In recent times it is the decided opinion of many philosophers that the proper function of philosophy is to analyse and criticise the language in which philosophical theories are expressed, and further that many of the disputes among philosophers may be found to be based only upon linguistic differences. These philosophers believe that philosophy cannot impart any knowledge about facts, that it cannot make any factual discovery, so that the controversies among philosophers are not with regard to facts but are only of a linguistic character. Thus, according to some of them, the so-called theory of sense-data should be regarded, not as a theory but only as a convenient alternative language which enables us to describe what we already know.

Thus the familiar theory of sense-datum is converted into a linguistic one. Let us first see how this happened, before we may be in a position to examine the success of this attempt and question the assumptions on which it is based.

Among the philosophers who introduced this linguistic conversion in the case of the problem of perception, Paul is one. According to him, to talk about sense-data is just another way of talking about the way objects look.

Hence sense-data are a verbal novelty rather than a factual discovery. It is, holds Paul, a misunderstanding of the sense-datum language to infer that philosophers have discovered some new entities in addition to the physical objects.

Paul adduces reasons why sense-data should not be accepted as genuine factual discoveries. Genuine discoveries, he points out, can always be clearly designated and differentiated from other things. To make this point clearer he gives the example of the fovea in the eye. When a new thing e.g. fovea in the eye, is discovered, everyone can say what it means (that fovea is 'the slight depression in the retina diametrically opposite to the pupil'), and one also may be able to single it out from the rest. The answer can be verified by dissecting some eyes and finding in each case whether there is an object actually corresponding to the description. But sense-data can never be distinguished or isolated in this way with the help of experiment. Experiment with regard to sense-data would be superfluous; not only that, it will be proper to say that experiment in such cases is a sheer impossibility. For the definition of sense-data makes it impossible that these can have independent existence. The existence of sense-data follows logically from the perception of physical objects, since we do not know what it would be like to see a material object and not have sense-data. Hence, while one can answer whether there
are such things as faves by saying that one would know what it was like to discover a retina which lacked a depression opposite to the pupil, it would not be possible to know what it would be like to see anything whatever and not be perceiving the sense-data. It is clear, therefore, that the existence of sense-data necessarily follows from the assertion of any perception, the definition of sense-data is included within the definition of physical objects. Here we pass from one known fact to another which also is known, but never from the known to the unknown. But genuine discoveries, according to Paul, are never logical consequences of what is already known. So Paul reaches the conclusion that sense-data should not be regarded as a new discovery, as an extra ground-floor object, but only as an alternative language to express the way physical objects appear to us.

That the sense-datum theory is merely a language may be shown, in Paul's opinion, by the further fact that questions about sense-data are settled linguistically, not factually. If sense-data be regarded as a different kind of entity in addition to the physical object, then it stands as a barrier between us and the physical object. To remove this difficulty if it is asked - 'Is the corresponding sense-datum identical with the observed surface of the physical object? it seems that the implication is that the question is to be settled by examining the object or objects. But, "actually it is to be settled", claims Paul, "by
examining not an object but our use of the words 'sense-datum' and 'surface'.

If a sentence which uses the sense-datum terminology and asserts something about it, be replaced by a sentence asserting the something about the surface of a physical object, then we may say that the two are identical. If on the other hand, the substitution leads to falsehood or nonsense, then it would be said that the sense-datum and the surface are not identical. "Thus if ex-hypothesi the corresponding surface is really round, and the sense-datum I see of it is elliptical, to say 'the sense-datum is round' is either false or nonsense, and so is 'the corresponding surface is elliptical'.

Paul further points out that to regard sense-datum as a factual novelty gives rise to several problems which cannot be answered satisfactorily. All questions about a physical object may be settled by observing the behaviour of the object, as we all are acquainted with the nature and properties of a physical object. There are certain general criteria which ordinarily enable us to decide whether a given physical object is the same object as we saw from a given perspective, whether it is now changing its colour and shape, and so on. But as sense-data by definition are private, these questions with regard to them cannot be answered by observation. There arise several problems if sense-data be regarded as actually existent entities. Thus such


(3) Ibid, p.110.
problems about them as 'can we see the same sense-datum twice'? 'What is to count as one and what as two sense-datum? cannot be answered by looking at the world. All we can do is to make decisions which will regulate the rules for the use of the expression 'sense-datum'.

From all such considerations Paul draws the conclusion that the introduction of 'sense-datum' is merely an alternative way of saying the something which can be expressed in physical object language; it would be utterly misconceived to think that this new term is in some way nearer to facts. The introduction of sense-datum language may be useful for some philosophical purpose, but it is useless to ask which is logically or metaphysically right way of speaking. In fact this new terminology does not fall into a fully-prepared scheme for its usage as a word for a physical object does, but at the same time it is not wholly fictitious or arbitrary. This new version expresses the same facts which are expressed in ordinary language by such words as 'looks', 'appears' etc. If someone thinks he sees an elliptical-looking penny when there is really no penny there, he can say: "what I really saw was a sense-datum which was elliptical, but was not a sense-datum of a penny". But, he adds, "It is equally good answer to say" It only seemed to me as if there was a round penny which looked elliptical. I was really not seeing anything at all." This says just the same as the statement what contained the word 'sense-datum', and there is no question of the one saying it less
or more adequately than the other."

Thus, though Paul admits the introduction of sense-data, he is unwilling to regard this as factual entities over and above physical objects, but merely as a variation of language.

Paul's arguments now may be examined and his assumptions clarified with a view to finding out how far they are tenable.

