

## PARADIGM OF CROSS- CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

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It is indeed a great privilege for me to contribute a paper in the Departmental journal that has been published in honour of our most reverent and beloved colleague, Professor Raghunath Ghosh. Since my joining as Lecturer on 10<sup>th</sup> of February, 1994, I have proceeded under his able guidance. The academic achievement I have gained so far is mainly due to his constant encouragement and inspiration. He possesses some admirable qualities and intrinsic virtues, rare these days. His dynamism, co-operation and admirable personality deserve respect. Being a scholar of Indology, Indian aesthetic, literature and culture, he visited almost every intellectual corner of the world and interacted with renowned academicians. I do reckon him as a true ambassador of Indian culture and literature. Besides being a competent teacher, he has also worked as an efficient administrator. Apart from his academic excellence he has rendered able guidance and tutelage to the Department of Philosophy which has been awarded maiden SAP of UGC in the faculty of Arts, Commerce and Law of North Bengal University. As a Director of SAP, he did stupendous work during two successive phases for which the Department of Philosophy has received a grant of Rs120 lakhs in the third phase; in fact, he deserves full credit for this achievement. He is a person with great humour; besides, he is a great orator, a great aesthete and possesses a dynamic personality. His cheerful and optimistic nature makes him most acceptable amongst all. His metaphorical and aesthetic use in language makes vulnerable communication more acceptable and lucid. In fact, he overcomes the problem of incommensurability in language. Prof. Raghunath Ghosh possesses the rare merits of a perfect human being. It is my privilege to salute my senior colleague with the words, of George Bernard Shaw, 'What a man! Is he a man!'

As language is culture-specific and language gets its life or structure from culture, cross cultural communication would be an effective paradigm of building up a world community. What then is culture? We do not mean the term 'culture' in a specific sense; rather we conceive it in a comprehensive manner. The term 'culture' in our sense intends to "use in the sense of whatever a person must know in order to function in a particular society"<sup>1</sup>. This definition bears the same sense with Goodenough's well-known definition of culture. In this regard he says that ' a society's culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members, and to do so in any role that they accept for any one of themselves'.<sup>2</sup> Simplistically, it can be said that culture is the *knowhow that a person must possess to get through the task of daily living*. Culture is our *world view* and the structure of language determines the way in which speakers of

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<sup>1</sup> Ronald Wardhaugh, *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*, Blackwell, 1986, p.215.

<sup>2</sup> Goodenough, "Cultural Anthropology and Linguistics" in P.L. Garvin (ed.), *Report of the Seventh Round Meeting on Linguistics and Language Study*, Washington: Georgetown University Press, 1957, p.167.

that language view the world. Thus, language we are envisaging is a world-view language (universal language). Language reflects our forms of life<sup>3</sup>, language is a mirror of human mind; language is also supposed to be the house of being<sup>4</sup>, therefore taking care of language is at par with taking care of humans. A man is known by the language he/she uses. We can solve the problem of other minds as well by taking care of language of humans. Language is the only medium, the only way through which interpersonal communication between the speaker and the hearers is made possible. Language is our form of life, our culture, our values, our ethos and above all the vehicle of humans. Inter-personal communication between the speaker and the hearer is not something *arbitrary*; rather it actually hinges on the *homogeneity of language and culture*.

Communication within the same cultural community by means of common language would not be a problematic issue. Every community or clan or caste or tribe adequately communicates among themselves by means of their respective native language. But the problem may arise in case of *cross-cultural communication or cross-language communication*. Now, if language is culture and gets its structure through culture then in order to know the culture of other communities, one has to have the knowledge of language of these communities either by way of knowing the language of these communities or by way of translating or interpreting or learning the language of these communities into his own language. Accordingly, it can be presumed at the very outset that any attempt of *building up a world community* actually hinges on the success of cross-cultural communication or cross-language communication. Communication within the same culture and same community by means of same language usually does not break down. However, breakdown of communication may appear between two competing scientific language communities or simply two different language communities. Kuhn and Feyerabend have attributed *communication breakdown* by using the term *incommensurability*. So long incommensurability or communication breakdown remains; it would appear as a stumbling block of building up a world community by means of language and

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<sup>3</sup> Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, Oxford, 1953, p.36.

