CHAPTER IV

LANGUAGE AND MEANING – WITTGENSTEIN

IV.1. Introduction:

Wittgenstein, the Austrian philosopher and logician is one of the founders of analytical philosophy and as an analytical philosopher, the issue before him is the analysis of language. Philosophy according to him aims at the logical clarification of thoughts and the task of philosophy is to clarify the thoughts expressed in language. The aim of philosophy and the task as attributed by the analytical thinkers make philosophy a critique of language. Wittgenstein in his early philosophy
goes with Russellian atomism by holding the relation of picturization between language and reality; but in the latter stage he works with the positivists by developing the empirical attitude about language and meaning. The whole philosophical career of Wittgenstein can be discussed in two phases – ‘Tractatus’ or early Wittgenstein and ‘Investigation’ or later Wittgenstein.

In the “Tractatus – Logico – Philosophicus” Wittgenstein expresses his departure from the traditional view of nature of philosophy by holding that all philosophy is critique of language. His view on the nature and task of philosophy has undergone changes from the analysis of the language of science to ordinary language. He intended to bring out the philosophical implications of the use of language. Wittgenstein stands against the traditional concept that philosophy is an attempt to explain life and the universe as a whole and advocates that the central problem of philosophy is the analysis of language.

“Philosophy is not a body of doctrines, but an activity,”¹ says Wittgenstein. This activity is of clarifying scientific language and without this activity scientific thought would remain cloudy and indistinct. “Philosophy does not result in ‘philosophical propositions’ but rather in the clarification of propostions.”² He claims that philosophy gives limit to the language of science as well as to the scope of natural sciences. This important task of giving limit to the language of science follows from the general activity of determining what we can speak and what we cannot. What we can speak we can think and what we can think we can speak. Thus the limit of language sets up the limit of thought. There is no thought, which can not be put in to language. One cannot think about what cannot be said. Regarding the method of...
philosophy Wittgenstein states that the correct method is to say nothing except what can be said, i.e., the propositions of natural sciences. He also says that as consequence of the failure to understand the logic of language, there arises the problem of philosophical propositions most of which are not false but nonsensical. In the Tractatus Wittgenstein holds, “A proposition is a picture of reality as we think it to be.” This position of Wittgenstein helps Russell to strengthen his views about the relation between language and reality in which language is used as a medium to arrive at the real. Reality is of the structure of language and it is by means of language that reality expresses itself.

Wittgenstein in his Tractatus develops a representational framework for understanding language and the world. Frege’s theory of logic and grammar is the background of Wittgenstein’s Tractatus. The basic concern for Wittgenstein is the structure of sense, since it provides the key to the structure of language and the world. According to him, the structure of the world is the same as the structure of language and this can be unfolded by the logical structure of sense. This is the source of the idea that logic is transcendental since it brings out the underlying structure of language and the world. In his transcendental logic Wittgenstein attempted to bring out the essence of language and the world. The investigation of the inner necessity governing language made by logic results in the logical grammar of language. The idea of logical grammar in its complete form has been represented in the Tractatus. This idea of logical grammar abolishes the dualism between the grammar of ordinary language and that of ideal language.
In the second or later phase of his philosophical development Wittgenstein gives up the Tractarian attitude and holds that language is like a game in which the words are used as tools like the pieces of chess. This view is expressed in the philosophical Investigations where he considered language as a form of life, a way of performance and behaviour, a kind of game. Language is not only for picturing facts but also for asking, cursing, greeting, praying, commanding and so on. Such varieties use of language expresses his emphasis on ordinary language. Language is the vehicle of life. The use of words that may be called speech activity, plays important role in his theory of ‘Language game.’ Wittgenstein uses the term language game much more broadly than speech activity. The pure speech activities like telling a joke and the activities as constructing an object from a description, obeying orders, which involve non – linguistic behaviour, are included in language game as essential components. Thus the language game is of two types – pure language game and impure language game. But pure and impure language games can not be divided in to two watertight compartments; they differ only in degree. Impure means to have slightest regulative force. Wittgenstein considers the impure language game as the basic and holds that pure language games are parasitic upon the impure in a crucial way.

According to Wittgenstein to speak a language is to behave in certain highly complex ways. To speak a language is to behave in certain ways which exhibit various abilities. Speech behaviour is not an isolated mode of behaviour, internally separated from other modes of behaviour. Linguistic and nonlinguistic behaviours are taken together in to an integrated organic whole. Speaking a language is a matter of being able to do a variety of things, to act or behave in certain ways and to do so
under appropriate circumstances. Some of these are purely linguistic, others non-linguistic. It is at the same time linguistic and non-linguistic in that they involve an interaction between using words and behaving in non-linguistic ways. Speaking a language is therefore, to engage in certain modes of behaviour. It is to engage in what he calls "forms of life". Expressions have meaning only in the stream of life. In the same way words have meaning only as pieces in the language games.

