QUINE ON MEANING AND TRANSLATION: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled *"Quine on Meaning and Translation: A Critical Analysis"* submitted by Satarupa Chakraborty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy from Jawaharlal Nehru University is an original work. This dissertation has not been submitted for the award of any other degree in this University or any other University.

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DECLARATION

I, Satarupa Chakraborty, declare that the dissertation entitled *"Quine on Meaning and Translation: A Critical Analysis"* submitted by me in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy from Jawaharlal Nehru University is my original work. This dissertation has not been submitted so far in part or full, for the award of any other degree in this University or any other University.

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To Maa and Baba

Without Whom Not..

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CONTENTS

Introduction

Language is the most efficient device which unpacks every phenomenon that is intelligibly captured by human mind. In other words, our thoughts, ideas, or what we are, what the world is, how the world is, and why it is the way it is- are all to be answered or to be made sense of, only through language. In short, language is the fundamental tool through which we can express ourselves. It would, perhaps, not be an over-statement if we say that the only way we can understand others, the only way we can generate a communication, the only way we can know the world - its elements and their activities and relations, and finally the only way we can know ourselves, is through the use of language. We can, perhaps, claim that one of the major grounds on which human beings differ from other species, lies in the fact that we have language to express ourselves and the world, which other species lack. So, the scope of language is vast. With the evolution of human beings, it has been recognised that the study of language is one of the most important, fundamental and challenging task. Such studies, not only, have contributed in generating various debates in different discourses, but also have contributed in developing human society as a whole.

Philosophy can be seen as one of the disciplines which has taken interest in the debates and discussions centering around language. Language, therefore, is one of the significant topics which have raised various debates among the philosophers over centuries. Wittgenstein, who has been considered as a philosopher of historical importance, holds: "All Philosophy is the *critique of language*".[1](Emphasis added is mine)

Much of the reason as to why language has become so important for philosophy lies in the fact that there is a complex relationship between language, thought and the world, a relationship that needs to be understood in order to address philosophical questions. Since language expresses our thoughts about the world, a philosophical engagement concerning this relationship has been undertaken by the philosophers. The move towards getting engaged in philosophical discussions concerning language can be majorly seen in late nineteenth and early twentieth century analytic philosophy. This

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[1] Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico Philosophicus*, p. 37, (4.0031).

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period was marked by the famous "linguistic turn". Twentieth century analytic philosophy could be seen as a period when the primacy had been given to the analysis of language, because philosophers belonging to this movement were convinced that philosophical questions could be dealt with and answered correctly by such an analysis. As, Michael Dummett says:

> What distinguishes analytic philosophy in its diverse manifestations, from other schools is the belief, first, that a philosophical account of thought can be attained through a philosophical account of language, and secondly, that a comprehensive account can only be so attained. Widely they differed from one another, the logical positivists, Wittgenstein in all phases of his career; Oxford 'ordinary language' philosophy and post-Carnapian philosophy in the United States as represented by Quine and Davidson all adhered to these twin axioms.[2]

Therefore, the understanding of the meaning of linguistic expression through an analysis of it, had become the central topic of discussion and debate for the analytic philosophers of twentieth century. Hence, philosophy of language emerged as a field of study within the analytic school with an aim to analyse linguistic expressions which express the structure of thought and help us in knowing and understanding the world.

Focusing on the relationship of language, thought and world, the philosophers have raised many significant questions. Philosophers such as, Frege, Russell, Wittgenstein, Carnap, Ayer, Quine, Davidson, Dummett, Putnum and many others have got engaged into debates concerning the analysis of language. The fundamental question that the philosophers have consistently raised is that: *what does it mean to say that a linguistic statement is meaningful*? In other words, if we claim that something is meaningful, we must then know what meaningfulness is or what meaning is. By acknowledging the importance of this question, the philosophers have noted the requirement of constructing a theory of meaning. A theory of meaning can be best described by the words of Michael Dummett. He says:

> According to one well-known view, the best method of formulating the philosophical problems surrounding the concept of meaning and related notions is by asking what form that should be taken by what is called a 'theory of meaning' for any one entire language; that is, a detailed specification of the

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[2] Dummett, *Origins of Analytic Philosophy*, p. 5.

meanings of all the words and sentence-forming operations of the language, yielding a specification of the meaning of every expression and sentence of the language. [3]

A theory of meaning suggests that, for understanding the meaning of any language in its entirety, it is important to analyze the sentences of the language into the simplest of their parts and by way of analyzing the simplest parts of the complex whole of the language, we will learn what the sentences of a language mean. With the aim of constructing a theory of meaning, various philosophers have proposed their accounts of meaning which have generated further debates within the field.

If we look into the debates concerning theories of meaning proposed by various philosophers in analytical movement, we can identify that their theories are concerned with meaning, truth and reference. But, how do these various theories answer the question: what meaning is? In order to deal with the question, philosophers had started giving definitions of meaning. This attempt of providing definitions of meaning broadly identifies two classes of statements: (a) the analytic statements and (b) the synthetic statements. Most of the philosophers, except philosophers such as Quine, held that the analytic statements are true by virtue of meaning and independent of fact whereas, the synthetic statements are those, the truth of which depends on empirical observation of facts. In this context, the distinction between the analytic and synthetic statements becomes very important. This distinction has been considered as an important distinction by a range of philosophers starting from Kant, Leibnitz, Hume to Frege, Russell, the logical positivists and many others. However, a very unique stand can be seen with reference to Quine's notion of meaning where he rejects the analytic-synthetic distinction. The primary aim of this research is to evaluate Quine's rejection of analytic-synthetic distinction which he has raised in "Two Dogmas of Empiricism".

Quine begins his paper "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" with a discussion of Kant's distinction of synthetic and analytic propositions. The first definition of analyticity by Kant holds: "a statement is analytic when it is true by virtue of meaning and independent of fact"[4] The second definition of analyticity, which is peculiar to Kant, defines it in terms of containment, that is, a sentence is analytic if the predicate of the sentence is

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[3] Dummet, *Seas of Language*, p. 1.
[4] Quine, "Main Trends in recent philosophy: Two Dogmas of Empiricism", p. 21.

conceptually contained in the subject of the sentence. So, this definition establishes a close relation between analyticity and meaning. Quine gives an overview of the short comings of such a distinction held by Kant. As, Quine argues in "Two Dogmas of Empiricism", the problem with Kant's definition of analytic is two-fold. He writes, "...it limits itself to statements of subject-predicate form, and it appeals to a notion of containment which is left at a metaphorical level."[5] So, Kantian definition of analytic opens up the problems for the notion of meaning. Quine's primary interest is to know what is meaning. To understand the concept of meaning with clarity, Quine proceeds towards evaluating the notion of meaning by taking various theories of meaning into account.

To begin with the notion of meaning, Quine tries to unpack what meaning is not. He argues that meaning cannot be identified with naming or reference. In this context, the accounts of both Frege and Russell come to prominence. However, Frege and Russell differ on major grounds; where Frege gives primacy to the notion of sense, for Russell's theory of meaning the concept of reference is central. But, both these accounts have been criticised by Quine.

Quine brings the famous Fregean example of "morning star=morning star" and "morning star=evening star" in order to show why such an identification of meaning with naming or reference is problematic. The expressions "morning star" and "evening star" though refer to the same object, yet, differ in meaning. If the meaning becomes identical with naming or reference, then how to understand such a notion of meaning when two expressions name or refer to the same object, but differ in meaning? Again, if we suppose that the meaning of the expression "morning star" is identical with the meaning of the expression "evening star", then, there should be no difference between sentences like "morning star=morning star" and "morning star=evening star". But, actually these two sentences differ on vital grounds. Quine writes,

> The two singular terms name the same thing. But the meanings must be treated as distinct, since the identity 'Evening star=Morning star' is a statement of fact established by astronomical observation. If 'Evening Star' and 'Morning Star' were alike in meaning, the identity 'Evening Star=Morning Star' would be analytic.[6]

Here, while on the one hand, Quine is indicating towards the problem of the idea that meaning can be identified with naming or reference, on other hand, he is again showing

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[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid. p. 22.

the problem of analytic-synthetic distinction maintained by Frege. If meaning has to be understood in terms of reference, then, the sentences having the form "a=b" where both the expressions "a" and "b" refer to the same object, would be analytic just as the sentences of the form "a=a" is analytic.

We must take a note in this context Frege has given primacy to sense over and above reference in his theory of meaning. He argues in "On Sense and Reference" that sense determines reference.[7] Though Frege has given primacy to the notion of sense over the notion of reference, he has not abandoned the idea of reference. But, Quine seems to take a different position altogeher. In "Two Dogmas of Empiricism", Quine points out the difficulty of reference by giving the example that "the creature with heart" and "the creature with kidney" might refer to the same creature, but they differ in meaning.[8] This is similar to the Fregean "Morning star" and "Evening star" example. He argues, if the meaning of both the linguistic expressions were similar, then the identity relation would have been analytic. But, it is not the case here. Then, how to account for the meaning in such cases?

The problem of a fixed reference also persists in Russell's theory of meaning. As, Russell gives emphasis on the notion of reference and establishes his theory of reference in order to set up his theory of meaning, he also faces the same question that Quine places against Frege. That is: how to account for the meaning in terms of reference when two linguistic expressions agree in terms of extension, but, differ in meaning? This problem has been addressed by Quine with his strong attack on analytic-synthetic distinction and the referential theory of meaning. This is where Quine's meaning scepticism comes in.

The major reason as to why we may call Quine a meaning sceptic comprises of his denial of analyticity. This denial comes from his analysis of two classes of philosophical statements[9].

1. No unmarried man is married.
2. No bachelor is married.

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[7] Frege, "Sense and Reference", p. 40.
[8] Quine, "Main Trends in recent philosophy: Two Dogmas of Empiricism", p. 22.
[9] Ibid. p. 23.

(1) is simply a case of logically true statement whereas (2) is considered as logically true by putting *synonyms for synonyms*. The first class of statement does not need much explanation as Quine says; it remains true under all interpretations of "man" and "married". But the second class of statement needs elaboration. When we consider (2) as an analytic statement, we are not fixing any new characterization for (2). It is just that we are replacing the word "unmarried man" with its synonym "bachelor" and thus, it becomes a logically true statement. Quine, therefore, argues that there is no clarity as to how we are assigning the status of analyticity to the second class of statement. [10] This way of addressing the problem of analyticity is very unique to Quine, which will be taken up for consideration in the dissertation.

However, the question still remains as to whether there can be meaning which we assign to the various linguistic expressions. Quine certainly does not reject that there are meaningful statements. But, he argues that mere synonymous expressions cannot be the criteria to accept the fact of meaning. Then, what can be the other criteria for settling a definition of meaning? Quine seems to suggest that there cannot be any fixed criteria to provide a fixed definition of meaning.

Another significant position which has been rejected by Quine is the account of meaning held by the logical positivists. Meaning with regard to the analytic-synthetic distinction held by the logical positivists, has been vehemently criticised by Quine. In fact, one could say that the logical positivists were the main target of Quine so far as the distinction between analytic and synthetic statements is concerned. For the logical positivists, the logical and the mathematical truths are analytic.

The Logical Positivists position has to be seen with regard to the question which has been already raised, that is, whether meaning is same as the analytic propositions. The logical positivists propose the method of verification in order to define meaning. They say, "The meaning of a statement is the method of empirically confirming or infirming it."[11] The logical positivists maintain that if a sentence is meaningful, the sentence must be either analytic or empirically verifiable. Meaning therefore, has to be understood either by virtue of the notion of analyticity or by logical definitions or by the method of verification.

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[10] Ibid. p. 24.
[11] Ibid. p. 34.

This position has been rigorously attacked by Quine. The positivists' position is highly problematic so far as the meaning is concerned. If this position of logical positivists has to be accepted, one has to also accept the referential theory of meaning. According to the referential theory of meaning, the meaning of a word or sentence has to be understood with the object it refers to. But, in reality, we understand the meaning of many such words or sentences which lack reference. An example could be taken from Frege's bearerless names such as "unicorn". If we accept logical positivists' theory of meaning, we must find some ways to empirically verify whether there is an entity called unicorn or not. By applying the method of verification, we ofcourse, will not find any existing entity called unicorn. And the expression "unicorn" can neither be considered as analytic. But, is the word "unicorn" meaningless? If not, how do we understand the meaning of it?

Quine would argue that meaning cannot have a determinate reference. In this context, he brings the notion of indeterminacy of translation with his famous example of 'Gavagai' and links up with the problem of referential theory in order to analyze the notion of meaning. This research work will take into account a close analysis of Quine's attack on the positivists' position and attempt to evaluate the counter perspective of the positivists' position given by Quine.

An analysis of the concept of meaning is important for understanding and examining his notion of meaning. Besides this, my research will be a conceptual as well as critical evaluation of Quine's notion of meaning and translation. I will also be engaging into a textual reading of Quine's original works such as "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" and *Word and Object*.

In order to provide an evaluation of Quine's account of meaning, I would like to address certain questions which may be significant for re-looking his notion of meaning and to establish a counter-perspective about his account of meaning.

Chapter 1 of this dissertation will engage in the discussion of the theories of meaning as proposed by Frege, Russell and the logical positivists. The verification theory of meaning, as highlighted by Quine, does not provide a satisfactory account of meaning. The concept of meaning as maintained by the positivists is, therefore, problematic as the criterion of verification cannot always be applied in terms of knowing the meaning of a linguistic expression. However, this account of meaning held by the positivists is

closely connected with the referential theory of meaning. The notion of meaning in the referential theory has to be understood in connection with the language and the world. The referential theory of meaning has been an important account for many philosophers like Frege, Russell etc. As Quine rejects a fixed notion of reference, he subsequently rejects the fixed referential account of meaning and hence, the verification theory of meaning. However, the question of understanding meaning in relation to language and the world remains important. So, the first problematic of my research concerns with the question that, can the relationship between meaning and verification be maintained. I shall discuss this question by unpacking Frege's theory of sense, Russell's theory of denotation and the logical positivists' theory of verification in chapter 1.

Chapter 2 will consist of a thorough analysis of "Two Dogmas of Empiricism". "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" is the work where Quine has consistently argued against the analytic-synthetic distinction. In the tradition of analytic philosophy, this distinction has been accepted by most philosophers. Quine's sceptical stand, however, has occupied an exceptional place in the entire tradition. This position of Quine, in contrast with the position maintained by other analytic philosophers has to be re-looked in order to understand the notion of meaning. The second chapter of this research will focus on the distinction of analytic and synthetic statements and Quine's criticism of it. I, therefore, would like to address the question that is: can the distinction between the analytic and the synthetic statements be maintained with regard to the notion of meaning?

Further, Quine's arguments against the referential theory of meaning proposed by Frege and Russell, and the verificationist theory of meaning proposed by the logical positivists have had important consequences in the history of analytic philosophy. It has influenced philosophers like Strawson, Grice, Davidson, Putnum, Dummett etc. to re-think about the notion of meaning. Quine's arguments in "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" subsequently had given rise to various important questions regarding meaning which had become the central questions for debates and discussions in analytic philosophy. One such important question is that, does Quine's criticism of analytic-synthetic distinction provide any ground for justification in rejection of the distinction? In response to this question, philosophers like Grice and Strawson wrote their joint paper called "In Defense of a Dogma" where they analyzed Quine's position and provided a response to his position. As they argue about his position that "...his criticism of the

distinction does not justify his rejection of it."[12] This argument had made significant contribution in order to respond to the question raised and in attacking Quine's sceptical position on meaning. This research would be an attempt to understand and evaluate Quine's meaning scepticism with regard to two major theories of meaning as mentioned above and with regard to his rejection of the analytic-synthetic distinction. Moreover, this research will provide an examination of Quine's notion of meaning by unfolding the response of Grice and Strawson.

In the third chapter, I shall take up another major thesis of Quine, that is, the indeterminacy of translation thesis. Quine's meaning scepticism generates a range of significant questions. If the analytic-synthetic distinction, in order to understand meaning, cannot be maintained as Quine pointed out, an alternative account of meaning must be given. What can be that alternative account of meaning? Does Quine's intervention into the fixed notion of meaning provide a satisfactory account of meaning? How does Quine's account of meaning solve the problem of meaning?

In order to deal with these questions, it is necessary to look into Quine's account of meaning holism. Quine's meaning scepticism cannot be understood unless we look at his arguments for indeterminacy of translation which comes from his meaning holism. Indeterminacy of translation, according to Quine, leads to indeterminacy of meaning which contributes in the rejection of any fixed notion of meaning. With his famous example of 'Gavagai', Quine shows us as how to the indeterminacy of translation gives rise to indeterminacy of meaning. He argues in *Word and Object* that while translating one language into another, it is possible to have an indefinite number of translation manuals which are compatible with the behavioural data of the speakers. Yet, he argues, that there is no objective ground to hold that they are compatible with each other.[13]

 The major problem that Quine is trying to portray here is that, there is no determinate objective factor that one may find in understanding the meaning of a particular word in translation. So, the idea of any fixed notion of meaning has been challenged by Quine through his idea of indeterminacy of meaning and translation. If Quine's arguments for indeterminacy of translation and hence indeterminacy of meaning is true, then, Quine's rejection of analyticity will be successful. I shall, thus, provide an evaluation of Quine's

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[12] Grice and Strawson, "In Defense of a Dogma", p. 141.
[13] Quine, *Word and Object*, p. 27.

account of meaning and translation by looking at his arguments for indeterminacy of meaning and translation in *Word and Object.*

Quine's thesis of indeterminacy of translation influenced Davidson to a great extent. Davidson had also taken Quine's thesis as having a strong point to challenge the fixed notion of meaning seriously. However, Davidson does not agree with Quine on some major grounds. In the third chapter, I shall thus, discuss Davidson's response on Quine's arguments by examining Davidson's arguments in *Inquires into Truth and Interpretation.*

Chapter 1

Theories of Meaning: A study of Frege, Russell and the Logical Positivists

Introduction:

The primary concern of this chapter is to look at two kinds of theories of meaning: (a) the referential theory of meaning and (b) the verification theory of meaning. The referential account of meaning has been considered as a significant account by many philosophers in the history of analytic philosophy, particularly by Frege and Russell. The concept of reference, therefore, becomes very important. Any basic enquiry about meaning starts with the question: what does a particular linguistic expression mean when we utter a sentence, e.g., "Grass is green"? To answer this question, it is necessary to see what this statement "stands for" or what does the expressions in the statement designate. This is where the concept of reference comes in. The philosophers have noted that the concept of reference plays a major role in order to understand the meaning of a particular linguistic expression. The meaning of the expression "Grass is green" can only be understood if we know what object and property the words "Grass" and "Green" refer to. Consequently, the meaning of a sentence with regard to its reference can only be understood if we know the reference its constituent expressions.

This point has remarkably raised debates and discussions among philosophers of language. The debate primarily focuses on the question whether meaning of a sentence can only be understood by virtue of its referent. There are agreements and disagreements among philosophers about the nature of reference. To understand some of the major problems concerning the questions mentioned above, I would like to look at the most important accounts given by philosophers such as, Frege, Russell and the logical positivists in this chapter.

If we look at the history of philosophy of language, we can see that the concept of reference has become one of the major concepts with regard to the notion of meaning. The theories of meaning proposed by various philosophers are constituted by giving primacy to the notion of reference. For an understanding of the referential theory of

meaning, we shall look at Frege's theory of sense and Russell's theory of denotation. I shall also unpack the theory of verification by the logical positivists in order to understand Quine's stance on the referential account of meaning.

This chapter aims to deal with the theories of meaning proposed by some of the influential philosophers in analytical philosophy. Since one of the major objectives of this research is to evaluate Quine's notion of meaning, it is an imperative to look into the accounts of meaning given by philosophers such as, Frege and Russell; and the account of meaning given by the logical positivists such as, Ayer and Carnap. Quine being part of the analytic tradition as well as being part of the logical positivists' movement in early phase of his career, has responded to them in his work either directly or indirectly.

1.1. Frege's theory of sense

Gottlob Frege in "On Sense and Reference" *(Uber Sinn und Beduetung)* has proposed the theory of meaning which have two major components: (a) theory of sense and (b) theory of reference. As we have seen, the philosophers of language in twentieth century have acknowledged that there is an inter-link between thought, language and the world. Any discussion on the notion of meaning, therefore, has to be addressed in connection with this triangular relationship of thought-language-world. The concepts of sense and reference have to be seen with regard to this triangular relationship. Sense and Reference according to Frege, plays a major role in understanding the relation between language and reality. When we talk about this relationship, the use of language comes in. Thus, the question arises: how the meaning is to be ascertained when words are used in a language to express certain thoughts about reality? Frege proposes his two-tier theory, that is, the theory of sense and the theory of reference to know the meaning of words in language in order to understand the relation between language and reality. Thus it is important to know what is sense and what is reference in Frege's account of meaning and their inter-relations.

