MEANING AND ITS COMMUNICATIONS: A STUDY OF WITTGENSTEIN'S PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE

Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University
In partial fulfillment of the requirements
For the award of the degree of
Master of Philosophy

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Certified that the Dissertation entitled *"Meaning and its Communication: A Study of Wittgenstein's Philosophy of Language"*, submitted by *Ms. Prachi Sinha* in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the **Degree of Master of Philosophy,** is her original work. It has not been submitted in part or in full, for any other degree or diploma of this or any other University, to the best of our knowledge.

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Declaration

I do hereby declare that the dissertation entitled *"Meaning and its Communication: A Study of Wittgenstein's Philosophy of Language"* submitted by me for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy is an authentic work and has not been submitted for any other degree or diploma in any other Institution or University.

I take full responsibility for any error in this work.

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Introduction

The Philosophy of Language

The study of language has been one of the premier research areas of twentieth century philosophy with the philosophy of language dominating the first half of the century. Philosophy of language does not study particular human languages. Rather, it focuses on more abstract questions of language itself, including how sentences mean what they do, how names refer to individuals or classes, how we can talk about non-existent things, and whether and how two sentences can mean the same thing.

Philosophy of language is the branch of philosophy that studies language. Its primary concerns include the nature of linguistic meaning, reference, language use, language learning and creation, language understanding, truth, thought and experience. At heart, the discipline is concerned with five fundamental issues.

- How are words *composed* into meaningful wholes, called sentences, and what are the meanings of the *parts* of sentences and the sentence as a whole?

- What is the *nature* of meaning? (What exactly *is* a meaning?)

- What do we do with language? (How do we *use* it socially? What is the purpose of language?)

- How does language relate to *the mind*, both of the speaker and the interpreter?

- How does language relate to *the world*?

Though philosophers had always discussed language, it took on a central role in the beginning of the late nineteenth century. In the twentieth century, language became an even more central 'theme' within the most diverse traditions of philosophy. The phrase "the linguistic turn", was used to describe the noteworthy emphasis that modern-day philosophers put upon language. In this dissertation we will primarily be dealing with the views laid by Wittgenstein regarding meaning and communication.

As a topic, the philosophy of language according to Analytic Philosophers is concerned with four central problems:

1. Nature of meaning,

2. Language use,

3. Language cognition, and

4. The relationship between language and reality.

First, philosophers of language inquire into the nature of meaning, and seek to explain what it means to "mean" something. Secondly, they would like to understand what speakers and listeners do with language in communication, and how it is used socially. Third, they would like to know how language relates to the minds of both the speaker and the interpreter. The specific interest is the grounds for successful translation of words into other words. Finally, they investigate how language and meaning relate to truth and the world.

Language is used, among other things, to exchange information about the world. This entails that during comprehension, the meaning of a phrase or a sentence is derived and, in many cases, its truth is verified. For this to be possible, information about the words of a language and about the facts of the world usually need to be retrieved from memory.

Here my main emphasis will be to understand how Wittgenstein's thoughts have actually moved from his book *'Tractatus Logico-*

Philosophicus' to *'Philosophical Investigations.'* [1] The belief that, he refuted his *Tractatus* thoughts in *Investigations*, has been commonly misunderstood and I will try to move in the direction that he has not refuted but modified his ideas on meaning and its understanding gradually. As Wittgenstein has said himself that one should study them together-

"that the latter could be seen in the right light only by contrast with the background of my old way of thinking." [2]

In stressing the importance of language, Wittgenstein shows that we cannot represent the world without language. We often see language as an acquired tool with which we describe the real world. It is the language that shapes reality, not the other way around. Only by using a public language can we conceptualize and understand the world around us.

This Dissertation will primarily deal with the interaction that happens between the speaker and the listener, and how meaning gets communicated between these two. Is it the same thing the receiver receives which the

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[1] Henceforth *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* will be named as '*Tractatus*' and *Philosphical Investigations* will be used as '*Investigations*'.

[2] *Investigations,p.viii*

speaker has said or the something different? And if the meaning is different, then how can we say that same thought have been communicated effectively?

Do we have thoughts, beliefs, and intentions prior to learning a language? Could we adequately represent the world to ourselves before acquiring language? How do humans ever come to learn a language in the first place? How could our ancestors have ever developed language without first having a way of conceptualizing their environment? Thus, to realize the true nature of language there needs to be a thorough examination in the light of above questions.

The primary concerns of what is known as 'analytical philosophy' is language and three main exponents of this new movement in philosophy are Frege, Russell and Wittgenstein. This triad (Wittgenstein at his earlier stage) was in unison about the importance of logic to language, but each contributing their distinctness to the analytic tradition. While Frege was epistemologically concerned about the different kinds of truth and structures of knowledge; Russell had ontological concerns, enquiring into the structure and reconstructions of reality, empirical questions about sense-data and their properties. Wittgenstein on the other hand was connected with the elements of thought and the relation between the language and world.

Frege on Meaning

Dummett claims that it was Frege who initiated the dominance of philosophy of language over epistemology, since the time of Descartes.[3] Frege believed in making thought free from reality. Frege in his 1892 paper *Über Sinn und Bedeutung* ("On Sense and Reference") introduced the distinction between *Sinn* and *Bedeutung* i.e. <u>Sense and Reference</u>. According to Frege, sense and reference are two different aspects of the significance of an expression. Frege applied reference to proper names, where reference is the bearer of the name, the object in question, and later applied the notion of reference to other expressions, including complete sentences, which refer to the two truth values, the true and the false. By contrast, the sense or *Sinn* associated with a complete sentence is the thought it expresses. The sense of an expression is the "mode of presentation" of the object referred to. He contrasted between language and pure thought leading to the contrast between ordinary misleading languages and its true logical formulations. According to Frege, one should never ask for a meaning of a word in isolation, but only in the context of a sentence. The meanings of words are dependent on the meanings of sentences in which they occur. Also, the concept of truth is fundamental to the meanings

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[3] Dummett,1973,p.665

of sentences, such that the meaning of words comprise their contribution to the conditions under which the sentences become true.

Frege defines the reference of a sentence as the aspect of the sentence which is fixed by the objects and properties referred in the sentence, which is also its truth value. But this does not comprise of whole meaning of the sentence as all true sentences does not have the same meaning, so that the sense of the sentences differ in meaning despite having the similar truth value. So we can say that as far as sentences are concerned, the sense-reference distinction is a distinction between the truth conditions and the truth value of the sentences.

Frege had considerable influence on young Wittgenstein which can be seen in his *Tractatus*, particularly, while beholding the primacy of sentence meaning over word meaning[4] and emphasizing on the notion of truth in the account of meaning[5]. Wittgenstein, by denying that sentences are names, rejects Frege's conception of the thought expressed by sentences as abstract objects. Wittgenstein also seems to be following the simplified version of Frege's sense–reference distinction. While Frege employed them

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[4]Tractatus, 3.3
[5] Ibid. 4.024

in sentential and semantic parts, Wittgenstein denies them having any references at all.

Russell on Meaning

The philosopher who has influenced Wittgenstein, next to Frege, is Russell. Whereas Frege views language as inseparable from logic, Russell, at an initial stage regarded logic as a theory about inferences between propositions. Frege talks about sentences, which have both a sense (a proposition) and a reference (a truth value); Russell on the other hand deals directly with propositions, but construes these not as abstract para-linguistic items but as sets of objects and concepts. For Russell, sense is wholly semantic. Reference by contrast is intimately connected with the named object. Russell said that most of the apparent proper names are in fact "disguised definite descriptions. So "Aristotle" is understood as "The pupil of Plato and teacher of Alexander", or by some other unique description. Russell gave the theory on denotation, where he said that we can have knowledge by descriptions about things with which we are unacquainted. So, Russell divided the forms of expression having denoting phrases into three groups. First which do not denote anything at all like 'the present king of France'; second which denotes definite phrases like the present 'King of England', which really exists and third those which are ambiguous in their

denotation like a man. The second group may be called definite descriptions while the third one as indefinite one. We can see that all the denotations are primarily based on the descriptions. Problems can occur when two expressions denotes the same thing e.g., Venus also sometimes the words have no meaning at all.

Russell's theory of meaning is based on the fact that all ideas are ultimately derived from experience .Understanding occurs when we know what the definable expression stands for.[6]In analyzing them we can know how new meanings are constructed with the other expressions. He has tried to explain how meaning of complex expression consists of simpler constituents, justifying logical analysis of the meaning.

Wittgenstein on Meaning

Wittgenstein accepts partially the views of both the two philosophers mentioned above i.e. Frege and Russell. From Frege he deduced that function-argument analysis held the key to the analysis of propositions; and from Russell he accepted the theory of descriptions and rejected the theory of types. The theory of descriptions inspired him in his

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[6] Hacker,1983,p.358.

logical positivist thought and rejection of types led to distinction between saying and showing. Frege and Russell thought that ordinary language was logically deficient in various ways, at least for scientific processes, needed to be replaced by a logical language. But on the other hand Wittgenstein, particularly later Wittgenstein, believed in analysing propositions of our everyday language, just as they stand to be in perfect logical order.[7] In the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein attempts to acquire an understanding of how language works. He believes that before we attempt to solve the problems of philosophy, we must first understand our use of language, and how it relates to the world we observe. The central claim of the *Tractatus* seems to be that thoughts are pictures of how things are in the world. According to him the problem with the language is its inadequate surface grammar and not the underlying logical form of propositions. In his later phase Wittgenstein denied the essence of language. Here he emphasizes on the point that nothing is hidden away from us while using language .The understanding of language requires acceptance of realities in many ways, and the meaning of a word lying in their use.

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[7] Tractatus,5.5563

General Introduction to the Chapters

In this work we will try to find out what Wittgenstein interpreted about meaning in both his earlier and later concepts of meaning in language, and how they get transmitted during communication. We will also try to see how Wittgenstein's earlier philosophy got metamorphosed in the later philosophy, and what he retained and rejected from his earlier phase in his later view. Further in the process of doing so, we will see how a language works and how we can try to free ourselves from the mistakes we create during any communication. This work will also deal with the interaction that happens between the speaker and the listener. How does meaning get communicated between these two? Is it the same thing the receiver receives which the speaker has said or something different? And if the meaning is different, then how can we say that same thought has been communicated effectively?

In the first chapter we will find that one of the major themes in the *Tratcatus* is Wittgenstein's attempt to reduce both the world and language to their basic components. On this account, the world is reduced to a collection of facts, which can be further reduced to atomic facts. Language is also

reduced in this fashion and each level of the structure of language matches a level of structure in the world. So, language can be reduced to a collection of propositions, which match facts in the world. These propositions can be broken down into elementary propositions. When we analyze elementary propositions, we find ourselves looking at the most basic level of language – names, and these names match up with the simple objects of reality. This provides us with a view of language that mirrors all aspects of the real world. For Wittgenstein, of the early phase, a proposition is a picture of reality. It is a model of the reality as we think it is.[8] The function of language, on this account, is to picture reality. Words gain their meaning by naming objects in the world. It makes no difference whether a proposition is written on paper, or contained in the mind. It still represents a fact of reality. The crucial point for Wittgenstein is that language is the only way by which we can picture the world. In the Tractatus, Wittgenstein had stated that a name means the object that it designates. So, the object being pointed at literally is the meaning of its name.