<sup>4</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, tr. Macquarrie, J & Robinson, E. New York: Harper Collins, 1962, p67.

literature. Therefore, in order to build up a world community by means of language and literature, one has to overcome the problem of *incommensurability or communication breakdown* between two or more different languages or two or more different interpretations of language.

### **Call for Universal language**

Thus, one may call for a universal language or global language through which a world community can be built up. Each and every regional language can be translated or interpreted into universal language. Therefore, one can build up a universal community just by knowing global language. How do we formulate a universal language? Translation manual perhaps is the most effective means available at our hand on the basis of which universal language in the desired sense can be formulated. But the problem of translation manual is that of its indeterminacy. No translation is perfect in the strict sense of the term and it has been pointed out by Quine. According to Quine, translation is indeterminate. Of course, Quine immediately claims that even though translation manual is indeterminate, it is radical. The point that needs to be taken care of what makes translation manual radical even though it is indeterminate? Is it really for the reason that there is no other alternative means through which we can have a sense of universal language? Or is it for the reason that indeterminacy is *sui-generis* for any sort of translation and interpretation. To me both of these are relevant and the second one is more apposite as far as our approach towards building up a world community through cross-cultural (language) communication is concerned.

### **Indeterminacy and incommensurability**

Arguably, when we talk about cross-cultural communication, we have to keep in our mind two important concepts, such as, *the concept of indeterminacy* and the *concept of incommensurability*. One should not confuse indeterminacy with incommensurability. The term *incommensurability* is coined from mathematics which literally means that there is no common measure between two irrational numbers. It has been used metaphorically by Kuhn<sup>5</sup> and Feyerabend with the strong intuition that communication breakdown between two scientific communities is due to lack of

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<sup>5</sup> Kuhn, 'Commensurability, Comparability, Communicability', PSA, 1982, Vol.2 p. 670

*some common measure* between the two languages used. For them any successful communication between two language communities requires *some appropriate common measures* between the languages used; otherwise communication would be incommensurable. This has exactly been the same of later Wittgenstein's philosophical position of 'family resemblance' or 'language - game'. According to Wittgenstein even though every member of a family (brothers and sisters of the same parents) differs from others, but each of them has some sort of similarities, dissimilarities, and criss-cross and overlapping features with others. Likewise, even though each game is different from other, say for example, the game of football differs from the game of cricket and the game of cricket differs from the game of swimming, but each of them belongs to the same generic class Game because they have some common overlapping properties. Initially, Khun has outlined the common measure as a *shared Paradigm*.<sup>6</sup> However, his view of shared paradigm has been severely criticized on account of its ambiguity and vagueness. Khun later on realized it. He accordingly concentrated on the essential part of the paradigm, namely, exemplars and similarities relationships (family resemblance of Wittgenstein) among items determined by exemplars. According to Khun, the phrase 'no common measure' becomes 'no common language'. He says, "The claim that two theories are incommensurable is then the claim that there is no language, neutral or otherwise, into which both theories, conceived as set of sentences, can be translated without residue or loss."<sup>7</sup> As Khun's requirement of *common language* based on shared paradigm is too broad and vague, he gave it up and began to focus solely on one *essential aspect of a language*, i.e., its *taxonomic (grammatical) structure*. As a result, his understanding of the phrase 'common measure' became 'shared taxonomy or shared lexical structure' between two competing scientific languages. Thus, Khun's main objective is to find out a significant and effective paradigm of making *cross cultural communication or cross language communication* successful. Khun reveals it very well that the breakdown of cross-language communication actually invites incommensurability. Thus, for Khun any two scientific theories, in our case

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<sup>6</sup> Kuhn, *Structure of the Scientific Revolutions*, Second edition, The University of Chicago Press, 1970 a. P.53.

<sup>7</sup> Kuhn, "Commensurability, Comparability, Communicability", op. cit. p.670.

any two languages whatsoever, would be incommensurable if there falls short of a necessary or so to speak minimum common measure (shared taxonomy).