Paul's first point of criticism is that the existence of sense-data cannot be proved. In the fields of the sciences, a new fact is established with the help of observation and experiment, and it can be regarded as a new discovery when it can be confirmed by experimental evidence. Thus he cites the example of the fovea which may be called a new discovery as it can be confirmed by experimental evidence. However, it may be said that though sense-data are not generally experimented upon, one may in some sense have experimental confirmation of their existence. Generally we do not distinguish between physical objects and sense-data, but this does not prove that the two are identical. If the eye-ball be pressed, there appear certain bits of colour patches before us without any definite shape or size. It is not possible to locate such sensations as being of any determinate physical object, but at the sametime it cannot also be denied that these patches did appear before us.

(4) Essays on Logic and Language, P.107-8
Experiences of this kind may be put forward as confirming the existence of sense-data as distinguished from physical objects. Moreover, cases of hallucinations also definitely prove the independent existence of the sense-data. Bare sense-data are said to be presented in hallucinations, and so we can conceive what it is like to have sense-data and yet not to perceive a material thing. It is clear, therefore that it would be mistaken to assume that as apprehension of sense-data is accompanied by perception of physical objects, the two are identical, and that the former have no separate existence apart from the latter. It is one thing to assert the continued presence of something in some other thing, and it is a quite different thing to regard the two as completely identical. It cannot be denied that if two things almost always go together, no distinction is usually made between the two. But this does not amount to saying that they can never be distinguished. So the argument that independent existence of sense-data cannot be proved by experimental evidence does not seem to be conclusive.

Paul's more important argument is that it is logically impossible to differentiate the sense-datum from physical objects. The existence of sense-data, on his view, is logically implied by the fact of perceiving a physical object. This logical necessity depends upon the way the word sense-datum is defined, and shows that the so-called theory is only a language or terminology and is asserting no new
 proposition about facts. The fallacy of the argument consists in considering definitions as merely parts of a language and not of a theory. Definitions are logical no doubt, but logic is not totally independent of facts. If logical definitions be regarded as quite indifferent to facts then they may be formally valid, but may not agree with actual facts, and hence materially invalid. It is a misconception to think that as various consequences follow logically from the definition, it must be reduced to a merely linguistic matter. Hirst says, "Logical necessity or impossibility, even if dependent on definitions, does not mean that the definitions are part of a language only, and not a theory. Thus that space is Euclidean or non-Euclidean are two rival theories, but once one is accepted various conclusions follow with logical necessity; nor does Einstein's re-definition of simultaneity with its logical consequences, make his Relativity Theory simply a new language." (5)

Paul's next argument to show that the sense-datum theory is merely a new language is that the questions concerning it are settled linguistically not factually. The absurdity of the argument is quite apparent. If the meaning of the two - the sense-datum and the physical object - languages be identical then there is at all no need of substitution. On the other hand, to prove whether the two are identical or not, we have to appeal to actual facts; as soon as the question of truth and falsity is raised, it no longer remains a

(5) R.J.Hirst, Problem of Perception, P.114.
linguistic problem only, but turns to be a factual one. We might substitute one word for another, there might be similarity between the two from the point of view of language, but whether the implication remains the same in two cases is to be determined by observation of actual facts.

The last argument of Paul in favour of considering the sense-datum theory as a linguistic one is that there arise several problems with regard to sense-datum which cannot be answered by actual observation. To this it may be said that in developing and formulating any theory which involves new concepts or new types of explanations, it should have to be decided what should be the proper method of counting or measuring something and so on. As the concept of sense-datum is not in common use, the answer to these questions is not ready-made, and it is quite natural that there should be diverse opinions about the true nature of the entity and several other problems with regard to it. But this does not imply that the theory is a language, not a theory.

Another leading exponent of the linguistic version of the sense-datum theory is Ayer. He denies the existence of sense-data, as the traditional arguments on which the concept is based are found to be inconclusive. Like Paul, Ayer also holds that the various philosophies of perception are not theories to explain or discover facts and to solve problems, but are simply alternative languages to express better the facts on which we are all agreed. Thus the sense-datum theory
did not really discover new entities, something of a new category, it only produced a 'sense-datum language' which is an alternative to the everyday 'material object language'. A sense-datum, according to him, is a new vocabulary, a novel manner of speech, a convenient mode of description. It is simply the material object language translated into the language of sensory contents. All that we are doing is simply specifically limiting ourselves to talking in terms of sense qualities without making any reference to material things. It is clear, therefore, that Ayer does not admit the existence of sense-datum as a factual novelty as Price and Broad do, but only as a novel mode of expression, a verbal reformulation.

At the same time, Ayer admits the sense-datum language as a more convenient way of expression than some other languages. Paul and some other philosophers are of opinion that there arise several problems in the reduction of the material object language into sense-datum language. Thus questions arise about the criteria of the self-identity of these objects, the means of distinguishing one of them from another, the possibility of their changing, the duration of their existence and so on. But Ayer points out that though it is true that there arise certain problems with regard to the sense-datum language, we have yet to remember that it is quite natural that one has to face several difficulties while applying a new terminology. And though there are no general rules from which
The answers to such questions can be derived, this does not mean that they cannot be given in particular cases. He also finds no difficulty in assuming that one who can record his own experience in terms of sense-datum could easily teach it to others.