"The simple signs employed in propositions are called names" [9]

"The name means the object. The object is its meaning. ('A' is the same sign as 'A'.)"[10]

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[8] Wittgenstein, "Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus". Paragraph 4.01.
[9] Tractatus, 3.202.
[10] Ibid. 3.203.

There are problems with this view, and Wittgenstein became aware of these problems while compiling his later work. It seems difficult to accept that the meaning of a word simply is the thing that the word points to in reality. So, the function of language may not be to mirror reality. The meaning of a word is nothing more than the role it plays in language.

Further the second chapter on Wittgenstein's *Investigations* is an inquiry into the relation between meaning and the practical uses of language, and is also an examination of the relation between meaning and the rules of language. Wittgenstein explains how vague or unclear uses of language may be the source of philosophical problems, and describes how philosophy may resolve these problems by providing a clear view of the uses of language. Words are instruments of language which may have varying uses, according to the purposes for which language may be used. The varying ways in which words may be used help to structure our concepts of reality. Language is, in part, an activity of giving names to objects, or of attaching labels to things. However, the naming of an object is only a preparation for an anticipated move in the language-game. Wittgenstein describes language as a game in which words may be used in multiple ways: for example, to describe things, to ask questions, to report

events, to give commands, to perform other acts of communication and so on.

Wittgenstein describes the activity of using language as similar to playing a game of chess. Words are like the pieces on a chessboard. Each word has a different use or function in the language-game. Meaning is not an act which accompanies a word or thought; rather, it is the use that a word has to in the context of a given situation. People who play a language-game, and who play by different rules, they may have difficulty in understanding each other. People may have different interpretations of the rules, or may apply rules differently. People may, in some cases, decide the rules of a game while they are playing the game

Wittgenstein says that the failure to understand words or the failure to use words clearly, may often be caused by misunderstanding of how words are used in a language-game. Failure to communicate clearly may be caused by the use of words which have an unclear or indefinite meaning, or by lack of understanding of the relation between the meaning of words and the way in which they are used. The task of philosophy may be to clarify the uses of language, and to assemble reminders of usage concerning how rules are applied in language. Wittgenstein argues that the uses or meaning of words may change, according to changes in the circumstances and scene of

a language-game. To use words meaningfully, people must decide which language-game they want to play, and how they want to play it.

The meaning of words in a private language may not be the same as the meaning of words in a common language. People may need a common language in order to share an understanding of the meaning of words. The connection between a word and its meaning may be arbitrary while, in some cases, the use of words may not be governed by any rules, or may occur beyond the limits of a language-game. In such cases, aimless or meaningless combinations of words may not be governed by the rules of any language-game. Wittgenstein asserts that understanding of what is designated by a particular word may sometimes depend upon a previous experience of whatever is designated by that word. For example, to understand the meaning of the word "pain," it may be necessary to have experienced pain. In order to imagine another person's pain, it may be necessary to recall one's own previous experience of pain.

As we move to the third chapter we will see the working of concept of meaning in practical contexts. We will eventually see how we interpret a meaning and how it may get misinterpreted. Further how this interpreted

meaning is used by us during communication. When a person utters something to other person, how does the listener get to know the meaning of that? Is it the same thing which the speaker has conveyed or has he inferred some different concept altogether? And what happens when we try to convey the same thing to others, do we also commit the same mistakes or amend and reuse them. Thus, we will try to clarify issues in meaning and communication by taking clues from Wittgenstein's early and later philosophies.

Chapter 1

The Concept of Meaning in Early Wittgenstein

1.1 Introduction

In *Tracatatus-Logico-Philosophicus,* Wittgenstein has discussed various questions; such as the function of philosophy, the relation between language, reality and thought, the relation between facts and meaning etc. Wittgenstein is one of the philosophers who brought the question of the relation of language to philosophy to the focus of philosophical discourse. Man has the power of speech, which implies use of language in a meaningful discourse. Thus the question which now arises is how words acquire their meaning. Also, how language can be used as the means of communication? Wittgenstein has contributed much to answering these questions which we will see eventually.

Wittgenstein considers that the job of philosophy is to analyze language, i.e. philosophy offers a criterion for separating the meaningful from the meaningless sentences. According to early Wittgenstein, our

ordinary language needs to be analyzed into an ideal language where there would be one to one relationship between a proposition and a fact. He says,

"In a proposition there must be exactly as many distinguishable parts as in the situation that it represents." [11]

This kind of ideal language consists of elementary propositions, the propositions which cannot be analyzed further. These elementary propositions, according to Wittgenstein assert the existence of a state of affairs, and are accordingly true or false depending upon their correspondence with the state of affairs.[12] Not only is this but meaning and meaninglessness of a sentence is determined by state of affairs.

The view expressed in the *Tractatus* is that a sentence must share a pictorial form with whatever state of affairs it reports. Wittgenstein was impressed by the way a model, for instance of a traffic accident, could be used to illustrate the actual events, and the picture theory takes the relationship of model to situation as the fundamental semantic relationship. It requires that elements of the model correspond to

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[11] *Tractatus*,4.04.
[12] Ibid..4.04,4.2,4.21,4.211

elements of the situation, and that the structure of the model is shared with that of the situation. Furthermore, the structure of language automatically falls in good logical order, though we need philosophical analysis in order to comprehend it. Anything in ordinary language which is capable of expressing meaning suggests that it is in good logical order. This leads us to accept that if in a language, the sentence is not able to convey its meaning properly; it is not in accordance with its respective laws of logic.

1.2 Basic Concepts used in Tractatus

To understand Wittgenstein's early philosophy we must begin with the problem of language. In *Tractatus* he has tried to explore the conditions under which it is possible for the language to have meaning. The *Tractatus* gives us an explanation that, when one express an idea in form o a proposition to convey some thought, we actually speak about the truth or falsity of that proposition. Through *Tractatus* , Wittgenstein tried to give philosophical semantics in order to explain , how this can be done , by explaining how meaning can be achieved in any logically possible language under possible situations.

Here before discussing the Wittgenstein's notion of meaning in the *Tractatus*, in terms of what is famously known as *Picture Theory* of meaning, we need to understand some of the basic terms that have been used by Wittgenstein throughout the text. This will help us in the better comprehension of his ideas about meaning and its representation.

The concept of representation and how it is related with the picture came to Wittgenstein's mind when he learnt in a court how toys were used to demonstrate a model of actual accident[13]. Through that he made some observations which are needed for the true representation of reality. One of them is that the elements of the model must be similar to the situation which is to be represented and also related in the same way to the corresponding elements in reality. We will take up the basic concepts one by one before going on to discussing the Picture Theory.

Names

According to Wittgenstein,

"A name means an object. The object is its meaning."[14]

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[13] Kenny,1973,p.54.
[14] ibid 3.203

In *Tractatus* , the meaning of a word, the smallest unit of meaning, is identified with its bearer. Here one thing which is to be made clear is that Wittgenstein does not say that we learn the meanings of names by ostensive definition and then use them in our correspondence with the world. Neither is he saying that we need to understand the names before we understand propositions and before understanding the names we need to understand the proposition in which they occur.[15] It is only in context of a proposition that a name has a meaning.[16] Names have ultimate objects as their referents. A proposition can employ names and can represent configuration of objects but they cannot say anything about the objects, they can only name them. The arrangement of names in a possible state of affairs according to logic constitutes a logical picture. The name with the form determines the truthfulness of a proposition. We are thus, able to comprehend the sense of an elementary proposition by knowing its constituents and its form.

A name is a certain kind of sign used in propositions. Elements of a propositional sign, according to Wittgenstein, become simple signs only when a proposition has been completely analyzed so that the elements may correspond to the objects of the thought.[17] Signs are classified as names

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[15] Kenny, 1973.p.15.

[16] Tractatus,3.3. Note that here we see the resemblance the Wittgenstein has with Frege 's idea that it is only in the context of a sentence that a word ahs meaning.

[17] Ibid. 3.2-3.201

when they correspond to the meaning of their object. A name cannot be analyzed further with the help of definition.

Objects

Connected intimately with the notion of name is Wittgenstein's notion of object. Objects are simples without any parts and have the ability to combine in complexes. They make up the substances of the world.[18]The objects make the substance and the content of the world. Objects can only be named, sign being their representatives.[19]They cannot be explained in words. Proposition can tell how things are but not what they are. Just as names and objects are simples, cannot be classified into further meaningful parts, the naming-relation is also simple.

Objects combine into states of affairs in which they are determinately related to one another. An object is a possible constituent of state of affairs.[20] Every object contains all the possibilities for its combination with the other object. Since every object contains all the possibilities for its combination with other object, when one object is given then all the objects,

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[18] Ibid. 2.02-2.021
[19] Ibid. 3.221
[20]Ibid. 2.011

being part of the possible combinations are also given.[21] When all the

objects are given, all the states of affairs are also given since states of affairs

are nothing but the possible combination of objects. In order to take things

as objects, it is necessary to take them as having just one form and lump all

their other properties together as external properties, serving only as a

means to identify them.[22]

Facts and States of Affairs

A fact is that which corresponds to each pair of contradictory

propositions, it is that fact which makes a proposition true or false. The

totality of such facts comprises the world.[23] A fact is a complex of objects.

Without the facts we could not form the picture of the world.[24]As objects are

required for the picture, in the same way the facts are required for the

existence of pictures as a fact is a picture of the world.[25]A picture not

signifying a possible fact cannot be true or false, therefore will lack sense.

Facts can be positive, with existence of states of affairs and can be negative

with the absence of states of affairs.[26]Facts are also independent of each

[21] Ibid. 5.524
[22] Finch, 1971, p.54.
[23] Tractatus,1.1
[24] Ibid. 2.0212
[25] Ibid. 2.12
[26] Ibid.2.06

other like the states of affairs as the facts are the existence or non-existence of states of affairs.

A state of affairs on the other hand is a possible combination of objects or things. States of affairs are independent of one another.[27] The existence or absence of one state of affairs cannot help us in telling the existence or non-existence of the other state of affairs.

Logical space

According to Wittgenstein a proposition is only possible when it is logical and already involves the whole of the logical space.[28] All pictures have logical form and pictures present their present situations and represent possible situation in logical space.[29] An object always occupies some position in logical space, which means that it has the possibility of combining with other objects. As Kenny says,

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[27]Ibid. 2.061
[28]Finch,1971,p52.
[29] Tractatus,.2.11-2.202

" *Logical space , it should be explained is the sum of the possible –*

and- existing states of affairs plus the possible- and non-possible states of

affairs. "[30]

Sign vs. Symbol

The difference between a sign and a symbol lies in their use. In the

propositional sign also its application makes it into a symbol. The physical

expression of a propositional sign enables it to express its sense.[31] A symbol

is a sign in use, or a sign used with a sense.

Wittgenstein defines sign as that part of the symbol which is

perceptible by the senses.[32] Both signs and symbols designate and have

meanings but a sign is ultimately arbitrary or conventional but symbols are

not.[33] To avoid ambiguities different signs should have different symbol.