This paper, however, is not confined with any specific language like Kuhn has outlined, rather it deals with a general form of language or more specifically the language of world view. The point that needs to be taken care of at this juncture is to show how such a kind of language that would reflect the world-view or world culture can be materialized? Translation manuals are the only available means through which we can approach towards the language of world-view. In this regard I do fully agree with Quine that any form of translation would be indeterminate in terms of degree. It is equally true to say that translation of a theory would loss the originality of the theory (residue or loss in the sense of Kuhn). There is no point of denying the fact that indeterminacy is *sui-gensis* of translation manuals. This does not, however, make sense say that the sort of indeterminacy arising out of translation manuals inevitably leads to incommensurability. Indeterminate translation in most cases, I do reckon, is commensurable. If two or more translators translate a theory within the purview of natural or ordinary language, the translations would be slightly different and there we find some overlapping, criss-cross similarities and dissimilarities in these translations. This is natural. Rabindranath Tagore initially wrote *Gitanjali* in Bengali language and it has been translated in many languages. Even many translators have translated it in the same language, for example, in English as well. If we go through two English translations, we do not find point to point similarities between them; rather there we find some overlapping characteristics between these translations. Translation is not a mere translation; rather it would be an outcome of interpretation as well.

Let us make this point more clear. Suppose there are two languages, such as, Bengali and Nepali. If we presuppose that language is culture-specific then Bengali language gets its structure from Bengali culture and so does the Nepali language. Let me further assume that there are no appropriate *common measures* between these languages in Kuhn's sense. Accordingly, if a translator translates both the languages into English, then it would certainly be the case in Kuhn's sense that the interpretations would be incommensurable. I do not reckon incommensurability in this sense. To me when the languages of Bengali and Nepali are translated into

English the person having the mastery over English comes to know about the culture of Bengali as well as Nepali just by way of going through the translations. Moreover, I think that within the purview of natural languages, there must remain some common share measures or share beliefs among different linguistic communities. When two languages in the strict sense of the term would be incommensurable, then there is no point of saying that they are indeterminate. Indeterminacy is relevant only in the case of commensurable language. Indeterminacy does not mean communication breakdown. The point that I intend to make here is that here we are dealing with the kind of language where the question of incommensurability in the strict sense of the term does not arise. Here we must take note from later Wittgenstein's metaphors of 'language-game' and 'family resemblance'.

Indeterminacy thus is an altogether different concept from incommensurability. Translation manual, even if it is indeterminate, may not lead to incommensurability. There is no possibility of communication breakdown in translation manual even if it is indeterminate. Incommensurability is applicable between *two competing scientific language communities* and if there arises any vagueness of the explanation of incommensurability it is partially due to the fact that we are dealing with a complex historical-anthropological phenomenon deeply rooted in the basic mechanisms of *cultures, forms of life, language and social institutions*. Incommensurability has its multi-dimensional aspects which are no longer relevant in the context of this paper. The only aspect of incommensurability that is particularly relevant in the context of this paper is *to envisage whether we have adequate notion of translation to work with it*. Thus, the point of contention of this paper at this juncture is to look at and take care of whether the notion of incommensurability or communication breakdown is associated with the notion of indeterminacy arising out of translation manual. Translation again may have different forms, such as, intentional translation mainly focusing on meaning (sense) and extensional translation focusing on reference. Quine elsewhere says that translatability is a *fragile and flimsy notion*<sup>8</sup> unable to live up with its *overloaded promise* of distinguishing alternative languages and also 'to unfit to bear the weight of the theories of cultural

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<sup>8</sup> Quine, "On the Very Idea of a Third Dogma" included in *Theories and Things*, Harvard University Press 1981, p. 42.

incommensurability'. Quine himself has adopted different notions of translation manual. At times, he has adopted a very strict notion of translation to measure the conceptual remoteness of two alternative languages. At other times, he allows obstinate and baffling translation between language embodying alternative or relative conceptual schemes<sup>9</sup>.

Like Quine, Kuhn also makes a distinction between liberal versus literal translation while exemplifying his notion of incommensurability. According to Kuhn, the main objective of a translator very similar to Quine's radical translator or interpreter is *to have a better understanding of an alien text*. In order to do this, the translator, Kuhn opines; "must find the best available *compromises* between incompatible objectives". Translation, according to Kuhn, always involves compromises and appeasements which alter communication. Thus, translation manual based on better understanding is supposed to be a relentless revision of one language into another language. Or it is process of constant revision within the same language and linguistic community. As there are many perceptible alterations in translation manual, translator must take note of what alteration is acceptable.<sup>10</sup> This sort of translation is called *liberal translation* by Kuhn. He then spells out some basic features of this sort of translation. These are as follows:

- The target language is allowed to be altered by introducing new concepts by subtle changing more or less the old concepts.
- It does not require a systematic replacement with or mapping of words or word groups in the source language to the corresponding words or word groups in the target language.
- The translation is not an exact one; rather it would be a matter of degree.
- The translation in the real sense of the term is strictly linked with the process of language learning and thus involves a strong interpretative component.