**IV.2. The Representational Semantics:**

The relation between language and meaning is such that investigation of one leads to the investigation of the other. Language and meaning both are in the same locus just like logic and logical form. Comprehending language is to comprehend its structure, organization and above all it's meaning. The syntax of language thus goes collateral with its semantics. The study of the structure and rules of language is the syntax, while investigating meaning is the task of semantics. Study of meaning presupposes that language has a syntactic structure and this structure of language is accompanied by meaning. Meaning and structure of language are therefore, interdependent in such a way that while meaning is the expression of thought; the expression in logical structure is language. Gotlob Frege was the first to introduce that meaning or sense is involved in the logical structure of language.\(^6\)

Meaning as the expression of thought in relation to the world can be called the representational concept of meaning. Wittgenstein’s Tractatus has very eminently made the concept of representation the logical basis of understanding of language and meaning. Frege’s sense and Wittgenstein representations are significant concepts of logical semantics. As a result of representational semantics, meaning...
becomes a matter of logical representation of the world and a line of representation between language, thought and world has been proposed. The representational semantics of Frege involves the problem of relating sense with language. Frege could not solve the problem as to how sense, being a real entity in the ontological sense, can be expressed in the linguistic medium, which is contingent in the world. The linguistic medium being primarily a medium of expression of sense or thought, it could be the case that thought remains independent of language and goes completely unexpressed. According to Frege there is no way sense or thought could be made language dependent, so long as language, in the ordinary sense is highly ambiguous and so unfit for being an effective medium of sense. The language, which is contingent in this sense, cannot express 'sense' which is necessary.

Wittgenstein could realize the real difficulty in Frege's semantics and therefore, through Tractatus advocated stronger role of language in representational framework. It is language and language alone which plays the role of cementing the gap between language and thought. In Tractatus Logico Philosophicus, Wittgenstein holds that thought and language are in the same logical space and both possess identical logical structure for which thought is completely reflected in language. The logical form of language is the same as the logical form of thought. On this basis Wittgenstein argued that sense is fully language dependent and therefore, there is no problem of thought or sense being unrepresented. Thus language can transparently express thought. This view leads Wittgenstein to uphold autonomy of language. The theory of autonomy of language establishes that language is already there before we could understand thought or sense. Sense, therefore, must be language dependent. In
this sense no semantic interpretation is possible in the absence of language. Language is fundamental, because it is the home of thought or sense.

With regard to language-world relationship Wittgenstein favours the same tune with Frege, but does not make it an ontological issue that Frege did. He showed that thought and language together make up the logical space that makes the notion of world-representation possible and thus solves the so called ontological issue. World-representation thus becomes crucial component of the semantics of representation both in Frege and Wittgenstein. Where as in Frege semantics is still concerned with the problem of sense and reference and how sense can determine the reference in the world; Wittgenstein holds that neither sense nor reference is sufficient in itself to fix the relation between language and the world. For him, therefore, there is no semantic problem of setting the language-world relationship. The relationship is built in to the semantic space that takes care of sense and reference of the linguistic representations. Wittgenstein tries to overcome the semantic dualism between sense and reference by integrating them in to a single frame of reference which may be called semantic frame-work.

IV.3. Universality of Language:

That 'language is a universal medium' is the foundation of the understanding of Wittgenstein's semantic frame-work. The explanation and appreciation of the semantics of Wittgenstein is possible only when this character is kept in mind. Language is a system of symbols which represents the world as well as constitutes the logical Criterion of making the symbol system coherent and consistent. Language expresses everything relating to the world and ourselves within itself. Even
our understanding of language is expressed in language without any requirement of metalanguage. Frege and Wittgenstein are aware that no metalanguage is involved in expressing and language has limits in its expressive power. Wittgenstein, in order to counter the possibility that grammar can be independent of our language holds that language contains its syntax and semantics, i.e., it contains its grammar without presupposing an independent medium to express the rules of grammar. No language is possible if it does not contain its grammar. Frege's theory of logic and grammar is the background of Wittgenstein's Tractatus that develops a representational frame-work for understanding language and the world. According to Wittgenstein, the structure of the world is the same as the structure of language and this can be unfolded by the logical structure of sense. Thus the structure of sense becomes the main concern as it provides key to the structure of language and the world. Wittgenstein attempted to bring out the essence of language and the world in his transcendental conception of logic.

Wittgenstein's logic starts with the notion of sense and representation. Logic, for him, studies the necessary structure of language and its sense. Logic investigates the inner necessities governing language. The result is the logical grammar of language and their necessary rules. The logical grammar we find in the Tractatus in its complete form. It abolishes the duality between the grammar of ordinary language and that of ideal language. For it, language is the one given, once for all, in nature and so the grammar that we talk about is the only one we can have. Thus there arises the need of a grammar of the necessary rules of language.
However, in the sense that language represents the world, all the rules of language are the rules of linguistic representations. Wittgenstein realizes that the idea of representation is inevitable for grammar since there is no other way we can conceive language at all. Language is the means of relating ourselves to the world and it is the way the world is mirrored in a network of symbols. This is a necessary fact about language that language is a method of expressing what is given in the world. The world exists independently of language but, so far as the structure of the world is concerned, there is the inevitability of bringing it out in the structure of the language through a study of the logical grammar of language. Hence the representational structure of language becomes necessary.