This would lead to clear and error free interpretations. A picture in addition

to being a sign is also a symbol and a picture's being a symbol is largely

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[30] Kenny, 1973,p,74
[31] Ibid. 3.34
[32] Ibid. 3.32
[33] Ibid.3.322

determined by its function as a part of our language.[34] Thus a fact becomes a picture-symbol by acquiring a special role in the language.

Thought

Thought is a logical picture of facts, logical picture being a picture where the pictorial form is its logical form.[35] Pictorial form is what a picture shares with the reality it is depicting.[36] A picture can have more spatial form in common with the reality in addition to the logical form.

We can say that thus thought as a logical picture is either is a meaning that every picture is a thought or that thought was a picture whose pictorial form was only logical form.[37] A thought is expressed by a proposition.

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[34] Ibid. 3.326-3.328
[35] Ibid.2.181
[36] Ibid.2.17
[37] Kenny, 1994, p.2

1.3 The Nature of Propositions

Proposition consists of a propositional sign with a projected thought. The possibility of states of affairs of proposition depends on its truth or falsity with the reality. If the proposition is true then the states of affairs exists, else the state of affairs does not exist. The possibility is because it consists of the pictorial form which shows that things are related to one another in the same way as the elements of the picture.[38]

A propositional sign can be a proposition if it is projected by a thought on to the world. The content of a propositional sign, after becoming a proposition becomes its sense. The content of sense of the proposition is objects of the possible states of affairs which the proposition depicts.[39]

Proposition along with the thought comprise the form of its sense but not the content. The sense of a proposition always involves two facts- a *positive fact* and a *negative fact*. Positive fact corresponds to the proposition which is true and negative fact corresponds to its being false. The meaning or reference is one fact which actually does correspond to the proposition and which we cannot know until we know whether the proposition is true or

[38] Ibid.2.151
[39] Kenny,1994,p.5

false. When a proposition is stated positively or negatively it has the same meaning. Wittgenstein believes that the sense of a picture is what it says while the meaning is arbitrarily determined reference.

Another difference between sense and meaning is that, meanings of words in a proposition have to be clarified in order to be understood but the sense of a proposition and the situation it presents is understood without any clarification.[40] Sense can be understood if all the constituents of the proposition and the situation it presents are understood. We can know and understand the meaning, but at times in order to understand, we need to know that first. Senses are on the other hand not known but only understood, by knowing the situations they represent.

In a proposition according to Wittgenstein, a thought can be expressed in such a way that elements of the propositional sign correspond to the object of thought.[41] A proposition is said to be fully analyzed when it corresponds with the elements of the thought, if not analyzed, the proposition gets disguised by the thought.

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[40] Tractatus,4.02, 4.026
[41] Ibid. 3.2

Also a fact which is the relation between elements of a picture led Wittgenstein to state that a picture is a fact[42].Wittgenstein called the relation of elements in a picture as the structure of the picture[43]. Every picture has a structure which is non-identical with the picture. Kenny suggests that not only the actual structures of pictures are to be considered but also the features that make a structure possible should be taken care of. In order to depict a picture the basic thing has to be the common element which Wittgenstein calls 'pictorial form'.[44]

Pictorial form is the thing common to both the picture and the pictured. Also it shows the possibility that both the parts are related in the same way as the represented elements in a picture.[45]The next thing worth mentioning is the notion about the logical form. Pictures can be more or less similar to what they picture, but still a minimum commonness is required which is needed to be portray the picture, even incorrectly, is what Wittgenstein call logical form[46]. It is a part of every picture in addition with the spatial picture. Every picture represent a possible state of affairs known as its sense, it is true if the sense agrees with the reality else false. A

[42] Finch, 1971,p.55.
[43] Tractatus, 2.15
[44] Ibid. 2.161
[45] Ibid. 2.151
[46] Ibid.2.18

proposition cannot be true or false in itself. It has to be compared with the reality in order to determine its truth or falsity.[47]

Also, just by stating a proposition, we can not be assured of its truth value. It may be true or false, but in general, we can at least comprehend it without the knowledge of its truth value. These points naturally lead us to state that we can successfully say something meaningful, although it is false. The things may be quite different as stated by the propositions. Also a proposition must be composite in order to be articulated wholly, because the only a proposition can be meaningful even when it is false. The concept of meaning, as Block says, in *Tractatus*, is dominated by the notion of truth conditions. The sense of any sentence includes in the conditions under which it is true or false.[48]

"*The expression of agreement and disagreement with the truth-possibilities of elementary propositions expresses the truth-conditions of a proposition.*"[49]

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[47] Ibid. 2.201-2.225
[48] Block,1981,p. 88,
[49] Tractatus ,4.431

1.4 The Picture Theory of Representation

According to Anthony Kenny, the picture theory of the meaning is an application of a general picture theory of representation to the special case of proposition.[50] The representation, as Wittgenstein believes, is through *isomorphism*. The model shows how the propositions and that which is pictured through the propositions are isomorphic with each other.

Another requirement for the model is to have *form* and *structure*. Here by form, we intend the possibility of the structure, and the structure is the actual way in which elements of model are arranged in a particular order, so as to be the model. Here one noticeable point is that the modes of various representations may have different representational forms such as two or three dimensional forms, but if they are representing the same state of affairs, they have to have the same logical form. If we come to understand the form, we get to understand it independent of the truth value of the proposition. A model represents a state of affairs and its structure consists of the way the elements of that state of affair are connected with each other. So for a model, to represent a given state of affairs, according to Wittgenstein,

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[50] Kenny,1973,p.54.

must be arranged isomorphically with the elements of model of the represented one.

By picture Wittgenstein means not only painting, drawing or other two dimensional representations but also maps, sculptures, and the three dimensional models, and even the musical scores. Any representation can be accurate or inaccurate depending on the truth or falsity of what is represented. When we talk of representation we also have to take care of what it actually represents and whether it is the accurate representation or not. This is the only criterion which will inform us about the meaning of the given proposition and whether the meaning is true or false.

As Kenny states[51] the relation between the elements of a picture- the fact that the elements are related in a certain way, is itself a fact; which led Wittgenstein to say that a picture is a fact. Also Wittgenstein called the relation of elements in a picture, the *structure* of the picture.[52] A picture actually is a relation between the elements having pictorial relationship to objects outside. The picture must have something identical to what it depicts

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[51] Kenny, 1973,p.54
[52] Tractatus, 2.15

to enable it to be the picture of the other at all[53], and this common element

between the picture and what is pictured is what we call a *pictorial form*.

As Wittgenstein remarks, since a pictorial form is the possibility of the

relationship between elements of a picture and is, common to pictures, and

what it pictures; pictorial form is also the possibility that the things

represented are related in the same way as the representing elements of the

picture.[54] Thus a picture actually represents a possibility in the real world,

though as Kenny had stated Wittgenstein has not very clearly explained how

it relates to the real world.

For Wittgenstein , say A to be a picture of B , A doesn't have to be

altogether like B, neither should it be altogether unlike B, but has to have

something in common with B, i.e. the pictorial form or the representational

form. This means that if A is exactly the same as B, A would not be called a

picture of B but would be only a reduplication of B. On the other hand if

they are totally different, from each other, we cannot call A a representation

of B. There can be a chance that the picture shows illusive or much clearer

picture of the exact reality, but the important condition is that it should in

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[53] Ibid. 2.161
[54] Ibid. 2.151

any way convey the form in common with the reality which has been called the *logical form*[55] by Wittgenstein. The various elements of a picture should be able to correlate with the elements of the pictured thing, be it directly or through any combinations among themselves. Logical form according to Wittgenstein is common among every picture and what it pictures; it is part of a pictorial form of every picture.

Every picture represents a possible state of affairs known as *sense*, which is to be agreeable to reality in order to make the picture true and vice-versa. No picture in itself is true or false, unless compared with the reality.[56] A logical picture of a fact is a thought. A picture showing the isomorphism of the pictorial form with its logical form is a logical picture.[57]Logical form comprises of pictures in any form common with the reality so that it can be depicted. Therefore logical pictures are able to represent a possibility of existence or non-existence of state of affairs. Though every picture is logical in itself but in thought logical picture are at their best, as logical structure forms the complete essences of their pictorial form. However, about this relationship between logic and thought, Wittgenstein says,

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[55] Ibid. 2.18
[56] Ibid. 2.201-2.225
[57] Ibid 2.181

"..thought cannot represent logic anymore than it can represent illogicality ,

for no picture can depict its pictorial form, and logic is the pictorial form of

thought."[58]

As Wittgenstein further says,

"The totality of true thoughts is a picture of world."[59]

"Only possible state of affairs can be thought of."[60]

Thought acts as a link between proposition and state of affairs. The

propositional sign when used in either written or spoken form gives an

insight into possible state of affairs. According to Wittgenstein, in an ideal

language the element of the thought corresponds to the objects involved in

possible state of affairs. Though in normal usage the form of thought gets

disguised the sentences as language is not designed to reveal the form of the

thought. As Wittgenstein have said these forms are really very complex in

ordinary language and we need proper philosophical analysis to make the

elements of propositions correspond to element of thought and reveal the

real logical form behind illusive ordinary speeches.

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[58] Ibid. 3.03
[59] Ibid.3.01
[60] Ibid.3.02

The picture theory grew out of a contrast which Wittgenstein drew and a contrast which gradually deepened between propositions and names.[61] Frege considered names and propositions alike having sense and reference. Wittgenstein on the other hand, instead of treating the truth value of the proposition as its reference, accepted the reference of a proposition is the fact that corresponds to it. Thus, the reference of P, if P is true, is the fact that P; if P is false it is the negative fact that not-P. As Kenny said this kind of explanations would lead to a contrast between the relation between names and its reference on one hand and that of proposition and its reference on the other hand. In case of proper names we can understand the proposition without knowing its truth value or its reference. Thus according to Wittgenstein when we comprehend proposition, we comprehend its sense and not reference. We have to know the case when a proposition can be true, and when it can be false. And both the aspects are equally important for a proper analysis of the proposition, as a proposition is either true or false; it cannot be both true and false or neither of them, and this is what we mean by the sense of a proposition. The factor that a proposition has sense differentiates it from a *name*, a name which has one to one relation with the object of the world. The meaning of a name is determined by whether an object corresponding to it exists or not. But a proposition exists even it is not true, i.e. is false. Proposition have directions, while names do not. Thus,

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[61] Kenny ,1973, p.60.

while propositions have only sense, the names are qualified with only reference. As Wittgenstein said,

"...*names are points, proposition are arrows.*"[62]

Further Wittgenstein said that, thus truth or falsity is not an accidental property of a proposition, but when they have meaning, they are also true or false constituting the relationship of proposition with the reality which we know is its meaning.So as Wittgenstein would say,[63] that when we understand a name and a proposition, we understand their reference and sense respectively, but the difference lies in the fact that we can understand the reference only when it has been explained to us , but for the understanding of the sense, we need not have its sense explained.

