CHAPTER III

ORDINARY LANGUAGE
AND
THE LANGUAGE OF ART
What is language? And what is the function of language?

"To the grammarian, language is primarily a series of grammatical forms, roots and endings. To the literary specialist, language is a series of words so arranged as to produce a harmonious or musical effect. To the lexicographer, language is fundamentally a list of words with their separate derivations, histories, and meanings. To the man in the street, language is what he uses, quite unconsciously, to communicate with his fellow man."

To communicate is the natural instinct of human being. Communication necessarily depends upon some mode of communicating and language is the most effective mode available to human being for this purpose.

So, the function of language is to express the knowledge and feeling of human being. Man gathers experiences and feelings of the world and he wants to communicate. He puts his knowledge in a language and the hearer or the reader unfolds it. Thus, the study of language means unfolding the language to get up the knowledge and feeling of the speaker.

And the chapter is an attempt to present an analytical exposition of different philosophies of language.

1. Ordinary language.

2. The language of art.

1. **Ordinary Language**:

Communication of our day-to-day affairs takes place through ordinary language. Day-to-day affair means behaving with *padārtha*. So, we are concentrating on the categorization of the world of our experience. And we call this world as *padārtha*.

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Padārtha is an entity. An entity is what has an existence and it is also real. One of the set of dravya is prthivi and these come down to the ordinary experience. Prthivi can be further divided into ghaţa, paţa etc. Another set of dravya is jala, which can be divided into ice, ocean, river. Another set of dravya is air, which can be divided as the external air and the air inside us. Another set of dravya is fire which can be further divided as the electricity, fire stimulating digestion. These lower items exist in the world of our experience. In the same manner, guṇa includes colours etc. - white, yellow, blue etc. We call them all rūpa. In the lower part we have included the objects of our ordinary experience of colours. But all these we call by a cover term, colour rūpa etc. Even in an ordinary world we can see that a human being keeps on categorizing. That is one of the reason why a human being is called a rational being. That's what a human being is doing in the case of communicating a common experience.

But an analyst or a philosopher is trying to categorize the entire universe. And an ordinary man is in the level of the ordinary experience. An analyst is trying to take us into the same upper level and upper level of padārtha and the whole world according to Indian logicians is categorized, according to our scheme. We have already seen that our world is padārtha. Our world is what language refers to and the basic characteristics of our world is knowability and namability.

Our ordinary behaviour with the ordinary world is prompted by the cognition of the ordinary world. Such a cognition is verbalisable. The language which expresses the cognition of the ordinary world is our ordinary language which we use in ordinary verbal behaviour. The ordinary world is described by ordinary language. We describe the world and the hearer or the reader understands it. This becomes possible because the speaker and the hearer are aware of the definite relationship between the language and the world of his experience.
Hence, there is a rapport between what a speaker speaks and what the hearer understands. The speaker can take the hearer to the same world about which he is talking. When such an incident takes place we say there is rapport between the speaker and the hearer. This has been possible because of the knowledge of the relationship of language and referent of the language.

Actually, we are able to understand language in the following way:

So, the study of language can be done from two angles:

a) The angle of speaker, and
b) The angle of hearer

a) The Angle of Speaker:

The speaker is the most important consideration in language. The modern tendency in linguistic studies is to lay stress upon the psychological aspects of speech. In considering the changes in any type of language we have to consider them in two distinct aspects:

i) the physical, and

ii) the psychological
i) The Physical Way:

The former concerns itself mainly with the vocal organs and the physical production of sound. Such changes are mainly considered under phonetics. Depending, as they do, on the physical laws governing the vibration of the vocal organs, these phonetic changes in language can be formulated with a considerable degree of accuracy. Phonetic laws have now almost attained the exactitude of the law of physical sciences.

ii) Psychological Way:

The second or psychological aspect refers to the speaker, or to put it more accurately, the mind of the speaker, which is at the back of every utterance. Whenever a man is uttering speech-sound, his mind is working and it works during every moment of the utterance. And this activity of the mind has a special bearing upon the development of speech. Psychology has been fairly, carefully studied in modern times and rules of mental working have been carefully investigated. Thus, the disturbing factors in the growth of human speech which are due to the activity of the human mind can be followed and investigated. Here the emphasis is on how a speaker forms a sentence.

b) The Angle of Hearer:

Here the enquiry is directed towards understanding a sentence. The process of understanding depends on the knowledge of two relationships:

i) Primary relationship, and

ii) Secondary relationship

i) Primary Relationship:

This is the basic relationship between the word and its meaning.