The notion of representation is significant, because the notion of sense or meaning is embedded in it. The logical relation is such that sense as the logical thought expressed in a proposition is the thought of the world. The world itself is open-ended but, as soon as the world is made intelligible, we have to recognize that there is nothing in it which is not anticipated by logic. In fact, logic is said to be the mirror-image of the world. The latter concept suggests that the world has a determinate structure that can be logically mapped. This underlying assumption leads Wittgenstein to take language as a representation or mirror of the world. For that matter, the world does not cease to be a contingent world, but so far as logic is concerned; the necessary structure of the world is all that matters. Wittgenstein says, the domain of logic is the domain of necessity and of logical laws which gives us the picture of the world that obeys the laws of logic.
Representationality and universality generally dominate the new conception of logic. The idea of representationality is that of the sense–world connection. It is the connection of the proposition with facts through representation. The senses have representationality and thereby become related with the world. This makes sense the inner content of the propositions such that, once the sentence expressing the sense is made, the sense is fully grasped. This leads Wittgenstein to say that sense is very much a part of the inner logic of the propositions. This inner logic is the logic of representationality of sense.

Universality is that of the logical structure of sense. The logical form of sense is the logical form of every expression whatever. Every linguistic expression reflects a sense as it is representationally connected with the world. From this it can be inferred that sense is the universal logical form of language and as such is the bedrock of the linguistic representation of the world. Wittgenstein believes that without the universality thesis there is no way we can prove that language is representational at all. The problem here is that language is contingently given and therefore, may not be universalizable, which means that language can not be shown to be representational in every aspect. Therefore, Wittgenstein took the idea that it is the proposition that represents fact irrespective of their content and subject–matter. The facts are formal in their structure and so they are subject–matter of linguistic representations. The universality of representational frame-work is built in to language in the logical sense. Language as such is representational in its relation to the world which is well explained in Tractatus as Picture theory.
IV.4. The Picture Theory:

The Picture theory is the central concern of Wittgenstein's transcendental logic. It brings out the logical structure of the world in and through the structure of language. The structure of language is the key to the structure of the world. This is a transcendental thesis in which the structure of the world is mapped through logic. Meaning, the structure of the world is represented in the logical structure of language. Wittgenstein makes it clear that the essence of the world could not be mapped in the thought – structure unless the latter is the one reflected in language. Thus there is the inevitability about the idea that language is the ultimate ground of the possibility of our knowledge of the world.

That language pictures the world as well as reality, is the principle of the picture theory. "The proposition is a picture of reality".\textsuperscript{10} It is the grammatical articulation of the fact that language makes the world intelligible. It lays down the conditions under which the world becomes transparent. These conditions are those which Frege called the conditions of sense as applicable to the linguistic representations. These conditions lie in the fact that sense is propositional and is regarding the world. Frege, of course, could not make these conditions sufficiently logical and intrinsic to language; there remained a gap between what the propositions say and what the world is. The picture theory remedies this situation by making sense transparent; that is, by making the sense of a proposition agree with the world. This can be possible only when the logical form of the proposition agrees with the logical form of the world. In fact, picture theory, in various versions, holds that the underlying logical structure of language and the world is same. This is certainly
highly metaphysical thesis and it is the basis of the semantics and the syntax of the picture theory. The theory lays down the logical conditions of the linguistic symbols and their inter-relations and thereby becomes a syntactic and semantic thesis. Moreover, the theory tells what the symbols mean and stand for, which is the key to the theory of meaning.

The semantic conditions are made logically secure by Wittgenstein so far as their relation to the world is concerned. Through the picture theory Wittgenstein made them rooted in the world. But in Frege the truth conditions and sense hang in the balance. The semantic conditions according to Frege, are the conditions of the truth of the propositions. If the propositions are understood here the truth conditions are also equally understood. In the Tractatus of Wittgenstein we find the semantic conditions more open than in Frege. The semantic conditions, in Wittgenstein, are on the surface since the grammatical structures of the propositions are so articulate that they take care of the sense and truth conditions as well. Thereby the semantic condition are not rejected but are made logically secure. There is both a syntactic and semantic guarantee that sense is related to the world through the propositions, which are the representations of the world.