Through a new proposition we get to communicate a new sense with old words. We can have various combinations among words making totally unheard sentences, and be able to comprehend the sense of the proposition completely, although being unaware of its truth value. This led Wittgenstein to state that a proposition is a picture which depicts the fact that it describes.[64] This, in light of correspondence of truth and falsehood, says

[62] Tractatus,3.144
[63] Ibid. 4.02
[64]Ibid. 4.016-4.021,4.023

what a picture presents is its 'sense' i.e. a possibility of corresponding with facts.

If the sense of a proposition agrees with reality, the proposition is true or else it is false. Thus a logical picture is dependent on intrinsic nature of truth or falsity. A picture cannot be true *a priori*, in order to be true the represented possibility must be the case. Wittgenstein further says that by comparing our logical truths with reality, we are able to say whether they are true or false. These are the major excerpts from *Tractatus* which primarily deals with the concept of picture in logical space. The existence of logical space is being guaranteed by the existence of its constituents. A proposition actually determines only one place in logical space, but whole of logical space must already be given to it.[65] However, in order to get the desired clarity we actually need to understand what Wittgenstein actually means by representations, depiction, and agreement- disagreement and so on.

A picture presents a situation in Logical Space, the existence and non existence of states of affairs.[66] Here the picture does not present an object, but presents a fact. Though the elements of picture stand for objects, yet the

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[65] Ibid. 3.42
[66] Ibid.2.11

constitution of those elements are irrelevant to what the picture presents. The picture is an arrangement of elements in the space to form a fact — the fact of the relation of elements. Similarly to fact, a picture stands in a logical space, so that the relation between fact and a picture exits in logical space.

By saying that picture presents a fact Wittgenstein tends to say that a picture can be interpreted in various ways. For example, a vase of flowers, or a group of six flowers, or a vase of porcelain etc. We do take pictures as mere representations of objects but take them with various properties which may actually be relevant to present a fact.

"The fact that elements of a picture are related to one another in a determinate way represents that things are related to one another in same way." [67]

The picture can be interpreted from the background of the picture, that is, the form, leading to various consequences. We can say that a picture is devoid of vagueness, the form and the specific arrangement of objects always leads to a specific fact. When viewing a picture one can also imagine the elements arranged otherwise than what is actually the case. Picturing

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[67] Ibid. 2.5

doesn't depend upon the external properties of the elements that are represented. Such a relation would mean 'standing for' rather than the realtion of 'giving meaning'. A picture, according to Wittgenstein depicts the reality, even though it may be an incorrect representation of that reality. The form is the possibility of structures, while a structure determines the specific situation that is presented.

"There must be something identical in a picture and what it depicts, to enable the one to be a picture of the other at all." [68]

Here Wittgenstein emphasizes on being identical in a strong sense, at a level of form, between the picture and the reality depicted, in order to determine whether the picture is correct or incorrect. This explains how a picture can be incorrect, the form will be such as to enable us to construct structure that doesn't agree with reality and yet can be still be about it, since it shares the same form as that reality.

"A picture represents its subject from a position outside it. That is why a picture represents it subject correctly or incorrectly." [69]

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[68] Ibid. 2.161
[69] Ibid. 2.173

So we see that there is identity of form of depiction between the picture and the reality. The form of depiction expresses the identity with reality, while on the other hand form of representation determines the possibility of making sense of the picture. We can use the picture; operate with means of representation in a way not actually similar with form of depiction.

Presentation is nothing but how the arrangements of the element make a structure from the form of depiction; while representation involves the way a picture itself is taken to state something, that might be other than, what it represents. We can use presented facts to represent other facts.

According to Wittgenstein, the emphasis on the distinction between a picture's presentation and the possibility of logical representation can be interpreted as saying that a picture presents a situation in logical space, the existence and non-existence of states of affairs. [70] This was a brief explanation of what Wittgenstein's actually intends while introducing the term 'picture' in his work. Further, we will now move on to discuss how this concept of representation is actually applied by him in the realms of thought and proposition.

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[70] Ibid. 2.11

1. Propositions as essential composites

For the isomorphism,[71] a model has to be composite consisting of various elements which will accordingly stand for what they represent and the relation between the elements of the model and that of the represented will be like a 'pictorial relation'. In order to be a proposition, it needs to be a combination of meaningful words. Also, a proposition consists of parts, which, according to Wittgenstein, can occur in other propositions too. But as stated earlier not any combination of words will suffice for being a proposition. The combination of words must have sense-defining words with proximity among them, and appropriate relationship between them. We cannot say that, for example, fire irrigates. Though this sentence is grammatically correct yet it is of no use. Also, when we just put a group of words together like 'apple flower dance', it gives us no meaning. The point here which needs to be understood is that there should be a proper alignment of words in a determinate way which is able to provide us with concrete sense, be it true or false.

2. The Correlation of Elements

The relation between elements of a picture and elements of what is to be pictured, comprise of pictorial relationship of the picture. As we mentioned

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[71] Kenny, 1973,p.63.

in the beginning, name is an element of the proposition, which is a simple, non-analyzable sign. [72] It's reference lies in an object and the relation between a name and what it names is a arbitrary convention, thus if a certain combination of signs fails to make sense , it is not something to do with the signs; it is that we failed to depict a correlation between that fact and the reality. But any proposition is not just combinations of various names with objects, but there also needs to be proper correlation between names of the proposition and objects of the facts. A fact consists of interwoven elements to make representation possible. In a fact the elements are arranged in order to represent the represented. [73]

3. Internal relation between proposition and situation

The connection through which a proposition communicates its internal picture, according to Wittgenstein, is a logical picture of that proposition. Every picture includes accidental and essential features, accidental features are arbitrary conventions in a particular language, and essential features are those without which the proper sense could not be expressed. These essential features comprise of logical form which must be common with what it depicts. The number of logical form depends upon the number of represented situations. A proposition is internally related to situation, not

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[72] Ibid. 3.203,3.26
[73] Ibid.2.141-2.15

causally. As Wittgenstein says, an internal relation is that, without which the thing ceases to be what it is. The logical structure of a proposition is an internal property of it. Two propositions with the same internal relation cannot have different logical structure. We can determine the truth or falsity of a proposition by actually comparing it with the reality.

4. *Internal relation as shown but not said*

According to Wittgenstein, in communication, only that can be said by the speaker which can be grasped by the listener. We cannot say a thing which cannot be communicated by the other party. The possession of internal relation falls into the category which cannot be talked of, they can only be shown. These internal relations are between the proposition and their represented situations.

Thus, from the above points it becomes clear that a proposition according to Wittgenstein, shares the essential features of all picture or models. Thus, we can say that like a model, the proposition must be composite, having a form, structure and combinational properties of its elements according to the rules of logic. It must be isomorphic with the

logical structure of what it represents and it should be agreeable and comparable to reality in order to be true. Wittgenstein was aware of the fact that at first glance a picture does not look like a proposition,[74] the elements of a picture is in no way same as the elements of reality, though an isomorphism between the two exist.

1.5 Conclusion

Language, according to Wittgenstein, is like a material object where simple units of meanings combine in complex ways to form a comprehendible thought. And it is with the help of these meaningful units that communication is made possible. Wittgenstein has said in his book,

" *I conceive the proposition –like Frege and Russell- as a function of the expressions contained in it.*"[75]

We may emphasize once more that for Wittgenstein language and world have the same logical structure. He argues for a kind of isomorphism or representation of the world in a language which forms the pictorial depiction of meaning. When he says that "*we make ourselves picture*

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[74] Ibid.4.011
[75] Ibid. 3.318

facts"[76] he wants to say that in our life we try to picture facts in our day to day activities. These pictures can be true or false about the facts of the world. The symbols in any logically possible language have perceptible as well as imperceptible parts. The perceptible part deals with sign, governed by logically arbitrary conventions of ordinary language. While the imperceptible deals with the symbols. The symbol transcends the perceptible sign in ordinary language, where it disguises and conceals a proposition's pictorial form.

The doctrine of atomism helps us to know about the determinacy of sense and absence of reference failure. We will see it through the following points. Now what actually is a proposition? It is made of expressions-simple and complex. A complex expression can be analyzed further into simpler ones. In the same way complex names can be analyzed into simpler names denoting simpler things or objects. According to Wittgenstein, such names have no sense but only reference; they always denote the same object which should necessarily exist. The determinate sense actually helps to define the possible argument. For Wittgenstein having sense implies having truth value which shows that every proposition has to have a truth value.

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[76] Ibid. 2.1

Wittgenstein's most decisive phase was to abandon *Tractatus*' view that meaningful sentence have a precise though hidden logical structures accompanying belief that this structure belongs to the logical structure of the facts depicted by the sentences.[77] Wittgenstein concludes that whatever he said in *Tractatus* needs to be rectifies. He found that there is a variety of language with different structures serving different purposes. Language as he thought earlier is not a unified thing but consist of multiplicity of language games. This led Wittgenstein to say that sentence cannot be taken as logical picture of facts and ultimate components of sentences cannot be taken as names of simple objects.

This new version led Wittgenstein to consider about human mind and how it is related to language as well as the outer world. In *Investigations* he sets out to argue that words have their significance in language in so far as they serve the purpose of communication. This led to the views that there could not be a complete private language dealing with only one's own experiences, and hence there must be some external sanctions imposed by the speaker of that linguistic community to facilitate communication. This is possible only if we think of linguistic meaning in an entirely different way from the way it has been understood in terms of the relation of picturing.

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[77] Sluga and.Stern,1996, p.16.

Chapter 2

The Concept of Meaning in Later Wittgenstein

2.1 Introduction

Wittgenstein seemed to be dissatisfied with his earlier views in *Tractatus* which is revealed through the first few pages of *Philosophical Investigations*. Here we will try to evaluate how his two books are similar and distinct in their own ways. In *Investigations*, unlike the abstract and uniform model of *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein has used practical instances to tell was that there are innumerable kinds of words and sentences, and that there are innumerable ways in which they function in language. As we have seen, Wittgenstein proposed a logical theory of meaning in *Tractatus*. The prominent use of a logical system of truth-functions seemed to be at the base of a logical theory. However, this logical theory of meaning is found to be inadequate even if not wholly incorrect, by the time Wittgenstein writes *Investigations*.

2.2 The Transition

Thus, Wittgenstein tries to rectify his earlier work and the mistakes which he thought he had committed in *Tractatus*. He established a new relation between language and reality. In *Tractatus* he considered language as absolute and abstract, but here he regarded it as part of a form of life. He realized that the present problems of philosophy cannot be solved with methods that have been laid down in *Tractatus* for analyzing language.

In the earlier and later philosophies of Wittgenstein, his main concern was with language and its different aspects only. In both these two stages his conclusion was that the job of philosophy is not to give new doctrines but to explain, comprehend, and describe reality and the working of language. Hence, Wittgenstein's philosophy is not concerned with the reality as a whole or its relation with man and nature, but it simply describes the way words are used. He did not explain the language according to the world but the other way round i.e. he believed that it is the language and its use which actually defines how we communicate in this world. He saw the world through the mirror of

language. We will now consider what are the reasons which led Wittgenstein to change his perspectives.

It has been argued that the eventual difference between earlier and later Wittgenstein lies is the different ways in which semantical links between language and reality are understood.