Ayer also answers some other charges against the sense-datum language. It is said that the sense-datum language is not only not in common use, it is an artificial way of speaking. It seems to bring unnecessary trouble in the ordinary mode of expression. Moreover, the sense-datum language is erroneous even as a language, as it is private; its privacy stands in the way of regarding it as an independent language. Such a private method of using terminology does not come within the confines of what is normally called a language, as it cannot communicate information about the empirical world. There must be some universal and ostensible rules at the roots of communicable signs. But all these are not possible in the case of sense-data. For sense-data are necessarily private to individuals. Their privacy follows from their very definition. Every sensation is peculiar to its owner as it is dependent on his physiological and psychological conditions. Hence there cannot be any general standard or criteria of sense-data. The fact is that sense-data cannot even be described except with reference to physical objects. The sense-datum terminology cannot stand as an independent language, it will be totally unintelligible without any reference to physical objects.
Ayer admits all these difficulties, but at the same time points out that these problems concern the sphere of psychology rather than that of logic. There always arise some problems with regard to an unfamiliar terminology and it is quite natural that while using an unfamiliar terminology one has to take the help of the familiar terminology in order to describe the matter clearly. The unknown should be expressed in terms of the known, the unfamiliar in terms of the familiar. But at the same time it is not inconceivable that there should be a language in which sense experiences may be described by using only names of sense qualities, which have no reference to physical objects. "Such a language would not be very useful, but it could be adequate for the description of any given experience." (6)

Ayer thus recognises the sense-datum language as an independent possibility, as an alternative language. Not only that, he thinks the sense-datum language to be logically prior to the physical object language; and in this respect he precisely differs from other linguistic philosophers. The sense-datum language is, in his view, much more comprehensive than the physical object language. Whereas in every case in which it is possible to apply the physical object language it is also possible, at least in principle, to apply the sense-datum language, but not vice versa. When one says that he perceives a rose, it would be equally true to say that he experiences certain red colour patch. But the apprehension of a sense-quality does not entail that one is apprehending a physical

object. Thus he says, "while referring to sense-data is not necessarily a way of referring to physical objects, referring to physical objects is necessarily a way of referring to sense-data." The physical object language presupposes the sense-datum language as the possibility of applying the former depends upon constancy of certain relations between sense-data. The implication is that "the structure of our sensory experience was such as to make it possible to 'construct' out of it the world of material things." Sense-datum language is also more useful in certain special cases. For as the main philosophical problem about perception is to analyse the relationship of our sense-experience to the material object statements, it is useful for us to have a terminology that enables us to refer to the contents of our experience independently of the material things that they are taken to present. "It has also the advantage of laying down an unambiguous convention for the use of words that stand for modes of perception, and so freeing us from the verbal problems that develop out of the ambiguous use of such words in ordinary speech."

But though Ayer admits the logical priority of the sense-datum language it should be noted that his main position is much on the line of Paul. For Ayer also, like Paul, denies that sense-data are some new sort of entity. Ayer points out that the traditional and most forceful argument for the existence of sense-data is not conclusive. If some object appears

(7) Philosophical Essays, P.164.
(8) do.
to us as other than what it is, we are still entitled to say that it is the object itself which we perceive and there is no need of assuming the existence of a queer sort of thing called sense-datum. The mistake, in his opinion, consists in thinking that the object cannot appear other than it is. Perception does not always necessarily involve existence. "And from this it follows that to assert that people actually do experience sense-data need be to assert no more than that such propositions as that I am now perceiving a clock or a pen or a table, in a sense of 'perceiving' that does not necessarily entail that these object exist, are sometimes true." (10) Moreover like Paul, Ayer also points out that the hypothesis of sense-data cannot be empirically verified. What the sense-datum philosopher does is to recommend a new verbal usage. "He is proposing to us that instead of speaking, for example, of seeing a straight stick which looks crooked, or of seeing an oasis when there is no oasis there, we should speak of seeing a sense-datum which really has the quality of being crooked, and which belongs to a straight stick, or of seeing a sense-datum which really has the qualities that are characteristics of the appearance of an oasis, but does not belong to any material thing." (11) But in adopting this technical terminology, he does not add to our knowledge of empirical facts. It only enables us to refer to familiar things in a clearer and more convenient way. The sense-datum language is convenient to express the present experience. Ayer gives the example of

(10) Ibid, P.59.
seeing a cigarette-case. If one says, "I see a cigarette-case", one is claiming more than one's present experience strictly warrants. For 'see' here implies the actual physical existence of the cigarette-case, while it may happen that there really is no such object. So it would be better to say, "it seems to me that I am seeing a cigarette-case". From this he then reaches the proposition "I am now seeing a seeming-cigarette-case". And such seeming objects are sense data.

But Ryle opposes Ayer's view on the ground that 'see' is a success-verb and not an experience-verb at all; to see something is to have succeeded in detecting it. To avoid this difficulty Ayer proposes to talk of "having something in sight" instead of describing it in terms of 'seeing'. But this is a very artificial and inconvenient way of speaking.

Moreover, even if we accept these 'seeming-objects', the difficulty still remains. For to say that there seems to be a thing e.g. cigarette-case there, need not imply that the thing is actually there. So how to pass from the perception of seeming object to the perception of the thing, how to fill the gap between what 'seems' and what actually is? That is what the sense-datum philosopher wants to do. He wants to say that there actually is a visual sense-datum of such and such sort in his present visual field. The language of 'seeming' or 'appearing' also is not independent; it has also meaning only with reference to physical objects. As Price says, ".....if we describe it just as seeming-cigarette case,
we are still describing it by means of material object concept. There may not actually be a cigarette case there. But still, what then seems to be is a material object, public, neutral as between the different sense-modalities, visible from many different phases, with backsides and inside as well as front, continuing through a period of time which may extent to many years. "So these are included within the material object concept." Hence Ayer is wrong in thinking that sense-data are logically prior to physical object.