The main thesis of the picture theory is that every well-formed proposition is a logical representation of the world. It is a syntactic articulation of the world as it is logically conceived. This thesis is the general picture theory that tells that there is a universality about the idea that language is a picture of the world in the logical sense. This aspect of the theory is best depicted in its assumption that language and the world have the same logical form. Another important thesis is that the world
is the totality of what is real and logically conceivable. Thus language, which
represents the world, is meaningful if and only if it has all the syntactic and semantic
resources required. This includes a theory of logical grammar and also a theory of
sense. This second thesis tells under what conditions the propositions are pictures.
Thesis bears the idea of depiction. The idea of depiction is one of the semantic
conditions of a proposition picturing the world. The logic of depiction brings the idea
of projection as the central concept of representation. The requirement here is that the
depicted reality is of the same logical status as the depicting medium. If the
proposition is the depicting medium, the fact which is depicted must be prepositional
and linguistically presentable. This is the essence of the proposition and the fact.
Wittgenstein says, “The general prepositional form is the essence of the proposition.
To give the essence of a proposition means to give the essence of all description, and
the essence of the world.” 11

That the essence of the world and that of language are same is the logical theory that marks the emergence of the idea that language is the model of the world. The concept of model goes back to the scientific and mathematical motion of model which is the foundation of the modern concept of science that tries to understand the world through various mathematical devices. The picture theory put forward by Wittgenstein provides a grammatical theory of model to suggest that all the scientific and mathematical models are ultimately linguistic. Such a model like Newton’s mechanical model, “is an attempt to construct according to a single plan all the true proposition that we need for the depiction of the world.” 12
The picture theory of Wittgenstein in its general form holds that the only relation between language and the world is that the world is represented by language. The notion of representation is a crucial one that goes in to the center of the theory of language. Wittgenstein does not admit any possibility of representing the world otherwise than through language. Language is only the medium and any other possibility would go beyond language. But what is beyond language is non-sensical. To represent the world language is endowed with rich semantic and syntactic resources. The picture theory emphasizes on this potentiality of language. The facts in the world are all-comprehensive to include everything in reality, and language has the corresponding names for all these constituents of reality. There is a logical harmony between language and the world. The picture theory is primarily the theory of this harmony which expresses that the logic of world representation lies in the logic of language and this is the underlying transcendental thesis of the picture theory.

IV.5. Language – Sense – World:

The picture theory of Wittgenstein nullifies sense independent of the theory of propositions. Sense is sense of proposition. Sense can be located only through the understanding of propositions. Sense cannot be extra-prepositional because sense is the thought contained in proposition. Sense is not factual entity, as it is not found along with other facts in the world. The sense of proposition, according to Wittgenstein, is self-guaranteed and therefore, the sense may be called autonomous. In this sense, sense is a linguistic reality, a logical entity and its logicality follows from prepositional origin. This is evidenced in the idea that sense is shown or expressed in the structure of the proposition. The sense is the essential logical form
of a proposition that makes a proposition a picture of the fact it states. According to Wittgenstein, propositions can not be articulated without sense. This gives the metaphysical ground of the independent reality of sense.

The domain of sense is the domain of Logic for Wittgenstein. The sense is the formal essence of propositions and this cannot be studied except by logic which aims at showing what the essence language and the world is. Logic as such is autonomous in what it "takes care of itself" as it unfolds the inner logic of language and the world. Here Wittgenstein carries on the idea of Frege that in logic nothing is relevant except the necessary laws governing language and thought. For Wittgenstein, by unfolding the structure of language logic unfolds the structure of the world. This leads him to hold the sense of the propositions is intrinsically related to the world. But this relation is not mental; because it is through linguistic representation that sense gets in to the world. The sense of the propositions enters the network of the world when the linguistic representations are so structured that they carry the essence of the world. The sense thus becomes part of the meaningfully represented in language. The notion of sense plays a crucial role in that the world is such that it is thinkable and representable in language.

Language is itself intrinsically related with the world. Therefore, if sense is real in language it cannot be but true of the world. So long as sense is not separated from language, the autonomy of sense is to be granted, there is nothing wrong with this; according to the realism associated with the theory of sense. By the intrinsic relation the gap between sense and world–order is bridged so as to make sense the essence of the world – representation. This can be characterized as the
semantic harmony between what is posited as the sense and what is given as the fact in the world. The fact is a construction in language in terms of the logical form of language. Hence facts themselves show the marks of the logical shadow of sense on the world. In this sense the world is the world of sense and inner necessity. However the contingency of the world is not abolished. But logic makes a difference to this world by making it representable in language.

The whole philosophy of Wittgenstein develops in a jig – jug way with various change of views. In the same way his theory of sense also undergoes little change in his later works. The problem continues as an attempt to make sense relevant to the world. The sense has its locus in the propositions, yet an inner boundary around sense has been built in the structure of language game, such that sense becomes the unfoldment of the grammar of the language – game. Sense is the grammatical essence of language such that the world–order is posited in the grammatical network itself. Wittgenstein maintains continuity between the Tractatus and his later philosophy regarding the problem of sense.