2.3 The change in Wittgenstein philosophy

We come across several significant shifts from earlier to later philosophies of Wittgenstein. As we just noted, in the first few passages of *Investigations* he criticizes *Tractatus*. Now *Tractatus* is seen as providing us with an ideal preliminary model of language which might help in understanding our natural language. While writing *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein was interested in giving the essence of language and of the corresponding world. While in his later work he questions how a particular model can be the essence of all language. Wittgenstein says that the picture theory of language focuses primarily on certain forms of language. This theory only led to think about a particularity about language and thought in a non spatio-temporal form and to consider language to be an ordered entity embodying *a priori* order of the world.

In the *Investigations* this Tractarian concern about the essence of names, sentences, pictures, thoughts and language in general, is replaced by the notion of use of a word in a language game. In *Tractatus* by accepting the inner essence of language all language were treated equally. In later part Wittgenstein while dealing with how a language describes the world, moved to describe the functioning of language. [78]

2.4 Differences and Similarities

Let us consider here, some of the striking differences between early and later Wittgenstein. The idea of the language as truth function was changed and he said that there are numerous different kinds of language games and thus languages.[79] The proposition having unitary meaning was replaced by the idea of multiplicity of meanings in his later philosophy. The pictures which were supposed to be logical pictures of the world [80] came to be seen as misleading analogies in Investigations[81].The philosophical approach which helps by setting sharp

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[78]Tractatus,1961, 2.1512
[79] Investigations, 23.
[80] Tractatus, 2.182.
[81]Investigations,31.

limits to our expression of [82]thoughts changed to a descriptive mode of clarifying, arranging [83] and explaining various uses which language can be subjected to. The movement from logical pictures of language to language games was an indication of a shift from the analytic to a descriptive mode of philosophizing.

The distinctions between Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* and *Investigations* have always been emphasized. But more than that we need to look at those aspects in *Tractatus* which can be said to have made the way for later part of Wittgenstein work without which *Investigations* might not have come into being. Also in *Investigations* Wittgenstein thinks that the indicative mood is more fundamental in language. The implicit logical form of language can be said to have turned into the rules of usage both being independent of, but essential to the understanding of language.

The irreducible presupposition necessary for meaning still existed in later Wittgenstein's later philosophy, though this irreducibility was provided by his idea of rules, instead of the notion of form that we

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[82] Tractatus, 4.112, 4.114.
[83] Investigations,126,109.

encountered in *Tractatus*. Also Wittgenstein both in his earlier and later phases rejects the idea of explaining language in psychological terms or in terms of private experience treated pictures, thoughts and language as intrinsically structural. In Investigations he sets aside private and mental processes to show language that is` intrinsically conventional. The psychological experience at most accompanies language but never determines either our use or our understanding of language according to Wittgenstein.

2.5 Meaning and Use

A criticism of the Augustinian picture of language marks the opening of the *Investigations*. According to the Augustinian picture of language,

"the individual words in language name objects-sentences are combination of such names... Every word has a meaning. This meaning is correlated with the word. It is the object for which the word stands."[84]

For this view of meaning, words can also be read as depicting a number of different conceptions about how the language works providing initiation about language and its meaning; and thus leading to an enquiry

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[84] Ibid.1

into how analysis of language can provide solution to philosophical problems. In the Augustine's concept Wittgenstein clearly states the gap between our time and Augustine's.[85] the opening sentence contains a definite picture of essence of language, and still, St.Augustine on first reading can be perceived as natural and unproblematic description of how language is learned. For Jakko and Merril Hintikka, with the help of the Augustine's passage is Wittgenstein's sets out the view that ostentation language and pointing , is the prime vehicle of language teaching and language learning.[86] Also, Kenny holds that Augustine anticipates important aspects of Wittgenstein's ostentation presupposes a certain mastery of language and that ostentation by itself cannot make clear word's linguistic role.[87] Wittgenstein in his later works, is not concerned about the philosophical problems and their solutions , but how the problem arise Thus we can say that his philosophical enterprise in *Investigations* is not about the systematic or historical study of language, but the study of language , thoughts and their relation leading to formation of philosophical theories.

In his later writings Wittgenstein identified meaning with use. As he says,

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[85] Stern,2004,p-72.
[86] Hintikka, 1986, p.179.
[87] Kenny,1984,p.10.

"For a large class of cases- though not for all- in which we employ the word 'meaning' it can be defined thus: the meaning of a word is its use in the language."[88]

By this Wittgenstein does not mean that the attempt is to tell beforehand how a language works, but instead it suggests that what actually happens when a language functions. The word does not come to us with a certain set of meaning or a singular meaning, but a multitude of meanings. Here the point worth mentioning is that the above statement does not mean that the particular term can have any meaning whatsoever without any order. Nor can we lay out all the rules and grammar to be employed in the use of language.

In describing how a word is used, we actually describe its meaning, also when we say that we know a certain word, we mean to is to say we know how it is used. When we say, this is accurate definition of a particular thing, we mean that it confirms with the way the word is used. In contrast, we saw how in *Tractatus* meaning was bestowed by the corresponding objects. So, the relation of correspondence between language and the words, or the relation of representation between a word and what it represented by a

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[88] Investigations, 43

word, is being replaced by a completely different relation of meaning in the *Investigation.*

When Wittgenstein talks of use, he means by it the ordinary use of language in our everyday life. As quoted earlier, paragraph 43 of *Investigations,* indicates that how a meaning can be applied in a particular case. Wittgenstein here also indicates that to experience the meaning, i.e. how various persons can take the same word in different ways, is determined by the use of the word in a particular context. We can guess the rules of use from a certain context. To illustrate, if someone asks me where is Gogo, I answer she is in Dhaulpur House. The person unaware of this usage may use it as a place in a city but some, who are aware of the context, knows it as a reading hall. But still nothing can be fixed, new types of use come into existence making the previous uses obsolete. We cannot tell anything about a language in its completeness. We know the working of a language and meaning of a linguistic expression through its use, its function. So, Wittgenstein says,

"One cannot guess how a word functions. One has to look at its use and learn from that."[89]

Repeatedly Wittgenstein compares language with an instrument.[90] In a language, the words and the sentences act like tools and we are the tool users and the use that we make out of the words and sentences give meaning to those words and the sentences. When seen from a different perspective we can also say that a word has no meaning when it is not being used – the word takes on meaning only when they are actually being employed by a user.

But one thing to be kept in mind is that 'use' does not at all mean that we can give any meaning to the word as we please. Also, it should not be private, that is it should be comprehendible by others as well. Thus when we say that language is intimately connected with the user, it means that language has its meaning in its use and in accordance with the rules of use. Wittgenstein also asserts that the relation between words and their meanings cannot be simply displayed in rules of grammar, dictionaries, tones of expression, facial gestures, but also by means of the ability, confidence and

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[89] Investigations, 340
[90] Ibid. 569

agreement between the speaker and the listener. Wittgenstein tends to associate use with life or the lived world. It is upon humans to give life to language. Hence,

"*Every sign by itself seems dead. What gives it life? - In use it is alive. Is life breathed into it there? - Or is the use its life?*"[91]

Thus, it is through the relation which the speaker and the hearer has to words for the purpose of communication that we begin to understand how words have their meanings. Words and sentences in themselves are neither meaningful nor meaningless but are characterized only as meaningful by virtue of having something done with them. [92]

2.6 Ostensive definitions

The traditional Augustinian understanding of the meaning of words in terms of correspondence to things in the world is based on the idea of ostension. Wittgenstein in the very beginning asks about how the terms

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[91] Ibid,. 432
[92] Ibid. 23

like, 'five' and 'red' are understood .He answers, *"Explanations comes to an end somewhere."* [93]

Here by 'explanation' he means explanation in terms of pointing or ostension, and tries to show the inadequacy of such an explanation. Man has been taught how to use words in his native language. By pointing out to objects, he is said to gradually learn the meaning of expressions in native language. But such definitions work only if at some stage these words have been related to something other than the words. Say, if a person is taught of something in English, and he is taught the same thing in Hindi, he may know the translation of that but not what it actually means.

A term or a sign can be made meaningful in case, either we can describe it in terms of other sign, or in terms some non-linguistic objects, i.e. via some form of ostension. Ostension involves pointing to some or other aspect of reality outside of the language. Verbal definition such as found in dictionaries, according to Wittgenstein takes us nowhere; while through ostension, we get a realistic picture of meaning. Verbal definition proceeds from complex to simple analysis. We can give meanings to complex words analyzing them into simpler ones. But at one stage we

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[93] Ibid. 87

would not be able to simplify further. At this stage we will need something which we can directly point. Thus verbal definitions of words finally have to depend upon ostensive definition of the simplest parts. But how can learning of a language be accompanied by ostensive definition and how does this take us outside of linguistic arena?

However, Wittgenstein's main objective is to show that, ostensive definition can be itself interpreted in various ways. It can itself be explained in multiple ways. As Wittgenstein has argued with the help of various examples, pointing, which is quite common in ostensive definition can be taken differently by different people. Also in case of most words in language there is no exact method through which their meaning can be pointed to or ostensively understood.

Wittgenstein idea of language as tools takes our attention to what actually a language is and what is its usage. Languages can be used variously in different 'language games'. Ostensive definitions are also a kind of language game where we see an object and name it as such. The ostensive process helps us to move from the linguistic arena to real world,

while verbal definition can never achieve this. But, on the other hand, verbal definitions are free from linguistic ambiguities while ostentation is not.

2.7 The Private Language

Another notion of language that has been criticized by Wittgenstein is the idea of private language. Consider the concept of "private language." By the private language we mean words which hold their meaning due to inner definition and association of signs and concepts. For example, sensations. Wittgenstein says that,

"if you have given yourself a private definition of a word, then you must inwardly undertake to use the word in such-and such a way."[94]

It is the inward pointing which is essential to a private language. He introduces the idea of private language[95] as one that refers to an individual's immediate private sensations. We may now ask why at all the idea of private language is important? This may be due to the fact that it forms a theory of meaning and understanding. He asks can there be a language through which one can communicate with oneself only and if that happens then is public

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[94] Ibid. 262
[95] Ibid. 243

agreement useless? What happens when a person speaks to himself and when he shares his notion of pain? Can his pain be communicated to anybody else? However, Wittgenstein says that the meaning of pain is not merely private as it depends also on how others take meaning to be. Wittgenstein asks, '

"How do words refer to sensations?"[1]

Here Wittgenstein says that there is a word which is correlated to its meaning. Meaning is the object for which the word stands. Wittgenstein shows how a private sign may indicate various things in a language, also in language of sensations, the meaning of word is not some object but something else, and although the meaning of sensation words need public agreement, yet they are personal to the concerned being only. If one says he is in pain, the meaning of 'pain' is known to him only and cannot be communicated to others in the same way, whereas the meanings of words like 'apple' and 'pencil' can be. Thus we can say that sensation words are not entirely under public control but controlled by one's own use of those words. So he says,

"Only I can know whether I am really in pain; another person can only surmise it.

This means that, every individual pain is different from each other and have particular meaning for the experiencer of the pain, and no one else other than the experiencer himself would be able to know its meaning. In arguing against private language Wittgenstein language denies the privacy of meaning, but not the privacy of experience. It means that though Wittgenstein denies that one could have private language, yet he accepts that one could have their private experiences.

