Chapter II

GRAMMAR OF NATURAL LANGUAGE

This chapter seeks to study the nature of grammar and reality in the context of the natural language philosophy. Of its three divisions, the first studies the concept of grammar in Quine’s philosophy; the second studies Wittgenstein’s idea of grammar and the last deals with Strawson’s idea of grammar and descriptive metaphysics.

1. QUINE AND ONTOLOGICAL RELATIVITY

Quine stands for a philosophical view which has a general empiricist and pragmatist orientation. As in the case of Frege and Russell, Quine is more concerned with logic, and, as a consequence, its metaphysical implications. Again, as against over populated world of the realist with abstract entities of all sorts, Quine maintains a nominalist world-view in which a taste for ‘a desert landscape’ is prominent. Hence there is an attempt to describe the world by positing minimal entities, which could be discerned in his formulation of quantificational devices to determine one’s ontology.
His taste for 'a desert landscape' does not allow him for a universe of superfluous entities, both physical as well as abstract. He attempts to describe the world of objects or individuals which are allowed to be or posited through quantification. His considerations of logic imply a language through which our ontological constructions of the world are established. Accordingly, in language the conceptualization of our experience of the world takes place. Quine advocates a naturalistic view of language; he rejects the characterization that the construction of an ideal language, by making use of logical tools, would be appropriate to account for the world of experience, since the structure of such a language and the world matches very well, or has an identical nature. Instead, he maintains that ordinary language is capable of doing the job very well. Moreover, as an essential sequence of the above notion the assumption of postulating meanings as entities and its referential aspect have also been questioned. He construes meanings as the behavioural aspects of the language which can be discerned in appropriate stimulus-response conditions.

Quine's Conception of Language

There is a close interconnection, in Quine's thought, between his views on the nature of language and his conception of the enterprises of ontology and behaviourism. Quine's approach to language is that of an empiricist and behaviourist. Being a philosopher, Quine endeavours to give an account of the world or what there is'. But this is possible only through an account of our conceptual scheme, or rather by an account of the
language, because the terms used to give an account of the world have to be embedded with the very ontology we seek, Quine is deeply aware of the diversity of conceptual systems, and according to him, we cannot get outside the use of some conceptual system or other. We cannot divest ourselves of the grid or filter of conceptual system in order to determine what the world is like independently and absolutely. Out of this deep awareness his conception of the intimate connection of thought and language is derived.

Quine argues that a thorough empirical study of the language learning could help us to understand the nature of reality. This empirical study comprises behavioural and publicly observable responses of the individual under verbal and non-verbal stimulations. Hence, in the course of learning a language, this behavioural and publicly observable responses to the given situations, either verbal or non-verbal stimulus, gets transformed and channelled into specific speech dispositions. This course of learning constitutes the basis for the claim of one's mastery over a language, inspite of the complications and stages involved in the 'ontogenesis of reference.' This emphasis over the empirical orientation for a study of a language does not give an ample ground to the claim of having got access to the 'things-in-themselves', since our claim of access is filtered through or coloured by the distinctive characteristic of one or another set of linguistic tools.

Quine is highly critical of the procedure of equating language and the world in a one-to-one correspondence fashion in which each term designates or refers something as meaning. He
characterises this copy theory of meaning by making use of the metaphor 'the myth of the museum'. In a museum the exhibits are labelled, correspondingly in the language words provide the labels of the 'meanings' as exhibits. Hence, words are labels for meaning exhibits. This conception projects meanings as some kind of entities, either propositional, or platonic or mental; consequence is the being of a universe of ontological excesses. "Uncritical semantics is the myth of museum in which exhibits are meanings and the words are labels. To switch language is to change the labels."¹

Quine takes the criticism of the myth of the museum further stating that a naturalist objection to this conception is not merely on the idea that it takes of meanings as mental entities, though it is one among them. Even if it is conceded that meanings are not mental entities but are Platonic ideas or even the denoted concrete objects, the objections persist because the very ideas of 'determinateness' of meaning beyond the dispositions to overt behaviour is not acceptable. Semantics should be free from 'mentalism'. Therefore, in a naturalist-behaviourist point of view of language, what we have to forsake along with the myth of the museum is the assurance of determinacy. The words and sentences in a language, according to the copy theory of language, have definite and determinate meaning. This determinateness cannot be sustained in a behaviourist-naturalist view of language, since meanings are nothing but the property of behaviour.

