

## CHAPTER FOUR

### A Plea for a Logically Perfect Language:

We have already noted that the prime objective of Russell's method of philosophical analysis of language is to dig up the logical form of language. We have also observed that the true logical form of language cannot be detected within the domain or parameter of ordinary language. It is important to note here that like many other linguistic philosophers, Russell was not so harsh on the application of ordinary language. However, at the same time he desired to make some necessary amendments on ordinary language as it is in its own form creates some obstruction to know the true picture of reality. Thus, clarification of logical form leads one to reconstruct a kind of language, which is philosophically known as 'ideal' or 'constructed' or 'logically perfect language'. Russell himself is interested for such type of language simply because it is a kind of language through which the fundamental identity of structure between a fact and the symbol for it can be properly detected. What is meant by 'a certain fundamental identity of structure' is made clear with the remark of Russell. Russell says, "In a logically perfect language, there will be one word and no more for every single object, and anything that is not simple will be expressed by a combination of words, by a combination derived, of course, from the words for the simple things that enter in, one word for each simple component. A language of that sort will be completely analytic, and will show at a glance the logical structure of facts asserted or denied."<sup>35</sup> Russell, however, does not think that a logically perfect or philosophical language is created except in certain fields and for certain problems. The so-called language of mathematical logic is the logical part of such a language. However, the language of theoretical physics is a slightly abstract part of a philosophical language. Russell pleads for such type of a philosophical language as he thinks that it is a great help towards a sound philosophy of the physical world. Thus Russell is in favour of constructing the language of mathematical logic and also in favour of constructing the language of physics what he calls 'philosophical language'.

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<sup>35</sup> Russell, Bertrand: *Philosophy of Logical Atomism*, P. 197-98.

The immediate question is: why does Russell plea for constructionism or revisionism? Why does he favour mathematical or philosophical language instead of ordinary (everyday) language? In answering to this question Russell would like to say that 'obstinate addiction to ordinary language in our private thoughts is one of the main obstacles to progress in philosophy.'<sup>36</sup> It is important to point out here that although Russell was not a firm disbeliever of ordinary language like many other philosophers, but the charges he raises against ordinary language are serious. Let us first explain the defects or loopholes of ordinary language as raised by Russell.

### **The Loopholes of Ordinary Language:**

One of the most important defects of ordinary language is that it is more or less ambiguous. One cannot deny the ambiguity of ordinary language. Ordinary language has its various uses. One word may be used in different sense in different situation. Thus, if one fails to understand the various meaning of ordinary language or if one fails to apprehend the logic of ordinary language, then the so-called ambiguity may crop-up or generate from the uses of ordinary language. Here we can after Russell mention at least two sorts of ambiguity of ordinary language relative to the logically perfect language. These are (1) syntactic ambiguity and (2) ambiguity between quite different kinds of semantic role.

According to Russell a sentence is held to be syntactically ambiguous if it *is* ambiguous and there is no way of accounting for the ambiguity by holding that one or more words in a sentence are ambiguous. For Russell the so-called 'scope ambiguity' is syntactic ambiguity *per excellence*. For example the sentence 'Everyone loves everyone' is ambiguous, but the ambiguity cannot be adequately explained in terms of ambiguity in any of the components words. In one sense, it may be interpreted in saying that each person is such that there is someone whom he loves and in other sense, it may be apprehended by saying that some person is loved by everybody. The difference, however, is focused through the different relative scopes of (x) and ( $\exists$ x) in the system of logical

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<sup>36</sup> Schilpp, P.A. (ed): The Philosophy of Bertrand Russell, Evanston and Chicago, Northwestern University Press, 1944, pp. 693-94.

formalizations. According to the first sense, the proposition under consideration is symbolized as:  $(x) (\exists x) xLy$ , and according to the second sense, it can be symbolized as:  $(\exists x) (x) xLy$ . Most people, however, find the first formulation more natural and this leads to the fact that it is quite common for widest scope to be marked by leftmost occurrence. Russell, however, illustrates this point by saying that descriptions, unlike name, are scope sensitive. An expression, Russell opines, is scope sensitive if there underlies an ambiguous sentence in which it occurs and whose ambiguity is explained in terms of the expression's different scope relative to some other expression. Thus it can be said, after Russell, that an account of scope ambiguity involves the notion of a language with a precisely formulated syntax. Unfortunately, the so-called ordinary language lacks such syntax. Only ideal form of language possesses it. Accordingly, one may desire to have a kind of perfect language, which is very much effective in removing the so-called scope ambiguity present in ordinary language.