IV.6. Language Game and Sense :

Wittgenstein’s “Philosophical Investigations” clearly shows his transition from Tractatus. The central issue in Investigations is the theory of language game. The Tractarian domain of propositions which instantiated the logical contents of sense is now transformed in to the domain of language games which equally makes sense available in the structure of language. In his later Philosophy, Wittgenstein introduces his theory of an integral system of language–games, which abolishes the apparent hierarchy of proposition in the Tractatus. The language – games constitute a
system even if they do not share anything more than a family resemblance. The concept of family resemblance contains the idea of unity which is the bedrock of all language-games. This language-game theory integrates language use and sense in a more comprehensive system.

According to Wittgenstein, language cannot be bifurcated in to unrelated items, though the unit of language are relatively independent. Due to this relative independence, the semantic molecularist like Dummet claims that Language is a hierarchical order. For them this hierarchy is such that there can be no single theory of meaning for all orders of language. But this is misrepresentation of Wittgenstein's theory of language. For Wittgenstein has claimed that language is like an organic structure that his natural history of its own. This view of Wittgenstein is found in the "philosophical Investigations." Language has an organic structure and it does not have component which are dissociated from one another. It is the logic of holism which imposes a unified structure in language. Here Wittgenstein differs from W.V. Quine regarding holism. Quine has claimed holism for the conceptual scheme rather than for language.

The sense or meaning is not an isolated phenomenon according to semantic holism. Meaning belongs to the whole of a language game and is itself a whole in the sense that it is neither a composite entity nor is it a single content. As a single content it could be an entity either in the mind or in the world, but both these are not possible. Meaning is also not a composite entity, because meaning is not constructed by the method of assimilation. Wittgenstein has argued that meaning is the physiognomy of language,18 such that there is a definite way of locating it in the
language use itself. Language use is the locus of meaning but not a product of use. Thus sense is not a single event phenomenon but multidimensional which accounts for its holistic character. Semantic holism in this way provides a better framework for understanding meaning. It takes meaning away from the fact of the world and puts it back in the language itself. Meaning is hereby made accountable to language instead of making it world dependent. In this sense, meaning is the linguistic phenomenon. Sense, in the total context of language appears to be something spread over the language rather than is an entity in the world or in the mind. This is the idea that 'meaning is not to be searched for as something to be discovered and so as something hidden' in the secret of human understanding. The idea of hidden something arises out of not placing meaning on the surface. Wittgenstein struggles to ensure that meaning is open to the language user in the public space of grammar itself. This view faces attack from the sceptics and relativists.

If meaning is on the surface, the sceptics opine that it may be something absolutely ephemeral. The relativists are of the view that it may be something dependent on the perceiver. Wittgenstein rules out such possibilities in his private language argument where he argues that meaning is not something which is dependent on the cognizent and his preferences. Besides, it is not something, which we decide to have. Subjectivism, therefore, is not the real threat to meaning – holism. Wittgenstein also rules out the possibility of meaning indeterminacy, which Quine has envisaged, in view of the fact that meaning is a linguistic phenomenon governed by grammatical necessity but not man – dependent. Meaning is the stable and grammatically necessary phenomenon such that the more it is realized in the stream of life and language, deeper it appears to be embedded in the linguistic rules. The
semantic frame-work of Wittgenstein makes room for the reality of sense in a linguistic sense. But he adds that the sense must be deeply laid in our language and life. Meaning, the sense must be laid within the language games which are the given schemes of language use.

IV.7. The Use Theory:

Wittgenstein in his earlier philosophy, i.e., in ‘Tractatus Logico Philosophicus’ supported referential theory or word object theory. His also tried to give a solid foundation to the theory by introducing the picture theory of language. But in his later philosophy he shifted his position from language as picture of reality to language as games that we play with word. In the ‘Philosophical Investigations’, Wittgenstein stresses centrally on language games of different types. The words are the instruments in language game and they have meaning in their application by human being. In another way it may be said that words have meaning in their “use”. In order to determine meaning from this point of view, Wittgenstein states, “What we do is to bring words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use.”20

The meaning of a word is determined by its use. In his own words, “For a large class of cases - though not for all - in which we employ the word ‘meaning’ it can be defined thus: the meaning of a word is its use in the language.”21 This use is not anything simple, common to all cases of linguistic behaviour. The uses are different in different cases. Wittgenstein clearly states the different uses cannot be assimilated, ‘they are absolutely unlike’.22 These different uses give different meanings to the words or signs. The signs by themselves are not meaningful, it is only use which gives meaning to them, according to Wittgenstein. It is claimed that
identifies the meaning of an expression with its use, when he writes 'But if we had
to name anything which is the life of the sing, we should have to say that it was its
use.' In this particular point of identifying meaning with use he differs from his
predecessors, Russell, Frege, Strawson and others. But interestingly enough the claim
made by some philosophers that Wittgenstein himself identifies meaning with use
looses its ground when we go through the sect. 43 of philosophical Investigations
proper. The final sentence of the section is this: ‘And the meaning of a name is
sometimes explained by pointing to its bearer.’ Before defining meaning of a word
as its use he clearly states, ‘for a large class of cases—though not for all.’ The phrase
‘though not for all’ warns against identifying meaning with use.