To understand the concepts of "sense" and "reference", I would like to borrow the famous example of "morning star" and "evening star" from Frege's "On Sense and Reference". In that paper, Frege has provided his arguments mentioning the need to

have such a distinction called sense and reference or arguments for admitting sense of an expression over and above its reference. The expressions "morning star" and "evening star" refer to the same planet, that is, planet Venus, but, the thoughts that are associated with both the expressions differ. In Frege's words, "The referent of 'evening star' would be the same as that of 'morning star', but not the sense."[1] What Frege is trying to differentiate here is that the object referred to is same for both the expressions the "morning star" and the "evening star", but, the expressions have different meanings since they have distinct cognitive values. These two expressions are said to have different cognitive values since they leave diverse impression to human mind when they are used. For example, let's assume that we have kept four pens of various color in a table one after another following the order, say, blue, red, green and black. Now, the phrase "second pen from the left" and the phrase "third pen from the right" designate the same pen, that is, the red one, yet, the meaning associated with the phrases are distinct since they leave diverse impressions in the utterer's mind. The phrase "second pen from the left" engages into a thought where an object is conceived as positioned in the left side and it can also be said that, perhaps no other object is situated to its right side. Similarly, the phrase "third pen from the right" can be conceived as being positioned in the right side and it is possible to think that there is no other pen to its left side. Thus, it can be said that these two phrases generate different cognitive values, and hence meaning, in the mind of the speaker.

This is the reason that we cannot call the morning star, the evening star and vice-versa. However, Quine seems to raise the question in this context whether we can consider two phrases, which agree with regard to their extension, as *cognitively synonymous* expressions.[2] According to Quine, two expressions are cognitively synonymous if they are interchangeable *selva veritate*.[3] But, Frege would not consider "morning star" and "evening star" as cognitively synonymous and thus, interchangeable. For Frege, these two phrases appear to our mind in different ways and therefore, the expressions "morning star is identical with morning star" and "morning star is identical with evening star" have diverse cognitive values and thus, they express different sense.

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[1] Frege, "Sense and Reference",p. 210.

[2] See, Quine, "Main Trends in recent philosophy: Two Dogmas of Empiricism", pp, 21-31. Quine's idea of cognitive synonymy will be discussed in the next chapter. Quine introduces this concept in order to show the problem of analyticity where two linguistic expressions are synonymous with regard to their extension , but, are said to have different meaning.

[3] Ibid. pp. 27-28. This notion will be discussed in the next chapter in detail.

Hence, in Fregean sense, the second phrase cannot be considered as analytic in the same sense of the first phrase. [4]

Now, if we analyze Frege's example, two kinds of relationships can be observed. One is the relation between thought and language where the concept of sense plays the central role; the other is the relation between language and the world where reference is the main operator. Therefore, for Frege, the concept of 'sense' and that of 'reference' are central ideas in order to know the meaning of a linguistic statement which expresses thoughts about the world.

However, it is very evident from Frege's theory of meaning that he has given more importance to the notion of sense than the notion of reference. I would like to evaluate Frege's arguments in this context to understand why Frege's theory of meaning is largely identified with his theory of sense. Although Frege has acknowledged that the notion of reference as the major operator with regard to the connection of language and the world, it is important to understand why he has given more importance to the notion of sense over the notion of reference? To unfold his arguments, I intend to analyze Frege's puzzle which primarily consists of three problems.

(a) The problem of identity statements.
(b) The problem of 'bear-less names'.
(c) The problem substitution into belief context. [5]

I would provide a brief exposition of these three problems by separating them into the following subsections.

1.1.1. The problem of identity statements

Frege starts his paper *"On Sense and Reference"* by giving the examples of identity statements. There are various types of identity statements. For example[6]:

1) 3+7= 10
2) Plato is the teacher of Aristotle
3) The morning star is the same as the evening star.

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[4] The notion of analyticity and the distinction between analytic and the synthetic statements would be discussed in detail in the second chapter of this dissertation.
[5] Millar, *Philosophy of Language*, p. 25.
[6] See Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, *Gottlob Frege*, Sep 14, 1995.

4) The morning star is the same as the morning star.

Frege argues that the first three statements have the form 'a=b'. The expressions 'a' and 'b' which signify names, descriptions etc., may stand for a single object or individual, but they differ on major ground. The identity relation of the form "a=b" conveys new information about the world while the fourth statement is of the from "a=a". Frege distinguishes the form "a=b" from the form "a=a". The form "a=a" is a tautologous expression where "a=b" is not. To determine the truth value of the sentence "a is identical with a", we do not need any further evidence, its truth does not depend on how the word is and is uninformative sentence. Kant would call the sentence of the form "a=a" an analytic sentence which is known to be true a priori.[7] On the other hand, the sentence of the form "a=b" can not necessarily be considered as an analytic statement, for, in order to determine the truth value of the sentence "a is identical with b", we need to look at the object for which both the expressions stand. If both "a" and "b" stand for the same object, we can say, "a=b" is true. Hence, the sentences "the morning star is same as the morning star" and "the morning star is same as the evening star" differ on crucial ground. The difference lies in the cognitive status which is associated with the form "a=a" and "a=b". Frege writes:

> ... a=a and a=b are obviously statements of different cognitive value; a=a holds a priori and, according to Kant, is to be labelled analytic, while statements of the form a=b often contain very valuable extensions of our knowledge and cannot always be established a priori.[8]

Such kind of identity relation gives rise to serious philosophical problem. Frege identifies the problem by raising the question: if the distinction between "a=a" and "a=b" has to be asserted by looking at the cognitive value of both the sentences, then how do we really differentiate "a=a" from "a=b" when both these statements are true and both expressions "a" and "b" have the same reference. In other words, suppose "a" and "b" stand for the same object, but, "a is identical with a" and "a is identical with b" differ, as their cognitive values are different. Now, Frege's worry lies in the question that how we are supposed to know the difference between "a=a" and

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[7] Frege, Kant and many other philosophers have considered the statements of form a=a as the analytic statements which are known to be true prior to our experience. I shall elaborate this notion of analytic in the second chapter of my dissertation.

[8] Frege, "Sense and Reference", p. 209.

"a=b" when "a=b" depicts a relation of identity of the reference of the name "a" and the reference of the name "b," and that "a=a" depicts the relation of identity of the referent of "a" and the referent of "a" and if "a=b" is true as it is true in the case of "morning star is identical with evening star" as both "morning star" and "evening star" have the same referent. It seems that there is no difference between "a=a" and "a=b" as "a=b" holds the same relation between the same pair of objects as does "a=a."

To solve this problem Frege introduces the term 'mode of presentation'. Frege writes, "A difference can arise only if the difference between the signs corresponds to a difference in the mode of presentation that which is designated."[9]

It is the "mode of presentation" by which one can differentiate "a=a" and "a=b". This "mode of presentation" is what Frege calls the thought of an expression. Hence, he argues that the expression "morning star" and the expression "evening star" may refer to the same object, but, they express different sense. Frege then moves on to the second problem which leads him to admit sense over and above reference.

1.1.2. The problem of 'bearerless names'

Frege identifies certain names which do not stand for any object as such; nevertheless, they express a definite meaning, and sentences in which they occur, express definite thought. Then, how do we account for the sense of such expressions which in fact lack a referent? Moreover, if there are expressions which do not have a referent, how do they have a definite sense? Frege writes:

> To every expression belonging to a complete totality of signs, there should certainly correspond a definite sense; but natural languages often do not satisfy this condition, and one must be content if the same word has the same sense in the same context. It may perhaps be granted that every grammatically well-formed expression representing a proper name always has a sense. But this is not to say that to the sense there also corresponds a referent.[10]

Frege argues that there may be cases where a linguistic expression or a proper name lacks a definite referent. But, we perfectly understand the meaning of that expression. For example, a unicorn, Pegasus etc., do not stand for any object, but, such kinds of

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[9] Ibid. p. 210.
[10] Ibid. p. 211.

expressions indeed are meaningful expressions. Thus, Frege argues that to understand the meaning of such expressions which lack a referent, it may be enough to grasp[11] the sense of the expression. The sense of a term for Frege, is graspable. It is because of the sense that we understand the meaning of an expression, which may indeed lack a referent. Therefore, Frege again suggests that sense is the primary concept which is required in order to solve various problems concerning language.

As Frege introduced the idea of *grasping the sense* as essential for meaning, it may leave an impression to many that sense is subjective. Frege, however, would not accept that the sense is subjective. This might again raise a question for the notion of sense: is it then the object or is it objective? Frege would deny that the sense is the object. For him, the referent of a proper name is the object, the conception or the idea that we have about the object is subjective as it may be based on the subjective understanding of a person. But, Frege very carefully draws a thin line in between the objective and the subjective which he characterises as something sharable and this, he argues, is objectively graspable by everyone. I would like to bring Frege's famous example of seeing moon through a telescope to elaborate this point. Frege writes:

> Somebody observes the moon through a telescope. I compare the moon itself to the referent; it is the object of the observation, mediated by the real image projected by the object glass in the interior of the telescope, and by the retinal image of the observer. The former I compare to the sense, the latter to the conception or experience. The optical image in the telescope is indeed one-sided and dependent upon the stand-point of observation; but it is still objective, inasmuch as it can be used by several observers.[12]

As he says, there may be differences in observing an object from one angle to another, and thus, the shape, size etc., may vary depending on from which side the observer is looking at the object. But, the content which would ensure a particular object exactly as that and nothing else, e.g., the optical image in the telescope, will not vary. Hence, that optical image in the telescope may be observed by a number of observers. Frege would say that this sharable objective image in the telescope is like the sense of an expression. This sense is neither object, the moon out there, nor the subjective idea in

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[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid. p. 213.

the mind of the perceiver. Hence, sense is sharable and graspable by users of language and is objective without being identical with the object.

1.1.3. The problem substitution into belief context

Let us now discuss the third puzzle. The third puzzle is the puzzle concerning the substitution of co-referential expressions in the context of belief reports. Frege in "On Sense and Reference" has pointed out that there are certain sentences in language which are called belief ascribing sentences. Such sentences as he argues, again gives rise to the problem of reference. If we consider a belief ascribing sentence, e.g., "X believes that a is p". What do we consider as the referent of "a" here?

Let us assume that X does not know anything about "a" except that "a is p". So, X believes that a is p, where "a is p" is a sentence and "a" refers to an individual.

Let us also suppose, a is identical to b (about which X may not be aware of), that is, "a" and "b" refer to the same individual (but X does not know the fact about the identity between "a" and "b"). Now, the question arises at this point is: can we say that the following inference is valid?

1) X believes that a is p.
2) a is identical to b.

Therefore, X believes that b is p.

The answer is, we cannot consider the above inference as a valid one. Because, although X actually believes that a is p and a is actually identical with b, it does not follow that she also believes that b is p, since she may not be aware of the identity between a and b.

Let us elaborate this problem by considering the following example:

Neera does not know anything about Sunil Ganguly expect that he is a great poet.

(a) Neera believes that Sunil Ganguly is a great poet.
(b) Sunil Ganguly is identical to Nil Lohit.

The question is, taking (a) and (b) to be two true premises, we infer:

Therefore, Neera believes that Nil Lohit is a great poet.

In the above cases, though (1) and (2) or (a) and (b) are true, we cannot infer that (3) or (c) is also true.

This problem should be seen in the light of Frege's compositionality principle which says: "The semantic value of a complex expression is determined by the semantic value of its part".[13] If we take this principle into account, it implies that when we substitute one part of the sentence with the other part which has the same referent, there should not be any change in the truth value of the complex sentence. As Frege would hold: "Substitution of a constituent of a sentence with another which has the same semantic value will leave the semantic value of the sentence unchanged."[14] Now, if we accept this principle, the example which we have presented above about the context of belief sentences, should not raise any problem. However, we have seen that in the context of substitution of co-referential expressions in belief ascribing sentences, this principle does not hold. Hence, it follows that we should either give up Frege's thesis of "the semantic value of a sentence is its bearer" or the "law of compositionality". But, both of the theses are central to Frege's theory. Hence, Frege needs to save his theory by introducing a new way to solve the problem.

In order to solve the problem, Frege introduces a distinction between "indirect reference" and "customary reference". Frege argues that in belief sentences, that which the customary sense of an expression becomes its reference, which he calls "indirect reference". He builds up such an argument on the basis that the belief sentences have a different sort of character which provides an attitude towards the belief itself. This can be called as "propositional attitude report". Meaning of expressions in belief contexts has to be understood in terms of their sense, and propositions behaved in a certain way in belief sentences as having indirect referents. For example, in case of the sentence "Neera believes that Sunil Ganguly is a great poet", the name "Sunil Ganguly" can only be replaced with "Nil Lohit" only if both of the names have same customary sense so far as the reference of the person is concerned. Here, we can see, according to Frege, a *referential shift* taking place. Frege would argue that by applying this 'referential shift', the problem of substitution of co-referential terms in belief sentences can be avoided.

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[13] Millar, *Philosophy of Language*, p. 11.
[14] Ibid. p. 12.

Further, Frege has noticed an additional problem called the problem of 'informativeness'[15]. In sentence such as "X believes that p is q" when p and q refers to the same thing and X does not know what p is, then how do we account for the knowledge of p on the part of X? If the meaning of a sentence is identified with the truth-value, then in the case of the supposition where, "X does not know p", but, "X believes that p" becomes impossible since X does not know what p is, it is hardly possible to know its truth-value and subsequently, it is impossible to know the meaning of such a sentence as "X believes that p". Nevertheless, such statements are meaningful statements. Frege argues that, such problem arises due to the identification of meaning of a sentence with its truth-value. It is possible to know the meaning of a sentence without knowing whether it is true or false. He, thus, claims that in order to avoid such problems of informativeness of sentence, we need to introduce an additional semantic property to the sentence than only the truth-value. This semantic property is what Frege calls, the sense which is graspable.[16]

Therefore, sense occupies the central place in Frege's theory of meaning. Frege considers reference as necessary, but, he holds that reference alone is not sufficient in order to understand the complex structure of language. Both sense and reference are needed in order to unfold the complex structure of language. This is where the need of connecting sense with reference comes in. Frege believes that so far as the use of language is concerned, we need both sense and reference. Sense and reference, thus, constitute the "two-tier theory of meaning" which is very specific to Frege.

Though sense and reference together constitute Frege's theory of meaning, he gives primacy to the notion of sense over the notion of reference. Since, Frege thinks that sense is the basic or essential element for understanding the complex of a linguistic expression that expresses thought about the world. Hence, sense plays the pivotal role in Frege's theory of meaning and the theory of reference would always require the theory of sense in order to have a satisfactory account of meaning.

This position of Frege, however, has been criticised by Russell as he would get rid of Fregean sense and would establish a pure referential account of meaning. Russell does not think that Frege's theory of sense could satisfactorily circumvent the problems of

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[15] Ibid. p. 27.
[16] Ibid. p. 28.

singular term as having empty reference. He also points out that Frege's conception of indirect reference is not adequate enough to solve the problem of meaning. He, thus, proposes his theory of denotation where he tries to solve certain problems concerning reference and also abandons Frege's theory of sense. I shall take up Russell's theory of denotation in order to understand his account of meaning in the next section of this chapter.

1.2. Russell's theory of Denotation

There are many philosophers in the analytic tradition who have challenged Frege's theory of meaning. Bertrand Russell can be considered as one of the most prominent critiques of Frege's theory of sense. In order to understand Russell's theory of meaning, it is important to outline the major points in Frege's theory of meaning which Russell has rigorously criticised. The points may be highlighted as follows:

- Frege's treatment of the notion of sense over the notion of reference.
- Frege's consideration of names as definite description.
- Frege's treatment of empty referential expressions.

These points need to be elaborated in order to understand Russell's "theory of definite description" which constitutes his theory of denotation. With the purpose of dealing with Russell's theory of definite description which constitutes his theory of meaning, I shall look into Russellean conception of "Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Description" and "Logical Atomism". I would like to give a detailed account of all the above mentioned concepts in this section to provide a background for understanding his position on the notion of meaning vis-à-vis the position I have just highlighted in the last section.

The major point that can be seen in Russell's theory of meaning is the prominence of an ideal logical language. Such an ideal language, according to Russell, would provide an image of the world through propositions and their truth-functional compounds. According to him, such an ideal logical language is required because, he holds that every meaningful sentence has to directly refer to the object. To be acquainted with such meaningful sentence in language, we need an ideal language. By elaborating his arguments in this section, we shall see how he establishes his theory of meaning.

To begin with Russell's theory of meaning, I would like to highlight certain points which are crucial for his theory of meaning. These also point to a number of disagreements with Frege's account of meaning. Let me now, elaborate some of these points.

Russell has thoroughly criticised Frege's attempt to consider names as definite descriptions. For Frege, the referent, which he considers as the semantic value, of a proper name, is the object which it designates or stands for. [17] If we take this definition[18] of Frege into consideration, the problem of bearerless names again comes in. Frege holds that "Plato", "Odysseus" etc., are proper names. For him, definite descriptions like "the author of Hamlet", "the present king of France" etc., are also proper names. Now, if the above definition of proper names proposed by Frege is correct, then there must be some object for which the definite descriptions such as "the present king of France" stand. But, there can be examples of many such definite descriptions which lack a referent and hence, do not stand for any object. In that case, how far Frege's definition of proper names would hold? Frege's response to this question introduces the concept of "sense". For him, as we have discussed in the previous section, the proper names (both ordinary proper names and definite descriptions) which lack a referent are not meaningless. Rather they are perfectly meaningful as sentences involving them express thoughts. According to him, sentences also behave like proper names and these express thoughts for which we understand the meaning of them. But, he argues that there are sentences such as, "The present king of France is bald", "The most perfect being in the world is large hearted" etc., which are neither true, nor false, yet they express thoughts or have sense. This argument of Frege, however, has not been considered as a satisfactory one by many philosophers. To get away with this problem, Meinong has suggested that we can still argue that the sentence "The present king of France" have a referent, but, only a reference that is a non-existent one. He says, the present king of France may not exist, but, subsist.[19]

These lines of arguments held by Frege and Meinong have been ruthlessly criticised by Russell. Russell takes a step to avoid the problems of bearerless names, but, he does not

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[17] Frege, "Sense and Reference", p.213.
[18] As Millar says, such a formulation about proper names can indeed be considered as a definition of proper name given by Frege. See, Millar, *Philosophy of Language*, p. 65.
[19] Ibid.

accept both the approaches of Frege and Meinong. Nevertheless, Russell must then propose some solution to the problem faced by Frege. He, thus, proposed an analysis of the sentence "The king of France is bald". The reasons for which Russell thinks that a different kind of analysis of the sentence "The present king of France is bald" is required lie in the following facts:

1) Since, a proper name cannot be meaningful if it lacks reference, and since a sentence cannot be meaningful if it lacks truth-value, (that is, in order for a sentence to be meaningful, it has to be either true or false), we must provide an analysis of such names or sentences which seem to be lacking a referent or truth-value, yet are meaningful names or sentences.[20]

2) Russell thinks that the grammatical structure of a sentence is not same as its logical structure. Grammatically speaking, a sentence may have a subject-predicate form. But, the logical structure of a sentence, may be far more complex than its grammatical structure. Thus, in order to determine the truth-value and hence the meaning of a sentence, we need to unpack its logical structure.

Therefore, Russell offers the following analysis of the sentence "The present king of France is bald":

(a) There is at least one king of France.
(b) There is at most one king of France.
(c) Anyone who is the present king of France is bald.

Russell would say that if we conjoin (a), (b) and (c), we would get the sentence "The present king of France is bald". He, thereby, argues that Frege's symbolisation of the sentence "The king present of France is bald" does not help in avoiding the problem that we have stated above. As we have seen earlier, Frege considers definite descriptions as proper names, he symbolizes the above statement by the form 'Ba' where 'B' represents the predicate of the sentence that is, 'bald' and 'a' represents the proper name, the definite description, that is, "The present king of France". This way of symbolisation, according to Russell, still holds the same problem where "the present king of France" as a proper name, continues to determine the semantic value of the sentence "The present king of France is bald". Thus, he proposes his own analysis of the sentence where he

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[20] Russell, as we know, was an "Ideal Language" philosopher, and hence thought that we require to construct an ideal language, devoid of any ambiguity, in order to provide a theory of meaning.

suggests to conjoin (a), (b) and (c) which can be symbolised as: "(∃x)[(Fx & Gx) & (∀y)(Fy → x = y)]". This way of symbolisation as Russell argues, avoids taking a definite description as a proper name and subsequently rejects the claim that "The semantic value of a proper name is the object which it stands for."[21] According to Russell, definite descriptions are functional expressions. He would argue that:

> Frege assigns definite descriptions the wrong sort of semantic values: Frege views definite descriptions as proper names, as having objects as their semantic values; but in fact definite descriptions have second-level functions as their semantic values.[22]

By considering definite descriptions as functional expressions, Russell seems to get rid of the problem faced by Frege. If definite descriptions are treated as functional expressions and not proper names, they do not require objects in order for them to have their semantic values. Russell argues that even if a definite description lacks an object as its referent, it can have a semantic value if a definite description is shown as a functional expression. So, the problem of bearerless names no more exists if we take Russellean account into consideration. As Russell says, the problem of bearerless names arises due to Frege's wrong approach of considering definite descriptions as proper names. For Russell, this problem does not arise because; he does not hold that the definite descriptions which do not have objects as their referents are neither true nor false. Rather, he considers that the sentence such as, "the present king of France is bald" has a truth-value, but, a false one. Hence, there can be various expressions which may lack objects as their referents, yet, they are perfectly meaningful expressions. There may be sentences which are false, yet, they are meaningful sentences. If we consider definite descriptions as functional expressions and symbolize these the way Russell has suggested, we may avoid the problem of bearerless names, as, they, no more, need any object to stand for in order to determine their semantic values.