Quine rejects any argument in favour of meaning as proposition or information, or content, since an empirical scrutiny of sentences does not allow us beyond the consideration of meaning as essentially as 'the property of behavior.' Moreover, Quine rejects the idea of finding out the truth and meaning of a sentence in isolation. Instead he considers the totality of sentences or statements in a language in which it is possible to ask the meaning of a sentence. Let us have a short look at Quine's holistic picture of language moulded in empiricist-behaviourist pattern.

The totality, Quine believes, of our so called knowledge or beliefs is constituted or embedded in the statements or sentences and to consider the meaning and truth of a singular sentence would amount to be insufficient to ascertain its validity. Because all those statements are part and parcel of an interconnected web of statements. He uses the metaphor of a 'field force' or 'a man-made fabric' to characterize the totality of our belief statements. Accordingly, periphery belief statements are in direct touch with our experience, and these statements in turn are logically connected with the 'interior' ones which in turn with others. Hence the truth-values of periphery belief statements condition the truth values of the statements of the whole system.

On the face of a recalcitrant experience in the periphery, the network or web of belief statements or system of knowledge has to readjust and re-evaluate in a fashion so that the

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statements at the centre, which are so remote from occasion statements, too get adjusted in tune with them. See how Quine describes this process. "A conflict with experience at this periphery occasions readjustments in the interior of the field. Truth values have to be redistributed over, some of our statements. Reevaluation of some statements entails reevaluation of others, because of their logical interconnections--the logical laws in turn imply certain further statements of the system, certain further elements of the field. Having reevaluated one statement, we must reevaluate some others, which may be statements logically connected with the first or may be statements of logical connections themselves. But the total field so undetermined by its boundary conditions, experience, that there is much latitude of choice as to what statements to reevaluate in the light of any single contrary experience. No particular experiences are linked with any particular statement in the interior of the field, except indirectly through considerations of equilibrium affecting the field as a whole."³ In this view it would be meaningless to ask for the meaning and truth of individual statements independently as conceived by the copy theory of language.

Meaning, Reference and Linguistic Relativity

Quine's objection does not simply end with this, but goes further to show that there is an indeterminacy of meaning in the case of these statements or sentences which are at the

³ Quine, "Two Dogmas of Empiricism," in New Readings in Philosophical Analysis, ed. by Feigl and Sellars, p.92.
periphery. This indeterminateness of meaning could be discerned, he further argues, in the objects of reference or denotation in experience. This we will consider later.

Let us consider how Quine arrived at the theory of indeterminacy of meaning, which has a direct bearing on his empiricist-behaviourist conception of language. As we already pointed out in the beginning of this section, for Quine language is a holistic network of belief statements; a social art which demands a thorough empirical study of the contents and situations in which one's language skill gets moulded. In order to do this, Quine prefers a drastically different method in which he portraits how one can translate words or sentences from a hitherto unknown language of an unknown community to English. He insists on a 'radical translation' rather than a linguist's approximation for the convenience of communication. He considers an hypothetical situation in which our linguist encounters a native of hitherto unknown language in which both happen to see a rabbit. Our native's verbal dispositions to the stimulus of the rabbit amount to the linguistic expression 'Gavagai'. In the usual situations the linguist easily may translate "Gavagai" as "Rabbit" into English. But from a philosophical point of view, the translation of "gavagai" as "rabbit" is not exact for our linguist, who with radical translation in mind is not pretty sure whether the native's dispositional utterence is an assent to the linguistic expression "rabbit" or to "undetached rabbit part" or to "rabbit stage." Quine, upon this consideration, brings out the difficulties involved in determining this aspect of translation and affirms that, any attempted way leaves a
trace of indeterminacy, which is deep rooted in translation.