Language has the three main aspects of syntax, semantic and
pragmatics. Wittgenstein seeks to explain the notion of meaning in terms of the
pragmatics of language. It is the pragmatics that helps one to learn about the other two
aspects also. Therefore, Wittgenstein takes pragmatics as the most fundamental aspect
of language. He argues that when children learn language, they cannot learn except
from the use of words in the context of actual interaction among people. Language
cannot be divorced from other behaviour of man, and consequently the meaning of
words cannot be divorced from their use in language. Whether one learns the exact
meaning has to be ascertained by using the word in proper contexts.

Wittgenstein holds that the existence of mental phenomenon need not
be taken for granted. Language and meaning should be explained in terms of physical
behaviour alone. Such disbelief in a occult mental process leads him to say that
naming theory of meaning fails to explain the relation between linguistic expression
and its meaning. Wittgenstein also rejects universals as such which perhaps is the most fundamental reason to hold use theory of meaning. It gives rise to his doctrine of same as a matter of convention. There is no universal feature of objects an no sameness among objects. If it is taken for granted that meaning is a mental picture accompanying every use of words, there need not be the same picture in every use. A word does not mean the same thing in every use of the word. It is only the use according to fixed convention that alone can account for the fact of communication, as language is a means of communication.

Wittgenstein holds a conventionalistic view regarding the relation between the words and their meaning. The term conventionalism is ordinarily associated with a particular theory about the nature of inductive generalizations. This theory holds that all general propositions are concerned merely with the linguistic conventions for using certain terms; and that they are either definitions of a word, or are statements about the defining characteristics of some word. But this conventionalism alone is not his functionalism. Functionalism is the view, which holds that a linguistic expression by itself has no meaning; it acquires meaning only when it is used to perform a certain function. This functionalism together with his conventionalism constitutes his ‘use’ theory of meaning, which according to him provides an adequate explanation of how a linguistic expression means its object.

Wittgenstein conceives language as essentially instrumental in nature. “Language is an instrument. Its concepts are instruments”26 In functionalism he maintains that the words have meaning only when they can be used to perform functions. The linguistic expression is associated with its meaning when the precise
rules of its use are explicitly stated. Regarding the nature of function that language 
can perform, Wittgenstein holds a catholic view. His theory of language games takes 
in to consideration the activity and outward behaviour as forming part of language. 
Therefore, it can be said that by use he means any sort of activity. Language is 
conceived by him as a part of human life. He holds’ “Commanding, questioning, 
recounting, chatting are as much a part of our natural history as walking, eating, 
drinking, playing.”27

Wittgenstein suggest that we try to understand language in terms of an 
analogy of the function or purpose of an instrument and that of language. Words and 
sentences in this sense may be thought of as tools. In the Investigation at several 
places he draws on this analogy: “Look at the sentence as an instrument, and its sense 
as its employment.”28 “Think of the tools in a toolbox; there is hammer, pliers, a saw, 
a screw-driver, a rule, a glue – pot, glue, nails and screws. · · · · The functions of 
words are as diverse as the functions of these objects.”29

From this it becomes clear that speech or language is something done 
with words, sentences, etc. They are like tools; we are tool-users and it is in the use 
made of them that they have meaning or sense. Language or speech when employed is 
doing something; it is a form of action. Moreover, it may be said that language has 
sense or meaning only when it is employed by someone. Hence, to a large extent, 
words and sentences have meaning in their use. But “use and its surrogates (purpose, 
function, role, office, application, and employment – all mentioned in the 
Investigation), should be distinguished from at least two misleading interpretations of 
the notion “use”.30 Words or sentences get their meaning through use does not mean
that words will mean whatever the user means when they are used. Use does not render meaning so esoteric and private that one must always consult the user for the meaning of a word or sentence. Get their meaning through use does not mean that words will mean whatever the user means when they are used. Use does not render meaning so esoteric and private that one must always consult the user for the meaning of a word or sentence. Wittgenstein reject the possibility of private language. Meaning–as–use cannot be appreciated in isolation from our ‘natural history’ and the social matrix of our language–using activity or ‘form of life’.

Moreover, use should not be construed simply as describing the logical environment of a word or sentence as if knowing the use of a word, and therefore its meaning, is a case of knowing the rule or formula for the possibility of saying the word meaningfully. But even if we know a set of rules that decides the correct combination of words in a sentence, we cannot say that this holds true in any given case or in future cases. We change the rules, such as they are, by our practice. There is a sense in which we have to have some confidence in the meaning of a sentence before we can agree upon the soundless of the rule that may or may not have been followed.