Russell further inclines to say that some words of ordinary language are ambiguous in such a way that leads us to a faulty account of how they work. Here we particularly call upon the ambiguity of the ordinary word of the verb 'to be'. According to Russell the word 'is' has three very different semantics roles, which cannot be specified in ordinary language. However, all these three different roles are properly specified in ideal language by means of three different constructions. One role is marked by ' $\exists x$ ', another is marked by '=' and the third is marked by concatenating a predicate with a term.

The third major defect of ordinary language is that it is by and large vague. Russell elsewhere in his **Philosophy of Logical Atomism** seems to have conceived that the development of sound philosophizing consists of mainly in passing those obvious vague, ambiguous things to something clear, definite, which by reflection and analysis we find is involved in the vague thing that we start from, i.e., in ordinary language. Any attempt to have a logically perfect language through the process of reconstruction is the removal of such vague, ambiguous things that are mostly present in ordinary language. For Russell one important aspect of a logically perfect language is that it is not capable of further analysis. Since a logically perfect language does not require further analysis, the truth stated in such language can never be ambiguous. In one of the passage of Logical Atomism, Russell inclines to say that vagueness is a difficulty facing the creation of a

logically perfect language. Vagueness is a serious defect of ordinary language 'which it is easy to imagine removed, however difficult it may be to remove in fact.' However, later on, Russell takes, it appears, a different stance on this issue. In his **Human Knowledge**, Russell seems to conceive that a vague predicate is introduced as one whose extension is classified into three regions. There are those things of which the predicate definitely fails to hold, those things of whose it definitely holds and those of which the predicate neither definitely holds nor definitely fails to hold. Russell says that 'red' is vague by this standard and that vagueness is ineliminable. You cannot replace 'red' by a non-vague predicate, which holds of all the things of which 'red' definitely holds and equally fails to hold of everything else. There is no sharp line between the things of which 'red' definitely holds, and those of which it neither definitely holds nor definitely fails to hold. Alternatively, it can be said that the lines dissecting the three regions into which the extension of a vague predicate divides are themselves vaguely drawn. Russell thus claims that all empirical measurement is vague to some extent.<sup>37</sup> Accordingly, one cannot eliminate vagueness by replacing 'red' by a predicate of wavelengths.

We think Russell in his different stages holds different standpoints regarding vagueness. At times he inclines to say that vagueness is never wholly eliminable and at other times he maintains that the so-called logical or philosophical language is completely free from vagueness. Moreover, if vagueness is supposed to be a defect, it does not make sense to say that it is a defect on the part of ordinary language. Ordinary language in itself is no longer defective, it is the users of such language who understand or interpret language vaguely. We do not think that a language with vague expressions is on this account defective as a language. Metaphorically, it can be said that a law granting tax rebates to bald men would be bad law because of its indeterminate cases; however, the sentence promulgating this law would not be a bad sentence. This makes sense to say that language in itself is all right. Language lies there and it is passive. Having said that, if anybody fails to apprehend the meaning of language, i.e., the logic of language, then only in such a situation the so-called vagueness or ambiguity comes into being.

However, reconstructionists' would like to eliminate vagueness from ordinary language by seeking a minimum numbers of vocabularies and thereby construct a philosophical

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<sup>37</sup> Russell, Bertrand: *Human Knowledge* , p.276.

language, which is required for science. Does it make sense to say that the so-called philosophical language, which is required for science is a transformation of ordinary language? The answer perhaps is not. The so-called logical or philosophical language is not a transformation of ordinary language; rather it is an abstraction of ordinary language or an idealized generalization about ordinary language.