Liberal translation, according to Kuhn, is the inventiveness practiced by historians and anthropologists. In order to make the source language available, the translator or the interpreter has to learn the source language in the process of translation and in turn looks for the closest counterparts of expressions of the source

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* p. 41.

<sup>10</sup> Kuhn, "Reflections on My Critics", in *Criticism and Growth of Knowledge*, edited by I. Lakatos and A. Musgrave, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1970b, p.268.

language in the target language.<sup>11</sup> If liberal translation is taken into account then it is possible to translate any different text no matter how alien is it to the translator's home language. As a result, there would be no incommensurable texts.

Unlike the liberal translation, Kuhn takes literal translation in a strict sense where the translator systematically substitute the appropriate expressions in the target language for the corresponding expressions in the source language in order to produce an equivalent text in the target language. Here the target and the source languages remain unchanged in the sense that no new kind-terms are permissible. The translation is mapped to a concept with exactly the same semantic values in the source as well as in the target languages. The translation between two languages is either possible or impossible. The translation is a totally different linguistic activity from language leaning or interpretation. The purpose of literal interpretation is to make an alien text intelligible and we can accomplish this by language learning. In this regard one has to emphasize more on to identify semantic values of the expressions in the source language and then formulate semantic equivalents of these expressions within the target language. Translatability is the only source one can do it. It actually hinges on the potential ability of the target language to produce semantic equivalents of the expressions in the source language without changing its taxonomic structure. Thus, a translation may fail 'if formulating the semantic equivalents of the expressions of the source language in the target language requires either change of the target language's taxonomic structure or an extension of its semantic resources by semantic enrichment.' How do we come to know that literal translation constitutes semantic equivalence? In this regard, one has to emphasize on the sameness of sense or intention, sameness of references or intentions of shared kind-terms, sameness of truth-values of shared sentences and more on some pragmatic aspects of language, such as, the speaker's intentions, meaning and reference and contexts. Notably, Quine has said that there can be many mutually incompatible systems of translation consistent with all possible data. We have to determine which one is relevant in the context of a particular translation. However, many would say that Kuhn's literal translation is too strong and too complicated that it would be very difficult to employ.

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<sup>11</sup> Kuhn, "Commensurability, Comparability, Communicability", op. cit., pp.672-73.

As a result, many would like to say that the two types of translations that have been comprehended by Kuhn do not help us to clarify the notion of incommensurability as if we introduce literal translation then it would make commensurable incommensurable and if we introduce liberal translation then it would make incommensurables commensurable. According to Wang, “Either way, the thesis of incommensurability would turn out to be an illusion.”<sup>12</sup>

Whatever the nature of translation may be, one thing must be kept in mind that translation must be *truth-preserving*. The traditional notion of translation, Quine’s indeterminacy of translation, and Davidson’s notion of radical interpretation all start from the very idea that an adequate translation must preserve the truth-values of the sentences of the target and source languages. However, Wang does not agree with truth-value preservation as he thinks that truth-preserving translation is irrelevant to the incommensurable texts because what really matters, Wang contends, is not ‘redistribution of truth-values’. Wang then concludes by saying that “there is no tenable and integrated notion of translation that can be used to clarify the notion of incommensurability.”<sup>13</sup> However, there is perhaps another way through which one may connect the notion of translation with the notion of incommensurability as communication breakdown. Many would like to say that translation would be either necessary or sufficient for effective cross-cultural communication and understanding. Here an interpreter can understand an alien language through the relation of the translated language to the interpreter’s own home language. If it does, then surely the failure of mutual translation between the source and targeted language would surely lead to the breakdown of cross-cultural communication between the speakers of two languages and as a result of that the two languages would be incommensurable. This actually identifies commensurability with translatability and incommensurability with untranslatability. In this regard, Davidson’s concept of interpretation is particularly relevant. According to Davidson, the meaning of sentence in a language is determined by the essential role of the sentence in the language as a whole. A theory of interpretation for a language does help us to understand the language. Davidson