The private language argument is mainly about meanings of terms used for private sensations, but Wittgenstein speaks of private meaning in general. If we take meanings as private, then the fact that people communicate with each other cannot be explained. So, to reconcile between privacy of meaning and communicability of meaning we can say that meaning has dual aspect, i.e. a private and a public aspects, and latter can the later being used during communication. But is it really possible to uphold the dual aspect account of meaning? Wittgenstein asks if one would not know what the other actually means by a word. He answered that there

can be a possibility for this. Wittgenstein gave several arguments against the

private language which can be seen as following,

Wittgenstein comments at that my right hand cannot give my left hand

money, because '*the further practical consequences would not be those of*

gift."[96] He goes on to draw an analogy with a private definition of a word.

This private definition is not a real definition, presumably, because it does

not have further practical consequences of a definition. But why so?

Wittgenstein argues that, mark 'S' which some one writes in a daily record

for the occurrence of a certain sensation, even allowing for the sake of

argument that it could really be meaningful, could not have genuine,

practical use.[97] A private definition could not have practical consequences

because the giver of the definition could not subsequently be sure that he or

she remembered it correctly. Thus at, we are invited to imagine ' *a person*

whose memory could not retain what the word pain meant.'[98]

The above section deals with a privately established correlation

between a sensation and utterances of a sign. If we imagine that such a

correlation is possible, would it really confer the meaning on the sign? In

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[96] Ibid. 268
[97] Ibid. 270
[98] Ibid. 271

this argument Wittgenstein explores the idea that there is a gap between knowing a correlation and possessing a definition. So he says,

"a great deal of stage settings in the language is presupposed if the mere act of naming is to make sense."[99]

Naming here means something more than merely correlating a thing and a sign. Just to make a connection between sensation and a sign would not yet to be understood that sign as a name. On the other hand, naming and ostensively defining are themselves only preliminary moves in a language-game, not fully fledged activity like describing.[100]

This section helps to explain what Wittgenstein means by the 'stage setting' necessary for naming.[101] He says that 'an ostensive definition explains the use – the meaning- of word when the overall role of the word in language is clear.' This seems to suggest that a private language could not define 'S' or use 'S' as a name, unless he or she already had a language and a clear role in it for 'S'. Privately established relations could not be the basis of a language, because they could count as a definition only for someone

[99] Ibid. 257
[100] Ibid. 49
[101] Ibid. 30-31

who already has a language. These distinctions provide an argument against a private language. Wittgenstein says that,

"Suppose you came as an explorer into an unknown country with a language quite strange to you. In what circumstances would you say that the people there gave orders, understood them , obeyed them, rebelled against them, and so on?The common behavior of mankind is the system of reference by means of which we interpret an unknown language."[102]

It follows that, without a degree of regularity, of correlation between utterance and action, there is nothing in the situation we can call a language. But in the case of someone who occasionally writes 'S' in a diary, no such regularity would be discoverable, and therefore a private language would not be a language.[103]

Wittgenstein further says that we can interpret utterance as language only if we can recognize the speaker's overall behavior, only if we can assimilate it to kinds of behavior with which we are familiar. Wittgenstein says that in a private language, a criterion of identity for my sensation would be needed. Again, to quote Wittgenstein , *"if I assume the*

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[102] Ibid. 206
[103] Ibid. 207

abrogation of the normal language-game with the expression of a sensation,

I need a criterion of identity for the sensation; and then the possibility of

error also exists. " [104]

Wittgenstein here states that the use of a sign in a private language

must be based on inner ostensive definition, which like any other ostensive

definition, can always is variously interpreted.

If the use of a sign in a private language is controlled by an ostensive

definition, one part of the definition must provide a sample- sensation like

this, and this sample functions as a criterion of type-identity for future

sensations. But if I use a sample to make a judgment about which sensation

I am experiencing, a possibility of misidentifications must exist.

Against this, Wittgenstein wants to emphasize how little our actual talk

about sensations depends on using criteria. Wittgenstein, he says that I have

no criterion for the sameness of two of my images, or for the redness of an

image. [105]He says that I do not identify my sensation by criteria, which

means that in a sense, I use the word for that sensation without

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[104] Ibid. 28
[105] Ibid. 77

justification. [106] This may be the reason why Wittgenstein advise us to 'get rid of the idea of the private object in this way : assume it constantly changes, but that you do not notice the change because your memory constantly deceives you. The point is that we have no place for this hypothesis in our ordinary talk about sensations, but that if the private object model of sensation language were correct , we would have .

On the private language model of meaning, we each know from our own experience of pain what 'pain' means, because it is our experience which makes the word meaningful. Wittgenstein argues that it would then be possible for the experience everyone calls pain to be quite different.[107] The individual's experience would be like a beetle hidden in a box that no one else could open: different people's beetle might be quite different. Similarly, he says, 'The assumption would thus be possible – though unverifiable- that one section of mankind had one sensation of red and another section the other.'[108] Wittgenstein dos not say that the hypothesis of inner variation is meaningless. He says that, assuming the sign in question had a use in public language; it 'would not be use as a name of a thing'[109]. This supports the view that Wittgenstein connects independent testing with

[106] Ibid. 289-290
[107] Ibid. 293
[108] Ibid. 272
[109] Ibid. 293

objectivity not meaning. Wittgenstein includes a sign S to discuss whether there can be a private language, which no other person could understand.[110] But the language should not be merely conglomerate of signs but they should also be interrelated amongst themselves in various ways. If S can be such a sign which occurs from time to time, then will S be able to state in a private language. If not then S will only have a private meaning in context of a language that is not private.

According to Wittgenstein, if we take the idea of a private language that other cannot understand. [111] There can be a language which person can use for his personal use. Even if nobody else would know, still the language would exist. This notion is purely private language is in its very conception unacceptable for Wiggenstein.

2.8 Language games and Rules

As we have seen, Wittgenstein held that language depends on 'agreement of judgments' to provide standard of right and wrong. He says that whether the human agreement will decide what is true and not true.[112]

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[110] Ibid. 243
[111] Ibid. 257
[112] Ibid. 249

This he tries to make which he answers by taking an example that a man thinks that the earth is flat. Now did the shape of earth will change if the agreement among the people will change? Meaning is what is established by the general agreement of sameness, which is in use. One can agree among themselves and call a chair a table and vice versa. Without the fundamental agreement in use, it would make no sense to speak of disagreement regarding particular matter of fact. And such an agreement must also exist among the users of the word at a given time. If not, one would be calling , say a color red and other would call it blue, thus, defying the whole notion of colors.

In the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein talked about the logical form as our limits of our language, but later he speaks about the forms of life. These references to 'life' and 'forms of life' show how Wittgenstein regarded logic as intertwined with human needs and interests, in contrast to the earlier conception.

What is a language game? Hintikka comments on this that it is to act in accordance with a rule and is one of the most important concepts in Wittgenstein's later philosophy. The role of a language game is to mediate

between the language and the reality. First Wittgenstein held the view that it constituted of name-object relations. Later on he conclude that language game must be grasped and learned by means of the rules that govern moves in a language game.

Language game can be viewed from various perspectives. In *Tractatus* Wittgenstein talks about projective relation between language and the world. Language games mediate between word-object relations and teaching language games is like training a new learner in a new skill rather than conveying to him definitions of words and expressions[113]. Language games consist not just of language or language use, but also of certain actions and the activities may not be linguistic.[114] Using a language and using it in the way that its meaning are different, Wittgenstein makes a distinction between two kinds of language games; which gives a certain meaning and through which we can learn meaning and secondly that language game in which we utter a word.

Wittgenstein, on the other hand, emphasizes the role of rule governed human activities in constituting the basic representative relation between

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[113] Ibid. p.213
[114] Ibid. p.219

language and reality. On the other hand, this highlights the fact that language can be used in many different ways, and not just in describing things. Wittgenstein does not reject the descriptive meaning in favour of language games, but claims that descriptive meaning itself is a form of language game. Wittgenstein also claimed that rules of grammar are constituents of language game in the same way in which rules of chess are in the game chess. If someone follows, other rules, he is playing another game. But unlike games can we say in language what may or may not be done. This can be true in case of a foreign language, but we always do not confirm with rule to say, 'I am in pain.'[115]

The concept of 'Rule' and how it is followed in language is a complementary to the understanding of words. Wittgenstein wanted to show that language is rule governed. But one should note that rules are not sufficient enough to explain why we need to ponder while communicating even when the rules are given to us.

Wittgenstein compares rules of grammar with that of rules of a game. If someone in either of these two cases, do not follow the rules, then we will not be playing the game correctly or will be playing a different game

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[115] Investigations, 83

altogether. In a game like Chess or so, we decide beforehand what are the exact rules, but can the same thing be done with the language. These rules may help in learning a second language or a foreign language but not according to Wittgenstein. We do not confirm to a rule and say that I am in pain or so. A non-knower of language may have to see the dictionary or so every time to confirm up with the rule but this cannot be done by the native speakers.

Any language can both be used in the right and the wrong way. While any irregularity in the world or the nature cannot be wrong, in language we call that thing wrong. That is why Wittgenstein objected that the sign S, if used will be neither right nor would be wrong. No one can say that without rules one cannot identify what is right and what is wrong. But this is not true. We can use language variously in order to communicate and if we do not follow the rules, one could tell that it is not the proper usage of language at all. The comparison drawn by Wittgenstein between language and game is fruitful. But one thing should also emphasize that language is not exactly a game. Games and their rules can be invented, changed and aborted, but this is not the case with language in real. A game may be verity long or short. But same things cannot be applied to language. In fact without language we cannot evaluate even the language game.

2.9 Conclusion

We have seen how Wittgenstein modified his earlier views in order to form a kind of turning point in his philosophy. He believed language to be social phenomena. He rejected the notion of 'private language' confined to singular person. Unlike *Tractatus, where* he tried to find the essence of language by finding relation of language to certain ontological issues. There the world was defined under the realms of language, analyzing the language in order to reach elementary propositions. While in *Investigations,* Wittgenstein rejected the essential element in the domain of language. Wittgenstein believed in many logic of language. Meaning of an expression lies is its use in the language games.

Language is not a uniform entity but includes various activities, and all activities like speaking jokes, stories, singing, and so on come under language games.[116]Language being a collection of games is not a uniform thing, but has multiplicity. He denied the essence of language by denying the univ ersal element of language. Language is a part of activity, a form of life.

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[116] Investigation.226

"What has to be accepted, the given, is- so one could say –forms of life."

We speak in a communal activity, a way of living in society which is part of a communal activity, a way of living in society which Wittgenstein calls a 'form of life.' It is through sharing in the playing of language games that language is connected with our life.

The meaning of an expression lying in its use can be put into much language games. Meaning actually lies in the particular context in which the word is being used. Similarly, a word has no meaning if it corresponds to nothing. Wittgenstein believed that the functions performed by the words and sentences in a language game determine the language, and not the objects that corresponds to them. Thus, describing the day to day ordinary phenomena.