It is further claimed that in the domain of ordinary language meaningless sentences may even be regarded as meaningful. The reason has to do with the paradoxes and the theory of types, which was designed to avoid them. The paradoxes can be argued for in ordinary language, but the formation rules of a logically perfect language will make the expression of the paradoxes impossible. Since ordinary language is based on descriptive content, even a sentence, which is contradictory in nature, may be interpreted as non-contradictory. Here we can call upon the name of P.F. Strawson who says that nothing remains contradiction if there is a scope of description. Let us consider a sentence to make clear of what is claimed above. The sentence 'I am speaking falsely' is held to be meaningful in ordinary language. But if he who utters the sentence on a given occasion speaks truly, then he speaks falsely, as he truly says that he is speaking falsely. But if who utters the sentence speaks falsely, then he speaks truly, for speaking falsely is what he says he is doing. So the sentence under consideration is true if and only if it is false, from which it follows in classical logic, that it is both true and false, which is a plain contradiction. Thus it deserves the name of 'paradox' as it is not clear where the error in reasoning lies. We shall see in the latter stage in what sense Russell's theory of types can block the paradoxes underlying in the sentence 'I am speaking falsely'. It is important to note that the so-called paradox underlies in the above sentence is not make apparent from its physical make up and that is why ordinary language is generally held to be defective. However, in the logically perfect language there is a clear and distinct rule for protecting the formation of such sentences. That is why the sentence under consideration does not find its foothold in the logically perfect language. Thus Russell inclines to say that it would be a great mistake on the part of ordinary language to include meaningless sentences as meaningful. The general point is that there is no effective and adequate way of avoiding such paradox in ordinary language.

Russell further seems to conceive that that the so-called ordinary (everyday) language always encourages false theories about how it works and also encourages unwarranted metaphysics. For Russell one could extract metaphysical conclusions from language, but importantly one would get wrong metaphysics if one attempted to extract them from English rather than perfect language. Russell says, “The study of grammar, in my opinion, is capable of throwing far more light on philosophical questions than is commonly supposed by philosophers.”<sup>38</sup> Russell seems to have conceived that the importance of philosophical grammar is much greater than it is usually thought to be. For Russell all traditional metaphysics is filled with mistakes due to bad grammar. Russell says, “. . . . .almost all the traditional problems of metaphysics and traditional results – supposed results- of metaphysics are due to a failure to make the kind of distinctions in what we may call philosophical grammar with which we have been concerned.”<sup>39</sup> Russell further goes on to say that it is difficult to make this point clear ‘that existence is a property of properties, not of individuals, so long as one adheres to ordinary language. Why? Simply, because ordinary language is rooted in a certain feeling that our past generation had. One cannot therefore get away from the bias imposed upon you by language so long you keep to ordinary language. “The only way” Russell opines, “you can really state it correctly is by inventing a new language.”<sup>40</sup>

We think that the influence of ‘bad grammar’ on metaphysics is one of the main reasons to Russell for deploring ordinary language. It is important to note that Russell in his earlier stages was heavily influenced by the subject-predicate grammatical proposition, which encourages his monism. Under this influence ‘traditional logic’ held that every proposition has this form. However, subsequently Russell seems to conceive that our assumptions that words stand for something outside themselves leads to the wrong results when applied to English. The so-called logically perfect language, Russell says, ‘will prevent influences from the nature of language to the nature of the world, which are fallacious because they rest upon the logical defects of language.’<sup>41</sup> Such fallacious inferences are being witnessed in the case of descriptions and of ordinary proper names.

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<sup>38</sup> Russell, Bertrand: *The Principles of Metaphysics*, London, 1903, p.42.

<sup>39</sup> Russell, Bertrand: “The Philosophy of Logical Atomism”, 1918, in C.R. Marsh, p.269.

<sup>40</sup> Russell, Bertrand: *Ibid.* p.234.

<sup>41</sup> Russell, Bertrand: ‘Logical Atomism’ included in *Logic and Language*, edited by Robert Charles Marsh, London, 1956, p.328.

When we use a proper name we commonly imagine, though falsely, one definite entity. For example, when we consider Napoleon as a proper name, we thereby mean one definite entity as denoted by Napoleon. Napoleon is, in fact, a series of events, but not a simple entity. Thus what ordinary language tempts us to imagine is false. Russell says, "Proper names" as ordinarily understood; "are ghosts of substances"<sup>42</sup> Here we fail to understand that ordinary proper names are not really proper names (i.e., logical proper names), but only abbreviated descriptions. Accordingly, we hold falsely the unwarranted view that the bearers of ordinary proper names are simple substances, whereas in reality they are nothing but set theoretical complexes. Thus, Russell through the introduction of logically perfect language seems to conceive that it is wrong to treat ordinary proper names as names. Secondly, it is also wrong to believe that names name only simples and equally wrong to further think that the bearers of ordinary proper name as simple and unchanging substances.