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<sup>12</sup> Wang, *Incommensurability and Cross-Language Communication*, Ashgate, 2007, p.44.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* p.45.

then equates a theory of interpretation with a theory of understanding. A translation manual, Davidson contends, actually tells us that certain expressions of the translated language mean the same as certain expressions of the translating language. For Davidson, it may theoretically be possible that to know of each sentence of a given language means the same as some corresponding sentence of another language, without knowing at all what meaning any of these sentences has. As a result, it can be said after Davidson that a translation manual does not constitute a theory of meaning or understanding; rather it leads to an understanding of the translated language only via the translating language. Simplistically, it can be said that, a translation itself is not sufficient for understating. Understanding or interpretation is altogether a different constraint in compare to translation.

It thus reveals after Davidson that translation is altogether a different prototype. The genesis of understanding is surely not translation, but *interpretation or language learning*. Interpretation is a different linguistic activity from translation. By interpretation we generally mean the sort of inventiveness particularly practiced by historians and anthropologists when they try to understand an old text or break into an alien culture. It is undoubtedly true to say that an interpreter has the mastery and authenticity over his native or home language. The source language perhaps is unknown to him. The main task of an interpreter is to make an interpretation *so as to make an unknown alien text intelligible*. Thus, it has been suggested by saying that the most effective means of an old or alien text intelligible is to learn the language or to understand the language instead of translating it. Arguably, it can be said that interpretation or understanding is the hallmark of making cross-cultural communication successful. Translation does not have a role to play. It may even be the case that the translator at the very outset may have the mastery over the source and target language. In such a case the purpose of translation is to formulate semantic equivalents of expressions of the source language in the target language. As a result of that translation would be *comparatively genuine*. However, if it would be the case that the underlying descriptive principles, taxonomic structure or the modes of reasoning of two languages are substantially different, the translation in case of such languages would no longer be genuine. Translation whether alien or non-alien languages would be indeterminate, there is no question of doubt. But translation of

two different languages would be incommensurable if nothing is common in such languages. As translation manual is indeterminate and does not resist the problem of communication breakdown or incommensurability in the true sense of the term, it may be suggested by saying that translation can best be treated as a *desideratum*, but *not a sine qua non necessity* for understanding. Instead of translation, interpretation in the real sense of the term can function impeccably well in understanding. As a result, it can be said that translation is neither necessary nor sufficient for understanding. Understanding is at par with learning. To understand is to learn. Even at times understanding is being obstructed by translation. It has been revealed through linguistic studies that the best way to learn an alien or foreign language is not to learn it by making word by word translation, *but by living in the community of native speakers (forms of life of later Wittgenstein) and by way of leaning the language from abrasion like a child does*. In this way one can gradually acquire the mastery over alien or foreign language by way of forgetting his own native language.

Thus, as far as the paradigm of cross-cultural communication of language is concerned there we have some key concepts, such as, incommensurability, indeterminacy, translation manual, interpretation, understanding and the concept of learning. Incommensurability in the true sense of the term is untranslatability. Commensurability means translatability with certain preconditions. Translation manual is in some sense or other associated with commensurability in most general cases rather than incommensurability. Translation manual thus all without exception does not overcome the problem of incommensurability. As translation manual does not overcome the problem of incommensurability, a proposal has been laid on in favour of interpretation, understanding and learning. Accordingly, it can be said that one can build up a world community through cross-cultural communication where interpretation and understanding of language have played the vital role. Having said this, the problem of incommensurability still remains obscure and mysterious to us. In our case incommensurability, if there be any, would be *relative and ad-hoc*. While building up a world community, we cannot survive and live up within incommensurability but of course we have to live up within indeterminacy.