That sense-data cannot be regarded as prior to physical objects from the strictly logical point of view will further be apparent after a closer view of the situation. In order to make an accurate translation, we have to know the meaning of the material object language, we have to know first what it means to say I am perceiving a material object.' This means that we must have some prior idea about the physical object, we must know the proper significance of a material object before we can translate it into another terminology. Indeed, it may be said that physical object statements are logically prior in this sense, while in an expistemological way our knowledge of the sense-data comes first. It is true that our knowledge of physical things depends upon perception of certain qualities present to our senses, i.e. upon sense-data. But this is not the something to hold that sense-data are logically prior to physical object.

Then again, physical objects have certain common accepted criteria and to make any translation, these necessary marks of physicality must be retained. But in the case of sense-data we find that the characteristics possessed by these are not the same as those of physical objects. Hence there is always a chance of invalid and faulty description, a distortion of the original fact. According to Ayer, the statement 'I am sensing or perceiving a material object' may be translated into the statement 'there is a seeming object'. But surely the meaning of the first statement is on a more secure ground than that of the second. There is a great deal of difference between the assertive and problematic modes of expression. The difference lies not merely in the formulation of the statement, but it is a fundamental one; the difference is with regard to the fact. The assertive proposition says something definitely about the positive or negative characteristics of a particular existence; it asserts some quality or fact. But the hypothetical translation may deny the existence of that quality or fact in question. The marks of physicality thus may be lost in the process of linguistic reduction. An indicative or categorical statement is required to convey 'existential import'.

If sense-data statements be merely variations of language, alternative to the physical object statements, then the application of one instead of the other must be successful in every case and the one must imply and express the same meaning which is conveyed by the other. But this is not
actually found in the practical sphere. For in some cases
the sense-datum sentences might be true and yet the material
object sentence, false, as in the cases of describing halluci-
cination, e.g. seeing of a mirage. But this is surely
against the principle of identity. Then, conversely, the
physical object may exist but there may not be any sense-
datum present to us under certain conditions. Thus the physi-
cal object statement that - 'there is a needle in the room'
may be true, but the corresponding sense-datum may not be
presented due to lack of good light or something like that.
It is quite natural that whatever conditions are stated,
there always remains the chance of overlooking some others.
Hence there always remains a chance of disagreement between
the two terminologies. Of course Ayer might reply that he
never speaks of complete identity between the two, but only
of logical equivalence. Here the implicit assumption is that
the facts in both cases remain the same. But as a matter of
fact we find that there are divergencies among facts them-
selves which cannot be denied by reducing the controversy
into one of language only. It is absurd to think that a new
terminology would have been invented merely to express the
same facts in a different way which could already be well
expressed in a familiar language.

J.L. Austin points out, rightly perhaps, that Ayer in
his attempt to prove that the sense-datum problem is a lin-
guistic one really shows his inclination to the 'sensible
manifold'. Ayer, in evaluating the argument from illusion,
holds that the argument in fact answers a purely linguistic question, not a question of fact. In the case of illusions, the quarrel is not actually with regard to facts, but only regarding the way of expression. To quote Ayer's own words....

"where we say that the real shape of a coin is unchanging, he prefers to say that its shape is really undergoing some cyclical process of change. Where we say that two observers are seeing the same material thing, he prefers to say that they are seeing different things which have, however, some structural properties in common......If there is here to be any question of truth or falsehood, there must be some disagreement about the nature of the empirical facts. And in this case no such disagreement exists." Hence the dispute, concludes he, must be a linguistic one not factual.

But the argument seems to be very weak. If all the disputes be with regard to linguistic expressions, if everyone can prefer one terminology instead of the other, how could the truth and falsehood of any statement be tested? Here Ayer also admits that sometimes at least, there is real 'disagreements about the value of the empirical facts'. And such empirical facts, in his opinion, are not the material things but facts about sense-data, or as he also puts it, 'about the nature of the sensible appearance; the phenomena'. "There are in his view - his real view - no other 'empirical facts' at all. The hard fact is that there are sense-data; these entities really exist and are what they are; what other entities we may care to speak as if there were is a pure
manner of verbal convenience, but 'the facts' to which these expressions are intended to refer will always be the same, facts about sense-data". It is clear therefore that Ayer really believes in the existence of sense-data in spite of his attempt to prove the theory as a linguistic alternative.

Alan Pasch in his book "Experience and Analytic" admits the utility of sense-datum language to some extent. As he says, "It is an undeniable fact, that we all can describe things accurately to a certain extent when limited to a sense datum vocabulary, and herein lies the efficacy of sense-datum theory." At the same time, like Ayer, Pasch points out that it would be proper to regard the sense-datum theory only as a separate vocabulary like that of physical object. For the claim of the sense-datum theorist should be right "if he could show that when I point and pronounce the word 'red' what I am pointing to, and hence what I mean by 'red' is a sense-datum rather than a physical object or a geometric square. But unless this can be proved, it might just as well be the case that by 'red' I mean the 'red of the chair' and not 'the red colour patch' or 'red here and now'." Merely to describe in terms of sense-datum does not prove anything and to ensure that the sense-data are separate existent is very difficult. He argues that if sense-datum should have any existence it must have real or empirical existence, not merely