Another important aspect of considering perfect language is that ordinary language contains redundant expressions. Russell elsewhere considers adverbs and their modifiers, attributive adjectives and the like are redundant categories of expression in ordinary language. Hence they have no place in perfect language. Why these expressions are held to be redundant by Russell? These expressions are held to be redundant for Russell, as they cannot be translated into any language with the line of **Principia Mathematica** Syntax. We think that Russell presupposes at the time of **Philosophy of Logical Atomism** that names cannot complexes partly by the fact that no perfect language name named a complex. Even in his book **My Philosophical Development**, Russell says, "I think, originally, that, if we were omniscient, we should have a proper name for each simple, but no proper names for complexes, since these could be defined by mentioning, their simple constituents and their structure."<sup>43</sup> Russell therefore comes to know that a genuine name is not synonymous with any descriptions. Accordingly, if the so-called ordinary language contains names for complexes, perfect language cannot translate it. If it is substantiated that ordinary language does not contain names for complexes as Russell does, then there needs to be a claim that names name only simples. Russell,

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<sup>42</sup> Russell, Bertrand: Human Knowledge: It's Scope and Limits, op. cit. p.88.

<sup>43</sup> Russell, Bertrand: My Philosophical Development, London, 1959, p.166.

however, conceives such an independent reason what is commonly known as the principle of acquaintance.

### **A plea for minimum vocabularies:**

It seems clear from the above consideration that by offering the requirement of perfect language, Russell thereby pleads for 'minimum vocabularies' by means of which the so-called perfect language can be constructed. He attempts to sideline the relevance of adjectives, adverbs and ordinary proper names from logically perfect language and thereby holds that only genuine names, names which are known by the principle of acquaintance, can be the body of perfect language. For Russell a minimum number vocabulary is defined as one having the two properties, such as (1) that every proposition in the given body of knowledge can be expressed by means of words belonging to the minimum vocabulary, and (2) that no word in this vocabulary can be defined in terms of other words in it.<sup>44</sup> According to Russell the idea of minimum vocabularies is important for two reasons. On one hand it prohibits the defects of ordinary language, which gives rise to the unwarranted metaphysics of substance in part via having names of complexes. By contrast a minimum vocabulary cannot contain names for complexes of which the structure is known.<sup>45</sup> Russell says, "What mathematical logic does ..... is to diminish the numbers of words which have the straightforward meaning of pointing to an object."<sup>46</sup> Accordingly, one can diminish the number of entities one's language forces one to assume. If one believes that there is a language containing a name 'n', one is committed to no fewer entities by preferring a language in which there is no such name. And if one inclines that 'n' is not really a name, then one needs an independent reason. The other notable relevance of a minimum vocabulary is that the words common to every minimum vocabulary 'present the hard core of linguistic world'.<sup>47</sup> This, actually, reiterates nothing but the principle of acquaintance. According to Russell the words common to minimum vocabularies are those which can be defined in no vocabulary, but

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<sup>44</sup> Bertrand, Russell: Human Knowledge, op. cit. , p.274.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid. , p.274.

<sup>46</sup> Russell, Bertrand: My Philosophical Development, op. cit., p. 237.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid. p.170.

which can be mastered only by acquaintance with the things for which they stand. Russell elsewhere also makes the similar remarks. Even in his book **Human Knowledge**, he inclines to say that the ‘main conclusion’ concerning minimum vocabularies is none other than that of unanalysable expressions.

Russell pleads for minimum vocabularies or minimal logical apparatus so that the whole of mathematics could, ultimately, be derived. Regarding this point, Professor Urmson has suggested that by pleading minimum logical apparatus Russell has articulated the logic of **Principia Mathematica**, which may have influenced Russell’s logical atomistic position. It seems to us that Russell’s works in mathematical logic may have led him to try to use a method and techniques similar to those he had employed to reduce mathematics to a few logical premises, to clarify ordinary language, and ‘reduce’ it to its fundamental propositions and, beyond that, to the basic constituents of the propositions. Urmson summarizes this point as follows: ‘As the techniques of logic could define and thus make theoretically superfluous the more complex and abstruse concepts of mathematics, so, by the application of the same techniques the less concrete items of the furniture of heaven and earth ..... could be defined and theoretically eliminated.’<sup>48</sup>