3.1 Introduction

Language, though being the most used and practiced form of human communication, holds a mystery for those who use it. We try our level best to communicate successfully, yet fail repeatedly. This leads us to ask what are the factors that are reasons for committing such mistakes? Or, to put in other words, how is it, that despite making so many mistakes, we are able to communicate with each other? Wittgenstein talks about language and meaning and how it gets communicated during a conversation. We do not go and search for new things, neither do we invent some facts every time we start communicating; but what we actually do is that we understand and interpret the communicated meaning from the facts which are lying around us. Instead of talking about some imaginative entities we refer to the existing things in the world and talk about them. We do not explain or analyze them before using them but we plainly use them and try to communicate. In Wittgenstein's words,

"simply puts everything before us, and neither explains nor deduces anything. - Since everything lies open to view there is nothing to explain. For what is hidden, for example, is of no interest to us"[117]

"How do sentences manage to represent? - Don't you know? For nothing is hidden."[118]

This may all seem simple and one may wonder why one is at all bothered about simple phenomena as communication that is already working nicely. But this is not true. We need to inquire that though being simple why there has to be so much contemplation regarding meaning, its understanding and its communication. We will see further in this chapter that how these dilemmas of philosophy of language have to be dealt with.

3.2 What is Meaning?

The concept of meaning has been a much debated issue among the philosophers of language. Thus with its multiple faces it had always intrigued philosophers. People say and mean various things in spite of being in the same conversation. If this happens, how can we ever say that any

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[117] Investigations,126.
[118] Ibid. 435.

communication between certain groups of people is taking place correctly? One can say that meaning is not just an object or a representation of the object, but it is what we construct and transmit during communication.

When a person says something to the other person, the speaker may not be able to tell whether the hearer has understood him or her, but the hearer's behavioural response to the sentence will lead the speaker to infer whether the listener has understood the meaning or not. In other words, we can say that we come to know about the person's understanding of, the meaning through his actions and reactions. For example When we ask a person to bring a chair and he actually brings it we can say that he knows the meaning of the chair and thus he has behaved accordingly, but if he had not brought the chair but something else, we have to say that he did not knew the meaning of the word chair. Thus, by looking at actions and reactions of the listener we can comprehend whether the listener is getting our conversation or not. We realize that somebody has understood the meaning of the word or sentence by looking at his or her reaction.

We may think we understand a word or a sentence and still may fail to understand that. This may be due to various reasons; like sometimes we

are not aware of the correct meaning, or the language is foreign to us. The question that may be asked here is: How will we determine that there is actually a conversation going on and the purpose of speaking and listening is being achieved? Here we will be dealing with the linguistic meaning and how its denotation will affect the process of communication.

The discussion about meaning will hopefully lead to the process of simplifying the various problems centering around role the concept of meaning and communication. Meaning and its relation with its various aspects such as truth, falsity, certainty, possibility, and so on will hopefully provide a proper analysis of the language and its role in communication.

3.3 Meaning and its Interpretation

In our social life and the interaction we perform within it, we use a variety of signs and symbol both in oral or written forms. One major component in the process of communication is how these signs and symbols are interpreted. Just by saying that one have transmitted the message, one

cannot be assure of transmitting the meaning also.[119] Every person's perception differs and we tend to give meaning to our transactions accordingly. So, if this happens, we can say that meanings are private in this respect and we all have different understanding. In this scenario, how can we say that we do understand each other![120]

During communication, we can say that language takes an objective form and our speech and words acts as physical carriers of this objectified meaning.[121] This is done through various symbols which can be graphic or auditory. Interpretation depends on meaning conveyed by the words or sentences, and how they are comprehended in relation with their context. When one is not aware of the speaker's or author's intention and the context, the same word or sentence can create different interpretations in accordance with the receiver's background. There can also be a situation when the reader or listener interprets the meaning freely in accordance of his or her own understanding rather than the author's or speaker's. Priddy calls these anomalies of the situation in the understanding of language misinterpretation. But on the other hand if the context is clear, the chance of getting misinterpreted minimizes, and thus leading to a path for effective

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[119] Glanville, p5.
[120] Ibid. p5.
[121] Priddy, 1999.

communication. We will, in the next section, try to further clarify this notion of interpretation.

3.4 Meaning and its Communication

In any kind of conversation or an effort to communicate the main motive of the speaker is to convey what he or she is thinking about of. This we can call as *intended* meaning.[122] The intended meaning carries with it some motive or purpose, this we can name as *purposive* meaning.[123] For example, the words 'This is fantastic!' said in certain contexts have the intended purpose of praising a thing, but in other contexts the same words may be used as a ridicule. So, here the same string of words is used as a sarcastic remark rather than a praise. Along with them Priddy says, that there can also be a kind of *potential* meaning. This kind of meaning can be actualized in accordance with the situations, where language is being used.

In the intended meaning, we can have all kind of voluntary gestures which helps in revealing our intentions. When we hear sentences, they come with a kind of intended meaning. When we get the same meaning as that which is being intended, communication is flawless. But this does not

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[122] Ibid.
[123] Ibid.

happen often. There can be a variety of possibilities for this. There can be a situation, when the listener is not able to comprehend properly the aim of the speaker and thus in order to understand he unconsciously imports his own intention into the meaning. Also there could be a chance that the listener or the reader is so overloaded with his own thoughts that he could not get the point the speaker or the author wished to intend. These all lead to ambiguities and thus communication fails. But what could be the possible solution of this problem?

This problem mentioned above can be dealt with by first noting that intended meaning can be a bit faster and easier in the context conversation where the speaker and the listener are both present, and so that ambiguities can be explained away simultaneously. However, even in verbal communication, there is always a chance of confusion in comprehension. Also though human minds may think alike, yet their diversity in terms of social and cultural upbringing tend to make effective communication difficult. Theoretical knowledge of meaning and language also does not assure one of errorless conversations. In spite all these difficulties words together with the symbols such as numbers, figures, illustrations and various non-verbal gestures can be used for communication. As mentioned earlier human actions can also be regarded as a way of 'sending a message' symbolically.

All these different forms of communication apparatus needs to be interpreted in order to get at their intended meaning. While we interpret in this way the correct intentions cannot be found unless the speaker himself gives the clues, which are necessary for the correct evaluation of the situation so that hasty conclusions may be avoided. If this is not so, one can read the meanings according to their own sweet wish regardless of the agent's intention, and in such a situation, normal conversations would become an impossibility . We may say that while conversing, if the speaker beforehand introduces the background and the context this error can be minimized. Also from listener's point of view, if the listener educates himself about the contexts and situation of the speaker, it also can help in communication to take place.

During these processes a new kind of possibility arises. While trying to grasp the intended meaning, the interpreter makes addition to the speaker's own set of inference by adding his own set of inference and this may called an *extended* meaning.[124]

An extended meaning may comprise of all kind of involuntary additions in the meaning which was absent in mind of the speaker. Extended

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[124] Ibid.

meaning can be understood in two ways.[125](1) It was originally not present in the speaker's or author's mind and (2) though unintended, but a significant meaning is derived from it and hence is a significant addition. So, in a way extended meaning can be useful when we try to understand elaborately, and also hazardous as sometimes the intended meaning can get dominated by the extended meaning and change the overall purpose of the communication.

Now, when we think about the purposive meaning, it may not always be evident from the spoken words, since the person while trying to communicate himself is aware of the situation in which he is speaking. So we can say that if the communicator is successful in explaining himself clearly it is known as intended meaning as the persons involved in the communication are aware of the situation.

From the above discussion we may conclude that meaning reflects the entire context in which interpretation takes place. We at no point can say that a full understanding has been reached in its wholesome. It is in fact an on-going process or a widening of comprehension..The answer may be that, in dealing with any subject at any level of comprehension, rules of method that are at once exact and specific cannot be formulated for all subjects and purposes. This is

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[125] Ibid.

why general principles of understanding are given instead of specific tailor-made methodologies. However, depending on the subject and its aim, any sort of relevant and effective methodological rules can be adopted and integrated within a holistic understanding, if they do not conflict with the general principles of understanding.

These principles may obstruct the process of understanding and may be that due to either verbal unclarity or conceptual confusion. In either case, understanding is hindered until a solution is found. Hence the principles are especially relevant for the interpretation of meaningful materials like texts and other symbols, whether of ancient or contemporary origin. Consistency in any system of ideas depends on structured forms of understanding where ideas are ordered and defined in relation to the subject and to one another in a clear and systematic way. Thus, logical thought and conceptual analysis can both play an important part in attaining such consistency, as do language mastery and insight into other problems and processes of symbolic communication.

In the first and last analysis, it is the process of understanding, that is, the faculty making us able to review and compare its own contents to its own satisfaction, which is of importance. If there is inconsistency, the good, critical mind will eventually discover this. Similarly, if an outlook is not comprehensive is biased in ways not evident to the speaker, then the perceptive mind with a

greater understanding must critically modify it or reject it. It should be clear that understanding can be a task demanding creativity and is never really a mere matter of imbibing facts, acquiring well-digested established theories or learning to apply conventional wisdom.

3.5 Wittgenstein on Meaning and its Understanding

We have seen how Wittgenstein gave different conceptions of meaning ranging from a proposition having meaning owing to a picture its verification to the meaning of a sentence consisting in its usage. Meaning and its analysis have certainly been an important part of Wittgenstein's interpretation of language leading to its understanding.

One may wonder what, in Wittgensteinian framework, exactly gives value to any utterance. If we try to understand it outside of the context it is meaningless and hence is not capable of communicating anything to us. The most genuine answer would be that it is the speaker or writer and listener or reader who gives meanings to these signs and utterance for the successful interpretation. But Wittgenstein differed here as he thought that this is

always misleading because we have a confuse picture of what the notions of meaning and understanding are.[126]

Generally understanding and thinking is thought to be a kind of process like speaking, listening, writing and reading etc. taking place in mind. But against this view Wittgenstein argues that meaning and understanding are not processes at all. [127] Wittgenstein questions the existence of mental processes themselves. He asks whether it is a kind of experience which the subject feels after introspection or an intelligent behaviour explaining the event of which the human mind is unconscious. Both these views are confusing in their own way.

Now one may wonder what exactly a mental process is. Is it a kind of process having a series of events with a beginning and an end? Wittgenstein says that understanding is not the experience a man has but the ability to do so[128] and we cannot fake an ability to be a process. We may know that we can do a certain act all our life but the actuality appears only when we try our hands on it. Understanding of a sentence cannot be like translation of thoughts in another language and this can be seen if one tries to perform that

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[126] Kenny, 1984,p.140
[127] Ibid. 140
[128]Investigations,181

process of understanding without speech. Wittgenstein says we cannot do this. Also he believes that to understand a word is a state, rather than the process. In fact as Kenny say Wittgenstein believe that thinking is much more a process than understanding which can be interrupted. But this does not happen usually in understanding. According to Wittgenstein one can see or grasp the meaning of a whole understanding or thought. Understanding unlike thinking can be doubted but when a person thinks he actually thinks. We cannot say that he may have been or have not been thinking.[129] Also understanding is a state rather than the process.

3.6 Wittgenstein on Meaning and Communication

We will now discuss how the idea of communication can be understood in the context of *Tractatus* in the first place and then in the context of *Investigations*.