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(13) Austin, Sense and Sensibilia, P.60.
'analytic' or 'epistemic' existence. He is willing to accept sense-data as elements of knowledge which are directly present in our perception and which are then interpreted as belonging to particular physical objects. But it is mistaken to think that sense-data have an extraordinary kind of existence. To say that sense-data are elements or facts of our experience is to bring in psychological elements and 'being the end result of analysis' is no longer by itself capable of standing as the criteria for epistemic existence. Sense-data have always some empirical reference. And so long as it is not possible to prove the separate empirical existence, sense-data should not be regarded as a process of describing the facts of our experience which may be expressed in some other language. The sense-datum theory cannot be regarded, according to this view, as a unique one in this respect, as there are other terminologies which are not physical object ones but which also refer to the facts of our experience. Thus he gives the example that "helicoid" and "torus" can be used to describe things as accurately as 'red' and 'green' do. These terms, claims Pasch, neither support the physical object language nor express the datum terminology, but assert precise and complicated geometric shapes accurately described by mathematical equations. Adequate characterisation of the given may be made by these terminologies also, and sense-data have no priority over these alternative constituent elements.
Nelson Goodman, in discussing the question of the structure of appearance, holds the view that the distinction between the phenomenal and physical standpoints is useless. There is no question of priority of the one over the other. We may describe the same experience either in terms of such elements as qualia, presentations etc. or in terms of physical elements such as, things, processes etc. The phenomenalist claims that everything that can be known must be known in terms of phenomena since it comprises the entire content of immediate experience. But the physicalist points out that the physical objects are known more directly than the post-analytic atoms of phenomena. Moreover, verification, experimentation and pragmatic tests are not possible in the case of sense-data, as they are possible in the case of physical objects. Then again, he urges that the phenomenalists account cannot be adequate to explain objective and intersubjective facts. But to this the phenomenalist might reply that the value of a system does not depend only upon its all-inclusiveness. A partial system may answer important questions. Goodman also rejects the claim of anyone to be epistemologically prior to the other, the claim that one gives a more true and exact description of what is experienced. But to decide which of two true descriptions more adequately describes what is experienced is a very difficult task. For the same fact may be described in two different languages and hence there is no question of one being more correct than the other. Thus Goodman gives the example of a bird which may be described as "a
moving patch of red", as 'a cardinal bird', or 'as the 37th bird in the tree this morning; and all these descriptions may be true. The phenomenalist's claim that his way of description is more secure than the physicalist's cannot therefore be accepted. The view that if I describe my present experience by saying 'I see a red patch', then there is no chance of error, is refuted by him. As he points out, "If the light was yellow, I may have seen an orange patch, and if the bird was against a bright sky, I may have seen a black patch. And I may on a given occasion be either more or less uncertain about the presented colour than about the kind of bird." Hence there is no question of epistemological priority of the one language over the other and there is neither any need for such priority. For 'an economic and well-constructed system of either sort provides an orderly and connected description of its subject matter in terms of perceptible individuals.'

Quinton is of opinion that the sense-datum language is of no use in separation from physical objects. He points out that the claim of the sense-datum philosophers that only statements about sense-data could be certainly true, excluding cases of deliberation lying and slips of tongue and tautologies, and that statements about physical objects could only be true in various degrees and never certainly true owing to the ever-present possibility of illusion and hallucination, phenomenologically indistinguishable from veridical perception.

is totally unjustifiable. For physical objects are directly perceived, there is no process of inference in our direct perception of physical objects. Hence there is no ground for giving preference to the sense-data as the immediate or direct objects of perception and thinking the knowledge of physical objects to be indirect. Moreover, as Smythies argues, there is no clear and cogent definition of 'sense-data' without any reference to physical objects. Every term to define sense-data, according to this view, is taken from common usage where it ordinarily refers to physical objects or parts of physical objects. As he gives the example that "coloured patch may be used to describe parts of a painting or a person's cheek". He also adds, "one can meaningfully talk of the sound of a waterfall in the wilderness never visited by man, the smell of a fox near a waterfall, or lichens forming coloured patches of stones in the vicinity and so on. If these terms can be used where no sensation is implied their uses as definitions of the elements of sensation would be confusing to say the least." (19) These cannot also be described as potential sense-data. To say this is not to give an unambiguous and clear definition of sense-data. So there is no need of assuming the existence of such a queer entity in separation from the physical object.

Gilbert Ryle is another philosopher who also abandons the concept of sense-datum altogether. He is of opinion that

the sense-datum theory does not bring something new, does not invent or discover a different class of factitious entities, but merely draws our attention to the immediate objects of sense which are not generally used in the language of commonsense. While explaining the sense-datum terminology Ryle thinks it to be equivalent to the language of appearings. Sense-datum, according to him, refers to what is meant in ordinary language by 'appearance' or 'looks'. Ayer, as we have seen before, accepts this transference of language. But Ryle differs from him in holding that the language of appearing or the sense-datum language is an artificial way of speaking about the material objects. Not only that it does not always convey the same meaning which one intends to express. As 'sense-datum' is equivalent to 'looks' or 'appearance', what one sees is this 'looks' or 'appearance'. But this way of speaking often misrepresents the facts in ordinary life. Generally in a process of observation one does not discriminate between two different stages - the observation of the object and the observation of the appearance of the object, but says that there is the observation of something which appears as something else. As he says, "...a person without a theory feels no qualms in saying that the round plate might look elliptical. Nor would he feel any qualm in saying that the round plate looks as if it were elliptical. But he would feel qualm in following the recommendation to say that he is seeing an elliptical look of a round plate." Absurdity

(20) The concept of Mind, P.216.
results from thinking that there is an extra object, namely, a 'look' in addition to the presence of the physical object. "We may say that the nearer aeroplane looks faster than the distant aeroplane, but we could not say that it has a 'faster look'. Talking about the apparent speeds of aeroplanes is not talking about the speeds of appearances of aeroplanes."