"Thus consider specifically the problem of deciding between "rabbit" and "undetached rabbit part" as translation of "gavagai". No word of native language is known, except that we have settled that on some working hypothesis as to what native's words or gestures to construe as assent and dissent in response to our pointings and querings. Now the trouble is that whenever we point to different parts of the rabbit, even sometime screening the rest of the rabbit, we are pointing also each time to the rabbit. When we indicate the whole rabbit with a sweeping gesture, we are still pointing to a multitude of rabbit parts. And not that we do not have even a native analogue of our plural ending to exploit, in asking "Gavagai?". It seems clear that no even tentative decision between "rabbit" and "undetached rabbit part" is to be sought at this level."

For Quine meaning is basically concerned with human behaviour to the occasional sentences. Beyond, that the construction of meaning as mental entities is totally unacceptable. The meaning being derived out of the dispositions to the stimuli, it does not acquire, as we have seen in the translation of "gavagai" to "rabbit," determinacy. The argument Quine put forward is that even in the most carefully controlled conditions of providing certain particular publicly given stimuli, it will not be the case that different linguistic responses in the face of those stimulations can be discovered to match each other completely in meaning. It is possible that

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4 Ontological Relativity, p.32.
there is always a certain element of indeterminateness which would be impossible to detect, in the attempt to go from one linguistic response to another, in the face of same stimuli.

Thus Quine formulated that even if we devise and use various techniques in order to reduce or avoid the indeterminacy, there is an unavoidable indeterminacy, in some degree, that will not be eliminated altogether. Especially when we go from one language to another there will not be complete match that could be brought out by a single manual of translation. This indeterminacy of translation, Quine argues, has much philosophical consequence. Indeterminacy of translation intrudes into our conceptual system and, hence, we face conceptual relativity. Quine's thesis of conceptual relativity or linguistic relativity finds its extension in the form of ontological relativity, into which we will come later. Before that we have to look into how the residual indeterminacy of meaning affects.

Quine extends his thesis of indeterminacy of meaning to reference, for conditions in which meanings become indeterminate have bearing over references in radical translations. Quine says, "the indeterminacy of translation now confronting us, however, cuts across extension and intensions alike. The terms "rabbit", "undetached rabbit part" and "rabbit stage" differ not only in meaning; they are true of different things. Reference itself proves behaviorally inscrutable".5

In the ordinary use of our language the notion of extension

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5 *Ontological Relativity*, p.35.
has been clear enough, there is no mystery over it; terms of our language have the same extensions when true of the same things. This is because we consider the apparatus of individuation as given and fixed. But when we are concerned with radical translation, the indeterminacy of the apparatus of individuation itself becomes the resting ground for the indeterminacy among "rabbit" and "rabbit stages"; then the inscrutability of reference.

Quine makes use of the words "green" and "alpha" in order to show the inscrutability of reference. There is an ambiguity, he argues, in the uses of these two words. We use these words as general concrete terms, when we say the grass is green, or some inscription begins with an alpha, and sometimes as abstract singular terms when we say green is a colour or alpha is a letter. Quine ascribes this ambiguity to the fact that there is nothing in ostension to distinguish these two uses. While teaching both the concrete general terms and abstract singular terms the pointing would be done on the same, yet the objects of reference are different under the two uses of words. Quine says "the inscrutability of reference runs deep, and it persists in a subtle form even if we accept identity and the rest of the apparatus of individuation as fixed and settled; even, indeed, if we forsake radical translation and think only of English."6

This inscrutability of reference, Quine remarks, is not only existent in radical translations from an unknown, language to a known one, but can be discerned even within ones own

6 Ontological Relativity, p.41.
language. While we learn language, in our childhood, we do it in a homophonic translation, we systematically construe our neighbour's apparent references. We reconcile and readjust our translation to the tune of our neighbours verbal behaviour so that we would be able to compensate for the switch of ontology. In effect, it would be impossible to unearth the inscrutability of reference at home. But, for Quine, this inscrutability of reference is not the inscrutability of fact, since there is no fact of the matter.

Quine draws his linguistic relativity thesis out of this predicament accrued in the considerations of inscrutability of reference and the reluctance to admit the facts of matter. Once we proceed with the conventional sense of terms and their references, we would land up in an absurd position in which there will not be any difference on any terms, interlinguistic or intralinguistic, objective or subjective, between referring to rabbit and rabbit parts or stage. This would be absurd, Quine argues, for it has the implication that attempts to discuss any difference between rabbit and each of its parts or stages are of no avail.