Language is always intimately connected with the user. It is in this that language has meaning in its ‘use’ and that rules, grammar and logical environment come to have their proper place. In all of our discussion about language as an instrument on words and sentences as tools, we can be misled in overlooking the user–a candidtio sine quanon for anything having a use. Wittgenstein has not overlooked this feature. Rather it is the basis for his laking about language as an
activity or arguing specifically, for example, that an “arrow points only in the
application that a living being makes of it.”

Wittgenstein draws the terms ‘use’ and
‘life’ in to close logical association. It is upon those who have human life that the
human language depends finally for its meaning. Language has life in being used.
This is clearly exposed when Wittgenstein holds, “Every sign by itself seems dead.
What gives it life?—In use it is alive.”

Words and sentences by themselves are neither meaningful nor
meaningless. They become meaningful or meaningless by virtue of having something
done with them. In so far as we need tests for the meaningfulness of speech acts, it is
a matter of someone else ‘getting it’ or understanding what is said. There is an
agreement between two persons at least in communication. For example, when A is
‘getting’ what B says, there is an agreement between A and B regarding the use of
words and not getting indicates disagreement. In fact, standards of correct use are not
established in isolation from other persons. “For if I need justification for using a
word, it must also be one for someone else.”

The things may be presented in various ways. There are many speech
activities and countless ways speech may function. Wittgenstein says, “But how
many kind of sentence are there? Say assertion, question, and command? – There are
countless kind; countless different kinds of use of what we call ‘symbol’, ‘words’,
‘sentences’.” Wittgenstein, in the same paragraph of Investigations states a list of
activities which involve the use of language. The list ranges from “giving orders”, “
play – acting” and “making a joke” to ‘asking’, ‘greeting’, and ‘praying’. From the
observation of the list it is clearly seen that there is a shift of attention from simply “
countless kind of sentence” to “countless different kinds of use”. This is one of the important points, P. F. Straw son rightly point out that “the sentence ‘it was raining’ might occur in the course of any one of these activities; as it might in factual narration. It would be absurd to speak of different sentences here let alone of different kinds of sentences.”35 Using words or sentences are linguistic activities in which words, sentences and the whole unit (Paragraph etc.) occur. There are thing which we mean by the use of sentence and could not mean by the use of words. The converse is also possible, i.e., there are things that might be meant by the use of words not by the use of sentence. Moreover, a word sometimes may function as a sentence. The meaning of a linguistic expression is determined by the function it can perform.

IV.8. Evaluation:

Language can perform according to Wittgenstein, functions of innumerable different varieties. And therefore, the meaning of different linguistic expressions are also of various different sorts. According to Wittgenstein, from the actual linguistic usage we can learn the varieties of functions performed by a linguistic expression. This functionalism along with the method of empirical investigation forbids Wittgenstein to arrive at an uniform account of meaning. Because he has to take into consideration all the different uses of linguistic expression in different times at different contexts. But in such situation there would be no end to it. He himself confused, “......... in general we do not use language according to strict rules – it hasn’t been thought us by means of strict rules either.”36 Moreover the overemphasis on the function of ‘use’ of language together with his conventionalism
would create a difficulty for Wittgenstein to maintain his structuralism in its proper form.

There is also a methodological difficulty in Wittgenstein's formulation of the 'use' theory. In the theory he maintained that words have meaning only in their use and the meaning varies with the varieties types of or contexts of use. But if the words have no meaning other than the use and if this use is of no fixed variety, then it would be almost humanly impossible to learn the use of words. In order to learn the use of words. In order to learn the meaning one has to learn all the possible uses of an expression to which there is almost no limit. Thereby it becomes humanly impossible to exhaust the numbers of different uses a word can have. This difficulty in Wittgenstein's formulation of the theory is a methodological one. The emphasis on the methodology of empirical investigations leads Wittgenstein to arrive ultimately on a mere collection of highly particular data about how the words and sentences are normally used. But this particular methodology hindered him from arriving at a systematic account about these particulars, or rather discovering any underlying structure behind all these surface varieties of uses of linguistic symbols. In other words, the use theory of meaning gives J. A. Fodor and J. J. Katz point out that the insistence upon the study of use does not amount to a theory of meaning but only to a specification of the data relevant to such a theory. This drawback of the theory may be said to involve the "use-use-fallacy," that tries to show that the use of a word is to be understood by nothing other than the use.

Wittgenstein's functionalism together with his conventionalism fails to provide satisfactory explanation of the compositional mechanism of language.
Language learning has the peculiar characteristic that one can construct new sentences with which one was not acquainted before. For learning a language, a preliminary training is required in having an initial acquaintance with the vocabulary and the rules of syntax. One these rules are grasped; the person can generate new logical consequence from the rules. No further training is required in the accepted conventions. This creativity in language acquisition reflects the systematic nature of the compositional mechanism of language, which Wittgenstein’s theory could not explain.