The fact is that in the physical object language the qualifying words become adjectives. But in sense-datum language these are reduced to nouns. But Ryle thinks that such a transference is not legitimate. To say that one sees the 'elliptical look' of a round plate does not convey any definite meaning. For 'look' is already a noun of seeing. The accurate description of the fact would be that the round place looks as if it were elliptical in shape.

Like Quinton, Ryle also points out that the sense-datum language is inadequate as it cannot stand alone, sense-data are inexplicable except in the framework of public physical object language. "We do not employ a 'neat' sensation vocabulary. In order to explain clearly what the sense-datum is we have to take recourse to the physical object language. The qualities or adjectives are present to us as qualities of some-other nouns, and it would be misjudged if these adjectives are used as nouns as such. It would be incomplete and unmeaning to say that one senses or experiences 'redness' or 'coldness' or 'bitterness' as such. What one ordinarily says is that he experiences the redness of the rose, coldness of (21). The Concept of Mind, P.217.
the ice, and bitterness of the fruit. It is clear therefore that sense-datum language is incomplete without the help of the physical object language, we cannot describe sensations themselves without employing the vocabulary of common objects.

Ryle also differs from Ayer in holding that the material object language can be reduced into the sense-datum language. He points out that such a transference is not possible as the two belong to different categories. Statements about physical objects are generally expressed in the categorical form. In a categorical proposition the existence of an object is asserted unconditionally. But the grammatically unsophisticated sense-datum sentences are usually 'mongrel categorical' statements. These express fairly complex propositions of which one part is both general and hypothetical. When one says "The plate has an elliptical look", one does not report a fact about his present sensation, but gives a general statement about how it looks. The implication is that the plate would look elliptical to anyone who would be in a condition and position to look at it from a definite angle. "The expressions" it looks....", 'it looks as if....', 'it has the appearance of.......', 'I might be seeing' and plenty of others of the same family contain the force of a certain sort of open hypothetical prescription applied to a case in hand". The actuality of unsensed material object is reduced to the status of

possibility, i.e. possible sense-datum; our categorical statements about it are reduced into hypotheticals and the single material object which is a unity, dissolves 'into an infinity of perceptual occurrences'. The sense-datum language thus forms a series of possible or hypothetical judgements, but the categorical judgement about a physical object can never be expressed with the same force in a series of hypothetical judgements.

We find an echo of Ryle's view in the writings of Isaiah Berlin. He holds that the material object statements entail an infinite number of hypothetical statements about possible experiences, but they cannot be reduced to a series of such statements without remainder. The reduction of material object sentences into what we may, for short, call sense-datum sentence, seemed to leave something out, to substitute something intermittent and alternated for something solid and continuous. Thus to say 'There is a brown table in the next room' would imply a set or series of hypothetical propositions like 'If a normal observer were to go to next door and look, he would, in normal light, other normal conditions etc., see such and such brown-coloured data etc.' The sense-data would be subjected to several conditions. But such a way of expression is, according to Berlin, a very artificial way of speaking. "For to say that something is occurring hypothetically is a very artificial and misleading way of

(S) G.Ryle, Concept of Mind, P.218.
saying that it is not, in the ordinary sense, occurring at all\(^{(24)}\). The categorical or existential proposition directly implies, or 'points' towards, their 'objects'. But this cannot be said with regard to the hypothetical propositions. "Hypotheicals, whatever they describe or mean, whatever they entail or convey or evince, in whatever way they are verified or fail to be verified, do not as a general rule directly assert that something has been, is being, or will be occurring or existing, or being characterised in some way." Hence no direct translation from categorical to hypotheticals, as a general rule, adequately render the empirical descriptions and therefore the one should not be regarded as the substitute of the other.

The chief assumption of Ryle's view is that sense-data are nothing but equivalent to what in ordinary language is called "appearance" or "look". On this assumption, he argues against such transference of language, as it may result in several absurdities regarding what one intends to say. But though a sense-datum may be regarded as the way in which a physical object is generally presented to us, it is too much to call it an 'appearance'. Sense-data do not merely convey what appear, but they are definitely given as selfcomplete entities as the immediate objects presented to our senses. It is indeed absurd to say that we see the 'elliptical look' of a round place, for 'look' is already a noun of seeing.

\(^{(24)}\) Ryle, loc.cit.,P.301.
\(^{(25)}\) Ibid.,P.299.
But the mistake here results from taking sense-datum to be mere 'look'. What would be said when expressed in sense-datum language is that one experiences certain determinable colour and shape. Whether this colour and shape are really identical with the physical object is a different question. It may be that the colour and shape are only apparent, not real. But this is not to say that we experience only appearance not real existence. The sense-datum is a real existence to the observer who perceives it. A sense-datum should not be regarded as a mere verbal or linguistic innovation.

