

Preface

I have been deeply involved to complete the thesis with the hope and belief that the thesis constitutes a modest breakthrough from philosophical perspective. The thesis deals with a core philosophical concept, such as, the concept of reference which perhaps would be the single most important function of language that we are hunting in the arena of philosophy of language. Philosophy of language or linguistic philosophy talks about many different aspects of language and each different aspect is deeply rooted in showing or establishing the relationship between language and reality in some sense or other. Without the perception of reference the relationship between language and reality would remain obscure in the real sense of the term. Of course, there is no question of doubt that philosopher of language has taken ambitious drive at times to develop the relationship between language and reality. Language refers. There is no question of doubt. To talk of language is to talk of something other than language. This clearly suggests that language has some extra-linguistic implication. Therefore, there should not be any philosophical complication about the referential function of language. Then why there remains problem of reference? Why do the philosophers belonging to different referential schools involve in philosophical debate regarding the authenticity of this theory? We think all sorts of problems actually come from reality side. Language refers, but what does language refer? Does language refer something in the world? If it does, then what type of world it would be? Would it be empirical world? Would it be other than empirical world? Would it be logical or actual or possible world? This is where the debate actually hinges on. Moreover, if language refers, what type of language would it be? Would it be logical language or other than logical language? Thus, the philosophical debate comes from about the very nature of language and also about the very nature of reality. Considering everything into perspective, the thesis has been proposed to divide

into four main sequels besides **General Introduction** and **Bibliography**. In the main **Chapters**, various theories developed in the name of reference are proposed to discuss. The thesis begins with the classical theory of reference, followed by the causal theory of reference and reveals these two theories as conceptually contradictory with each other. In this sense, if the classical theory of reference is attributed as thesis, then the causal theory of reference may be attributed as anti-thesis and the debate between thesis and anti-thesis is vivid and clear. The thesis examines these two theories at length. After that the thesis engages to develop the neo-classical theory of reference which appears as a synthesis of both classical and causal theory of reference. Thus the classical, the causal and the neo-classical theory of reference jointly cover the whole development of the concept of reference. The thesis ends with concluding remarks where some concrete proposals on the part of the author of the thesis are extracted. These proposals would reflect the contribution of the author of the thesis.