Further, Russell makes a distinction between the ordinary proper name and logically proper name. Ordinary proper names are those which can be replaced by descriptions. He calls these as *disguised definite descriptions*.[23] There are other types of names which cannot be replaced by any descriptions. For example, words such as 'this', 'that' etc., in

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[21] Ibid. p. 65.
[22] Ibid. p. 67.
[23] Ibid. p. 68.

sentences like "This snow is white", "That house is far". Such kinds of expressions designate something which cannot be expressed through descriptions. They can only be viewed in terms of proper names referring to the sense-data or what may be called "objects of senses".[24] So, the ways we can avoid the problems of bearerless names are: (a) through a proper logical analysis of sentences such as "The present king of France is bald" and (b) by introducing genuine proper names consisting of the words 'this' 'that' etc.

An exposition of Russell's "theory of definite description" would be incomplete without looking at the puzzles that he has explained in the paper "On Denoting". There are three puzzles that he has mentioned. One concerning a definite description and a proper name, the other two concerning the reference of non-existing entities. I shall now, elaborate these puzzles to understand Russell's theory of meaning.

Russell takes examples of identity statements in order to look at the problem of using definite description in identity statements. It gives rise to the following puzzle. He says,

> If a is identical with b, whatever is true of the one is true of the other, and either may be substituted for the other in any proposition without altering the truth or falsehood of that proposition. Now George IV. wished to know whether Scott was the author of Waverley; and in fact Scott was the author of Waverley. Hence we may substitute Scott for the author of "Waverley," and thereby prove that George IV. wished to know whether Scott was Scott.[25]

This puzzle constituted by Russell primarily raises problem for Frege's "law of identity" and "compositionality principle". Let us analyze the above example. Though the sentence "Scott is the author of Waverley" is true , yet, the two expressions "Scott" and "the author of Waverley" cannot always be substituted as we have seen that substitution of co-referring expressions give rise to problems of meaning. So, even though, "George IV wished to know whether Scott was the author of Waverley" is a true sentence, the sentence "George IV wished to know whether Scott was Scott" is a false one. Because, George IV never wanted to know whether Scott was identical with Scott, rather, he wanted to know if Scott was the actual author of Waverley. Russell makes a distinction between primary and secondary occurrence here. He writes:

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[24] Ibid. p. 69.
[25] Russell, "On Denoting", p. 485.

> … when we say, "George IV. wished to know whether Scott was the author
> of Waverley," we normally mean "George IV. wished to know whether one and
> only one man wrote Waverley and Scott was that man" ; but we may also
> mean : "One and only one man wrote Waverley, and George IV. wished to
> know whether Scott was that man". In the latter, "the author of Waverley" has a
> primary occurrence; in the former, a secondary. [26]

Russell argues that such differences between the primary and the secondary occurrences in language give rise to vagueness. Yet, such kind of vagueness is not difficult to avoid if we use the tools of logic. He points out that such a case occurs because of the misleading nature of grammar of our language holding that "Scott is the author of Waverley" is a sentence of subject-predicate form. The true logical character of language cannot be seen in ordinary language because of the misleading nature of grammatical form of the sentence. Questioning the grammar of ordinary language, Russell argues that there is a need to analyze language to its appropriate logical form.

Russell then moves towards the second puzzle concerning the "law of excluded middle". If we consider the sentence "the present king of France is bald" is a false but meaningful sentence, it leaves space for a question to arise that: whether the sentence "the present king of France is not bald" is also a false sentence. Now, according to the law of excluded middle, either a sentence 'p' or the negation of the sentence 'p' must be true. But, if both of the above sentences are false, then a counter-example to the "law of excluded middle" gets generated. Russell thus argues that if we create two lists of entities, one comprises of the category of things which are bald and the other consisting the category of things which are not bald, "the present king of France" will not fall under either of the categories.[27]

In order to solve the problem, Russell brings the distinction between primary and secondary occurrences of an expression in a sentence here. For him, the sentence "the present king of France is bald" is certainly a false sentence.[28] But, the sentence "the present king of France is not bald" can be analysed in two ways. Russell here introduces the existential quantifier to analyse the sentence. One way of analysis considers the sentence

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[26] Ibid. p. 489.
[27] Ibid. p. 485.
[28] Ibid. p. 490.

"the present king of France is not bald" as a false sentence[29], represented in the following form:

(a) There is a person who is the present king of France and is not bald.

This may be symbolised as: (∃x) (Fx . −Bx) [Here, 'F' represents 'the present king of France' and 'B' represents 'bald'.]

Now, the reading of the entire symbolisation would be: there is an 'x' such that 'x' is 'the present king of France' and 'x' is not bald. The semantic value of this sentence would be false. This may be considered as the narrow reading of the sentence where the negation operator falls within the scope of the existential quantifier.

Let us now move to the other way of analysis where the sentence "the present king of France is not bald" becomes a true sentence.

(b) It is false that there is a person who is the present king of France and is bald.[30]

This may be symbolised as: −(∃x) (Fx . Bx)

We may read it as: It is false that there is an 'x' such that 'x' is 'the present king of France' and 'x' is bald. This reading of the sentence may be considered as the broad reading of the sentence where we are negating the whole sentence and hence the sentence becomes true.

Russell by referring to the distinction between the primary and the secondary occurrence in a sentence, argues that in case of (a), the expression 'the king of France' occurred as a primary occurrence where the negative operator was used to negate the predicate of the sentence and thus sentence became false; while, in (b), the expression occurred as a secondary occurrence where the negative operator functioned as negating the whole sentence and hence the sentence became true. Therefore, the problem of counter-example of the "law of excluded middle" can be avoided.

The third puzzle involves the problem of reference of non-existing entities as the subject of a proposition. Russell argues that a non-referring entity cannot be the subject of a proposition. He shows that if we assume a non-referring entity as the subject of our

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[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid.

proposition, then contradiction arises. This problem can be explained by referring to a passage from Russell's "On Denoting". Russell says:

> Consider the proposition "A differs from B". If this is true, there is a difference between A and B, which fact may be expressed in the form "the difference between A and B subsists". But if it is false that A differs from B, then there is no difference between A and B, which fact may be expressed in the form "the difference between A and B does not subsist". But how can a non-entity be the subject of a proposition?.....Hence, it would appear, it must always be self-contradictory to deny the being of anything; [in fact]….[it can also be seen] that to admit being also sometimes leads to contradictions. Thus if A and B do not differ, to suppose either that there is, or that there is not, such an object as "the difference between A and B" seems equally impossible.[31] (Addition in the second brackets is mine)

Russell now, proposes the solution to avoid such a problem of reference by arguing : "If A and B do differ, there is one and only one entity x such that 'x is the difference between A and B' is a true proposition ; if A and B do not differ, there is no such entity x."[32] He says, the denotation, as it is conceived, applies to "the difference between A and B" if A and B differ, but not otherwise. Russell considers this as a matter of relation. He argues that a relation becomes true when it denotes an entity for which it stands and false when it does not stand for an entity. He gives an example in "On Denoting" that "the earth revolves round the sun" is a true proposition where it denotes an entity, but, it is false that "the sun revolves round the earth" and hence, it does not denote an entity.[33]

According to Russell, there are some expressions which may not denote anything, but, they, nevertheless, are denoting phrases. Such expressions can be said to have reference if we analyze those by using proper tools of logic. Thus, he gives importance to the requirement of a logical language for analyzing propositions in language.

It must be noted that Russell has tried to construct cases of identity statements, non-referential entities which give rise to various puzzles. Yet, he has attempted to solve these puzzles without using the sense and reference distinction as Frege has proposed. Sense and reference distinction, according to Russell, on one hand, is a wrongly conceived notion

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[31] Ibid. p. 485.
[32] Ibid. p. 490.
[33] Ibid. p. 491.

and on the other hand, it is superfluous. [34] Frege by introducing the distinction of sentence and reference and by giving primacy to the notion of sense over reference has attempted to solve various problems of reference. In contrast, Russell, in "On Denoting', explicitly demonstrated that such problems can easily be avoided without getting into Frege's theory by constructing cases of puzzles.

Russell argues that for any intelligible account of meaning, we need the notion of reference. By introducing the idea of 'denoting phrase', Russell gives primacy to reference with regard to the notion of meaning. He, therefore, argues that even in case of 'Morning Star' and 'Evening Star', we refer only to the planet Venus and not Saturn. It is only through the reference we can rightly understand the meaning of a linguistic sentence.

Let us quickly revisit what we have done so far. Russell's analysis of names and definite description in terms of the puzzles concerning language is different from Fregean analysis. The major difference lies in the fact that Frege appeals to the notion of sense and reference and finally gives more importance to the notion of sense over the notion of reference in order to solve the puzzle concerning language, whereas, Russell takes a different route altogether. He solves the puzzles concerning language without having any appeal to the notion of sense.

Therefore, Russell's treatment or analysis of names and definite description does not involve Fregean sense rather it overcomes Fregean sense. For, Russell theory of denotation appeals to a pure referential account of meaning. He thinks that a satisfactory theory of meaning is possible by constructing a logical language for analyzing the linguistic statements and by having a referential account of meaning.

However, Russell's theory is also not far from criticisms. There are many philosophers who have challenged such a pure referential account of meaning as Russell holds. One such philosopher is Quine. He holds that if we accept a referential account of meaning, we will have to accept the analytic-synthetic distinction of statements. And such a distinction of analytic and the synthetic statements is something which Quine rejects. Quine's arguments on analytic-synthetic distinction will be discussed in the later chapters. But, there is another significant account of meaning given by the logical positivists of Vienna Circle which must also be looked at before looking at Quine's arguments on the rejection

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[34] Millar, *Philosophy of Language*, p. 72.

of analytic-synthetic distinction. I shall now look at the logical positivists' theory of meaning which will occupy the discussion of next section of this chapter.

1.3 Logical Positivists' Verification Theory of Meaning

The period of 1920s and 1930s in the history of analytic philosophy has been marked by an emergence of the school of logical positivists in Vienna. The school was majorly influenced by the modern empiricists like Hume, Berkeley etc. on the one hand and philosophers of language such as Frege, Russell and Wittgenstein on the other. The leading figures of the logical positivist school such as, Neurath, Weissiman, Godel, Ayer, Carnap, Hahn etc., got engaged in various debates and discussions concerning the notion of meaning which was the primary focus of the analytic school at that time. The agenda of the logical positivists was primarily focusing on a thorough attack on metaphysics. In order to accomplish the agenda, the logical positivists have started identifying certain linguistic expressions, which they recognize as meaningful expressions and certain others, which they categorize as meaningless expressions. In this section, I would like to provide an exposition dealing with the logical positivists' arguments on the attack of metaphysics. By doing so, I shall look at the evolution of the theory of meaning proposed by the logical positivists in late nineteenth and the early twentieth century.

The logical positivists' project primarily has two agenda:

(a) To reject metaphysics, holding the view that metaphysical statements are utterly nonsensical.
(b) To establish a method of verification for testing propositions which are meaningful.

To understand logical positivists' theory of meaning, let us first look at the statements which the logical positivists would categorize as meaningful and that which they would categorize as meaningless statements. Let's consider the following statements:

1) The blue litmus turns into red when it comes in contact with acids.
2) The Absolute is one.

In the above statements, the semantic value of (1) can be known by conducting a test. If the blue litmus actually turns into red when we put it in acid, the statement will be true. But, in the case of (2), what kind of test can be conducted to know the truth-value of the sentence?

Many philosophers argue that it is perhaps not possible to assign a truth-value, either true or false, to such statements. Should we then consider such statements as meaningless statements? The logical positivists would answer this question affirmatively by considering such statements as literally meaningless. Since for them, only those sentences are meaningful sentences which are either empirically verifiable or true by 'virtue of meaning'. To put it in Ayer's language,

> The principle of verification is supposed to furnish a criterion by which it can be determined whether or not a sentence is literally meaningful. A simple way to formulate it would be to say that a sentence had literal meaning if and only if the proposition it expressed was either analytic or empirically verifiable.[35]

The criterion of meaningfulness as Ayer has suggested has to be seen either with regard to the principle of verification or with regard to statements which are analytic. [36] The verificationists go even further by saying that the sentences, which are neither verifiable nor analytic, are not propositions since only those sentences can be considered as propositions which are literally significant. But, a difficulty may arise with an understanding that the sentences in question may occur even before the verificationists' principle is applied. To avoid such a difficulty, Ayer very carefully uses the term "putative propositions".[37] He considers only those sentences as meaningful if and only if a person, for example "X", knows how to verify the propositions which the sentence "purports to express". The sentence such as "The Absolute is one" cannot be verified by any means. Naturally then, such statements do not express anything and hence, they cannot be called as propositions.

It is now important to understand what does 'meaningful by verification' tend to establish? As the logical positivists' project was to eliminate metaphysics by considering metaphysical speculations as utterly non-sensical, they propose the 'criterion of significance'[38]. This criterion can only be applied to propositions which have semantic values and those sentences which lack a semantic value are thus to be considered as

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[35] Ayer, *Language Truth and Logic*, (1952) , Second(1948) Edition, Dover Publication, INC., New York, p. 5.
[36] The logical positivists consider the statements which are true by 'virtue of meaning' as analytic statements. I shall discuss this in detail in the second chapter of my dissertation.
[37] Ayer, *Language Truth and Logic*, p. 8.
[38] Millar, *Philosophy of Language*, p. 93.

literally meaningless sentences. Hence such sentences do not hold any significance in language. As Ayer writes in "Logical Positivism":

> The originality of the logical positivists lay in their making the impossibility of metaphysics depend not upon the nature of what could be known but upon the nature of what could be said. Their charge against the metaphysician was that he breaks the rules which any utterance must satisfy if it is to be literally significant.[39]

The logical positivists' attack on metaphysics has to be seen with regard to the fact that it always disregards the knowledge of common sense and science. The logical positivists argue that it is wrongly conceived by the metaphysicians that philosophy provides us with the knowledge of the world which goes beyond our common sense and science. It is because of the logical error committed by the metaphysicians that they hold such a view. The position of metaphysicians needs to be challenged on the ground that what are the premises from which they derive their thesis.[40]

The logical positivists were aware that the metaphysicians would reply to this question by introducing the idea of 'intellectual faculties' which would play the role in order to know the reality transcending our sense-experience and science. Thus, the logical positivists formulate their criticism by the way of looking at the character of the basic statements made by the metaphysicians. The logical positivists would argue, the metaphysicians' claim does not make any sense since the nature of their basic statement is such that it can hardly be considered to have any literal significance. Ayer writes:

> …no statement which refers to a 'reality' transcending the limits of all possible sense-experience can possibly have any literal significance; from which it must follow that the labours of those who have striven to describe such a reality have all been devoted to the production of nonsense. [41]

This strong claim of Ayer needs to be seen with a detailed account of the principle of verification which constitutes the fundamental thesis of the logical positivists' verification theory of meaning. I shall now attempt to elaborate the verification theory of meaning as advocated by the logical positivists.

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[39] Ayer, (ed.) "Logical Positivism", (1959), Glencoe, IL: Free Press, p.11.
[40] Ayer, *Language Truth and Logic* , pp. 33-34.
[41] Ibid. p. 34.

The logical positivists argue that the meaningfulness of sentences lies in the method of its verification. That is to say that, a sentence 'p' is meaningful if and only if it can be empirically proved as either true or false. So, the principle of verification offers a method or a criterion for determining a statement is meaningful in terms of its empirical confirmation or disconfirmation. As Ayer writes, we can have only two types of meaningful sentences in hand, one, which are empirically verifiable and the other, which is analytically true. Ayer writes:

> The criterion which we use to test the genuineness of apparent statements of fact is the criterion of verifiability. We say that a sentence is factually significant to any given person if, and only if, he knows how to verify the proposition which it purports to express – that is, if he knows what observations would lead him, under certain conditions, to accept the proposition as being true, or reject it as being false. If, on the other hand, the putative proposition is of such a character that the assumption of its truth or falsehood, is consistent with any assumption whatsoever concerning the nature of his future experience, then, as far as he is concerned, it is, if not a tautology, a mere pseudo-proposition.[42]

With this criterion, the logical positivists set a background for their theory which considers certain statements as meaningful and certain other as meaningless statements. Moreover, it also states that in order for a statement to be a genuine proposition, it must fulfil the criteria of verification. This not only grants the status of some sentences as meaningful sentences, but, also attributes the literal significance to a range of sentences belonging to the same fact-stating class.

However, Ayer makes an observation in "Language Truth and Logic" that there are certain statements which are literally significant, yet, it is a hard task to verify them. For this reason, Ayer proposes a distinction of practical verifiability and verifiability in principle.[43] As he says, this problem arises due to the lack of practical means by which we could empirically verify certain statements which are meaningful. Nevertheless, this does not remain a problem once we are able to verify them theoretically. There may be countless things which I myself may have not experienced, yet, if those things can be verified by using the theoretical tools of science and by means of what we can common-sensically think of, this gives a ground for its verification by principle. On the contrary, there are

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[42] Ibid. p. 35.
[43] Ibid. p. 36.

certain statements which can neither be verified in practice nor in principle. Ayer gives an example of such pseudo-metaphysical sentence quoting Bradley: "the Absolute enters into, but is itself incapable of, evolution and progress."[44] Such kind of sentences cannot be verified in any case and thus, according to the logical positivists, lack literal significance.

Now, the question is: will only those propositions which are verifiable in experience be considered as genuine propositions expressing meaning? In order to answer this question, Ayer proposes the distinction between verification in the strong sense and verification in the weak sense. He says, a proposition is verifiable in the strong sense only when the truth of the proposition can be established by empirical verification; whereas, in case of weak verification, the proposition can only be verified by looking at the possible experience which may make it probable.[45] Then, which type of verification should be considered in order to fix the status of a genuine proposition?

Ayer has realized that if we consider verification in the strong sense as our only criterion, we have to treat the statements of scientific generalisations such as "a body tends to expand when it is heated" in a similar way as we have treated metaphysical statements. [46] Ayer would say that we need the weak sense of verification in order to avoid such difficulty and prevent the statements of scientific generalization from getting excluded from the class of genuine propositions. He says, we must ask the question, "Would any possible observations be relevant to the determination of its truth or false-hood?" instead of asking "Would any possible observations make its truth or falsehood logically certain?" [47] Ayer clarifies his point through the following passage:

> Let us call a proposition which records an actual or possible observation an experiential proposition. Then we may say that it is the mark of a genuine factual proposition, not that it should be equivalent to an experiential proposition, or any finite number of experiential propositions, but simply that some experiential propositions can be deduced from it in conjunction with certain other premises without being deducible from those other premises alone.[48]

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[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid. p. 37.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Ibid. p. 38.
[48] Ibid. pp. 38-39.

As Ayer suggests in the above passage, there are statements, such as, the statements of scientific generalisation for which we may not have immediate accessible tools to verify their truth or falsity, yet, they have genuine factual contents. He further extends his argument by saying that it would be utterly nonsensical if we hold that "the world of sense experience is unreal". There may be argument as to what truth or falsity we will derive when there are chances that we are deceived by our sense experience? But, even, this argument does not rule out the fact of our conceivability of sense experience. There is, therefore, no conceivable observation which can provide us any ground that our world of sense experience is unreal.[49]

However, Ayer has realized that this argument does not give an adequate answer to the problem. It needs further interpretations for avoiding vagueness. Ayer proposes a different phrase, that is, 'observation-statement' instead of 'experiential proposition' in order to hold on to his view that a genuine factual proposition records an actual or possible observation.[50] He writes:

> ..the principle is that a statement is verifiable, and consequently meaningful, if some observation-statement can be deduced from it in conjunction with certain other premises, without being deducible from those other premises alone.[51]

Ayer constitutes an example to expand his arguments in the above passage by taking a statement 'P' and an observation-statement 'O'. He says, suppose, 'O' follows from 'P', and 'if P then O'. The observation-statement 'O', in this manner, can be deduced from the sentence 'P' by the conjunction of the premises mentioned, but, not from 'if P then O' alone.[52] Now, if, for example, the statement 'P' represents 'the Absolute is lazy', and 'O' represents 'the colour of the roses in our garden is yellow', it means, we can still consider the statement 'P' as factually significant. Because the observation-statement 'O' is derived from the conjunction of the statements 'P' and 'if P then O'. Following this kind of formulation, one can say that any indicative statement of grammar can be factually significant. However, this kind of formulation will only lead to further problems. As Ayer himself notes, such an account is not acceptable. Since the purpose is to construct a theory of meaning, we must provide a more plausible account.