### **Conceptualism and cross-cultural communication**

What helps an interpreter to make interpretation cognizable? Is there any underlying structure or scheme on account of which cross-cultural communication or more simplistically, communication in general made possible? In this regard it can be said that conceptualism is the key of making our understanding or interpretation possible. What then is conceptualism or conceptual scheme? Seemingly, conceptual schemes are all about *concepts* even though the notion of concept is notoriously murky and dicey. Conceptualism is particularly relevant to the context of cross-cultural communication because the two primary functions of concepts, such as, categorization and conceptualization are intimately associated with language. Conceptualization being a thinking process is essentially a linguistic activity. Thinking with regard to language actually helps one to have a better understanding about concepts. That is why conceptualists, such as, Carnap, Whorf, Quine, Wittgenstein, Strawson have outlined conceptual schemes along with linguistic line. The relationship between conceptual schemes and language actually hinges on two factors, such as, linguistic counterparts of concepts and kinds of language. As concepts are associated with meanings, linguistic meaning would be the primary bearer of a conceptual scheme. However, with the appearance of reorientation of semantics as developed by Frege, Russell and logical positivism, we notice an altogether radical ontological shift where sentences take or occupy the place of concepts as the primary elements of conceptual schemes. As a result, conceptual schemes become more closely connected to language. That is why instead of saying conceptual schemes, philosophers such as Carnap intends to speak of *linguistic framework*. We notice further impulsion in Quine's philosophy. For Quine, a conceptual scheme is not merely associated with a language; rather it is identical with language.

According to Quine, a conceptual scheme is a set intertranslatable sentential language. "It is", Quine says, "a fabric of sentences accepted in science as true, however provisionally".<sup>14</sup> A conceptual scheme or language is like an interconnected 'web of beliefs', 'a man-made fabric which impinges on experience only along the edges', so much so that 'the total field is so undetermined by its boundary conditions,

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<sup>14</sup> Quine, "On the Very Idea of a Third Dogma" op. cit. p. 41.

experience.’ For Quine, our statements about the external world face the tribunal of sense experience not individually, but only as *corporate body*. As a result, the unit of linguistic meaning, Quine contends, is nothing but the whole language. Conceptual scheme is a tool or a linguistic device for working a manageable structure into the flux of experience. A conceptual scheme eventually becomes a set of languages that share the same conceptual make up. More interestingly Quine while advocating that conceptual scheme is identical with language does not talk about a technical language, not he advocates in favour of ideal or logical or scientific language, rather he envisages ordinary sentential language and thereby allowing the possibility that more than one language may express the same scheme.

Having said this, conceptualism again appears as a philosophically knotty issue. In fact the root of conceptualism in our desired sense is entrenched in Kant. Kant conceives conceptualism with regard to concepts and categories. According to Kant no human experience is possible without the two basic kinds of mental schemes, viz., sensibility and understanding. As for Kant, mental schemes are universal and unchanged; there are no distinct mental schemes. Kant actually was in favour of a fixed unified conceptual scheme based on trampled object-content distinction. The Kantian conceptualism has further been drawn-out by Strawson. Like Kant, Strawson conceived of a *unified core of human conceptual scheme*. However, this sort of conceptualistic web first collided with Quine’s conceptual relativism. Unlike Kant and Strawson, Quine is a proponent of conceptual relativism. For Quine, ‘no sentence, not even the logical rules, is immune to revision’.<sup>15</sup> A continuous revision is going on in our belief system. I reckon Wittgenstein’s ‘riverbed’ metaphor has a close proximity with Quine’s non-fixed contextualized form of conceptual scheme. Wittgenstein tells us to imagine our worldview as a riverbed, where the bed of a river actually characterizes certain ‘hardened propositions’ which is the essential core of the world view. The river running on the bed represents the mass of our ever

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<sup>15</sup> Quine, “Two Dogmas of Empiricism” in his *From a Logical Point of View*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Harvard University Press, 1980, p.42. (Quine was in favour of a non-fixed, relative, contextualized belief. He says that we are more ready to revise everything in the light of experience. He denies Kantian rigidity between analytic-synthetic distinctions. For Quine without Kantian dogma, one can have a sense of non-fixed analytic-synthetic distinction.)

changing belief systems. The river- bed of thoughts may shift just like our beliefs as the rushing water of the river could slowly change the shape of the riverbed and alter the course of the river. Whatever the nature of conceptualism, whether unified (universal) or relative, may be, it plays a significant role in making cross-cultural communication possible. More importantly, it can be said that a translator enables to translate a script with the background of conceptual scheme. Thus, in one sense conceptualism of any sort would be treated as the *Criterion of Intelligibility*.