Ryle's second charge is that the sense-datum language is incomplete without any reference to physical objects. Now, if the criticism means that a sense-datum language is incomplete without reference to names of physical objects, it may be replied that though the criticism contains some truth, it cannot be regarded as showing as serious defect. The sense-datum language is not much used; it has not yet acquired the richness of vocabulary to be able to express everything in terms of it and so has to refer to physical object language which is already familiar. It is really no discredit to express the comparatively unknown in terms of the known. Moreover, to say that the sense-datum (not as language but as fact) is related to the physical object is not to assert the complete identity between the two. There is a difference between the part and the whole, the direct and the indirect. We can say that 'directly to observe an object or event' is synonymous with 'to sense a sense-datum (or experience an
A further difficulty of the sense-datum language, as pointed out by Ryle and Berlin, is that the existential or categorical propositions about physical objects cannot be translated into hypothetical or conditional propositions about sense-data. The sense-datum language, it is true, refers generally to things under certain conditions, but it would be too much to hold that to say that something is occurring hypothetically is to deny that something is occurring at all. In fact, in the natural sciences also some categorical statements are based on hypotheticals. The hypotheses are subsequently to be verified, and on this ground the existence of certain entities is asserted. Similarly, on the basis of hypothetical statements about sense-data, the existence of physical object may be asserted. As Ayer says, "there is no more difficulty of principle in replacing categorical statements about chairs and tables by hypothetical statements about the sense-datum than there is in replacing categorical statements about electrons by hypothetical statements about the results of physical experiments, or in replacing, categorical statements about people's unconscious feelings by hypothetical statements about their overt behaviour." (26)

It is clear, therefore, that Ryle's criticisms of the sense-datum theory are not irrefutable, they do not point to insuperable difficulties. All that can be said against the sense-datum language is that as it actually has been worked out, it is not equal in its power to the physical object language, but this surely does not disprove the possibility of developing a sufficient powerful sense-datum language.

Chisholm also is of the opinion that the several philosophical questions about perception arise due to our failure to understand the proper use of words, the adequate way of talking. If the words 'appear' and 'sense' be properly analysed, it would be apparent, according to Chisholm, that these do not point to any new entity; there is no need of distinguishing sense-data as the objects of the act of sensing. The appearance terminology, in his opinion, does not add something new to the existing characteristics of the object referred to by the verb. As he says "the appearance sentence 'The curtains appear green' does not attribute anything to the appearance of the curtain, for what we are saying of the appearance of the curtains if not that the curtain is green? In perception we are almost always conscious of external objects as such and not of colours and shapes divorced from them. In the physical object language also something is said to appear to us in perception. But it would be wrong to infer from this that what we see is an appearance and sometimes it may lead to utter mistake. Thus the statement 'He sees a
boat', may be transformed into either 'A boat appears in some way to him' or 'A boat presents him with an appearance.' But it would be fallacious to say that 'He sees an appearance' which may imply the contradictory of the first proposition namely, 'He does not see a boat' (Chisholm calls this fallacy 'the sense-datum fallacy'). It is different from what Prichard calls the sense-datum fallacy. Chisholm has distinguished between 'appears' and 'appearances'. Both the 'appearance' and the object appear to us. Hence there would be no mistake in asserting that the physical object appears as red. It would be fallacious if it be interpreted as signifying that there is an 'appearance' in addition to the red object. We find that Chisholm's view is similar to that of Ryle. Thus he says, 'we have only to ask our perceiver, for example, whether he thinks it's the house or the appearance of the house, that is appearing to him'. (27) Whatever the appearances may be, they are not "objects to a subject". .......Moreover, "we obtain our appearance statements only by referring to still other physical object. (28) Chisholm further points out that the use of 'appearance' or 'sense-datum' terminology may give rise to several difficulties e.g. the questions about "other minds" and about relations between the appearances or sense-data and physical objects etc. In order to avoid such difficulties he intends to substitute the appearance terminology by the terminology of sensing. Thus, instead of saying 'I

have a pain' or 'I experience a pain' we may say, if we choose, 'I sense painfully'. If we talk in this way, then there is no scope of any question regarding other minds. For 'we no longer have the noun pain'; hence we cannot use 'pain' as subject of the phrase 'is identical with'; and therefore we cannot ask whether another person can experience my pains'. Similarly, the question of the relation between sense-data and physical objects does not arise. For there "no longer having such expressions" as 'elliptical sense-datum', we cannot ask whether the elliptical sense-datum is identical with the round penny which presents it. Chisholm's description of perception is much on the lines of Ryle. Chisholm is right in clarifying the distinction between 'appearance' and 'appears.' But his analysis of perception in terms of sensation is hardly a satisfactory one. The adverbial way of speaking in terms of sensation may work well in some cases but in some other cases it leads to absurd locutions. Though one may say 'I sense painfully', would it not be ridiculous and even nonsense to say 'I sense triangularly'? Further, one may even detect a difference in meaning between 'I have a pain' and 'I sense painfully'. Ordinarily, a perceiver remembers and tells what is perceived, not how the thing is perceived. In perception our consciousness is almost always of an external object. The colours and shapes appear as distinct from our sensing of them.

(29) Ibid, P. 195
(30) Ibid, P. 123.
(31) Ibid, P. 123.
exactly what the sense-datum philosophers claim. Again Ghisholm's claim that he succeeds in getting rid of some pseudo-problems by using 'sensing' and 'being appeared to' language, that he avoid the mistakes of those who treat appearances or sense-data as entities, cannot be justified. This is merely to avoid the problems without attempting to solve them. His way of talking is the result of a misconception or incorrect analysis of sensing. There is a difference between seeing or perceiving and sensing. The cure then lies in a better analysis of sensing and perceiving than in the derivative expressions. A way of talking can be adequate if it is the expression of an adequate theory i.e. of one that explains the facts and solves - extra-linguistic problems. In fact, most of his criticisms against the sense-datum theory are attacks on false assumptions or inadequate explanations of the theory and not just on the language. Even considered as a theory, it seems hardly to be a satisfactory one.