This 'quandary' can be solved by consideration of how in our mother tongue things work. The argument is that we have, in our language, a frame of reference, i.e., a network of terms, predicates, and auxiliary devices. Quine says, we have the apparatus, "... in our language with all its predicates and auxiliary devices. This vocabulary includes "rabbit," "rabbit parts," "rabbit stage," "formula," "number," "ox," "cattle"; also two-place predicates of identity and difference, and other
logical particulars. In these terms we can say in many words that this is a formula and that a number, this a rabbit and that rabbit part, this and that the same rabbit and this and that different parts. This network of terms and predicates and auxiliary devices is our frame of reference or coordinate systems. Relative to it we can and do talk meaningfully and distinctively of rabbits, and parts, numbers and formulas." In terms of this 'frame of reference' in a language we are able to specify meanings and referents. Therefore, there is no question of absolute specification of meanings and referents; hence linguistic or conceptual relativity.

Quine on 'What there is'

Quine thinks that this linguistic or conceptual relativity has ontological consequences, since objects of a theory have to be determined in terms of the language. Quine devices some tools to determine one's ontology. Therefore it is essential to consider what he has to say over 'what there is'.

Ontology or 'what there is' occupies a central place in Quine's philosophy. He discusses what should be the ontological commitment of a theory in his celebrated paper 'On What there is'. He criticises the existing philosophical views such as the one which wants to acknowledge beings of non-existent entities named in the fiction or myth; which posits entities based on the distinctions between actual and possible; and which makes use of fundamental contrast between particulars and universals. Quine,

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7 Ontological Relativity, p.48.
dissatisfied with these theories, vehemently opposes them and shows the faulty grounds and misleading considerations on which those theories are based.

Against the above said philosophical view Quine raises, mainly, two objections; lack of the clear and distinct criterion of identification and the fallacy of equating meaning and naming. The concept of identity could not be applied to the unactualized possibles as the example of the possible fat man and possible bald man shows. When we use singular terms, it has been construed that there should be an entity to be designated or referred to. This fallacy could easily be solved by using, Quine argues, Russell's theory of descriptions. The technique of analysis employed in that theory showed how one can transform a sentence containing a singular term into a sentence in which, without loss of meaning, that singular term is no more present; what remains are quantified variables, predicate expressions and relevant constants. Since singular terms are no longer present, necessity of positing an entity correspondingly does not arise. Quine writes, "when a statement of being or non being is analyzed by Russell's theory of descriptions, it ceases to contain any expressions which even purports to name the alleged entity whose being is in question, so that the meaningfulness of the statements no longer can be thought to presuppose that there be such entity."

In the fundamental distinction of particulars and

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8 Quine, 'On What There Is' in New Readings in Philosophical Analysis, p.546.

universals, Quine stands firm against positing universals as entities, for abstract nouns never ontologically commit us, since it can be replaced by a predicate expression. Of course there are red houses, roses, sunsets but nothing in common as 'red'. Quine says the words "red houses," "roses," "sunset" are all about sundry individual entities which are houses, roses, sunsets, but there is no entity which can be named as "redness."  

Thus how can we determine ontology of a theory, or in what way is it possible to determine the ontological commitment of a theory? For the answer, Quine resorts to, like Frege and Russell, the great resources and power of modern logic, especially of predicate calculus which uses the method of quantification, i.e., the bound variables to express forms of generality.

In order to determine the ontological commitments embedded in a discourse, Quine adopts Russell's method, i.e., rewrite the relevant statement by making use of the tools of the predicate logic, to disclose the underlying structure of the statement. Quantifiers, bound variables, predicate expressions and logical constants are the expressions involved in the process. Accordingly in a re-written statement only quantified bound variables determine the ontology since the bound variables range over a domain of objects as values. "To be assumed as an entity is, purely and simply, to be reckoned as the value of a variable.... The variables of quantification, 'something,'

'nothing,' 'everything,' range over our whole ontology, whatever it may be, and we are convicted of a particular ontological presupposition if, and only if, the alleged presupposition has to be reckoned among the entities over which our variables range in order to render one of our affirmations true."