3.6.1 In Tractatus

By introducing the picture theory of linguistic meaning, Wittgenstein is famous for rejecting the theory that the meaning of an utterance is the

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[129] Kenny,1984,p151

mental image you form in your head in response to the utterance. Our understanding of linguistic communication is a highly specialized endeavor focusing on formal characteristics of language and interaction with the world. In the emerging model, the mind's ability to run mental simulations is treated as the basis of abstract thinking as well as the condition of possibility for verbal communication. The listener takes the words and uses them to construct a rich simulation based on their own remembered and analyzed experiences. The act of understanding relies on the mind's ability to respond to a simulated scenario as if it were a perceived event. Wittgenstein in the end of *Tractatus* says, that there are domains of human life which are beyond communication. So, his famous remark:

"Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent."[130]

This concluding remark challenges the whole of philosophical studies. Wittgenstein here meant that if one is unable to say clearly about a philosophical statement, one should remain silent. According to McDonough, we can actually put genuine propositions in the words which give a scientific account of what is involved in such communication. Though in one way one cannot say about the philosophical propositions but

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[130]*Tractatus* p 7

in the other sense one can also say about them.[131] How do we expressing a thought in words?

Different linguistic subjects communicate concerning general matters of fact in accordance with general propositional symbol. This propositional symbol consists of perceptible and imperceptible signs. Both these structures are connected with each other by a set of complicated transformation rules helping in the process of communication by coding and decoding of these signs.

Communication is successful when the speaker succeeds in conveying his thoughts to his listener. But the symbols can be perceived differently. So here one thing worth mention will be that the communication will be said to be successful when the same set of coding is decoded by the speaker as well as the hearer. To explain this further we can say that when a person think of the Venus, one may say it in context regarding Morning star but the other listener may comprehend it as Evening Star. So here though both the communicators are actually referring to the same object, yet with entirely different connotations.

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[131] McDonough,1986, p.216-217

The two points according to McDonough[132] which are important regarding these coding rules are as follows. First the rules can be mechanically applied. If not mechanically applied, then the system of rules which connects perceptible signs with thoughts cannot be explain how these linguistic speakers manage to transmit their thoughts to each other. The second point is that this communication theory has to presuppose a theory of meaning, a theory which holds that meaning is unambiguously determined by the structure of thought.

Thus we have to accept that a communication is successful if and only if the same set of meaning is being comprehended .If either of the above to rules are not applied then the principle behind the communication, the transformation of thoughts or meanings would not be explained by the system.

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[132] Mcdonough, 1986, p.219-220

3.6.2 In Investigations

In *Investigations*, Wittgenstein does not seem to be concerned with the problem of understanding, or communicating with each other. Instead he sees communication as a special, but as yet not fully explained unitary process, and hence cannot be considered as the basic feature of being human.[133]

Wittgenstein is rather concerned about reacting and responding in various ways through which day to day communication sustains. In order to do this we have to language game try to understand and interpret each other, within the context of a language game. Only then successful communication is possible. Wittgenstein seems to be more concerned with the circumstances in which we can 'go on' with each other in practice.[134] We, although believe that we can communicate with each other successfully we often get wrongly interpreted. And so we misunderstand each other. Thus his concern is with seeking ways of talking in which we can avoid such confusions and misunderstandings, in which we can avoid any kind of misunderstandings and prevent ourselves from the "*bewitchments of our*

[133] Shotter, 1994,
[134] Ibid.,1994

intelligence by means of language. "[135] It is with this project in mind, that he is interested in the embodied knowledge we exhibit both in our more orderly social practices, and in the more disorderly activities of our lives together when simply in conversation with each other -where, as far as he is concerned, there is no one single order to be discovered in our lives or in their surroundings.

Even in the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein said that, *''There is no order of things a priori* '[136] and the modern view of the world is illusionary that *'the so-called laws of nature are the explanations of natural phenomena*'[137]. While in the *Investigations*, he is wants *"to establish an order in our knowledge of the use of language: an order with a particular end in view; it is one out of many possible orders; not the order,"*[138] because there is no such single order to be had. There are multiple orders which we make ourselves.

According to Wittgenstein, we can say that we are able to explain the nature of things around us only when we sensibly follow our ways of 'going

[135] Investigations,109
[136] Tractatus,5.634
[137] Ibid,6.371
[138] Investigations,132

on', achieving things which we seem are important to us.[139].We are then able to socially interact and develop different kinds of conversations through our own efforts without searching for some hidden and mysterious laws.

"'To invent a language could mean to invent an instrument for a particular purpose on the basis of the laws of nature (or consistently with them); but it also has the other sense, analogous to that which we speak of the invention of a game...."[140]

We are dependent just on ourselves and the linguistic community as to how words should be used in everyday correspondence with each other taking care of all the important features included in the games we play with language.

3.7 Conclusions

Communications between the humans have always instigated curiousity in the philosophical minds. The ability to define and use symbols in a productive way is what separates human beings from other animals; and this is also the quality that makes it prone to misinterpretations. In using

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[139] Shotter, 1994
[140] Investigations,492

symbols the speaker use them in accordance with one meaning of convention, while and the listener may interpret it with a different convention. We saw that the communication fails due to various reasons. This may be due to difference in language, difference in cultural contexts, difference in psychological settings, and difference in educational backgrounds and to name few. Thus, a successful communication demands a lot from the speaker and the hearer in order to correctly transmit the intended meaning. The interpreter must convert the communicated words by decoding it according to the speaker's intention. Also he has to keep the conversation at that limit which can be comprehendible to him also; else he may know the factual aspects of the word or sentence but would never understand them, and consequently will not be able to apply them.

When we try to understand the unarticulated backdrop of communication of meaning from the point of view of practice rather than theory, we find ourselves constructing our own realities. When we talk of simple concepts of our daily life, we can analyze them in detail. We then realize that the objects lying in the world are not untouched, waiting to be discovered by us, but are agreeable ones which we use in language-games. We know that these entities can create an illusory or imaginary sense of their reality in us – a state of affairs we can easily fail to detect, if we are

satisfied with truth as being a kind of seeing on our part. These concepts carry a whole range of possible meanings making a definite kind of sense we develop in our lives interwoven around us. Wittgenstein says,

"We feel as if we had to penetrate phenomena: our investigation, however, is not directed towards phenomena, but, as one might say, towards the 'possibilities' of phenomena"[141]

This quote shows the practical importance of his work. If we know how the words are used with the help of mind and how they describe the various possibilities they create for how one might 'go on' with the others around us in the circumstances of their use - then we can begin to see how, in practice, we might create with them new ways of 'going on'.[142] Wittgenstein means that instead of thinking that we have to know about the process of understanding and worry about learning them, they are already known to us in practice by just using them. Here we learn through using and not vice –versa. We keep on rediscovering the uses of meaning whether they are old or new. In some situations we finalize the meanings and fix them for the future usage while in others we have the chance of inventing new meanings according to new contexts for the old words are always present

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[141] Investigations,90.
[142] Shotter,1994.

synchronously with the new forms of human life. We are not aware that why this actually happens and what kind of logic is used but this happens for sure and we cannot deny this fact. We need to think about the possibilities in which every user of language and not only the elite speakers can make rules and interpret the language successfully.

We, as social beings tend to communicate naturally, whether it is right or wrong, and we will continue to do so in future also till we have the rationality in us to interpret and understand things and their meanings. Wittgenstein also accepted this fact and said,

"We are inclined to say that when we communicate a feeling to someone, something which we can never know happens at the other end. All that we can receive from him is again an expression. This is closely analogous to saying that we can never know when in Fizeau's experiment the ray of light reaches the mirror."[143]

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[143] Wittgenstein,1958,p.185.

Conclusion

We have seen how the interest of philosophers of language changed the interest from propositions and its meanings to how these are used in the domain of language. The situation became more explicit when later Wittgenstein refuted his vision of having a so called logically perfect language. He vehemently said "Do not ask for the meaning but for the use." he came to view the semantic aspects of a language pragmatically.

Language is a complex and subtle thing. This is good because it allows us to express a wide range of ideas — not the least of which are new ideas never expressed before. To accomplish this, we need a very flexible tool. Unfortunately, language is so flexible that it can get bent out of shape without us even realizing it. In this way our terms and concepts can be so vague that it is not clear what exactly they are referring to in the first place. But we don't notice these anomalies of language and keep on using it rather successfully.

Most of the time, we manage to muddle through — but sometimes, and far too often, this leads to misunderstandings. Philosophers seek to eliminate misunderstandings from their discussions, so of course they try to make the definitions of their terms more precise than they typically are in casual conversations. In doing this, however, they come to realize just how vague everything was to begin with — far more vague than was initially thought. This, in turn, gives rise to the question of just how anyone manages to communicate anything in the first place.

There are answers, of course — context, community, and culture go a long way in providing a strong background for our language. This, in turn, helps prevent our words from being seen in isolation — and it is only when we interpret words in isolation that much of the ambiguity or vagueness develops.

We noted that for a successful communication what is needed is the correct interpretation of meaning as intended by the speaker to their listener. This also comprise of understanding of mental, and social circumastances, which guides a person to his comprehension of meaning. Since we tend to

believe that language is that which is shared, understood and applied in public sphere, communication and the conditions needed for it are to be fulfilled by social aspects of the communicators.

In spite of all these there are various factors which lead to the failure of the essence of communication. The factors aiding it may not be very grave but each does contribute in unsuccessful communication. Even when we pay great attention to all the aspects of communication, there can be a possibility to have failed in transmission of meanings.

Again we see that there are times when we give a peculiar meaning to some object in addition with its actual one. We tend to use the term in that way only in which we have learnt it. For example, take the word milk. I believe it is a liquid, good for our bones and teeth and have great taste. When I suggest to somebody to have it, I may tell "Have milk its healthy as well as tasty!" But there is a huge possibility that the listener understands parts of the word in a different way. So we come to see that though some parts of my sentence have been taken as I wanted but some actually got misinterpreted. Thus we can say that every aspect of the meaning has to be

similarly shared between the communicators. Also, any sentence can thus be misinterpreted in multiple ways according to the number of the listeners.

One case can also occur which demands an explanation is that there can be a possibility that the person with whom I am communicating might be more learned than me, so while I intended on the singular aspect of the meaning I am being comprehended in multiple ways. Here though my aspect of meaning does get transmitted but not without the additional baggage.

Thus, on a final note we can say that there is a huge possibility that the meaning of the speaker can get diversified variously. The ambiguity being a result of variance in the context, be it mental, social, cultural or geographical all of which play major contributors in the dislocation of meanings. Communication though seems simple, goes beyond the web of words, sentences and the meanings to these domains which are not directly linguistic. When we search for the solution it is just that the similarity of background and the physiological and psychological process may minimize the ambiguousness to an extent. But as long as one person tends to differ from the other there will remain the potential of being 'misunderstood'. We

live in a world which demands from us to be actively engaged, and is full of

diversities which we as a human actually enjoy. The monotony of the world

though may help in the communication being less erroneous; this will come

at the price of fading away the zeal to live in the world and to interact with

someone very different from us. So, we can say that it is better to be actively

playing the language game and exchanging the roles in it, than to be silently

aware of all the musings.

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