Conceptualism, I do reckon, whether fixed or relative, is a state of mind. If conceptualism is supposed to be a universal core of human thinking along with the line of Kant and Strawson, then one can assess it because of its objective nature. However, the problem may arise in the case of extreme conceptual relativism where cross-cultural communication between those schemes is unattainable because in order to identify an alternative scheme, it has to be somehow intelligible to us to the extent that we recognize it *as a state of mind*. If we do not have any sense of an alternative conceptual scheme then how do we justify or believe that there, in fact, exists a state of mind. According to Davidson, an alien conceptual scheme within the purview of extreme conceptual relativism as expounded by Quine would be extremely remote from ours to the extent of being 'mutually unintelligible'. As a result, it has been criticized by saying that cross-language understanding between those schemes is unattainable in principle. Wang denies the position of Davidson as he thinks that even if there exists an alien human language that cannot be made intelligible through interpretation by our semantic and conceptual apparatus, but still we can make it intelligible if the language under consideration has been qualified as a human language. I think in the context of this paper it is our general presupposition that when we are envisaging the paradigm of cross-cultural communication we are primarily concerned with a kind of language that would be qualified as human language. Following Wittgenstein it can be said that human language is rule-following and following a rule is a practice in our community or society, i.e., in our forms of life. A language is human language if one can learn it from *abrasion just like a child does*. Any sort of human language is learnable in principle. As a result, it can be said that if a language is not learnable in principle, it would not be treated as human language in our desired sense.

It should equally be kept in mind that different conceptualists have approached different types of language. For example, Kuhn and Feyerabend are in favour of scientific language and Quine, Wittgenstein, Whorf are in favour of ordinary or natural or sentential language. I think the problem of incommensurability or communication breakdown very much persists in case of scientific language. Scientific language is artificial in nature and in most cases it ignores the cultural aspects of human life. It emphasizes more on reduction instead of baptismal ceremony or historicity in the true sense of the term. However, the problem of incommensurability in the case of natural or ordinary language or sentential language does not arise in most general cases. Ordinary or natural or native language though ambiguous in nature because of its versatile and multifarious uses, but one can ensure common shared beliefs or a common form of life among linguistic community taking part in ordinary language. Thus, our view of language is a world view (a language view is a world view) contains cultural tradition associated with language. Just like the rays of the Sun warm every part of the world, the language that we talk about as the vehicle of world view would be the participation of the world community and as a result of that it would be the reflection of global culture. Gadamer says, "If every language is a view of the world, it is so not primarily because it is a particular type of language (in the way that linguists view languages) but because of what said or handed down in the language."<sup>16</sup>

### **Concluding Remarks**

Let me revisit what the paper initially promises to do and how far it has been shaped. Initially, the paper engages to find out the paradigm of cross-cultural communication towards building up a world community. In doing so, the paper runs with a few philosophical backgrounds. First it has assumed that language is *culture specific* and *language gets its structure from culture*. This assumption is not universal in nature and it cannot be accepted without question begging. However, it is a forceful philosophical perception on the basis of which the paper has been developed. The other important precept is that of the concept of *incommensurability* or

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<sup>16</sup> Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, second revised edition, trans., by J. Weinsheimer and D. Marshall, Continuum, New York, 1989, p.441.

*communication breakdown*. Incommensurability is a mathematically operational jargon and philosophers like Kuhn and Feyerabend in particular have used it in scientific language. Even though this paper borrows this concept from Kuhn and at length concentrated on Kuhn's position of incommensurability as ready reference, but the paper actually reads the concept of incommensurability neither in the mathematical sense nor even in the sense predominantly concerned with scientific language, rather it takes it in the case of natural language or ordinary language which appears as a world-view. Thus the point of contention of this paper is to have a kind of language that would be appeared as a *world-view*. Certainly, artificial or constructed language does not appear or functions as a world view. Similarly, there are as many as innumerable types of language like as there are as many as innumerable types or communities all over the world. However, scientific or artificial language differs from community language of any sort in the sense that the language of community is native and natural and it is intimately associated with culture, ethos, and historicity or the baptismal ceremony ( Putnam) or charity ( Davidson). This paper has attempted to unearth the path through which one can build up a world community by way of visualizing a language that would appear as a world view.