According to Russell the so –called ‘minimum vocabulary’ is required not only for constructing the logically perfect language, it is also required as the ultimate goal of reconstruction. Russell elsewhere says that any given body of sentences which we can understand, what is the smallest number of words of the sentences in question can be defined? Usually there is not a unique answer to this question, but the different possible answers will, as a rule, contain *same words* common to them all. These words are called ‘the minimum vocabularies’ which represent the hard core of experience by means of which our sentences are attached to the non-linguistic world. We may perhaps, opines Russell, define the ‘stuff’ of the world as what is designated by words which, when correctly used, occur as subjects of predicates or terms of relations. However, the relation of logic to ontology is very complex. We can in some degree separate linguistic aspects of this problem from those that have a bearing on ontology. The linguistic problems are capable of a precise solution, but the ontological problems remain much more obscure. However, linguistic problems have an ontological background, though a somewhat vague

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<sup>48</sup> Urmson, J.O: Philosophical analysis, Oxford, 1956, p. 6.

one. Sentences are composed of words and some of the words must have that kind of relation to something else that is called 'meaning'. According to Russell the degree of ontological commitment is involved in all ordinary speech, however, the relation of words to objects other than words varies according to the kind of word concerned and this gives rise to a logical form of the doctrine of parts of speech. If our ordinary empirical statements are to be significant, they must point to something outside words. The question then arises: what is the minimum vocabulary, which will enable us to assert what we believe to be fact?

We think that Russell's whole reconstructionist program as an effort to secure a 'minimum vocabulary', would give rise to the basic terms for the logical perfect language as the ultimate goal of reconstructionism. This vocabulary, Russell says, would be, in effect, the indispensable types of symbols remaining after the superfluous words have been extirpated in terms of words which function referentially. Russell seems to conceive that the quest for a minimum vocabulary has genuine ontological significance. Russell holds that if we can discover it, the symbols it includes will be those, which stands for objects that we should regard as the basic 'stuff' of the world. When we have analyzed our language and have subsequently eliminated from it such vocabulary as appears to be mere excess baggage, the residue will be those symbols which must be taken as having ontological significance, as denoting some basic reality. This will be the ultimate 'premises' from which the remainder of ordinary language is derived. Therefore those parts of ordinary language, which are built upon them, the incomplete symbols can be regarded as having only such ontological significance as the basic words possess and propositions containing such symbols will be capable of interpretation in terms of these more basic symbols.

### **The Objective of a Logically Perfect Language:**

The objective of a logically perfect language is to find out the logical forms of the basic propositions, which constitute the bedrock of the whole linguistic superstructure. These basic propositions are called atomic and each atomic proposition is said to assert directly some atomic fact. Since atomic propositions assert atomic facts, they can be considered

the fundamental elements of the whole language. Being the 'simplest sort of fact', atomic facts have a special status in the hierarchy of facts. Consequently, propositions, which mirror or assert them, will have a special significance, as their constituents' words will directly designate the ontologically basic elements, which go to make up such facts. According to Russell the idea of an atomic proposition will not in fact be represented in the syntax. It is rather expressed by a sentence comprising an unanalysable predicate of degree  $n$  followed by  $n$  unanalysable names (If we pretend that the relevant ordinary (English) expressions are not analyzable), such as 'wise  $x$ ', 'Loves ( $x, y$ )', 'Gives to ( $x, y, z$ )' which Russell calls 'propositional functions'. According to Russell these propositional functions become sentences when their variables are replaced by names. Next, he introduces the idea of predicate variable, written ' $\phi$ ', ' $\phi$ ' ..... Now, if we replace the names in an atomic sentence by name variables and the predicate variable, we can get atomic formulae, such as ' $\phi x$ ', ' $\phi xy$ ' etc. According to Russell all atomic formulae are propositional functions. These propositional functions would become sentences expressing propositions if their variables were properly replaced by individual constant. Atomic formulae belong to the syntax, i.e., language of **Principia Mathematica**.