There is another philosopher, Hirst, who also supports this adverbial account of perception. He rejects sense-data as 'entities so queer and paradoxical as to condemn the theory which depends upon their postulation'. To eliminate the need of such entities Hirst suggests what he calls on "adverbial" account; one should say that some one sensed squarely or redly, rather than that some one sensed a square or a red sense-datum. But we have already shown the difficulties of such a view. 'He sensed redly' has no natural meaning, it will have to be explained in the same way in which 'He sensed

a red-sense-datum' is explained and thus would, in the end, have the same meaning. Instead of being left with the impression of a queer object, we would be left on his view with the impression of a queer activity e.g., sensing redly. This way of expression is no better than one using the sense-datum terminology.

This general review of the views of some of the linguistic philosophers makes it quite evident that the main point at issue is whether it is at all possible to draw a strict line of demarcation between factual and linguistic problems. The linguistic philosophers claim that metaphysical problems arise from misconstructions of certain expressions, and that they can be dissolved by clarifying the use of these expressions. The basic defect of these linguistic philosophers is that they assume that there are two entirely separate provinces: one, of the sciences, dealing with actual facts or theories about facts; and another, of philosophy, which deals only with language or modes of expression. The conclusions of sciences are based on factual evidence, but the function of philosophy is only to provide linguistic recommendations. The linguistic philosophers hold that there is no difference so far as philosophical controversies are concerned with regard to the facts and evidences. For the fact is perception in all cases, and no other evidence is available except sense-experience. Hence the disagreement between naive realists and the sense-datum philosophers cannot
be due to disagreements in factual evidences. The difference, therefore, lies in the way of description, in the different language used. There is the possibility of plurality of ideal languages which may be used simultaneously. Some one may choose the physical object language, while others may choose sense-datum language. There is something given no doubt. The difference consists in describing what is given. This is what seems to be common to the views of Goodman, Pasch Chisholm and Paul; while Ayer, admitting this much, advances further and gives preference to the sense-datum language.

Now we should consider whether such a rigid distinction between factual and linguistic problems is at all tenable. The linguistic philosophers assume that if the evidences be the same, the difference between rival themes must be one of language. It is supposed that the task of collecting evidence depends on ordinary experience and on science, while philosophy is concerned only with their precise linguistic conversion. But we should point out that between scientific theories, which normally explain and predict, and languages which state or describe, there is a third category i.e. theories which interpret facts and evidences. Some philosophical theories belong to this category. One of the tasks of philosophy is to interpret and explain facts, to find out relations and interconnections between them and to harmonise the chaotic facts into a systematic whole. The same fact may
interpreted and explained in two different ways. It would be mistaken, therefore, to think that the facts being the same, the differences among rival theories must be due to the language adopted. This may happen in the sciences also. Thus in physics the Corpusclar and wave theories explain equally well all the facts about light, and yet the two are not merely linguistic theories. There is thus always the possibility that two rival hypotheses explain the same facts and yet their difference cannot be said to be one of language only.

In the same way, with regard to the problems of perception, even if the evidences and facts were the same (we may even go further and question, if the facts and evidences are really the same), the different theories might be interpreting the same facts in different ways, and it would be unjust to regard the differences only as a difference of language.

Even if it be granted that there are two different kinds of problems - one factual and the other linguistic, how to distinguish between them? Is there any definite criterion for drawing such a distinction? That there is no such criterion and that no such criterion is possible may be shown by pointing out that the same problem which is treated as factual may be turned into a linguistic one. As for example when one asks, 'Is Delhi the capital of India?' the emphasis may be on the fact of Delhi being the capital of India. But if the same question be put in a slightly different way, e.g. 'Is the capital of India Delhi?', then it
seems no longer to be a factual problem, but one of expression, here the emphasis is on whether the capital of India is named Delhi. The reverse also is true. There cannot be any question which is to be considered solely linguistic. For as soon as there arises the question of verifying the proposition or a fact, testing the truth or falsity of the statement, then it no longer remains a purely linguistic matter, but there is an extra linguistic reference to facts. Language can never stand by itself, it would be a mere vacuum without any reference to facts which they are to describe.

Even language itself has two different functions - the linguistic expressions which are actually used, and the other that are purely linguistic, namely, those that are mere recommendation in Ethics. Of a sentence may be understood as implying something or stating something; but it also might be considered as a mere amalgamation of words. In one mode of operation the linguistic expression is referred to; but in the other, in the so-called purely linguistic mode, it is the language itself, the grammatical make-up, that is regarded as the sole consideration. It is assumed, that if a question may be decided a-priori, by the rules of logic that is necessarily a linguistic one. But this cannot be regarded as true. For language is based on actual practice. Hence the truth and falsity of an expression is to be verified with reference to facts or experience. But the problem then no longer remains to be purely linguistic. It is clear, therefore
that language has always a factual reference in it. This factual reference is actually taken into account even by the linguistic philosophers themselves. Whatever be the formal intention of these linguistics analysts their most interesting results are obtained not by analysis of grammatical language, but by reviewing the situations to which certain words apply. Language should have no value if the words do not refer to any thing and it can be said to have any meaning only when it induces men to respond overtly to socially observable stimulations.

It is clear, therefore, from the above discussion that there cannot be any hard and fast rule as to how to distinguish between the factual and linguistic sides of a problem. Not only that, it would not perhaps be far from the truth to hold that there cannot be any rigid difference between the two, so that one could stand quite independent of the other. As a consequence, the attempt to turn the factual problem of perception into a purely linguistic one should be regarded as mistaken.