In this regard, the paper has explained and examined three basic concepts, such as, *incommensurability*, *indeterminacy* and *translation manuals*. It claims that translation manual is the ready reference on the basis of which one can attempt to have a language of world view towards building a world community. By translation, it does not mean a mere form of translation. While translating a script, the translator has to fulfill certain important conditions, such as, he has in depth knowledge about the original script (the source language); he has the mastery over both the languages (the source and target languages). Having said this, the paper claims that indeterminacy is *sui-gensis* of translation manuals. Translation of any sort must be indeterminate and it should be measured in terms of degree. It is indeed true to say that any two translations of a particular script would not be exact in nature. There must be some overlapping and criss-cross linguistic symptoms that would certainly be appeared in these translations. This would happen in the case of same language. The ground reality would further be different in case of cross-cultural communication or cross language communication. The paper intends to say that translation manuals is

the most effective path through which one can have a sense of world community by way of formulating universal language.

What then is incommensurability? This paper even though has coined the concept of incommensurability and at length discussed it with regard to Kuhn and Feyerabend, but it differs from their position on a few accounts. First, Kuhn and others used it in the case of scientific language. The author of this paper claims that as scientific language is artificial in nature, two or more scientific language may differ from other and there is a possibility of incommensurability in the cases of scientific languages. As the paper deals with a kind of ordinary or natural language with the philosophical precept that language is culture and language gets its structure from culture, it encompasses everything from holistic point of view. Language as a means of communication must be treated as an all pervasive tool or instrument which constantly touches upon the *stream of human life*. It is a form of life in the sense of later Wittgenstein where everyone takes part and nobody is excluded. The form of life functions and functions very well on the basis of some shared beliefs or some common measures (family resemblance in the sense of later Wittgenstein). Even though native language differs from community to community, from clan to clan, from country to country, but there must underlie some common measure or common beliefs (may be some conceptual concepts in the sense of Immanuel Kant or some basic particulars in the sense of P.F.Strawson). As the credibility of this paper actually hinges on this philosophical precept, interpersonal or cross-cultural communication is held within indeterminacy. Does it then lead us to assume that indeterminacy leads to incommensurability? This paper almost rules out the problem of incommensurability within the purview of indeterminacy arising out of translation manual. This has been justified on the basis of *a unified core of human thinking*, i.e., on the basis of conceptualism (either universal or relative or radical). Thus, language develops on the basis of cultural heritage and there underlies some shared or common measures or beliefs among linguistic community in general irrespective of their caste, creed, clan, nationality. The core of human thinking remains the same whatever the language they use, whatever the cultural heritage they have; whatever the geographical location they occupy. Thus, the paper strongly addresses that incommensurability may appear as a glimpse in cross-cultural communication, but it

would not be lasted for a considerable length because the translators with their sheer understanding and interpretation eventually overcome the problem of incommensurability within the linguistic environment of indeterminacy towards building up a world community. The all-important conclusion that the paper draws is to boil down the possibility of incommensurability within the regime of natural language that would appear as a world view. Secondly, translations of any sort whether within the same language or in different language would be indeterminate. In this sense it can be said that indeterminacy is *sui-gensis* in translation manuals. Indeterminacy arising out of translation manuals in natural language by no means invites incommensurability is the real sense of the term. Even if incommensurability arises, it would not be lasting within the regime of natural language.

The readers or viewers of this paper may be interested to take note about the insight of this paper that would meticulously boils down the possibility of incommensurability or communication breakdown on non-relative basis within indeterminacy. As language is culture-specific, a house, human beings do not live in the objective world alone or alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, rather they survive at the very mercy of the particular language as the medium of expressions for their respective society. Language as the house of being controls the world-view. As one's own language controls one's own world-view, naturally speakers of different languages will, therefore, have different world-views. But how do we synthesize individual's world view towards holistic world view is a matter of question that has been well addressed in this paper. This actually recalls the metaphor of "language-game" of later Wittgenstein. Under the generic term Game, there are innumerable games and each game has its own world-view that neither game can survive without Games. There is a family resemblance among games and in turn all games belong to Game. Similarly, there are innumerable sub-languages as like as there are innumerable sub-communities. Having said this, there underlies some common features or common overlapping conceptual characteristics on the basis of which all languages can function within the purview of Universal or World-language. In this regard, we can adopt translation manuals along with the background of conceptualism of any sort, human understanding, interpretation and the capacity of language learning. All these are taken together can help us to build up a world

community by conceiving a world-language. There remains indeterminacy in this language but there cannot remain incommensurability on non-relative basis.