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[49] Ibid. p. 39.
[50] Ibid. p. 11.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid.

Ayer then reformulates his principle of verification in a different manner. He proposes another distinction which comprises of direct verifiability and indirect verifiability. In order to define direct verifiability, Ayer writes:

> a statement is directly verifiable if it is either itself an observation statement, or is such that in conjunction with one or more observation statements it entails at least one observation statement which is not deducible from these further premises alone[53]

Let us consider our example where 'O' is deduced from 'P' in conjunction with 'if P then O'. Here, 'P' is not an observation-statement, 'if P then O' is also not an observation-statement. Thus, following the criterion of direct verifiability, 'P' cannot be said to be directly verifiable although it entails 'O' which is an observation-statement.

Indirect verification, on the other hand, has been defined by Ayer through the following passage:

> a statement is indirectly verifiable if it satisfies the following conditions: first, that in conjunction with certain other premises it entails one or more directly verifiable statements which are not deducible from these other premises alone; and secondly, that these other premises do not include any statement that is not either analytic, or directly verifiable, or capable of being independently established as indirectly verifiable.[54]

If we consider the example of 'P', applying the criterion of indirect verifiability, we see that 'P' is not indirectly verifiable either. Therefore, Ayer reconstructs the principle of verification by holding the view that if a statement has to get the status of a factually meaningful statement, if the statement is not analytic, it must be either directly or indirectly verifiable in order to satisfy the criterion of the principle of verification.[55]

I shall now, proceed towards explaining the second type of propositions, that is, the analytic propositions which the logical positivists have accepted as meaningful. Let us first take a look at what constitutes Ayer's conception of analytic proposition. Ayer in the section "The A priori" of "Language Truth and Logic" writes:

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[53] Ibid. p. 13.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid.

> a proposition is analytic when its validity depends solely on the definitions of the symbols it contains, and synthetic when its validity is determined by the facts of experience.[56]

This definition has been substituted by Ayer in the introduction to the second edition of his book by considering analytic propositions as true 'by virtue of meaning of its constituent symbols'.[57] This implies that Ayer also has made a distinction between propositions like many other philosophers have made. The propositions whose truth and falsity has to be determined by looking at the facts that the propositions designate are called synthetic propositions whereas, there are certain propositions which are known to be true by virtue of their meaning and independent of facts.

The propositions of mathematics and logic do not designate any factual object of the external word. Those propositions therefore have to be categorized as analytically true propositions. We do not need a method of verification to ascertain the truth of such propositions. By characterizing such propositions as analytically true propositions, the logical positivists aim to establish the necessity involved in the truth of such propositions. Though these propositions, for example, the propositions of mathematics and logic lack literal significance with regard to factual meaning, yet, these propositions are meaningful since they are necessarily true. By arguing this, the logical positivists safeguard the propositions of mathematics like '2+2=4' and the laws of logic such as 'the law of non-contradiction', 'the law of excluded middle' and the like.

However, there have been charges historically put against the empiricists that they cannot have an account of necessary truth since their theory would not allow any room for such a truth. Ayer totally disagrees with such an argument and therefore, he proposes his arguments in order to reject such a view. Before going in details as how he does this, I would like to look at why such a view has been placed by the philosophers against the empiricists. In order to go further with the logical positivists' account, I would like to look at Hume's view in this regard. Ayer writes:

> ...as Hume conclusively showed, no general proposition whose validity is subject to the test of actual experience can ever be logically certain. No matter how often it is verified in practice, there still remains the possibility that it will be confuted on some future

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[56] Ibid. p. 78.

[57] Ibid. p. 16.

occasion. The fact that a law has been substantiated in n − 1 cases affords no logical guarantee that it will be substantiated in the nth case also, no matter how large we take n to be. And this means that no general proposition referring to a matter of fact can ever be shown to be necessarily and universally true. It can at best be a probable hypothesis.[58]

Looking at the above passage, it is very evident that Hume would not consider the propositions which are subject to empirical test as necessarily true propositions. For Hume, distinguishes truth into two kinds: the truth concerning relations of ideas and truth concerning matters of fact. The logical certainty comes only with the propositions which are true by virtue of the relation they express without depending on any experimental tool for their confirmation. For example, the proposition "3+2=5" expresses the relation between numbers and hence, for knowing the truth of such proposition, we do not require to conduct any test. But, the question arises: how do we account for such propositions which cannot be verified in experience. However, they hold truth irrespective of whether someone has conceived it as it is or otherwise. For example, if I see 4 pair of shoes kept in a place and find a total number of 9 shoes by individually counting them, this will not make our mathematical proposition '4× 2=8' false. As it would be considered as the case of my wrongly counting of shoes, but, this certainly will not set a case to falsify '4×2=8'.[59] Therefore, Ayer would consider such propositions of mathematics as analytically true propositions. But, the criterion of necessity in Ayer's account is not yet clear. We must now look at the following passage in order to understand why Ayer considers the propositions of mathematics, geometry, logic etc. are necessarily true propositions.

> We cannot deny them without infringing the conventions which are presupposed by our very denial, and so falling into self-contradiction. And this is the sole ground of their necessity. . . .There is nothing mysterious about the apodeictic certainty of logic and mathematics. Our knowledge that no observation can ever confute the proposition "7 + 5 =12" depends simply on the fact that the symbolic expression "7 + 5" is synonymous with "12", just as our knowledge that every oculist is an eye doctor depends on the fact that the symbol "eye-doctor" is synonymous with "oculist". And the same explanation holds good for every other a priori truth.[60]

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[58] Ibid. p. 72.
[59] Ibid. p. 75.
[60] Ibid. p. 85.

As the truths of analytic propositions does not depend on our experiences of objects in the world and the fact that the denial of analytic proposition will only lead us to self-contradiction, it naturally generates certain kind of necessity which we by no means can falsify. The necessity of such truth can only arise from norms of the 'symbolic expressions' that are operative in our system of language.

However, there is an interesting point mentioned in the above passage of Ayer. Ayer conceives the fact which justifies or confirms our knowledge about a priori or analytic truth, lies in the fact of synonymy between two terms. This notion of synonymy is very important for Quine as his rejection of analyticity is primarily based upon the argument that if analyticity is to be defined in terms of synonymy, then, there will be circularity. According to Quine, the notion of synonymy, then, has to be defined in terms of analyticity and hence, circularity. I shall discuss this point in details in the next chapter.

Having unpacked Ayer's account of distinction of empirical verification and the analytic proposition, I should now expand on another significant account of the distinction proposed by another leading philosopher of the logical positivist movement. I shall now, aim to take up Carnap's distinction of 'internal' and 'external' questions which would help us to understand Carnap's approach to the notion of meaning. In order to understand Carnap's view, I shall evaluate his arguments presented in the paper "Empiricism, Semantics, and Ontology".[61]

Carnap begins his paper by noting that the empiricists have always been sceptical in dealing with certain entities such as "properties", "classes", "relations", "numbers", "propositions" etc. These are called abstract entities. Since the empiricists grant only those as having meaning which can be perceived empirically by our senses, any discussion on abstract entities may put them in a place of discomfort. However, these entities come very often into philosophical debates and discussions. The empiricists, therefore, cannot completely get rid of these entities without taking a clear stand. I shall now, look at the empiricists' position as to how to deal with abstract entities by way of looking at Carnap's paper.

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[61] This paper is viewed as the supplementary work of "Meaning and Necessity" as Carnap himself has noted. See Carnap. R., "Empiricism, Semantics and Ontology", in Benacerraf and Putnam (eds)(1983) *The Philosophy of Mathematics*, Cambridge University Press .

There are two dominant views which have been discussed by Carnap in "Empiricism, Semantics and Ontology" with regard to the question of abstract entities. In one view, it is said that the empiricists have been traditionally found to take the side of the Nominalists who deny reference of abstract objects altogether. The other is the view by the Platonists who take the truth of arithmetical statements "to imply the existence of a range of abstract objects, numbers, not existing in space and time, and completely disconnected from the causal order of concrete entities."[62] Carnap's aim was steer clear of both these positions and finally, his aim was to show that an analysis of abstract object can go well with empiricism and science. In order to establish such a view, Carnap has proposed a distinction concerning the question of existence. This distinction involves the distinction of "internal" and "external" questions.[63]

The distinction of "internal' and "external" questions cannot be understood without giving an exposition of Carnap's concept of "linguistic framework". A "linguistic framework" for Carnap means a structure where the operation of language takes place with the introduction of new rules. Carnap writes:

> If someone wishes to speak in his language about a new kind of entities, he has to introduce a system of new ways of speaking, subject to new rules; we shall call this procedure the construction of a linguistic framework for the new entities in question. And now we must distinguish two kinds of questions of existence: first, questions of the existence of certain entities of the new kind within the framework; we call them internal questions; and second, questions concerning the existence or reality of the system of entities as a whole, called external questions.[64]

Carnap's linguistic framework is different from what may be called the factual framework. He would distinguish these two frameworks by addressing the questions in which we apply certain logical rules and those in which no logical rules are required as such. In arithmetic, for example, we do certain calculations which are not based on our empirical observations, but, they are based on some logical rules and conventions which may be regarded as a priori. So, it can be said that the internal questions which are dealt in linguistic framework, are to be answered analytically. On the contrary, the internal questions in factual

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[62] Millar, *Philosophy of Language*, p. 115.
[63] Carnap, "Empiricism, Semantics and Ontology", p. 241-242.
[64] Ibid. p. 242.

framework are dealt with differently. Let's consider the statement: 'Is lead soluble?'To answer such questions, we need to carry out an experiment based on our empirical tools. Hence, these kinds of internal questions in the factual framework are answered by observing our sense perceptual experiences, and therefore, they are called a posteriori. Thus, the internal questions in both linguistic and the factual framework can be considered as literally significant as we have seen in Ayer. Because, the answers are given in both the framework either by analytic means or by empirical verification. [65]

Now, let us consider the external questions. The question such as "Are there numbers?" The Platonists would answer this question by way of arguing that numbers exist in an abstract sense outside the purview of our sense-perceptual domain. The Nominalists, on the other hand, would say, such entities do not exist. Carnap, however, accepts neither position. He tries to answer the questions from being within the linguistic framework. According to him, such external questions have no literary significance because the criteria they satisfy are only at the level of pragmatic considerations of the framework best suited to deal with the questions. It can be expanded through the following passage:

> There may be a substantial question as to which framework best satisfies the relevant pragmatic criteria. But the external questions themselves do not concern any issue of truth or falsity, only decisions based on purely pragmatic considerations of the type mentioned. The traditional metaphysical debate is really only a psuedo-debate, and the questions it raises are pseudo-questions. There are, says Carnap, no substantial, metaphysical questions about matters of ontological commitment: we are only fooled into thinking that there are such questions by confusing external questions for internal questions.[66]

Keeping the logical positivists' stand exact, Carnap argues that the external questions concerning abstract entities do not have meaning as they lack literal significance. The way the traditional metaphysicians have raised questions about the existence of abstract objects are not genuine questions to be raised, rather, they are pseudo questions. However, from the above discussion, it can be clearly seen that Carnap has kept his distinction of analytic and synthetic within the realm of internal questions. It is, therefore, only the internal questions, comprise of the analytic and empirical statements of language, having literary significance and thus, meaningful for the logical positivists.

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[65] Millar, *Philosophy of Language*, p. 117.
[66] Ibid. p. 118.

Conclusion:

We may conclude the chapter by noting that though Frege's theory of meaning has given centrality to the notion of sense, it does not abandon the necessity of reference. It holds that reference alone cannot be the sufficient condition for understanding the meaning of a sentence, although it may be the necessary condition for a theory of meaning. However, Frege's theory tries to establish an account to avoid the problems related to referential expressions by considering the notion of sense as the sole criterion to express thought and thereby, express meaning. But, sense and reference must go together in order for a sentence to be intelligible. However, Frege's theory of meaning had given over emphasis to the notion of sense. The problems concerning language that Frege had tried to solve by over emphasizing the notion of sense could be solved with such a notion as pointed out by Russell in his theory of meaning.

Nevertheless, Russell theory of meaning is also not satisfactory as it has given sole importance to the notion of refernce. Though Russell had attempted to solve the problems of reference concerning definite description and bearerless names, it could not provided a satisfactory account of referential theory. Considering both Frege and Russell, it cannot be hold that a referential theory of meaning solves the problems of meaning in its entirety.

Further, we have tried to give an exposition of another account of meaning held by the logical positivists. A major shift can be seen between the accounts of Frege-Russell and the logical positivists as the logical positivists offer a theory of meaning without appealing either to the notion of sense or to the notion of reference. They provide a theory of meaning where the criterion for meaningfulness lies in the method of verification. So, they got rid of both the theories of sense and reference in their account of meaning.

There is another crucial ground on which the logical positivists differ from Frege and Russell. For Frege and Russell, names were central, their theories of meaning primarily dealt with names and definite descriptions whereas, the logical positivists aim was to establish an account of meaning by considering two kinds of sentences as meaningful. These are: the sentences which are verifiable in experience and the sentences which are analytically true. These are two major grounds on which a shift can be observed from a referential theory of meaning to a verification theory of meaning.

However, the logical positivists' account also gives rise to the problems with regard to their strong distinction between the analytic and the synthetic proposition which traditionally Frege, Russell and many other philosophers have held.

It must also be noted that, all the theories of meaning that are discussed in this chapter, have given importance in establishing a fixed account of meaning. This fixedness of meaning has been challenged by W.V.O. Quine. I shall discuss Quine's arguments in rejecting the referential theory and the verification theory by analyzing the fundamental distinction of analytic and synthetic propositions in the next chapter of my dissertation.

Chapter 2

Quine on Analytic-synthetic Distinction

Introduction

"Two Dogmas of Empiricism" is the work where Quine has consistently argued against the analytic-synthetic distinction. In the tradition of philosophy, this distinction has been accepted by most philosophers. Quine's skeptical stand, however, has occupied an exceptional place in the entire tradition. This position of Quine in contrast with the position maintained by other analytic philosophers has to be re-looked in order to understand the notion of meaning.

In this chapter, I attempt to analyse Quine's position on the distinction between the analytic and the synthetic statements. It has to be examined as to why Quine criticises this distinction and what he aims to establish by criticising this well-established distinction of analytic and synthetic statements. Secondly, I shall analyze Quine's arguments to understand why logical positivism cannot get away from the dogma of analytic-synthetic distinction. And thirdly, I would be examining response of other philosophers, such as Grice and Strawson, on Quine's "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" and build up a response for Grice and Strawson from Qinean perspective.

2.1 Quine's arguments against analyticity: An evaluation of the first part of "Two Dogmas of Empiricism"

Before we start analysing Quine's arguments against analyticity, let us take a look at some of the historically important accounts of the distinction of analytic and the synthetic statements proposed by various philosophers. This exposition would provide a background to locate Quine's position on his attack against the well-established distinction of the analytic and the synthetic statements. I shall briefly discuss some of the accounts here which would primarily include the accounts of Kant, Frege and the

logical positivists. Nonetheless, this distinction can also be found in the work of Scottish philosopher David Hume. As Quine puts it:

> Kant's cleavage between analytic and synthetic truths was foreshadowed in Hume's distinction between relations of ideas and matters of fact, and in Leibniz's distinction between truths of reason and truths of fact.[1]

Let us then begin with a brief understanding of Hume's account of the distinction of "relations of ideas" and "matters of fact."[2]

David Hume in *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* has argued for a distinction between "truth concerning relations of ideas" and "truth concerning matters of fact". This distinction is widely known as *Hume's Fork* [3]. The distinction can be viewed as parallel as the analytic-synthetic distinction. For, Hume argues that the objects of human reason under the class of "relations of ideas" express their truth with certainty without being dependent on anything which subsists in the world. For example, the sentences of Algebra, Arithmetic etc. are either *intuitively or demonstratively certain.*[4] As Hume says, the proposition such as "three times five is equal to the half of thirty" expresses a relation between numbers. According to him, the "Propositions of this kind are discoverable by the mere operation of thought, without dependence on what is anywhere existent in the universe."[5] This line of explanation about certain propositions, comes under the class of analytic propositions, as, on the one hand, the truth of such propositions can be established without taking into account any empirical evidence and on other hand, such propositions are *necessarily true.*

On the contrary, there are "matters of fact" which stand reverse to "relations of ideas". Hume writes:

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[1] Quine, "Main Trends in recent philosophy: Two Dogmas of Empiricism", p. 20. In this paper, Quine says that the distinction between the analytic and the synthetic statements could be traced to Hume and Leibnitz. I shall attempt to discuss the account of Hume in the main text. To be precise, Liebnitz's distinction of "truths of reason" and "truths of fact" also can be viewed as parallel as the analytic-synthetic distinction. Liebnitz conceives the statements of "truth of reason" as true in every possible world. Since the main focus of this chapter is on Quine's arguments against analyticity, I shall restrict myself from elaborating Liebnitz account here though it has a great philosophical significance with regard to the development of the analytic-synthetic distinction.

[2] This distinction was made with respect to the objects of our reason. However, we shall explain this distinction here as to provide a historical background for the analytic-synthetic distinction applied to linguistic expressions.

[3] Flew, *Hume's Philosophy of Belief*, p. 53.

[4] Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, p. 108.

[5] Ibid.

Matters of fact, which are the second objects of human reason, are not ascertained in the same manner; nor is our evidence of their truth, however great, of a like nature with the foregoing. The contrary of every matter of fact is still possible; because it can never imply a contradiction, and is conceived by the mind with the same facility and distinctness, as if ever so conformable to reality. That the sun will not rise tomorrow is no less intelligible a proposition, and implies no more contradiction than the affirmation, that it will rise. We should in vain, therefore, attempt to demonstrate its falsehood. Were it demonstratively false, it would imply a contradiction, and could never be distinctly conceived by the mind.[6]

As Hume argues, it is possible to establish falsehood to the class of proposition which come under "matters of fact". Such statements are not true by virtue of their meaning, rather the truth of such statements are established with reference to empirical evidence from our senses or by observing the causal affairs. Hence, if we attempt to establish the falsehood of the statements under "matters of fact", it would not lead us to contradiction. Rather, the denial of such statements can be *intelligibly* established. Hume's definition of this distinction is similar to Kant's analytic-synthetic distinction.

To explain the distinction between the analytic and the synthetic statements, it is important to refer to Kant's definition of the distinction. Quine's rejection of analytic-synthetic distinction began with the reference of Kant's definition of the distinction in "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" and by rejecting this definition, Quine aimed to reject all the other accounts of the distinction of the analytic and the synthetic statements. Let us examine Kant's definition.

According to Kant, an analytic statement is true by virtue of its meaning and independent of fact. In this definition, Kant defines analyticity in terms of meaning and he also separates meaning from the fact. So, this definition establishes a close relation between analyticity and meaning .Further, an analytic statement is such whose denial, according to most philosophers, is a self-contradiction. Synthetic statements, on the contrary, are based on matters of facts and the truth and falsity of such statements are contingent.[7] Now, it is important to look at what are the problems persisting with the notion of analytic and what is Quine's claim on that.

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[6] Ibid.

[7] Quine, "Main Trends in recent philosophy: Two Dogmas of Empiricism", p. 20.

If we take a close look on Kant's definition of analytic statements, we can recognise the definition in terms of 'containment', that is, his definition of the analytic statements can be conceived as the predicate of a sentence being conceptually contained in the subject of the sentence.[8]

So, we have three definitions of analyticity in hand which are:

1) Only those statements are analytic which are true by virtue of meaning. A celebrated example of such a definition of analyticity is: "Bachelors are unmarried men." To say that this statement is true by virtue of the meaning of the terms "Bachelor" and "Unmarried men" is to say that it will remain true under all possible interpretations of "Bachelor" and "Unmarried men" without any change in its truth.

2) Only those statements are analytic whose denial lead to self-contradiction. For example, "either it is raining today or it is not raining today" is always true. If we deny this statement, we will fall into self-contradiction. For, we will then violate the law of excluded middle.[9]

3) Analytic statements are those in which predicate term is already contained in the subject term. This definition is particularly seen in Kant's notion of analyticity. For example, "Oculists are eye-doctors". The truth of such kinds of statements can be established by looking at the concepts of "Oculist" and "Eye-doctor" and hence, it may be found that one term is conceptually contained in the other term and therefore, the sentence "Oculists are eye-doctors" becomes an analytically true sentence.

