above conditions of producing behavioural dispositions are fulfilled the possibility of a list of factors cannot be denied, the presence of which will prevent the production of behavioural disposition. For example the utterance “Your son is ill” will produce in a hearer disposition to go to his son if he has a great deal of concern for him, if he is not physically prevented from doing so, if he has no religious scruples against doing so and so on.

The view that every disposition produced by an utterance has certain bearings on the meaning of the utterance is an inadequate view because utterances with different meanings may have the same behavioural disposition. For example, the utterance “The Sun is 97,000,000 miles away from the earth” produces a disposition to open one’s mouth in amazement if one were previously unaware of this. But the same disposition is produced by the utterance with a different meaning, “The Pyramids are several thousands years old”. An utterance may have a certain behavioural disposition but the disposition-production does not determine the meaning of the utterance.

In all these theories of truth and meaning sketched above the bifurcation between language and reality remains. The question may always be asked as to where the correspondence between word and fact is exact or whether a coherence among different propositions really represent reality in all its objectivity and independence or whether the workability of a proposition can always be the criterion of its truth. Similarly, the theories of meaning too are in different ways and degrees attempts to make reality intelligible through language. The behaviourist theory of meaning has also been attacked from many corners. One can say safely that its truth and applicability is limited so long as it is not related to the conscious and existential dimension of human existence and speech.

V

Since words (language) and the world are ontologically different and the purpose of language has always been to definitize, understand and communicate the nature of different items of the reality extraneous to users, one may very well think the relation between the two, in whatever degree it is achieved, as the result of an attempt to bridge the difference between the two. To speak in the terminology of Indian philosophy the difference or *bheda* between language and reality is the difference in kind.³⁰ In Indian terminology *bheda* or difference is of three kinds: *sajātīya*, *vijātīya* and *svagata bheda*. The difference between two things of the same kind is called *sajātīya bheda*, e.g., the difference between two men is the *sajātīya bheda*. The difference between two things of different

kinds is called *vijāṭīya bheda*, e.g., *difference between a man and a tree is called vijāṭīya bheda*. And the internal difference between the parts of a whole thing of the same kind is called *svagata bheda*, e.g., the difference among the different parts of a tree, i.e., the difference among the root, stem, leaves of a tree is called *svagata bheda*. The world as it is in itself, across language is unspoken and *not meant*. The purpose of language is to make it *meant*. As K.C. Bhattacharya remarked, “object is what is meant”.³¹ Searle has rightly said that the philosophies of language of Frege, Wittgenstein, (in his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*) and logical positivists held in common that the only aim of language is to represent and communicate factual information, and the part of language that counts is the ‘cognitive’ part. In these approaches language and reality are treated as two separate ‘things’, As Searle says, “They treat the elements of language — words, sentences, propositions — as things that represent things that are true or false, etc., apart from any actions and intentions of speakers and hearers.”³² This was one way of bringing two ontologically different entities closer in terms of an one to one correspondence. This is well reflected in the statement of Wittgenstein of *Tractatus*, ‘A proposition is a picture of reality’.³³

But this attempt to bridge the gulf between language and reality cut off from actions and intentions of speakers and hearers and specific forms of life was realized to be wrong in the late thirties and especially after the second world war by Wittgenstein himself. In his *Philosophical Investigations*, he rejected his earlier position of *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* and came up with a concept of language which was actions-based. Later-Wittgenstein dealt with basic problems of philosophy of language in a new key. The influence of this approach

prevails even now in the area of philosophy of language. Philosophy of language is not the study in all its complexity, of language in a Platonic world of "Ideas". It is an investigation into the world of objects which human beings inhabit. It is a living world of relationship between men and objects. Here human beings are surrounded by those objects which they have made their own by forming, organizing, arranging, using, and modifying them according to their own choices. It is an experience of our every day life where there is a relationship between human beings and objects, i.e., between words and reality. Language is the means of human beings to know, understand, and explain the world of objects and language is the medium of expressing things in the human world. The human being is existent in the world and he wants to understand how he exists along with the objects of the world which have significance for him. The understanding of the world means the disclosure of the significance of the totality of objects. To my mind, an examination of the theories of meaning and truth involves coming to an understanding of the relation between a human being, his existential modes, understanding, language, speech, etc. The essential philosophical question about language is this: 'What is language for man'? It seems probable that language is something which is absolutely essential to comprehension, something at the very heart of our consciousness and "We have ...to drop the idea that language is an epiphenomenon of the process of comprehension."³⁴

We contend that the relation between words and world can be best understood from a phenomenological standpoint which takes over the lead in the present context. In the following chapters we shall trace it from the sources of Wittgenstein, Austin, Strawson, Searle who are

basically analytic philosophers together with the phenomenologists Husserl and Merleau-Ponty. We think that a phenomenological treatment of this relation would perhaps make it possible for any future philosophy of language to conceive of 'one single world' enmeshing language and the world without slicing it into 'words' and 'world'. Before we proceed in that task we shall take up an exposition of the views of some analytical philosophers of language on the issue of the word-world relationship. Our purpose in doing this is whether, the analytic philosophers reveal a phenomenological orientation in their doctrines and theories, thereby having a kinship with Husserl and Merleau-Ponty.

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