ii) Secondary Relationship:

The secondary relationship may be considered as an extension of the primary relationship to include the new referents. For example, "The word gaṅgā which stands
for 'the flow of water' (pravāha) through primary relationship needs to be extended to refer to the back of the gaṅgā when the speakers start using it in that sense. This extended relationship is the secondary relationship.\(^1\)

Once that relationship is known by both, the speaker and the hearer of a particular language, the communication becomes possible and the rapport gets established automatically. "Ordinary language makes use of both the types of relationship, primary as well as secondary. In other words, an ordinary language too has the capability to be extended to denote new language. The speaker makes use of these relations and encodes the knowledge of the ordinary world and the hearer decodes that encoded language and arrives at the cognition that was encoded by the speaker and it matches. There will be rapport between a speaker and a hearer. It is also that decoding is the getting of the cognition of the world and since it is the cognition of the world it leads to the same world which has been cognised by the speaker."\(^2\)

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2. Ibid P. 57.
The Process of Verbal Understanding:

"The following steps are followed in decoding a sentence of an ordinary language:

Step I : hearing of the sentence, say

\[ a + b + c + d \]

Step II : remembering the referents of the elements of the sentence.

\[ a' \quad b' \quad c' \quad d' \]

Step III : relating the referents

\[ a + b + c + d \]

\[ a' \quad b' \quad c' \quad d' \]

Step IV : knowing the relations of step II

\[ a' \quad b' \quad c' \quad d' \]

Step IV is the verbal understanding of the sentence \( a + b + c + d \) by the hearer.

a, b, c and d are the elements of the sentence of an ordinary language and a', b', c' and d' are the referents. This is what is the function of language."

Language relates man to his environment or his universe. A man acquires thought or knowledge. The knowledge gets verbalised by the speaker or writer when he encodes it and that encoded form is called a sentence. The listener follows the reverse process and goes to the knowledge of the speaker.

When this is identified, it is said there is samvāda. This is how an ordinary language become a medium of communication.

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1. Ibid Pp. 57-58.
2. The Language of Art:

What is language of art? When a language causes delight of extraordinary type, it is called the language of art. This language encodes the extraordinary knowledge of the world of art, created by an artist.

Ānandavardhana quotes a verse which says, "the poet is a creator in the boundless world of poetry. The universe appears to assume that from which he is pleased to give to it. Whatever be the emotion (either love or pathos or heroism) with which he charges his poem, the world becomes immersed therein. Poetic genius (pratibhā) is like the third eye of God Śiva, with which the poet perceives the shape of things, past, present and future. Poetic consciousness touches for a moment the real essence of the world."¹

"Though the poet or the writer creates his literary world out of the ordinary world of experience, he also creates his literary language out of the ordinary language. How? He establishes a new relationship over and above the existing ordinary relationships to create a new language of poetic communication."²

Let us take an example in the drama of "Bhavabhuti's 'Uttarāmacarita' memories not only of 'nights of love' each unlike the others, but also of the heartbreaking demands made by the world for moral decisions which can campel a king to inflict terrible wounds upon himself as individual, turn to blood within the poet, his characters and lastly within us."³

We have already seen that there is an ordinary world and there is a literary world. We have also seen that the ordinary world is referred to by an ordinary language.

The language that you and I speak and use describes the ordinary world.

There is rapport too between an ordinary speaker and an ordinary hearer. But this does not hold good about a speaker of the category of a poet and an ordinary hearer. The reason is quite obvious. The poet is describing a world which he himself has created with which an ordinary listener is not acquainted before his getting educated.

Let us take an example:

When a poet expresses about a ‘flower’. It is not an ordinary expression. The flower may stand for the face of a child. It is a symbolic expression. Unless one is acquainted with this symbol, one cannot unfold it. Here the poet or the writer has established the relationship between the flower and the face of a child. He superimposed the face of the child on the flower and created his world and to express he uses the symbolic expression ‘flower’.

Naturally, when the hearer will be acquainted with that relationship, he will understand the language of the poet or the writer, otherwise not.

“Language, being a social product and, in particular, being the foremost medium of inter-personal communication, should of course be likewise personal. Language intended to express meanings, is essentially characterized by the tendency to be impersonal and perhaps is not worth the name if it is not actually so in practice.”

The reason seems to be that the language of poetry or the language of art is not only appreciative, but it is imbosed with an unusual spirit of discipline and is reflective of deep insight as language should be in order that it can serve the purpose of any adventure of the human mind, whether intellectual, artistic or religious.