Kant in *Critique of Pure Reason* writes:

> In all judgement in which the relation of a subject to the predicate is thought…this relation is possible in two different ways. Either the predicate B belongs to the subject A as something that is (covertly) contained in this concept A; or B lies entirely outside the concept A, although it does instead stand in connection with it. In the first case I call the judgement analytic, in the second synthetic.[10] (Kant 1965, B11)

This definition of analytic given by Kant opens up the problems for the notion of meaning. The questions arise as: (a) what does it mean when we say the term "bachelor"

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[8] Ibid.
[9] According to the law of excluded middle, either a sentence or its negation, is always true. It can be expressed in the form of: p v -p.
[10] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason,* B11.

is *conceptually contained* in the term "unmarried man"? And (b) how would Kantian definition of analytic deal with the sentence, such as, "Mary drinks with those with whom she herself triples"? Because this sentence may appear as intuitively true and does not need an observation on part of Marry's behaviour to know the truth.[11] Taking these two questions into account, Quine observes that Kantian definition of analytic fails to provide a satisfactory answer. As Quine writes, "...it limits itself to statements of subject-predicate form, and it appeals to a notion of containment which is left at a metaphorical level." [12]

In standard definitions of analytic, a statement is analytic when (a) it is true by virtue of its meaning and independent of fact and (b) when its denial leads to contradiction. But, the question arises as how to account for such an account of analyticity. Quine argues that there is no clarity as to how to account for it. He writes:

> This definition has, small explanatory value; for the notion of self-contradictoriness, in the quite broad sense needed for this definition of analyticity, stands in exactly the same need of clarification as does the notion of analyticity itself. The two notions are the two sides of a single dubious coin.[13]

The notion of self-contradiction can be explained by the form "P & –P". An analysis of such an account of self-contradiction would offer two ways of characterizations, one consisting the narrow sense and the other consisting the broad sense. In narrow sense, a statement of self-contradiction in the form "P & –P" does not help to address the sentence such as, "Mark is a married bachelor", because, it does not follow the form "P & –P". Thus, we need the broad sense of characterization of self-contradiction. Quine claims that the broad sense of self-contradiction to address the sentence "Mark is a married bachelor", is in much great need of clarification which is no less difficult a task than to explain the notion of analyticity itself. Hence, such a definition of analyticity which is core to Kant's definition, fails to provide a clear account of the notion of analyticity.

Moreover, as Kant's definition involves the notion of conceptual containment, a question has been pointed out by many philosophers as: what happens to the sentences

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[11] Millar, *Philosophy of Language*, p. 128.
[12] Quine, "Main Trends in recent philosophy: Two Dogmas of Empiricism", p. 21.
[13] Ibid. p. 20.

which are (apparently) analytic sentences but cannot said to be analytic by applying Kantian characterization of conceptual containment. Let us consider the following sentences.

(a) If x is bigger than y, and y is bigger than z, then x is bigger than z.
(b) If something is red, then, it is colored.

How does Kant's definition of analyticity in terms of containment fits into the examples mentioned above. Quine, thus, does not consider Kant's definition of analyticity as convincing and therefore, he holds that it is just a metaphorical use by Kant when he defines analyticity in terms of conceptual containment and hence, the problem with the notion of analyticity persists.

Quine then takes into account another significant version of analyticity which includes Frege's definition. Frege conceives the notion of analyticity in connection with the logical laws. According to him, the analytic truths can be said to have two features: one concerning the logical laws and other which takes the premises as definitions. Sentence such as, "No unmarried men are married" comes under the logical laws according to Fregean analysis. It can be said that *such statements are true and will remain true under all interpretation of their component parts*. Frege's analytic truth, thus, can be elaborated as: "any statement which is either (a) a logical law, or (b) derivable from logical laws using only definitions as premises"[14] is to be called an analytic statement.

Let us apply Fregean characterization to propositions in order to unfold his account of analyticity.

(1) No unmarried men are married.
(2) Bachelors are unmarried men.
(3) Therefore, no bachelors are married.

In the above propositions, (1) is the statement of a logical law, (2) is the definition of "bachelor" and (3) is what we have got from taking (1) and (2) together, that is, (3) is being deduced from (1) and (2). Now, if we apply Fregean characterization of analytic truth, we can observe that (3) has fulfilled one of the criteria which we have mentioned

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[14] Millar, *Philosophy of Language*, p. 129.

in (b). The sentence "No bachelors are unmarried" has been derived from the logical law by using the definition of the premise. Hence, "No bachelors are unmarried" is a statement containing analytic truth.

Now, Quine attacks such characterisation of analytic truth as it does not do any better for the notion of analytic. Let us apply this characterization to another set of sentences having the same form:

(1) No unmarried men are married.

(2) Philosophers are unmarried men.

(3) Therefore, no philosophers are married.

In the above set of sentences, (4) is the logical law, (5) is the definition of philosopher, and (6) is derived from the logical law by using the definition. This also fulfils the criterion of analytic truth as defined in (b). However, it is not plausible to consider the sentence "No philosophers are married" as analytically true sentence though it meets the criterion to be called as analytic sentence as per Fregean suggestion. The problem arises here due to the use of *incorrect*[15] definition of "philosopher". Then how are we to solve this problem? Quine argues that when we try to respond to this in order to solve the problem raised, we reach at our original position of struggle to define analyticity. He says, in order for us to have an account of analyticity with correct definition, we need to have a structure where the meaning of one term is *synonymous* with the other term. Like in the case of "All bachelors are unmarried men", the term "bachelor" is synonymous with the term "unmarried men".

Quine takes this point of synonymy with much rigour. The questions asked at this point is: what is this new idea of synonymy? Can analyticity be defined only in terms of synonymy? Quine argues that if we are to consider the sentence "No bachelor is married" as an analytically true sentence just as we consider the sentence "No unmarried man is married" as an analytically true sentence, it seems, our consideration must rest on the notion of synonymy, since, "No bachelor is married" is an analytically true sentence because we put the exact *synonym for synonym* where one term can be defined with reference to the other and vice-versa. However, this notion of synonymy with regard to explaining the notion of analyticity does not solve the problem of

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[15] Ibid. p. 130.

analyticity. Therefore, Quine writes: "a notion of synonymy...is no less in need of clarification than analyticity itself."[16]

Quine's argument against the notion of synonymy as a characterization of analyticity unfolds the fact that two expressions are synonymous when they are *interchangeable salva veritate.*[17] This means that the substitution of the term "bachelor" in the place of "unmarried man" will not affect the truth of the sentence "All bachelors are unmarried man" and vice-versa. However, the problem of analyticity still remains unresolved. Because, Quine raises the question: is *interchangeability satlva veritate* a sufficient condition for synonymy? He extends his argument by questioning whether non-synonymous expressions are also interchangeable. He applies the criterion of *cognitive synonymy*[18] in order to analyze those analytic sentences where two terms are interchangeable and aims to see whether this criterion can solve the problem of analyticity. But, he observes that it does not.

In order to provide reason for his argument, Quine takes the examples of sentence in *extensional* language. He argues that there may be agreements between terms in extensional language, but, mere agreement of terms in extensional language does not guarantee an account for holding that these two terms will be interchangeable by virtue of their meaning. For example, the co-extensional expressions such as "the creature with a heart" and "the creature with a kidney" or "the morning star" and "the evening star", are interchangeable so far as extension is concerned, but, they differ in meaning. If we provide a criterion of cognitive synonymy of terms as *interchangeable salva veritate* to define analyticity, it must hold the same in case of expressions in extensional language as well. However, it does not. Quine writes:

> In an extensional language, therefore, interchangeability salva veritate is no assurance of cognitive synonymy of the desired type. That 'bachelor' and 'unmarried man' are interchangeable salva veritate in an extensional language assures us of no more than that [All and only bachelors are unmarried men is analytic] is true. There is no assurance here that the extensional agreement of 'bachelor' and 'unmarried man' rests on meaning rather than merely on accidental

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[16] Quine, "Main Trends in recent philosophy: Two Dogmas of Empiricism", p. 23.
[17] Ibid. p. 27.
[18] Cognitive Synonymy can be explained in a way where two words are cognitively synonymous by virtue of the cognitive sense associated with the words where one word can be substituted with the other word without changing the meaning conceptually associated with the words.

matters of fact, as does extensional agreement of 'creature with a heart' and 'creature with a kidney'.[19] (Additions in the second brackets are mine with a minute change in the quotation for clarity)

Therefore, it can be said that the co-extensional terms are interchangeable by a matter of *accident*, but, there is no sufficient reason to hold that they are cognitively synonymous by way of meeting any intuitive criterion of meaning. Thus, a new criterion has to be added to get rid of such a problem.

If we add a criterion of "necessity" into such an account of cognitive synonymy, the same problem no more remains persistent. As,

> This will allow us to say that two expressions are synonymous if and only if they are necessarily intersubstitutable salva veritate. This would ensure that cases like "Renate" and "Cordate" do not count as synonymous by our account of synonymy: although they are co-extensional, they are not necessarily co-extensional, since we can quite easily imagine possible worlds in which there are creatures with kidneys but no heart, and so on. Thus, "Renate" and "Cordate" are not necessarily intersubstitutable salva veritate, and hence do not count as synonymous by our account of synonymy.[20]

But, what does it mean to say that two terms are necessarily co-extensional? This new criterion gives rise to a new problem altogether. Quine argues that the addition of this new adverb actually does not solve the problem of analyticity. Because, our supposition about the addition of this new criterion remains at the same level of supposing analyticity. Hence, it does not provide a satisfactory account of analyticity. Quine, thus, argues that when we try to define analyticity, we presuppose analyticity.[21] Given the fact, an attempt of defining analyticity may take us to the problem of something like circularity which, in any case, we must avoid. From the analysis of Quine's arguments, it can thus, be hold that no definitions of analyticity as held by philosophers like Kant and Frege, gives satisfactory account analyticity. As, they attempted to exaplain analyticity by presupposing analyticity which is not acceptable for Quine.

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[19] Quine, "Main Trends in recent philosophy: Two Dogmas of Empiricism", p. 30.
[20] Millar, *Philosophy of Language*, p. 131.
[21] Quine, "Main Trends in recent philosophy: Two Dogmas of Empiricism", pp. 28-29.

However, Quine's main attack focuses on the logical positivists' account of analyticity. Let us now consider the logical positivists' account of analyticity to understand Quine's arguments against them.

The logical positivists' account of analyticity differs from the account of Kant or that of other philosophers which I need to elaborate now. Though logical positivists' account differs from other philosophers' account of analytic, there is a similarity between Liebnitz and the logical positivists in this regard. Carnap who was one of the prominent leaders in the positivists' movement defined analyticity in terms of a state-description.[22] A state-description as Quine writes, is "any exhaustive assignment of truth values of the atomic, or non-compound, statements of language." [23] That is to say that a state-description is such an assignment of truth under which the atomic statements are true in every possible world. For obvious reasons, this definition goes very close to Liebnitz as he talks about "truth of reason" which he explains as true in every possible world.[24] Quine points out that this account of Carnap brings back the problem of synonymy and analyticity. He writes:

> ...this version of analyticity servers its purpose only if the atomic statements of the language are, unlike 'John is a bachelor' and 'John is married', mutually independent. Otherwise, there would be a state-description which assigned truth to 'John is a bachelor' and falsity to 'John is married' and consequently 'All bachelors are married' would turn out synthetic rather than analytic under the proposed criterion. Thus the criterion of analyticity in terms of state-description servers only for languages devoid of extra-logical synonym-pairs, such as 'bachelor' and 'unmarried man': synonym pairs of the type which gives rise to the 'second class' of analytic statements.[25]

Carnap's state-description can only be applied to the propositions which are mutually independent. This criterion, as Quine seems, to argue does not give a satisfactory clarification for the statement "No bachelor is married". So, the problem of synonymy still remains as Carnap's state-description does not capture the function of synonym-

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[22] The concept of "state description" can be found in detail in Carnap's *Meaning and Necessity*, (1947) p.9.
[23] Quine, "Main Trends in recent philosophy: Two Dogmas of Empiricism", p. 23.
[24] In Liebnitz, we can find the notion of 'truth in all possible worlds'.
[25] Quine, "Main Trends in recent philosophy: Two Dogmas of Empiricism", p. 24.

pairs and therefore fails to give any plausible account of statement such as "No bachelor is married".

The efforts that have been made so far to understand the notion of analyticity through Quine's work, is by analysing the definition of analyticity. Quine claims that an analysis of different philosophers' account of analyticity and various ways of understanding analyticity has failed to make any progress in terms of getting a clear definition of analyticity. Quine notices it very carefully and thus, subsequently abandons the definition of analyticity itself. It has to be noted that when the definition of analyticity itself gets rejected by Quine, the distinction of the analytic and the synthetic statements does not automatically hold any more.

Since modern empiricists hold the distinction of analytic and the synthetic statements, Quine in "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" argues that modern empiricism gives rise to two kinds of dogmas. He considers the distinction of the analytic and the synthetic proposition as the first dogma. There is, however, another dogma, that is, the dogma of reductionism which is closely related with the distinction between the analytic and the synthetic statements.

Reductionism involves "the belief that each meaningful statement is equivalent to some logical construct upon terms which refer to immediate experience".[26] That is to say that only those statements are meaningful which are verifiable in experience. Quine argues that this theory of logical positivists fails to capture a range of meaningful statements which are not verifiable in experience. Now, it is important to note that the logical positivists have accepted both the notion of analyticity and the theory of verification. This dogma of the positivists is connected with the first dogma as argued by Quine. The appeal of the logical positivists for the theory of verification supports the distinction of the analytic and the synthetic statements. As Quine writes,

> …as long as it is taken to be significant in general to speak of the confirmation and infirmation of a statement, it seems significant to speak also of a limiting kind of statement which is vacuously confirmed, *ipso facto*, come what may; and such a statement is analytic.[27]

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[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid. p. 38.

Quine finds such positions held by the positivists as nonsense. For, those cannot give a solution to the problem of analyticity, rather leave it unclear for the statement such as "No bachelor is unmarried" and secondly, it is not simply granted that only those statements are meaningful which can be verified in experience. Because, in such case what happens to the statements which are not analytic in the same way the sentence "No unmarried man is married" is analytic? Thus, such a position held by the positivists has been thoroughly challenged by Quine. I attempt to unpack Quine's disagreements with the logical positivists' account of analyticity and theory of verification in the next section of this chapter.

2.2. Empiricism without analytic-synthetic distinction: An evaluation of the second part of "Two Dogmas of Empiricism"

Let us take the pivotal point from the positivists' theory of verification and see where the contrast comes with Quine. For the logical positivists, meaning is that, which is derived from the observational consequences. If we take this theory and the notion of analyticity together, a conflict can easily be recognized. Because, the theory of verification demands an observational reference which an analytic statement can not provide. It will perhaps not make any sense to say that 'All unmarried men are bachelors' is an analytically true statement because we have not observed any man so far who is unmarried and not a bachelor. Rather those who accept the notion of analyticity would say that this statement is analytically true by virtue of its meaning.

If this is the case, then how can anyone accept the notion of analyticity which does not need any empirical evidence for its confirmation and at the same time the theory of verification which does not recognize anything as meaningful that lacks empirical evidence? We must remember that, for the positivists, the notion of analyticity and the verification theory are two crucial points. Rejection of the verification theory means the collapse of the whole positivist project of rejecting metaphysics while rejecting the notion of analyticity means rejecting the laws of logic and mathematics.

Thus, analytic-synthetic distinction is one such distinction which is core of the positivists' philosophy and Quine in the 5th and the 6th section of "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" shows how the logical empiricist position is faulty. Quine, further,

establishes different sets of arguments to illustrate the difficulties with the logical positivists' position and his disagreements with them. He does not recognise any special class of sentences called analytic sentence. I shall unpack Quine's arguments against the logical positivists' distinction of the analytic and the synthetic statements by way of evaluating his arguments in "Two Dogmas of Empiricism".

Let us begin by taking the concept of synonymy into account and contrast it with the logical positivist definition of analytic-synthetic distinction. Looking at their account of analyticity and method of verification, it can be said of the logical positivists that their treatment of synonyms go with the method of empirical verification as they hold that the word occurring in "P" and the word occurring in "Q" are synonymous if both the sentences have the same method of verification for their confirmation or disconfirmation. Now, if we apply this definition of synonymy by the logical positivists to the notion of analyticity as held by them, it would turn out as: *only those sentences can be considered as analytic sentences which are synonymous with the logical truth.*

This formulation of the logical positivists has been thoroughly challenged by Quine. He argues that the logical positivists' formulation of the definition of analyticity and the method of verification are based on false assumption. Because, the basis of their assumption rests on the fact that only individual statements are meaningful if these can be empirically confirmed or disconfirmed by the method of verification. Quine rejects such assumption. According to Quine, all meaningful statements face the *tribunal of experience as a whole*[28]. This is known as Quine's *meaning holism*. Quine holds that:

> When faced with a recalcitrant experience – an experience which conflicts with our currently held theory of the world – we have to revise that theory. But in principle any part of the theory can be dropped, subject to this being accommodated by changes in other areas of the theory: which part of the theory should actually be dropped will be determined by purely pragmatic standards, such as the preservation of simplicity and the minimisation of future recalictrance.[29]

If we notice closely, we can observe that Quine's meaning holism is different from Ayer's moderate holism[30]. Quine goes on arguing in his meaning holism that logical

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[28] Quine, "Main Trends in recent philosophy: Two Dogmas of Empiricism", p. 41.

[29] Millar, *Philosophy of Language*, p. 137.

[30] Ayer's moderate holism holds that for any empirical test of hypotheses, we need to take into account the whole set of hypotheses and not a single hypotheses in isolation. As he writes, "When one speaks of

positivists' notion of analytic sentences consisting the sentences of logic and mathematics, as true by virtue of meaning is not correct. As, those sentences are also not *immune to revision*. Quine writes:

> Total science is like a field of force whose boundary conditions are experience. A conflict with experience at the periphery occasions readjustments in the interior of the field. Truth values have to be redistributed over some of our statements. Reevaluation of some statements entails reevaluation of others, because of their logical interconnections – the logical laws being in turn simply certain further statements of the system, certain further elements of the field. Having reevaluated one statement we must reevaluate some others, which may be statements logically connected with the first or may be the statements of logical connections themselves. But the total field is so underdetermined by its boundary conditions, experience, that there is much latitude of choice as to what statements to re-evaluate in the light of any single contrary experience.[31]

Quine's meaning holism, therefore, aims to establish that logical positivist account of the distinction between the analytic and synthetic statement is not worthy to be granted. Since, even the logical and mathematical statements are revisable, with an attempt to make some adjustment in the system; we can make any statement as true without even incorporating the notion of analyticity in our system. He, thus, argues:

> It is misleading to speak of the empirical content of an individual statement - especially if it be a statement at all remote from the experiential periphery of the field. Furthermore it becomes folly to seek a boundary between synthetic statements, which hold contingently on experience, and analytic statements which hold come what may. Any statement can be held true come what may, if we make drastic enough adjustments elsewhere in the system. Even a statement very close to the periphery can be held true in the face of recalcitrant experience by pleading hallucination or by amending certain statements of the kind called logical laws. Conversely, by the same token, no statement is immune to revision. Revision even of the logical law of the excluded middle has been proposed as a means of simplifying quantum mechanics; and what difference is

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hypotheses being verified in experience, it is important to bear in mind that it is never just a single hypothesis which an observation confirms or discredits, but always a system of hypotheses." See, *Language, Truth and Logic*, p. 94.

[31] Quine, "Main Trends in recent philosophy: Two Dogmas of Empiricism",pp. 39-40.

there in principle between such a shift and the shift whereby Kepler superseded Ptolemy, or Einstein Newton, or Darwin Aristotle?[32]

Thus a strict division between the analytic and the synthetic statement is not required at all. A change in the system, where we are dealing with the truth and the falsity of a particular set of statements, can change the truth value of these statements. He claims that, by simple amendment in the system, we can hold any statement as true.

Quine further clarifies that "no statement is immune to revision" We can even think of revising a logical law as there have been instances where logical laws have been revised. Since, even logical laws can be revised; any statement within a particular system can be revised and thus, any statement can be held true under a system. [33] This argument, therefore, again gives ground to abandon the distinction between the analytic and the synthetic statements held by the positivists.

However, some philosophers have found Quine's treatment of the notion of analyticity as incorrect. Grice and Strawson argue that Quine's aim of rejecting the analytic-synthetic distinction on the basis of some criticisms, is not strong enough to reject such a well-established distinction. I shall evaluate Grice's and Strawson's arguments in the next section of this chapter.

2.3. In Defence of the Analytic-Synthetic Distinction: Grice and Strawson :

In "Two Dogmas of Empiricism", Quine does not merely criticise the distinction between the analytic and the synthetic statements, but, his claims go on in rejection of such a distinction held by the logical positivists. Many responses have come on Quine's rejection of this well-established distinction. A very significant response has come from the joint work "In Defence of a Dogma" by Grice and Strawson. To establish their response to Quine, they start with an overview of various ways by which one can criticise a distinction, but, hold that mere criticisms are certainly not enough in order to abandon a well-established distinction such as, the distinction between the analytic and the synthetic statements. Grice and Strawson have not mistaken Quine's claims in this regard and therefore, they acknowledge that his claims are not mere criticisms, but a great deal more. However, they believe that Quine's criticisms of the analytic-synthetic

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[32] Quine, "Main Trends in recent philosophy: Two Dogmas of Empiricism",p. 40.
[33] Ibid.

distinction do not justify the rejection of the distinction. [34] Hence, they develop a bunch of arguments in response to Quine's position.