According to Russell a logically perfect language results from the syntax of language by the addition of predicates and names, with the result that atomic sentences can be formed. Russell says, "Every logical proposition consists wholly and solely of variables, though it is not true that every proposition consisting wholly and solely of variables is logical."<sup>49</sup> Russell seems to conceive at least two accounts of logical truth. For him it is sufficient for being a logical truth that the proposition be reducible from 'the premises of logic'. However, Russell does not spell out any general marks of these premises. In the introduction to the second edition of **The Principles of Mathematics**, he says that a logical truth is one, which is 'formally true' or 'true in virtue of its form', but he confesses that it would be difficult to give any further analysis of what is involved in being true in virtue of form.<sup>50</sup> According to Russell in order to understand a sentence one has to have the knowledge both of the constituents and of the particular instance of the form. It is in this way that a sentence conveys information since it tells us that certain

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<sup>49</sup> Russell, Bertrand: *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism*, op. cit. p.237.

<sup>50</sup> Russell, Bertrand: *Our Knowledge of the External World*, New York, 1914, p. 66-67.

known objects are related to certain known form. In this sense some kind of knowledge of logical forms is involved in all understanding of discourse.

According to Russell logical form is important not only in our understanding of language, not only to philosophical logic, but also to inference. He says, "In all inference, form alone is essential."<sup>51</sup> Russell claims that logical form is applied to the formulae of **Principia Mathematica**, logical constants, general propositions, and philosophical logic. In short, it can be said that logical form is held to be the central idea. A logical truth, says Russell, is one that can be true in virtue of its form. A logical constant is a constant which also occurs in the logical form. A completely general proposition is a logical form closed by universal quantification. A logically valid inference is one that is valid in virtue of its logical form. Thus, it can be said that the 'so-called logical form as envisaged by Russell 'will show at a glance the logical structure of the facts asserted or denied.'<sup>52</sup>

Russell seems to conceive that if you know the true logical form of a sentence, then you can equally know how it is that the meaning of its parts combines to determine its meanings. For him the logical form actually tells us that certain known objects are related according to a certain form. For Russell the meaning of an unanalysable non-logical word is an object and knowing the meaning of the word involved knowing the relevant object. Russell even has attempted to detect the logical form of belief sentences. He claims that belief is a new best for our zoo. This means that a belief sentence does not have a logical form like **Principia Mathematica**. Thus the so-called logical form as proposed by Russell may be relatively imprecise in the case of belief sentence. However, one relatively precise view of logical form is to be found in the work of Davidson. Davidson holds that the best way to provide a semantic account of English is first to translate it into some formalized language and then to provide a recursive semantic theory, which in Davidsonian view will consist of a theory of truth, for the formalized language.

According to Davidson formal language or canonical notations are required for exploring the structure of natural language. Davidson says, "We know how to give a theory of truth for the formal language; so if we also know how to transform the sentences of a natural

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<sup>51</sup> Russell, Bertrand: Ibid. p. 42.

<sup>52</sup> Russell, Bertrand: The Philosophy of Logical Atomism, op.cit. p.198.

language systematically into sentences of the formal language, we would have a theory of truth for the formal language.”<sup>53</sup>

According to Davidson the logical form of a sentence of ordinary English language is the sentence with which it is matched with some formal language for which there is a theory of truth. Since Davidson seems to conceive a logically perfect language as a formal language, a transformation of an English sentence in a logically perfect language will serve it for the application of the theory of truth. Since a theory of truth is equal to a semantic theory in the eyes of Davidson, accordingly, the so-called logically perfect language is held to be a corridor through which a semantic theory is applied to English.

The concept of semantic theory was not developed at the time of Russell and Russell was foreign to the idea of Davidsonian conception of semantic theory. However, Russell has been familiarized with the Tarskian semantic theory of truth, but he has not connected his own idea with the theory of meaning. Thus we cannot attribute Davidsonian view to Russell. However, in the context of Russell, we would call upon the name of Davidson simply because we think that many of Russell’s comments about logical form followed from Davidsonian view. Thus on the part of Davidson, Russell’s own position can best be justified. It is also important to note that Russell’s claim that ‘some kind of knowledge of logical form is involved in the understanding of discourse’ can be justified in terms of Davidsonian standpoint. Davidson seems to have conceived that if we explicitly state the meaning of an English sentence within the parameter of semantic theory, we shall have first to give the sentence’s logical form. The logical form of a sentence actually reveals, opines Davidson, its semantic mechanisms. Moreover, an explicit knowledge of a semantic theory of English and thus an explicit knowledge of the logical form of English sentences actually forms through the medium of which the semantic theory applies to English.