The use theory has to face the fundamental problem of determining the proper sense of the term ‘use’. Meaning, for Wittgenstein can be explained in terms of use. But there are many types of linguistic use, which are not relevant to the questions about meaning. David E. Cooper points out some such cases that may be mentioned here as:

1. It might be the case that ‘if’ was used seven hundred times yesterday in the village of Red Rock – but this fact about the use of ‘if’ has nothing to do with its meaning.
2. I can use the words ‘Good evening’ to terrify the life out of some one if, say, I utter them in a Boris Karloff voice on a lonely forest path at midnight. But this use of ‘Good Evening’ is unconnected with its meaning.
3. Most people know how to use ‘Amen’ namely, to put it at the end of their prayers but do not know what it means.
4. There are some expressions, which obviously have a use, But which do not so obviously have a meaning; for example, proper names.
5. Quite meaningless words can have a use ...............
One might explain the use of a given word in a poem by pointing out that it rhymes with another word. This use is no part of its meaning.\textsuperscript{38}

From all these cases pointed out by Cooper we find that there are many aspects of use which are not relevant to meaning. Therefore Wittgenstein is not right when he holds the meaning of a word as its use. It tends to lead to conclude with Paul Ziff that "It is wrong to say 'the meaning of a word is its use in the language,' for the use of a word depends upon many factors many of which have nothing to do with questions of meaning."\textsuperscript{39} From among the different types of use, it is not difficult to isolate the irrelevant types and can be eliminated as unintended by the use theory. Gilbert Ryle points out that it is use in the senses of 'usage' or 'utility' in terms of which meaning is to be explicated. In enquiring about meanings neither the utility of words nor the facts about the usage of words is enquired. Rather the standard or stock uses to which words may be put becomes the matter of enquiry. The standard use is such in terms of which meaning is to be explained. Ryle says, "Usage is a custom, practice, fashion or vogue \ldots there cannot be a miscustom or a misvogue."\textsuperscript{40}

But even after making this distinction between ordinary usage and standard use, the theory still remains in trouble. There are cases where standard use of an expression is unconnected with its meaning. No criterion has been given to find out what type of standard use is relevant to meaning. Moreover, it is surely the case that we can speak of misuses of sentences which tell us nothing about their meanings. The examples of misuse we put may be said to be not relevant; but there is also no criterion to distinguish between semantically relevant and semantically irrelevant misuses.
Just as there are expressions having standard use but unconnected with its meaning, so there are sentences without standard use but the meaning of which can be understood. For example, the sentence 'pain is the stimulation of C-fibres' has no use in scientific theory at present; but it might well come to have one. It would be highly implausible to suggest that it only acquires meaning when it gains the use. On the contrary, it is precisely because it means what it has already meant that it can be given a use within scientific theory.

There are various differences in the uses of expressions. The problem is to decide which differences in the uses are relevant to the synonymy or otherwise of expressions. For example, the two sentences 'this is a good clock' and 'this clock does the job it was designed to do with great precision' are used differently. The first is used to comment, and the second, mainly to report. Whether this difference in use shows difference in meaning, cannot be answered without any account of what constitutes relevant differences in use. The use theory could not give any account of what constitutes relevant difference. Again, the mere fact that two expressions can be used in very similar ways does not show that they are synonymous. Mustard oil and refined vegetable oil can be used in very similar ways; but that does not make mustard oil the vegetable oil. Thus the use theory suffers from various difficulties, which are also difficulties for a use theory synonymy.

The use theory also suffers from the problem of circularity. As all aspects of use are not relevant to meaning, the use theory is reduced to claiming that meaning can be explained in terms of those uses which are relevant to meaning which is patently circular. So far we have no way of describing what these relevant uses are beyond describing them as the relevant ones. J. Findlay states, "The notion of use, as
it ordinarily exists and is understood, presupposes the notion of meaning (in its central and paradigmatic sense), and .......... it can not therefore, be used to elucidate the latter.⁴¹ No doubt, our intuitions sometimes tell which uses and misuses are semantically relevant, but these intuitions can not be supported by an adequate theoretical account. Further in the example of ‘good clock’ intuitions cannot answers about relevant uses

From all the above discussions it has been found that the use theorists could not give a systematic account of meaning that can be properly called a ‘theory’. Fodor and Katz point out that it is little more than “a recommendation that questions about meaning are to be handled as questions about the uses of words or expressions.”⁴² But yet, it is not be considered simply from negative aspects. The failure of philosophers to justify the slogan ‘Meaning is use’ has not entirely vitiated the work of philosophers influenced by that slogan. Even if it is taken for granted that use is completely distinct from meaning, the study of use does not its importance. For the philosophers it may still be of immense value to examine uses. The problems of equating meaning with use have been realized by some philosophers and therefore, an appeal to ask for the use not to ask for the meaning has been placed. Whatever meaning might mean we can find out by studying use. It meaning becomes use at some context then the study of use is alright an even if it does not then also study of use does not become meaningless. Thus the use theory rightly points out that at least in some cases the study of use may help understanding meaning and thus open a new line of thought.
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