If one looks at first few sections of Quine's paper (1951), it is very easy to understand that Quine has emphasised to a great extent that the distinction between the analytic and the synthetic statements is not sufficiently clarified. He also argues that the notion of analyticity is also not clear. Quine's repeated arguments about the inadequately clarified notion of analyticity have certainly made the building blocks for his further arguments. But, he made much strong arguments than just claiming about the inadequately clarified notion of analyticity. Grice and Strawson write:

He declares, or seems to declare, not merely that the distinction is useless or inadequately clarified, but also that it is all together illusory, that the belief in its existence is a philosophical mistake. That there is such a distinction to be drawn at all is an unempirical dogma of empiricists, a metaphysical article of faith.[35]

Quine seems to argue that the distinction between analytic and synthetic statements as has been held by most philosophers, does not give sufficient reason to believe that such a distinction is a well-defined definition. Because, the definition of the notion of analyticity gets restricted to 'synonymous' terms when statement like 'No bachelor is married' is considered as an analytic statement. Further, he says, to believe in the notion of analyticity, one needs to presuppose analyticity which leads to the problem of circularity. [36] Hence, the belief in the existence of such a distinction is a philosophical mistake. Grice and Strawson argue that if we can make a clear list of statements to which the word 'analytic' and an another list of statements to which the word 'synthetic' will always apply, it will give us sufficient condition to believe that such a distinction exists. [37] They say that the application of these expressions called 'analytic' and 'synthetic' will mark the distinction as clearly as it needs to be. However, with regard to clarity of the notion of analyticity, Quine always says that there is a lack. Grice and Strawson responds that even Quine's incorporation of the term 'cognitive synonymy' to define analyticity as attributed to the positivists, is in great need of clarification. They write:

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[34] Grice and Strawson, "In Defence of a Dogma", p. 141.
[35] Ibid. p. 142.
[36] Quine, "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" 1951, p. 28.
[37] Grice and Strawson, "In Defence of a Dogma", p. 143.

To say that two expressions are cognitively synonymous seems to correspond, at any rate roughly, to what we should ordinarily express by saying that *x* and *y* have the same meaning or that *x* means the same as *y*. If Quine is to be consistent in his adherence to the extreme thesis, then it appears that he must maintain not only that the distinction we suppose ourselves to be marking by the use of the terms 'analytic' and 'synthetic' does not exist, but also that the distinction we suppose ourselves to be marking by the use of the expressions 'means the same as' 'does not mean the same as' does not exist either. [38]

If the distinction between 'means the same as' and 'does not mean the same as' is also denied by Quine, then, any distinction of a pair of linguistic expression is denied by Quine after all. Grice and Strawson argue that if Quine accepts this, then it will lead him to commit a philosophical mistake and if he maintains that there is a distinction between 'means the same as' and 'does not mean the same as' , then, Quine must also accept the analytic- synthetic distinction.

Grice and Strawson then shift towards explaining analyticity by bringing the distinction between 'logical impossibility' and 'natural impossibility'. They consider two kinds of propositions: [39]

1. "My neighbor's three-year-old child understands Russell's Theory of Types."
2. "My neighbor's three-year-old child is an adult."

Both these examples are the cases of impossibility, but they differ in kind. In the first case, one may say of the utterer that her words are unbelievable. But, in the second case, one can simply say that the utterers words do not make any sense. For, as long as we know and understand the meaning of the word 'three-year-old child' and the meaning of the word 'adult', we can clearly say that these two words cannot apply to the same person unless there is a change in the meaning of these two terms. Hence, Grice and Strawson hold that there is analytic-synthetic distinction.

However, Quine has responses for the Grice and Stawson. Before we look at Quine's responses against Grice and Srawson, let us note once again what are the points on which Grice and Strawson think that the dogma of analytic-synthetic distinction can be defended.

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[38] Ibid. p. 145.
[39] Ibid. p. 150.

1) Grice and Strawson consider Quine's accusation that the notion of analyticity cannot avoid circularity is faulty. As, they argue in "In Defence of a Dogma" that Quine's complaint against analyticity does not offer enough reasons to discard the notion of analyticity and hence the distinction of the analytic and the synthetic statements. In philosophy, the philosophers make a distinction between an *open class of cases* and a boarderline cases. [40] The distinction of analytic and the synthetic statements has to be seen in connection with this distinction. There may be distinctions of various kinds in philosophy which may not be sufficiently clarified. But, it certainly does not mean that there is no matter of the fact about such distinctions.

2) The second defense of the dogma by Grice and Strawson comes with the argument that: the phrase "hard to come by" that Quine has used in order to show the difficulty in holding the distinction of analytic and the synthetic statements sets an unnecessarily high standard for holding a distinction. As Quine holds that the notion of analyticity should meet both the conditions of necessity and sufficiency with regard to the clarity of its definition, he then must also hold that the same conditions should apply to the cases of extension.[41] That is, whenever we are to speak of any cases of extension, we need to see that both the conditions of necessity and sufficiency are met. But, in cases of extension, at least the first condition does not hold. Yet, those sentences of extension do not become meaningless sentences. Therefore, for a concept to become meaningful, we do not need to set such high standards and hence, analytic-synthetic distinction can be held without having necessary and sufficient conditions for defining it.

Now, Quine thinks that Grice's and Strawson's argument commits the "fallacy of subtraction"[42]. Quine argues that if we have two sentences s1 and s2 and if we say that s1 is meaningful and means the "same as" s2, then we must admit of an abstract entity of which both s1 and s2 are connected.[43] A Quinean reply to such an argument by Grice and Strawson would be: in order to define meaning of something, there is no need to appeal for such a phrase "means the same as".

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[40] Glock, *Quine and Davidson on Language, Thought and Reality*, pp. 73-74.
[41] Ibid. p. 74.
[42] Ibid. p. 76.
[43] Quine, *Word and Object*, pp. 206-207.

Moreover, it creates further complication when, for example, "X knows the meaning of superfluous" and "The meaning of superfluous is identical with the meaning of redundant". From these, we cannot hold that "X knows the meaning of redundant".[44]

Again, Quine argues the intentional notions like analyticity do not have a clear criterion for defining the identity relations. The only way, the identity between two words are defined is by the application of the notion of synonymy. And this notion, as we have seen, Quine completely rejects as synonymy cannot be the criterion for analyticity. Since any attempt of defining analyticity in terms of synonymy will make us fall in circularity.

Therefore, Quine holds that such an intentional notion like analyticity which gives rise to a fixed account of meaning cannot provide a satisfactory theory of meaning. Hence, meaning, for Quine is, indeterminate.

Conclusion:

As long as we hold the distinction between analytic and the synthetic, the problem of meaning in terms of a pure intentional account of meaning will be persistent. There have been different attempts to provide a definition of analyticity by many philosophers. But, none of the definition could establish a clear criterion for analyticity without the notion of synonymy.

Quine's main aim in the "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" was to reject the logical positivists distinction of analytic and the synthetic statements and thereby establish that logical positivists mistake of holding such a distinction lied in the fact that they had considered the sentences individual and not as a whole set of sentences for their analysis of meaning. If we take into account the block of sentences and then aim to set a theory of meaning, we may realise that the distinction of analytic-synthetic statements no more holds. Hence, a new account of meaning has been proposed by Quine which aims to establish that meaning is indeterminate. I shall look into the alternative account of meaning proposed by Quine in the next chapter of this dissertation.

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[44] Glock, *Quine and Davidson on Language, Thought and Reality*, p. 76.

Chapter 3

Quine on Indeterminacy of Translation and Meaning

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I have tried to unfold Quine's arguments against the distinction between the analytic and the synthetic statements. Quine's attack on the distinction between the analytic and the synthetic statements indicates a kind of *meaning scepticism.* As, Quine argues that:

> ..there is simply no fact of the matter as to whether a given sentence is analytic or synthetic, no fact of the matter as to what it means; and for any given pair of sentences, there is no fact of the matter as to whether they are synonymous or not.[1]

Thus, it can be said that Quine's meaning scepticism begins with the rejection of the analytic-synthetic distinction particularly his rejection of synonymy in this context. However, in order to understand Quine's meaning scepticism, it is an important task to unpack his arguments about the indeterminacy of translation. The claim that we cannot have any fixed notion of meaning suggests that a correct translation of one word into another supposed synonymous word is in principle impossible. Hence translation is indeterminate.

In this chapter, I aim to evaluate Quine's arguments concerning indeterminacy of translation. This will lead to establish the ground for Quine's meaning holism as opposed to atomistic accounts of meaning found in Russell and Frege. I shall also establish the connection between indeterminacy of translation and meaning holism. Finally, I aim to provide a Davidsonian response to Quine by way of looking at Davidson's radical interpretation.

3.1. An exposition of Quine's arguments for indeterminacy of translation:

Quine's notion of indeterminacy of translation continues to challenge any determinate notion of meaning. In order to show this, Quine offers his arguments which involve reference to *radical translation*. He says: suppose Jones speaks only English and he is

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[1] Millar, *Philosophy of Language*, p. 141.

expected to translate the statements of a different language, say, German, into his own language. Jones has absolutely no knowledge about German, neither has he any historical or cultural familiarity with the language. Given this fact, Jones has to formulate a *translation manual* to achieve his purpose of translation. This *translation manual* should provide an instruction such that each sentence of English co-relates with each sentence of German language. Now, if Jones' *translation manual* is *correct*, then a sentence in German, for example, "Schnee ist weiss" should be translated as "Snow is white". If his *translation manual* translates the sentence as "Instantiations of snow-hood are cold", we can say that his *translation manual* does not provide a correct translation of the sentence "Schnee ist weiss".

But, Quine claims that this is a mistake. He argues that there is no objective fact of the matter on the basis of which we can assert that a particular translation manual is correct and the others are incorrect translation manuals. For, if a translation manual is correct, we should be able to pair the sentences of one language with the sentences of other language and both the sentences of two different languages should have the same meaning. But, according to Quine, this is not the case. As he argues that there is no correct translation manual which would pair two sentences of two diverse languages, there would be no objective fact of the matter where two sentences of different languages would mean the same. Since there is no fact of the matter of the sameness of meaning, there would be no objective fact of meaning as well.[2] This argument of Quine constitutes the major point for indeterminacy of translation thesis which gets its background from his rejection of the notion of analyticity which we have discussed in the previous chapter.

Quine further claims that in a particular language, we can possibly formulate more than one equally acceptable translation manuals. Therefore, it is possible that two translation manuals become compatible with the observation sentences at hand for which we have set up the translation manuals. However, he claims, the two translation manuals would be incompatible with each other. He argues that there can be an indefinite number of translation manuals for a particular language. But, if we chose two of these, they would not be compatible with each other. If there are two translation manuals for a language one of which, for example, translates "Schnee" as "Snow" and the other translates it as

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[2] Ibid. pp. 141-142.

"Instantiations of snow-hood", we will not be having anything to pick one translation manual as correct and thereby abandon the other. Nevertheless, we do choose some words which fit into the language in translation the most. Thus, one can raise the question that, if Quine's claim is true, on what basis we choose certain words to formulate sentences to translate those from one language to another. To answer this question, I shall evaluate two major arguments that Quine proposes to establish indeterminacy of translation thesis.

Quine's indeterminacy of translation thesis primarily consists of two major lines of arguments. One comprises of the "argument from below" and the other comprises of the "argument from above". The first argument comes from Quine's celebrated book "Word and Object" and the second argument comes from his paper "On the Reasons for the Indeterminacy of Translation". I shall now elaborate these two arguments in order to understand Quine's indeterminacy of translation thesis.

(a) The Argument from Below :

Quine introduces the notion of a *radical translator* in his thesis to show that meaning is indeterminate. A radical translator, as Quine projects in his thesis, belongs to a certain linguistic community, yet, undertakes the job of translating the language of some other linguistic tribe which is absolutely unfamiliar to the translator. As we have seen in the above example, Jones being the radical translator does not know anything about German language and he does not have any familiarity with the historical or cultural facts of the linguistic community either. The translator does not have any prior information about the linguistic community of the language in question; neither has he had an access to a bi-lingual interpreter. The radical translator has nothing at hand apart from the fact that he can *observe the behaviour* of the people belonging to that linguistic community and guess, from their observed behaviour, what they could be meaning. The question that may be relevant at this point is: how does a radical translator's translation, which is only based on the observation of behaviour of the people, would lead to indeterminacy of translation and hence, indeterminacy of meaning?

Quine's point, however, is clear. If we claim that there is objective factor to suppose that a translation manual of the language in question is correct, it implies that (given the fact that the translator is only left with observing speakers' behaviour) our claim that a particular translation manual is correct, depends only upon the speakers' behavioural

65

dispositions. If this is the case, then, the question arises as how far we can achieve about the determinate notion of meaning. It is perhaps not a very comfortable position for the philosophers who would argue for a determinate notion of meaning. Because, in the case we have stated above the whole notion of meaning then gets determined only by the behavioural dispositions of the speaker. And this cannot be accepted as an argument in favour of the notion of meaning. So, there is a need of stronger version of meaning to face Quine's challenges.

There can be another way of arguing for the notion of meaning as one may bring the idea that there are certain *conventions* for which we call a tree, a tree and not a table. But what are these conventions after all? The conventions do not supernaturally come into existence. The conventions come into existence because of certain behavioural disposition that we attribute towards a certain word. When we call a tree –"tree" and not "table", our attribute towards the word is determined by our behaviour with the word which depicts a certain object. But, is such an attribute sufficient to have a correct translation manual? Quine would undoubtedly disagree that it would. Our behaviour with words is not sufficient on the basis of which we can claim to have a correct translation manual. Hence, there is no fact at all on the basis of which we can claim to have a correct translation manual.

The reason that Quine takes into account the notion of behavioural dispositions in the indeterminacy thesis, is because, he wants to establish that it is not possible to have a translation manual which will provide the ground where each sentences of an alien language can be translated into the sentences of the translator's own language, and thereby, can be shown that each sentences of the alien language is compatible with the sentences of translator's own language. In this context, Quine thinks that bringing the notion of behavioural dispositions would help us to understand why there cannot be a definite notion of meaning. In order to make his argument clear, Quine brings another notion called *stimulus meaning* in his thesis. The concept of stimulus meaning can be defined as follows:

> The stimulus meaning of an expression is defined to be an ordered pair consisting, on the one hand, of those sensory stimulations which prompt assent to the sentence (the affirmative stimulus meaning) and, on the other hand, those sensory

66

stimulations which prompt dissent from the sentence (the negative stimulus meaning).[3]

Now, given this definition of *stimulus meaning* at hand, a translator should be able to formulate a translation manual which offers a translation of each sentences of his own language that pairs with the *stimulus meaning* of the sentences of an alien language which the translator is at task of translation. Quine's thesis of indeterminacy of translation claims that the translator cannot provide a satisfactory correct translation manual of this kind. As, he argues:

> Manuals for translating one language into another can be set up in divergent ways, all compatible with the totality of speech dispositions, yet incompatible with one another. In countless places they will diverge in giving, as their respective translations of the sentences of the one language, sentences of the other language which stand to each other in no plausible sort of equivalence however loose.[4]

We must note that Quine's conception of a translation manual is confined only to the evidence that we get from the speakers' behaviour dispositions. Because, his meaning scepticism is concerned only with the fact about the stimulus meaning and also because it is the speakers' behavioural disposition which can begin from and which provides clue for translation. Now, the question arises: how the radical translator is supposed to perform his job of translation by only observing the behavioural dispositions of the speakers of an unknown linguistic community? Quine writes:

> How is he to recognize native assent and dissent when he sees or hears them? Gestures are not to be taken at face value; the Turks' are nearly the reverse of our own. What he must do is guess from observation and then see how well his guesses work. Thus suppose in asking "Gavagai?" and the like, in the conspicuous presence of rabbits and the like, he has elicited the responses "Evet" and "Yok" often enough to surmise that they may correspond to "Yes" and "No", but has no notion which is which. Then he tries the experiment of echoing the native's own volunteered pronouncements. If thereby he pretty regularly elicits "Evet" rather than "Yok" he is encouraged to take "Evet" as "Yes". Also he tries responding with "Evet" and "Yok" to the natives' remarks; the one that is the more serene in its effect is the better candidate for "Yes". However inconclusive these methods, they generate a

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[3] Ibid. p. 144.
[4] Quine, *Word and object*, p. 27.

working hypothesis. If extraordinary difficulties attend all his subsequent steps, the linguist may decide to discard that hypothesis and start again.[5]

Quine, through the above passage, prepares a ground to give emphasis on the thesis of indeterminacy of translation. Let us suppose that the radical translator, by using his device of observing the behaviour of speakers of the unknown linguistic community, found that whenever there is a rabbit around, the speakers of that linguistic community utters "Yo, gavagai" and that, when there is no rabbit around, they abstain from uttering such words.

Now, the difficulty arises at this point. We must note that, the translator is the one who is to choose the words best suited for the expression "Yo, gavagai". But, there is every possibility that the translator chooses the expression "there is an undetached rabbit part" when he hears "Yo, gavagai". Our intuition might say that the expression "there is an undetached rabbit part" is not a correct translation of "Yo, gavagai" and therefore, we must appeal to the expression "there is a rabbit" as the correct translation of "Yo, gavagai". But, what remains as the objective factor for us to decide which translation is the correct one here? As, there is no other fact except that we can take only native's behavioural dispositions into account and nothing else, we are still at the level of the same problem. Because, this observation does not contribute in any way to choose as to which translation of "Yo, gavagai" is correct.

We must also notice that the two expressions "there is a rabbit" and "there is an undetached rabbit part" have the same stimulus meanings, "since whenever there is a rabbit present there is also an undetached rabbit part present, and vice-versa".[6] So, there is no fact by virtue of which we can choose one expression over the other as the correct translation based on stimulus meaning and observational evidence. Quine, however, does not disagree that we do choose one expression over the other looking at the expression which would best suit the context. The point he tries to make is this, that, our decision of choosing one expression over the other will not provide any justification for accepting that the expression we choose(while in translation) is the correct one.

Now, there can be a response against Quine. Let us suppose, we place a question to the native speakers in the native's language where we have identified certain expressions

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[5] Ibid. pp. 29-30.
[6] Millar, *Philosophy of Language*, p. 147.

68

like "emas sa" as "the same as" and the demonstrative words such as, "hit" as "this" and "hat" as "that" and thereby formulate our question "Si hit gavagai emas sa hat gavagai?" translated in English as "Is this gavagai same as that gavagai?" By asking this question to the native speakers by pointing towards a specific part of a rabbit, for example, its ears, we can get genuine answers. For example, to decide on which translation of "Yo, gavagai" is accurate, if we point to a certain part of the rabbit (e.g. its legs) and put the question to the native speakers, after pointing to its nose, "Si hit gavagai emas sa hat gavagai?" (which in English means "Is this gavagai the same as that gavagai?"), we can get a genuine answer. Because, if the native speakers say "Evet" (which we have identified as "Yes"), then, we get our correct translation for "gavagai" as "rabbit". This evidence then, would subsequently reject the translation of "gavagai" as "undetached rabbit part". It would be the other way round if the native speakers answer the question by saying "Yok" (which we have identified as "No").[7]

Now, Quine has a reply for such an argument. Quine's reply can be articulated through the following passage by Gareth Evans:

> An expression may sensibly be regarded as a predicate only if it interacts with the "apparatus of individuation", and the stimulus conditions that trigger assent to the sentences in which such interaction occurs provide the only empirical evidence that bears upon what extension the expression, as a predicate, should be regarded as possessing. But the identification of the apparatus of individuation in a foreign language is empirically quite underdetermined; the expression that one theory regards as the identity predicate, may, with suitable adjustments be treated by another as an expression for some distinct equivalence relation – both theories assigning to whole sentences a significance completely in accordance with the behavioural data. Consequently, whether an expression is a predicate at all, and if a predicate, what extension it has, are matters underdetermined by all actual and possible observations.[8]

Quine argues, to ask the question "Is this gavagai the same as that gavagai" is to assume that there is already existing translation which will provide us an answer to the question. In Quine's language, the expression such as, "the same" is called the *objective reference*

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[7] Ibid.