Furthermore, when Russell goes on to say, ‘A is mortal’, he thereby equally means to say ‘There is a time at which A will die’. One may, however, raise an objection by saying that such interpretation of Russell appears to be inadequate as ‘A is mortal’ contains a bound variable ranging over times. Accordingly, the interpretation of ‘A is mortal’ as

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<sup>53</sup> Davidson, Donald : ‘ The Method of Truth in Metaphysics’ in Peter A. French, Theodore E. Uehling, JR. and Howard K. Wettstein, eds. *Midwest Studies in Philosophy*, Volume 2: *Studies in the Philosophy of Language*, Morries, USA, 1977, P.247.

'There is a time at which A will die', though claimed to be synonymous is not symmetric. However, if two things are held to be synonymous, they at the same time satisfy the requirement of symmetric. Anyway, if we look at Davidsonian interpretation, we will see a straightforward interpretation or explanation of the sentence under consideration. According to Davidson the Russellian sentence 'A is mortal' can be interpreted as: 'There is a time at which A will die' which we must give in order to arrive at a semantic theory for English by proxy of a semantic theory for perfect language. A further way in which a Davidsonian view would justify Russell's use of the idea of logical form is this: the direct applicability of a theory of truth of perfect language, but not to English, gives literal content to the metaphor that perfect language, but not English, 'shows at a glance the logical structure of the facts asserted or denied.' The logical syntax of perfect language 'reveals structure' in such a way so that it would make the relationship between the physical make up of perfect language sentences and their semantic properties. Since there underlies no actual definition of truth in English, one has to have the logical constants of English through perfect language. Thus we simply mention Davidsonian view of logical form owing to support Russell's main ideas concerning logical form. We think that there are points regarding the tenability of both Davidsonian own account, but this would certainly not the relevant part of this chapter.

As Russell is desired to have the logical form of the basic (atomic) propositions which mirror atomic facts, i.e., the simplest sort of facts, he at the same time explains the concepts of relation at its various orders which articulate basic or atomic propositions. According to Russell all atomic propositions assert relations of various orders. He classifies relations as dyadic, e.g., 'This is to the left of that', triadic relations, e.g., 'A gives B to C'. This means that the facts which atomic propositions assert can be said to be made up entirely of terms- i.e., designated particulars and relations. However, among particulars and relations, the former conceives the greater share of Russell's attention. In order to discuss the true particulars and the words that stand for them, rigorous analysis is required. Let us explain, after Russell, in what sense particulars can be apprehended.

According to Russell the definition of a particular is something purely logical and that is why he seems to have regarded it as axiomatic that there are such ultimate simple as particulars are supposed to be. Russell inclines to say that the question whether this or

that is a particular is a question to be decided in terms of that logical definition. Owing to apprehend the definition, it is necessary to know beforehand that ‘This is a particular’ or ‘That is a particular’. Accordingly, it remains to be investigated what particulars you find in the world, if any. Thus the whole question of what particulars you find in the real world is a purely empirical question, which does not draw interest to the logicians as such. In his Introduction to Wittgenstein’s **Tractatus Logico Philosophicus**, Russell says, “If an atomic fact is analyzed as fully as possible (theoretical, not practical possibility is meant), the constituents finally reached may be called ‘simple’ or ‘objects’. It is not contended ..... that we can actually isolate the simple or have empirical knowledge of it. It is a logical necessity demanded by theory, like an electron.”<sup>54</sup>

There are at least two things that will come up from the above remarks. These are (1) particulars are not simply postulated in order to justify some requirement stemming from the metaphysical doctrine associated with logical atomism and (2) qua-logical simple. Qua – logical simple is not an essential characteristic of a particular that can be empirically accessible. These two points need to be elaborated. Regarding (1) it can be said that that it is true that Russell’s logical atomism involves, barring his method of analysis, a metaphysical view of the world as composed of entities such as particulars are supposed to be. However, Russell does not seem to have thought it merely a question of postulating such entities. Like Wittgenstein, Russell seems to conceive that language presupposes particulars. Without particulars the words of language simply not have a definite and unique meaning. Elsewhere in his Introduction to the *Tractatus*, Russell says, “Logic has two problems to deal with in regard to symbolism: (1) the conditions of sense rather than non-sense in combinations for symbols; and (2) the conditions for uniqueness of meaning or reference in symbols or combination of symbols. A logically perfect language has rules of syntax, which prevent non-sense, and has single symbols, which always have a definite and unique meaning.”<sup>55</sup>