[8] Evans, "Identity and Predication", pp. 27-28.

or *the apparatus of individuation*.[9] He argues that, although we have these apparatus, these do not provide an objective ground for us to build an independent translation of the expression such as "gavagai". We can think of divergent ways of formulating the behavioural data, for example, let's assume that we have formulated an expression: (a) "Dohab gavagai roles dahab gavagai".[10] Let us also assume that this expression *assends* to the fact when there is a rabbit around. It may then be plausible to translate (a) as: (a1) "This rabbit is the same as that rabbit". However, we must note that (a1) is not the only expression which is compatible with the behavioural data we have got. There can be other expressions which are similarly compatible with the behavioural evidence. For example, we can translate "roles" as "is a part of the same rabbit as" instead of "is the same as". Given the fact that we have a new translation of "roles", the expression "gavagai" now can be translated as "undetached rabbit part". Hence (a) can be translated in this form: (a*) "This undetached rabbit part is a part of the same rabbit as that undetached rabbit part".[11]

Hence, Quine would offer his argument from below: for any language L, there can be infinite number of translation manuals. It is also possible that each of the translation manual becomes compatible with the natives' behavioural dispositions, yet, they would be incompatible with each other. And since, the only available evidence for the translator is the behavioural data of the speakers, it is not possible to have a *correct* translation manual for any language. Since there is no correct translation manual to be found, there is no objective fact that meaning is determinate.

We shall now evaluate Quine's second argument, that is, the argument from above which has appeared in "On the Reason for Indeterminacy of Translation" almost after ten years of the publication of "Word and Object".

(b) The Argument from Above:

Quine begins the paper "On the Reasons for Indeterminacy of Translation" by arguing that the second line of argument for indeterminacy of translation is even more important

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[9] Quine, *Word and object*, p. 53.

[10] Glock, *Quine and Davidson on Language, Thought and Reality*, pp. 174-175

[11] Ibid.

than the first one. He considers the second line of argument as the real ground for his doctrine and considers it to be "very different, broader and deeper".[12]

The idea of *underdetermination* of physical theories by the empirical or observational data is central to Quine's argument. As Quine argues:

> Theory can still vary though all possible observations be fixed. Physical theories can be at odds with each other and yet compatible with all possible data even in the broadest sense. In a word they can be logically incompatible and empirically equivalent. This is a point on which I expect wide agreement, if only because the observational criteria of theoretical terms are commonly so flexible and so fragmentary.[13]

We must note that as Quine has argued in the argument from below that there can be infinite number of translation manuals; each manual is compatible with the behavioural data of the speakers, yet, incompatible with each other. In a similar fashion, Quine shows in the argument from above that there can be various physical theories which are perfectly compatible with the observational data, yet, one theory may be logically incompatible with the other.

If we take a close look at Quine's argument from above, we would realize that his argument basically comes from his account of meaning holism. In holism, Quine has argued that "our statements about the external world face the tribunal of sense experience not individually, but only as a corporate body".[14]

Now, let us assume that we have a framework with the *recalcitrant experience*, that is, the experience which comes in conflict with our theory which is conjoined with a set of hypotheses explaining the empirical conditions. If we take meaning holism into account, we may be able to give up some parts of the theory, at least in principle. As, according to Quine, even scientific theories can be revised and we can give up certain parts of the theory by looking at the adjustment we have made in our overall framework. However, our decision of giving up some parts of the theory is not determined by any observational fact no matter what they are, whether actual or possible observational

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[12] Quine, "On the Reasons for Indeterminacy of Translation", p. 178.
[13] Ibid. p. 179
[14] Quine, "Two Dogmas of Empiricism", pp. 39-40.

facts. Our scientific theory, therefore, does not depend on or is not determined by the observational evidences. It can be best described through the following passage:

> We can hold on to any part of our physical theory, provided we are willing to make the requisite adjustments elsewhere, among the auxiliary hypotheses or wherever. It follows that given any set of actual or possible observations, we will have – at least in principle – a choice between a range of competing theories, all of which can be chosen consistently with the observational data subject to appropriate revisions elsewhere in the set of our empirical (or even logical or mathematical) beliefs.[15]

But, Quine realizes that there may be disagreements about extending the degree of indeterminacy. Meaning thereby, one may take this underdetermination to the highest level of physical theories while one may take it to the level of common sense traits of macroscopic bodies.[16] The point however is that, Quine's indeterminacy of translation goes as far as his concept of underdeterminacy of physical theories go. His idea of indeterminacy of translation re-appears in the argument from above. He applies his theory of radical translation to a radically foreign physicist's theory and argues:

> As always in radical translation, the starting point is the equating of observation sentences of the two languages by an inductive equating of stimulus meanings. In order afterward to construe the foreigner's theoretical sentences we have to project analytical hypotheses, whose ultimate justification is substantially just that the implied observation sentences match up. But now the same old empirical slack, the old indeterminacy between physical theories, recurs in second intension.[17]

Quine extends his argument further by saying:

> Insofar as the truth of a physical theory is underdetermined by observables, the translation of the foreigner's physical theory is underdetermined by translation of his observation sentences. If our physical theory can vary though all possible observations be fixed, then our translation of his physical theory can vary though our translations of all possible observation reports on his part be fixed. Our translation of his observation sentences no more fixes our translation of his physical theory than our own possible observations fix our own physical theory.[18]

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[15] Millar, *Philosophy of language*, p. 157.
[16] Quine, "On the Reasons for Indeterminacy of Translation", p. 179.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid.

Quine's argument shows that if our only restriction about translation is that the physical theory we assign to the natives should best fit the observation sentence, and if there is more than one such theory that best fits the observation sentence, then, there will be an indeterminacy of translation. He claims that:

> The indeterminacy of translation is not just an instance of the empirically underdetermined character of physics. The point is not just that linguistics, being a part of behavioural science and hence ultimately of physics, shares the empirically underdetermined character of physics. On the contrary, the indeterminacy of translation is additional. Where physical theories A and B are both compatible with all possible data, we might adopt A for ourselves and still remain free to translate the foreigner either as believing A or as believing B.[19]

However, Quine does not want to establish that there is no fact of the matter about physics. His point is clear as he says that if we have two physical theories, it is possible that both the theories are compatible with the empirical data, but, they, however, would be incompatible with each other. As Quine thinks that "There can be logically incompatible and empirically equivalent physical theories."[20]

3.2. Meaning Holism:

The concept of holism plays a major role in Quine's theory of meaning. Quine introduces this notion in his widely celebrated article "Two dogmas of Empiricism". The distinction of the analytic and the synthetic statements which has been held by many philosophers in general and the philosophers of logical positivist school in particular, has been rejected by Quine in "Two Dogmas of Empiricism". In fact Davidson also agrees with Quine in this respect. As he holds:

> Erasing the line between the analytic and the synthetic saved philosophy of language as a serious subject by showing how it could be pursued without [which] there cannot be: determinate meanings.[21] (Addition with a minute change in the second bracket is mine)

In the second part of "Two Dogmas of Empiricism", Quine proceeds towards arguing that an account of empiricism is possible without adhering to the distinction of the

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[19] Ibid. p. 180.
[20] Ibid. p. 181.
[21] Davidson, "A Coherence Theory of Truth and Knowledge" (1986).

analytic and the synthetic statements. Thus, it can be said that his arguments for "empiricism without a dogma", establishes pragmatism without holding the distinction between the analytic and the synthetic statements. Quine's meaning holism gets its nerve from the second part of this article.

We have discussed Quine's rejection of analytic-synthetic distinction thoroughly in the second chapter of this dissertation. We have also tried to unpack Quine's objection towards the notion of determinate account of meaning. However, we need to now, look at what Quine had tried to establish by criticising a determinate account of meaning. I shall now try to elaborate Quine's arguments on meaning holism in order to see how he has offered an alternative account for a theory of meaning.

Before we begin, we must note two things: first, Quine's project aims to abandon the logical positivists' account of the analytic-synthetic distinction which subsequently leads in rejecting any determinate notion of meaning. Secondly, the dogma of analytic-synthetic distinction is connected with the second dogma, that is, reductionism. The connection lies in the fact that one dogma gets its support from the other. Since Quine's charge was mainly against the logical positivists, he showed in "Two dogmas of Empiricism" that, due to the mistake of taking two types of statements in isolation, for example, the analytic and the synthetic statements, the dogma of reductionism arose. As, the logical positivists' idea is to conduct an empirical test for granting meaningfulness to the statements which are not known to be true a prori, they must then conduct their empirical test by reducing the statements in question to empirical confirmation or disconfirmation. Hence, the dogma of reductionism arises.

Quine's account of holism is deep rooted in the discussion of these two dogmas. It is also connected with his indeterminacy of translation thesis. It is in this context we shall discuss Quine's arguments from "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" and build up the connection with his thesis of indeterminacy of translation.

To begin with Quine's meaning holism; we need to look at what his concept of holism stands against. A reading of Quine would immediately helps us to recognise that it stands against meaning atomism. Meaning atomism can be best elaborated as follows:

> A linguistic expression *e* in a language L has its meaning 'Auf Eigene Faust' (viz., in
>   and by itself) by virtue of a symbol-world relation independent of, and

(metaphysically) prior to, whatever role *e* has in L. For meaning atomism, reference (however specified), then, is primitive, and the role of *e* in L is determined by, and derivative from, the meaning *e* acquires in virtue of that relation [22]

The discussion that we have undertaken in chapter one may be recalled in this context. From the discussion, we could see the accounts of Frege and Russell echoed an account of meaning atomism. The idea of meaning atomism lies in the fact that: the complex sentence or linguistic expression should be analysed into the simplest parts of the sentence. We must remember Frege's compositionality principle in this context which says: *it is in the context of a sentence that words get their meaning.* Therefore, the meanings of words which make the simplest parts of the complex whole of a sentence have to be analyzed in order for a complex sentence to be meaningful. This idea constitutes meaning atomism which has prominent presence in the accounts of meaning proposed by Russell and Frege.

Quine, however, criticises such an account held by Russell and Frege. Quine as a holist rejects meaning atomism to its core and adopts the account of meaning holism. We, now, need to explain what meaning holism is? Meaning holism holds:

A linguistic expression *e* in a language L has its meaning in virtue of its (however specified) relations with other expressions in L; that is, in virtue of its role in L. For meaning holism, since the role of *e* in L constitutes *e*'s meaning, reference becomes derivative from, and (metaphysically) posterior to, the role *e* plays in L. [23]

Now, assuming the fact that we clear about the basic distinction of meaning atomism and meaning holism, I shall move forward with my aim of looking at Quine's arguments for meaning holism.

(a) Quine's argument for meaning holism:

Many contemporary philosophers have argued that Quine's meaning holism can be considered as confirmation holism[24] as most of what Quine argues in "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" about holism rests on an account of verification of meaning. However, we must not make a mistake by holding Quine as a verificationist on par with Carnap or Ayer. The major difference between them, as we have seen in our discussions in the

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[22] Rosa and Lepore, "Quine's Meaning Holism", p. 65.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Fodor and Lepore, "Meaning Holism and Confirmation Holism", p. 37.

previous chapters, lies with Quine's rejection of the analytic-synthetic distinction, whereas, such a distinction has been thoroughly safeguarded by Carnap and Ayer.

Quine's confirmation holism is said to get its nerve from Duhem's thesis. The Duhem's thesis, as it stands, holds that: "It is only the theory as a whole and not any one of the hypotheses that admits of evidence and counter evidence in observation and experiment." [25] This means that the empirical elements in a theory cannot be looked at individually, but, as a whole within the theory. The reason that we can attribute confirmation holism to Quine can be best explained through the following passage:

> If we recognize with Peirce that the meaning of a sentence turns purely on what would count as evidence for its truth, and if we recognize with Duhem that theoretical sentences have their evidence not as single sentences but only as larger blocks of theory, then the indeterminacy of translation of theoretical sentences [or, mutatis mutandis, meaning holism] is the natural conclusion.[26]

Following Duhem, Quine also holds that the theoretical sentences are confirmed not by any single sentence, but, by a range of sentences. He also holds that if we accept this line of argument, then, we would automatically accept the indeterminacy of translation thesis.

However, although we attribute confirmation holism to Quine, this does not identify Quine with the logical positivists any way. The reason primarily lies in the fact that reductionism , which is prominent in the account of logical positivists, has been rejected by Quine as he rejects the distinction of analytic-synthetic statements. Quine writes: "The dogma of reductionism survives in the supposition that each statement, taken in isolation from its fellows, can admit of confirmation or infirmation at all." [27] This dogma is linked with the first dogma since the logical positivists adhere to the distinction of the analytic and the synthetic statements where they consider a unit of sentence to be known a prori, whereas, others, they take as confirmed by means of empirical observation. Quine's attack on the logical positivists comes at this point. He says:

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[25] Confirmation holism can be found historically important for the movement of empiricisms. It is the view which holds that if a hypothesis is proved by means of empirical confirmation or disconfirmation, then, it can be said that all the theories which correspond to that hypothesis, are automatically proven. See Rosa and Lepore, "Quine's Meaning Holism", p. 66.

[26] Ibid, pp. 66-67.

[27] Quine, "Main trends in recent philosophy: Two Dogmas of Empiricism", p. 38.

My countersuggestion, issuing essentially from Carnap's doctrine of the physical world in the Aufbau, is that our statements about the external world face the tribunal of sense experience not individually but only as a corporate body.[28]

Quine's meaning holism, therefore, can be said to be entailed by confirmation holism as pointed in "Two Dogmas of Empiricism". We can, thus, summarize Quine's argument by breaking it into two points and therefore, we can reach an inference of meaning holism:

 (P1) The meaning of a sentence consists in its (dis)confirming experiences (or empirical content) – that is, in what counts as evidence for its truth (verificationism about meaning).

(P2) Sentences of a scientific theory do not have their range of (dis)confirming experiences individually but have them only as a corporate body – that is, they lack empirical content in isolation from the other sentences of the theory (Duhem's thesis).

∴ (C) The sentences of a language do not have meaning individually but have it as a corporate body – that is, they lack meaning in isolation from the other sentences of the language (meaning holism).[29]

Now, if our assumption that rests on the points that the meaning of a sentence lies in its method of empirical verification and if we assume that our observation plays a double role, one lies in holding theories and the other lies in learning the language, and if, these two are inseparable, then, the inference (C) that we derive from (P1) and (P2) is indeed a valid inference.[30]

Quine's account of meaning holism is often identified with his account of indeterminacy of translation. Let us, now, look at how Quine's meaning holism is connected with the indeterminacy of translation thesis.

(b) Quine's meaning holism and indeterminacy of translation:

It can be said that Quine's account of meaning holism cannot be understood without his thesis of indeterminacy of translation. I shall, now, elaborate on the reasons as to why we can claim that these two notions are inter-linked. In order to see this connection, let

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[28] Ibid.

[29] Rosa and Lepore, "Quine's Meaning Holism", p 67.

[30] Ibid.

us bring Quine's arguments on radical translation of an alien language into the radical translator's language, say, English.

We must note some of the basic lines from Quine in order to see the fundamental reason for which Quine comes to the conclusion that translation and hence meaning is indeterminate. Quine writes:

> All the objective data [the radical translator] has to go on are the forces that he sees impinging on the native's surfaces and the observable behaviour, vocal and otherwise of the native. Such data evince native "meanings" only of the most objectively empirical or stimulus-linked variety. And yet the linguist apparently ends up with native 'meanings' in some quite unrestricted sense; purported translations, anyway, of all possible native sentences.[31] (Second bracket with the words added)

Since the radical translator has to go with his project of translation by means of the only evidence (left with her), that is, the observation of the native's behavioural dispositions, the translation that the radical translator arrives at, on the basis of her translation manual, cannot guarantee, as a matter of fact, the correctness of the translation manual. As, Quine argues, there can be infinite number of translation manuals, each compatible with all possible observation sentences, yet, incompatible with each other. There cannot be an objective fact of the matter as to find a correct translation manual for the language L. Therefore, Quine concludes that the translation is indeterminate and hence, meaning is also indeterminate.

As a naturalist, Quine, thus holds:

> Two expressions are alike or unlike in meaning has no determinate answer, known or unknown, except insofar as the answer is settled in principle by people's speech dispositions, known or unknown. If by these standards there are no determinate cases, so much the worse for the terminology of meaning and likeness of meaning.[32]

Since Quine's radical translation situates a case that translation is indeterminate, it also sets a case where the notion of meaning also becomes indeterminate. By way of attacking on the notion of meaning, he rejects all the accounts of meaning, such as, the accounts held by Frege, Russell, Carnap, Ayer. The evaluation of the theory of sense, the theory of denotation and the theory of verification that we have undertaken in

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[31] Quine, *Word and Object*, p. 28.
[32] Rosa and Lepore, "Quine's Meaning Holism", p. 71.

chapter one, clearly shows that all these philosophers' account of meaning have had an appeal to a definite notion of meaning. As, for Frege, sense is something fundamental, whereas Russell gives primacy to the notion of reference, and the logical positivists adhere to the method of verification. Quine finds all these accounts as unsatisfactory. Though all these philosophers differ on crucial grounds about meaning, they agree on the need of having analytic-synthetic distinction. Quine sees this distinction as the major ground for which these philosophers hold a definite account of meaning and such an account of meaning, as we have seen, is consistently rejected by Quine. Therefore, he suggests his notion of meaning holism as an alternative account of meaning which falls from his thesis of indeterminacy of translation.

My attempt, so far, was to outline the fundamental point of indeterminacy of translation. I shall now, connect this to his notion of meaning holism as mentioned in "Two Dogmas of empiricism".

Since Quine adheres to Duhem's confirmation holism as discussed previously. And since he holds that "No particular experiences are linked with any particular statements in the interior of the field, except indirectly through considerations of equilibrium affecting the field as a whole"[33]. And since he also argues that "mutually incompatible translation manuals can be made equally compatible with all the possible evidence by compensatorily juggling the translation of the apparatus of individuation"[34] These give reasons to establish a link between Qnine's meaning holism with indeterminacy of translation. For Quine's indeterminacy of translation is based on Duhem's confirmation holism and the rejection of the analytic and the synthetic statements.[35]

Let us now, summarize the points we have got so far in order to establish Quine's meaning holism as true. As Rosa and Lepore shows in the essay "Quine's Meaning Holism" :

   (P1) "Our statements about the external world face the tribunal of experience not individually but only as a corporate body" (Duhem's confirmation holism).

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[33] Quine, "Main trends in recent philosophy: Two Dogmas of Empiricism", p. 40.
[34] Rosa and Lepore, "Quine's Meaning Holism", p. 72.
[35] Ibid.

∴ The empiricist dogma of reductionism (i.e., the view that each synthetic statement "taken in isolation from [the other statements of the theory] can admit of confirmation or infirmation" must be abandoned.

(P2) The dogma of reductionism and the analytic-synthetic distinction are "at root identical".

∴ (C1) The analytic-synthetic distinction must also be abandoned.

∴ (C2) Meaning holism is true.[36]

We can thus, conclude this section by holding that if Duhem's confirmation holism is true which Quine accepts as the basis of his meaning holism, and if we accept Quine's argument that a sentence in isolation cannot be said to have meaning since we need to take the sentences as a whole in order to account for meaning, these give us a ground to accept Quine's rejection of the analytic-synthetic distinction and the kind of verification logical positivists hold. We can then, say that the whole of Quine's arguments establish the truth of his meaning holism.

Quine's indeterminacy of translation which is connected with his meaning holism has influenced a range of philosophers. One such philosopher is Donald Davidson. I shall, now, move forward with an exposition of Davidson's theory of radical interpretation which is closely connected with Quine's theory of radical translation, but differs from it in an important sense. An evaluation of Davidson's response against Quine would be the main focus of next section.

3.3. Radical Interpretation: Davidson's response to Quine:

Davidson's project in philosophy of language primarily concerns with the formulation of a theory of meaning by adopting Tarskian model of theory of truth and by adopting *radical interpretation* which takes much of its insights from Quine. I shall mainly focus on the second aspect of Davidson's project in this section. He holds that the necessity of interpreting a speaker's speech dispositions yields additional constraints on theories of truth and meaning. He then proceeds towards evaluating the notion of interpretation and thereby proceeds to evaluate the formulation of theories of meaning by extensively referring the work of Quine. I shall look into his arguments in *Inquiries into Truth and*

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[36] Ibid.

Interpretation in order to unpack his response to Quine's notion of indeterminacy of translation.

To begin with Davidson's notion of radical interpretation, let us try to understand what he means by interpretation. Taking insights from Quine's radical translation, Davidson makes the following observation:

Suppose, X belongs to a community of speakers of a common language *L*, and she says "Gavagai!" which is true at a particular day and time, say, Monday afternoon, and there is a rabbit visible to X in Monday afternoon, and obtaining additional data from the observation of *L*-speakers' behavioural disposition, X infers that

(1) If *p* is a *L*-speaker, then *p* says "Gavagai!" which is true at the time *t* if and only if there is a rabbit visible to *p* at time *t*.

Now, following the Tarskian-model[37] of theory of truth for language *L*, X may take the following sentence to be confirmed:

(2) "Gavagai!" is true as uttered by *p* at time *t* if and only if there is a rabbit visible to *p* at time *t*.

If the theory of meaning which accepts (2) as correct, then it will permit us to *interpret* that *p's* utterance of the sentence "Gavagai!" as an act of saying that there is a rabbit visible to *p* at time *t*.

Davidson's theory of meaning, thus, offers a connection between a sentence, a speaker and a time. It sets certain *constitutive constraints* upon the interpretation of the verbal utterances of the speakers of the language. These constitutive constraints can be well spoken without supposing any correct translation. Therefore, Davidson thinks that there is a need to introduce the concept of *interpretation*. We can see at this context the major point of difference between Quine and Davidson. For Davidson, our understanding of other speaker's utterance is said to be possible if we can appeal to the notion of interpretation. It is only through interpretation that we may possibly have a ground to know what others wish to express. And for such an exercise of interpreting others in

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[37] Adopting Tarsky-style theory of truth, Davidson's theorem thus takes the form of "s is true if and only if p."

Davidsonian framework is possible through what he calls the *principle of charity*. Thus, Davidson's theory of radical interpretation is primarily based on a principle of charity.

Now, the question comes: why Davidson thinks that one needs to be charitable to understand others' utterances? The answer to this question lies in the fact that: for any successful communication to take place, interpretation plays an essential role. An interpretation demands an involvement of both the interpreter and the utterer. Davidson claims that an interpreter can interpret the utterer's words only if the utterer makes her words interpretable for the interpreter. In turn, the interpreter also has to attempt for understanding the utterer's language in order to have a correct interpretation. Hence, both the speaker and the interpreter have to be charitable in order to have a successful interpretation.

The principle of charity includes: (a) principle of coherence and (b) principle of correspondence. I shall now discuss principle of charity in light of these two principles to set the background of Davidson's theory of radical interpretation.

Principles of Charity: (a) Coherence and (b) Correspondence:

Davidson holds that "a theory of meaning will be interpretative if it satisfies a number of constitutive constraints on interpretation, principally, the principle of charity".[38] The principle can be conceived as the conjunction of two notions: (a) a holistic assumption of rationality in belief, that is, principles of charity with coherence; and (b) an assumption of causal relatedness in beliefs, especially the beliefs which are based on our sense perception, and the object of belief. The interpretation thus, proceeds by taking into account both the notions of belief.[39]

Since Davidson's account of interpretation is primarily based on Tarsky-style theory of truth, the interpreter must look into the coherent structure in the sentences of the foreign speakers' language. In order to do so, the interpreter goes on with an assumption that the foreign speaker's behavioural dispositions satisfy certain normative constraints, that are, the logical laws. By doing so, the interpreter gets the data which she can apply in order to learn the internal structure of the foreign speaker's language. This is where the application of principles of charity as coherence comes in.

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[38] Millar, *Philosophy of Language*, p, 294.
[39] "Davidson", *Standford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

The principle of charity as correspondence, on the other hand, applies to the observation sentence such as, "There is a rabbit present". There is a common ground where both the interpreter and the speaker share the same world and the utterances and the attitudes of the speakers are also shared in the same world. Now, the problem comes with the question that what if a observation sentence is considered true by the speaker, but, false by the interpreter. How do we bridge the gap between the speaker and the interpreter in this context? Davidson conceives the principles of charity as correspondence with regard to the maximisation of agreement between the interpreter and the speaker. That means, the interpreter needs to incorporate the speaker's attitude in the process of interpretation. To do so, the interpreter must take into account the speaker's beliefs which give her an idea about the most coherent part of what the speaker believes. The principles of charity as coherence and correspondence, therefore, make the job of a radical interpreter possible.

Having discussed the role of the principles of charity, we should now, move forward with our purpose of discussing Davidson's radical interpretation. I shall now attempt to unpack his arguments for radical interpretation.

Davidson begins his chapter "Radical Interpretation" by taking the example of speaker Kurt's utterances which is uttered in an unfamiliar language which the radical translator is supposed to interpret. Let us suppose that Kurt says "Es regnet" and the radical interpreter has to interpret this utterance. How does the interpreter proceed to interpret this utterance? Following Davidsonian account, the interpreters have the choice of adhering to the following form:

1)   Kurt holds true "Es regnet" if and only if it is raining where Kurt is present.

as evidence for

2)   "Es regnet", as spoken by Kurt, is true if and only if it is raining where Kurt is present.

We must note two points here. First, is that what the speaker's holds true is a semantic evidence. Here, on part of the speaker, holding a sentence true is to believe that the sentence is true. So, the basis of interpretation according to the above formulation, is

purely semantic. Davidson here differs from Quine [40] as he is not concerned with the non-semantic basis in respect of interpretation. It means that Davidson's interest does not lie in proving any underdetermination of scientific theories due to indeterminacy of translation; his interest, rather, lies in the semantic aspect of how to make an interpretation of others' language possible. Secondly, it is plausible to claim that one may know that the utterer holds a sentence to be true without having any idea of what the sentence means. So, it is possible to make sense of what others hold without knowing that meaning of the speaker's utterances. Davidson writes:

> A good place to begin is with the attitude of holding a sentence true, of accepting it as true. This is, of course, a belief, but it is a single attitude applicable to all sentences, and so does not ask us to make finely discriminated distinctions among beliefs. It is an attitude an interpreter may plausibly be taken to be able to identify before he can interpret, since he may know that a person intends to express a truth in uttering a sentence without having any idea what truth [the utterer intends to express].[41] (Additions in the second brackets are mine]

According to Davidson, we need the constrains with regard to go for the evidence in the form of (1) to (2) and this will permit us to interpret "Es regnet" *as an act of saying that it is raining*. The reason for introducing such a constraint is because (1) itself does not supply any objective fact for (2). Davidson thinks that this happens due to the fact that both belief and meaning are dependent on each other. As he puts:

> A speaker who holds a sentence to be true on an occasion does so in part because of what he means, or would mean, by an utterance of that sentence, and in part because of what he believes. If all we have to go on is the fact of honest utterance, we cannot infer the belief without knowing the meaning, and have no chance of inferring the meaning without the belief.[42]

Now, let us suppose that today is a rainy day in Delhi. Let us also suppose that X does not believe that today is a rainy day in Delhi. In that case, we cannot hold that X thinks that "Es regnet" is a true sentence which provides evidence for (2). In a similar way, if we suppose that the meaning of "Es regnet" is the same as, say, Sunday, then we cannot consider that X thinks this sentence to be true which provides evidence for his belief

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[40] Quine through the "argument from below" shows the underdermination of scientific theories.
[41] Davidson, *Inquires into Truth and Interpretation*, p. 135.
[42] Ibid. p. 142.

that it is raining. Now, there is a clear circularity. Because, if we want to know what X claims, to be to about, what he believes to be true, we should know the meaning of the sentence. Similarly, if we want to know what the sentence means, we should now what X believes to be true. Now, how we are to move from this circularity?[43] Davidson replies to this question by his principle of charity. He writes:

> We solve the problem of the interdependence of belief and meaning by holding belief constant as far as possible while solving for meaning. This is accomplished by assigning truth-conditions to native sentences that make native speakers right when plausibly possible, according, of course, to our own view of what is right.[44]

So, what do we get so far? By looking into Davidson's solution to the problem, that is, the problem of supposing the concept of correct translation, we need to apply what Davidson calls the adequacy condition for interpretation on the theories of meaning. Our theory of meaning should be such that we can correctly interpret what speakers say in a particular language. According to Davidson, the principle of charity allows us to attribute to the speakers the belief that we think to be correct and would fit into the context.

By the application of principle of charity, Davidson's theory of meaning got rid of Quinean version of indeterminacy of translation to show indeterminacy of meaning. He, thus, claims that there is no need for an appeal to a correct translation as Quine suggests. However, a few points need clarification at this point.

First, one may get an impression from the above discussion that the principle of charity as has been discussed above, makes it impossible for the speaker to hold a belief which the interpreter considers as false. But, this is the most unsophisticated account that one may attribute to the principle of charity. Davidson's take, however, is this that the principle of charity as a holistic constraint applies to a system of beliefs and not to individual beliefs. Our interpretation of the speaker's utterances should be such that most of his beliefs are true according to our consideration. A more sophisticated account of this principle also can be placed which holds that we can interpret the speakers' beliefs which are not necessarily true by our considerations, but, are *intelligible* by our

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[43] Ibid. pp. 130-131.
[44] Ibid. p. 137.

consideration. In this sense, we may attribute false beliefs to the speaker. But, Davidson would say, "The aim of interpretation is not agreement but understanding"[45].

Secondly, Davidson does not think that the principle of charity is merely a useful principle which helps us to facilitate the process of interpretation. This principle rather helps us in constituting the entire process of interpretation. As he puts it:

> The methodological advice to interpret in a way that optimizes agreement should not be conceived as resting on a charitable assumption about human intelligence that might turn out to be false. If we cannot find a way to interpret the utterances and other behaviour of a creature as revealing a set of beliefs largely consistent and true by our own standards, we have no reason to count that creature as rational, as having beliefs, or as saying anything.[46]

Thirdly, the principle of charity is not just a single principle which directs the interpretation. Rather, there is a set of such constitutive principles which facilitate the process of interpretation. Hookway wtites:

> Interpretation rests upon a number of normative standards. We are constrained to look for true beliefs, to look for rationally coherent bodies of belief, to avoid ascribing inexplicable ignorance, to look for reasonable desires, to look for coherent patterns of preferences, and so on.[47]

Fourthly, Davidson does not hold that there can be only one theory which would be found as perfectly satisfactory. According to him, there can be many theories of meaning which satisfy all the significant constraints. Here, he again, disagrees with Quine and thus, writes:

> It is not likely that only one theory will be found satisfactory. The resulting indeterminacy of interpretation is the semantic counterpart of Quine's indeterminacy of translation. On my approach, the degree of indeterminacy will, I think, be less than Quine contemplates . . . But in any case the question of indeterminacy is not central [to my concerns]. Indeterminacy of meaning or translation does not represent a failure to capture significant distinctions; it marks the fact that certain apparent distinctions are not significant. If there is indeterminacy, it is because

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[45] Ibid. p. xvii.
[46] Ibid. p. 137.
[47] Hookway, *Quine*, p. 173.

when all the evidence is in, alternative ways of stating the facts remain open.[48]

(Second bracket added along with the words)

Davidson argues that the indeterminacy which is involved in his account of radical translation is at least less than the amount which is involved in Quine's account. The principle of charity captures a wide range of sentences than Quine's radical translation does. Since Davidson's principle of charity in the process of interpretation can capture a wide range of sentences, it also reduces the amount of indeterminacy. Much of his confidence lies in his idea in the following passage:

> A rough comparison may help give the idea. A theory of measurement for temperature leads to the assignment to objects of numbers that measure their temperature. Such theories put formal constraints on the assignments, and also must be tied empirically to qualitatively observable phenomena. The numbers assigned are not uniquely determined by the constraints. But the pattern of assignments is significant. (Fahrenheit and Centigrade temperature are linear transformations of each other; the assignment of numbers is unique up to a linear transformation). In much the same way, I suggest that what is invariant as between different acceptable theories of truth is meaning.[49]

In Quine's radical translation, what is invariant between various translation manuals is not even considered as something which can bear a resemblance to intuitive notion of meaning. On the contrary, Davidson can be seen as holding that what is invariant between various theories of truth is to be seen as that which approximates our intuitive notion of meaning.

Conclusion:

Quine's thesis of indeterminacy of translation rests mainly on the argument from below and argument from above which as a whole denies the referential account of meaning as accepted by philosophers, such as Frege, Russell. It also denies a definite notion of meaning which has been adopted by many philosophers including the logical positivists.

Quine's denial on these two major fronts has given rise to an alternative account of meaning which is known as meaning holism. I have tried to link up Quine's meaning holism with his notion of indeterminacy of translation in the present chapter.

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[48] Davidson, *Inquires into Truth and Interpretation*, pp. 153-154.
[49] Ibid. p. 125.

Lastly, I have looked at how Quine's account of indeterminacy of translation has raised further debate in the way of taking up Davidson's account of meaning. Davidson's account of meaning, however, can be seen as a response to Quine's thesis of indeterminacy of translation as lacking an intuitive notion of meaning. We have also seen how bringing in the notion of radical interpretation as opposed to radical translation Davidson tries to salvage a theory of meaning from Quinean scepticism about meaning.

Conclusion

An evaluation of Quine's account of meaning draws our attention to three major points which can be summarized as follows:

(1) A rejection of analytic-synthetic distinction in Quinean framework is deeply connected with his attack on the referential theory of meaning and the logical positivists' theory of verification.

(2) Quine's rejection of the analytic-synthetic distinction and his attack on the logical positivists' theory of meaning are linked up with the indeterminacy of translation thesis by virtue of which Quine attempts to establish that meaning is not determinate.

(3) Both of the above positions of Quine lead to his meaning holism.

As, the theories of meaning, which primarily include the theory of sense, the theory of denotation and the theory of verification, have had significant influence on the development of Quine's theory of meaning, we have undertaken a study of all these historically important accounts of meaning to provide a comprehensive picture of Quine's position vis-à-vis the position maintained by other philosophers.

Having looked at Frege's theory of sense, the point that we tried to highlight was that: his account had given primacy to the notion of sense over the notion of reference, but, it did not deny the need of reference. According to Frege, the reference of a linguistic expression is determined by the sense of the linguistic expression.

As, he has argued, "Morning Start" and "Evening Star" have different senses (meaning or sinn), but, have same referent (denotation or bedeutung), he seems to hold two points. First, there is a distinction between the analytic and the synthetic statements. His attempt to demarcate the sentences of the form "a=a" from "a=b" with the example of "morning star is identical with morning star" and "morning star is identical with evening star" establishes a distinction between sentences where two expressions have distinct cognitive values though they hold the same object as their referent. Secondly, his introduction of the notion of sense is the core factor by virtue of which we can know

the meaning of the expressions such as, "morning star" and "evening star" which have the same object as their referent, but differ in meaning.

Quine, seems to be in agreement with Fregean sense, but, will certainly not agree with Frege on the point that sentences can be compartmentalized into the analytic and the synthetic. Moreover, though there is an apparent Fregean tone in Quine's account, Quine's position is much refined. He gets rid of sense and reference by incorporating the concept of *intension and extension*. Frege's example of "morning star" and "evening start" as having same referent but different sense has been replaced by Quine with the example of "the creature with kidney" and "the creature with heart".

If we go with Quine, then, we must accept that there is a function of synonymy in cases of expressions where two expressions differ in meaning but hold the same referent. This implies that, by the application of synonyms for synonyms, we adhere to the distinction of analytic and the synthetic statements of the form "a=a" and "a=b". Looking at the apparent form of the sentences "a=a" and "a=b", one may find it right to conclude that the analytic-synthetic distinction exists. But, as Quine argues in "Two Dogmas of Empiricism", mere synonymy is not sufficient to define the notion of analyticity. If analyticity is to be defined, we must find better way of defining it and this, as Quine argues, has not been done by the philosophers who adhere to the notion of analyticity.

However, Quine's disagreement with Russell and philosophers of positivist movement, such as, Carnap and Ayer is even more serious than that of Frege. As, Quine rejects the distinction of analytic and synthetic proposition, he consequently rejects referential account of meaning and the theory of verification. If we accept a referential account of meaning, we must accept the analytic-synthetic distinction as they are connected. The connection rests on the fact that even if we hold a pure referential account of meaning as Russell holds, we must find our way to deal with the expressions the meaning of which cannot be understood by ostensively pointing towards any object. For example the propositions of mathematics and logic or the proposition such as "All bachelors are unmarried men". These expressions are indeed not meaningless. But, how to account for such expressions, only by having a pure referential account of meaning? Hence, there is a need for introducing the notion of analyticity. Though Russell has attempted to save the concept of reference and gave primacy to reference unlike Frege, yet, his account could not solve the problem concerning meaning particularity the problem about how to

account for the notion of analyticity. Thus, the referential account of meaning as proposed by Russell also cannot get away with Quine's charge.

We have seen that Quine's main attack rests on the logical positivists' theory of verification. His claims in "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" shows that for any attempt on our part to define analyticity take us back to the problem of analyticity. Since the logical positivists suppose that there are two types of sentences to be meaningful that are, the sentences which are analytic and the sentences which can be verifiable in observation, they are under the same charge as Quine places against others who hold the distinction. For, if we accept the fact about analyticity and hence the analytic-synthetic distinction, we must then define what analyticity is? In order to do this, we fall within a circle. Because, we have to define analyticity in terms of synonymy as Quine has highlighted in "Two Dogmas of Empiricism". But, the notion of synonymy is no less in need of clarification. In any attempt of defining synonymy, we would eventually need the notion of analyticity; hence, the circularity comes in. As, the logical positivist could be seen as safeguarding the distinction of analytic and the synthetic, their position, as highlighted by Quine, falls under the dogma of reductionism. The supposition that the sentences can be confirmed or disconfirmed by taking individually, gives rise to the dogmas that logical positivists cannot really get away with.

If the logical positivists' approach is also wrong according to Quine, he must then propose an alternative account of meaning which can solve the problem that he has highlighted. Quine, therefore, proposes a holistic account of meaning. That is, we cannot understand the meaning of sentences in isolation without understanding them in relation with other sentences within the system of our language. As Quine was reasonably successful in bringing the charge against the logical positivists as falling under the dogma of analytic-synthetic distinction and reductionism, and since his account had provided an holistic approach of meaning, Quine's fundamental purpose to establish that there could be no fixed account of meaning got saved.

Now, Quine offers his radical thesis, that is, the indeterminacy of translation thesis by virtue of which he tries to establish that if there is a fixed notion of meaning, then, while translating one language into other, we must get a correct translation which would be compatible with all the other translations of a particular language. But, Quine, by offering his indeterminacy of translation thesis, shows that there can be huge number of

translation manuals, each may be compatible with the observation sentences, however, they are incompatible with each other. It can, thus, be said that since there is no correct, hence fixed translation possible, there cannot be any fixed meaning either.

Quine's indeterminacy of translation thesis not only rejects the intentional concepts, such as, "analyticity", "synonymy" etc. but also, gives rise to a sort of scepticism about reference and truth. Since, in Quine's account, there is a clear presence of indeterminacy as he holds that when the speaker says "gavagai", she may indicate to "rabbit" or "an undetached rabbit part" or "rabbithood" etc. but, there is no fact available for the translator to determine what the speaker actually means when she says "gavagai". As, we cannot hold a definite translation for such an utterance as "gavagai", we possibly cannot claim to have a definite meaning either.

Quine's argument for indeterminacy of translation can be seen as an indication where he seems to hold that even a homophonic translation[1] is not possible. This implies that if we accept Quine's thesis of indeterminacy of translation, we must give up the idea that an understanding of one's utterance being part of the same linguistic community,(where we do not require any additional information, neither do we need to observe behavioural dispositions of our fellow beings), is also impossible. Hence, accepting Quine's indeterminacy of translation thesis, we, perhaps, will have to conclude that there will always be a sort of indeterminacy involved between the speaker and the hearer.

This sort of scepticism about meaning is a little too much for a theory of meaning. For, it does not help us in making any progress for understanding other's language; rather, such kind of scepticism may make our day-to-day conversation impossible. Therefore, we must ask if we should allow this much of indeterminacy and hence scepticism about meaning?

To answer this question, we may seek for a Davidsonian solution. Quine's thesis had major influence on Davidson as we have noticed earlier. However, there are essential differences between them. The major disagreement between Quine and Davidson may be sketched by clarifying Davidson's charge against Quine's idea of a correct

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[1] A translation of speaker's utterance from being within the same language, that is ,for example, I translate the words or sentences uttered by another person who belongs to the same linguistic community as I do- may be called as homophonic translation.

translation. Davidson argues that for any communication to take place, we need to bridge the gap between the utterer and the hearer. Once the gap is decreased, an interpretation is possible. So, we can understand others' language by way of interpreting others' words without appealing to a correct translation.

He further argues that as our intuition plays a major role in interpretation, we may apply our intuition in order to understand others. So, in translation, however, there may be indefinite number of translations available, but, the amount of indeterminacy can be reduced by bridging the gap between the utterer and hearer and by the function of our intuition. Davidson thus argues that Quine has completely missed this point and the amount of indeterminacy involved with Quine's thesis is indeed much higher than Davidson's account of radical interpretation.

If we accept Davidson's theory of radical interpretation, we may be able to do away with Quine's scepticism. As, Davidson's theory has left sufficient space for a communication to take place. There may be problems with Davidsonian account of meaning as well, but, so far as, understanding others' language is concerned, Davidson's radical interpretation seems much appealing than Quine's meaning scepticism.

The debates that Quine's theory of meaning generated, gave rise to a huge body of literature. A major limitation of this research is the lack of many such important discussions and debates which have occupied place in philosophical dialogues for over the decades. Particularly, this research could not engage into the critical questions and responses that had come from philosophers, particularly Putnum and Rorty. I wish to explore and engage into the debates which Quine's philosophy has generated in course of further research.

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