We think that by claiming the view that every simple symbol has a definite and unique meaning, Russell again recalls the relevance of the referential theory of meaning. Since the basic words in a language must have a ‘definite and unique meaning’, it follows,

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<sup>54</sup> Wittgenstein, Ludwig: *Tractatus Logico Philosophicus*, London, 1922, p. 22.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.* p.8.

according to this theory, that there must be absolutely simple entities functioning as the 'meanings' of these words. According to the referential theory of meaning, if there were no entities at all corresponding to these basic words, nothing for them refer to, they would be totally without meaning; and if these entities were not simple (non-complex) entities, they would not be able to provide definite and unique meanings. Thus, it seems clear that the so-called terms of an atomic fact must be simple. If the terms of a fact are not simples, then the fact, by definition, is not simple. It then can be further analyzed into facts containing as constituents the simple elements, which the basic terms designate. It is important to note here that this requirement does not dictate that any particular kind of object be taken as 'simple' only that whatever kind of object is taken as basic, it must, with the parameter of language system, function as simple. In sum: there must be atomic facts because there must be something for the basic propositions of a language to assert and these must be made up of particulars, together with various types of relations, because there must be simple entities to serve as the 'meanings' of the basic words.

What is said above clearly leads us to the second point, which states that particulars need not be identified with entities whose empirical accessibility affords them as epistemically privilege status. It is important to note that this is made possible simple because Russell does not clearly distinguish between particulars qua-terms of relations in atomic facts and particulars qua-objects of immediate awareness in sense experience. And it is this assimilation of one conception of particular to the other that leads him to conclude that words that would appear in a logically perfect language- only entities of which we are immediately aware, i.e. , entities with which we are, as he says, 'always acquainted', can be regarded as particulars. Thus, Russell seems to conceive that, "A name .... in the narrow logical sense of a word whose meaning is a particular, can only be applied to a particular with which the speaker is acquainted, because you cannot name anything you are not acquainted with."<sup>56</sup>

The so-called logically perfect language as proposed by Russell is completely analytic as it shows at a glance the logical structure of the facts asserted or denied. Russell elsewhere claims that in a logically perfect language there will be one word and no more word for every simple object. He further inclines to say that if anything will not be simple, then it

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<sup>56</sup> Russell, Bertrand: *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism*, op. cit. p.201.

will be expressed by a combination of words, by a combination desired from the words for the simple things that enter in, one word for each simple component. In this regard, Russell refers the language of **Principia Mathematica**. For him, it is a kind of language having only syntax and no vocabulary. It aims at to have a sort of language that would be called a logically perfect language. Thus, it appears clear to us that by advocating a logically perfect language, Russell intuitively a kind of language, which cannot possibly be served the purpose of daily life. In this regard, it is called a private language, as all the names that it would use would be private to that speaker and hence could not enter into the language of another speaker. Russell says, "A logically perfect language, if it could be constructed, would not only be intolerably prolix, but, as regards its vocabulary, would be very largely private to one speaker."<sup>57</sup> One may, however, raise a quip by saying that the so-called logically perfect language as advocated by Russell is not a language at all and it completely fails to satisfy the requirements of ordinary people. In later Wittgenstein's<sup>s</sup> voice it can be said that a language is meaningful if it has use in our form of life, in the community of life. We think that Russell was very much conscious about it and that is why he elsewhere says that logic is very backward as a science. For him the needs of logic are completely different from the needs or requirements of daily life. Ordinary form of language cannot serve the purpose of logic. Logic always desires a kind of language, which is somehow, or other different from ordinary or everyday language which sole objective is to give a true form that will help us to know the true ontological structure of the world.

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<sup>57</sup> Russell, Bertrand: 'The Philosophy of Logical Atomism', included in *Logic and Knowledge*, edited by Robert Charles Marsh, p. 198.