A first-order quantified proposition is one in which the bound variables range over individual objects. Therefore, once the different expressions or elements of first-order quantification takes its position in a sentence, the ontology committed by it can be determined. Among different expressions, in such a re-written sentence, the bound variables stand out because among other expressions only bound variables range over a domain of objects. Other expressions do not designate any objects, therefore not bindable by quantification. For Quine predicate expression stands only for schematic letter, do not refer to any entities. Hence bound variables range over individual objects. These individual objects constitute the possible values of the bound variable. These objects, as making up the domain of possible values over which the quantified variables range, may be of any type one chooses to distinguish in one's ontology.

For Quine the difference among ontologies have to do with what kind of objects should be considered as values of variables. As said earlier, the predicate expressions and other logical constants, except bound variables, are not quantified

12 See "Ontology and Ideology," in New Readings in Philosophical Analysis.
since they do not range over any domain of objects. So it is clear that in a first order predicate calculus, when all expressions assume their proper place, only variables stand to present us the ontology of the expression. They are to be found in a range of values allowed and governed by the bound variables. Thus Quine’s famous dictum ‘to be is to be the value of a variable’ gives us the essential nature of the quantification by which we determine the ontological commitment of a given discourse.

Ontological Relativity

Quine’s idea of linguistic relativity provides grounds to deny absolute specifications of ontology of a theory. The question whether the terms in our language really refer to the ‘referents’ of the terms makes sense only with ingeniously permuted denotations. On the other hand it is meaningless to ask the question of reference absolutely, it can be asked meaningfully only relative to some background language. This makes it essential that any attempt to fix the ontology of a given theory needs a background language. Then the question of reference for the background language itself will be in need of another background language and so on ad infinitum. Does this process involve an infinite regress? Quine argues that somehow somewhere we have to end this regress. His suggestion is that we find this ultimate ‘resting place’ in our mothertongue. “In practice of course we end this regress of coordinate system by something like pointing. And in practice we end the regress of background languages, in discussion of reference, by acquiescing
in our mothertongue and taking its words at face value."

As we have seen in the previous section, the answer to the question what would be the objects of a theory lies in his dictum 'to be is to be the value of a variable.' While keeping it in mind, what has he to say about the objects of a theory in the light of the thesis of ontological relativity? Quine draws a comparison by bringing in the idea of a coordinate system in which position and velocity occupy the end points of physical explanation. But what of velocity and position itself? There is no absolute velocity and position, it is relative to a coordinate system.

In the same way, the objects of a theory do not make sense in absolute terms but in how the theory of objects is interpretable in a background language. Quine writes, "... it makes no sense to say what the objects of a theory are, beyond saying how to interpret or reinterpret that theory in another. Suppose we are working within a theory and thus treating of its objects. We do so by using the variables of the theory, whose values those objects are, though there be no ultimate sense in which that universe have been specified. In the language of the theory there are predicates by which it distinguishes as portions of this universe from other portions and these predicates differ from one another purely in the roles they play in the laws of the theory. Within this background theory we can show some subordinate theory, whose universe is some portion of the background universe, can by a reinterpretation be reduced to

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13 *Ontological Relativity*, p.49.
another subordinate theory whose universe is some lesser portion. Such talk of subordinate theories and their ontologies are meaningful, but relative to the background theory with its own primitively adopted and ultimately inscrutable ontology.  

Quine finds indeterminacy of meaning out of the thorough-going empiricist-behaviourist study of language. This idea takes him to the inscrutability of reference and, finally, to the linguistic or conceptual relativity thesis. Result is that our conceptual system or linguistic practice depends on another background language, since there are no facts of matter to 'scrute'. Does he advocate a kind of 'semantic nihilism,' for meaning and reference are so indeterminate and inscrutable? Or shall we assume that our conceptual apparatus or linguistic tools are not sufficient enough to know what it is, or the very nature of our language is such that ontology becomes elusive to human understanding?

2. LOGICAL GRAMMAR IN WITTGENSTEIN'S PHILOSOPHY

Wittgenstein, both early and later, attempted to reveal the structure of reality by the logical analysis of language. It is obvious that early Wittgenstein was trying to construct a logico-metaphysical system which will reflect the nature of


reality. The structure of the ideal language revealed by making use of the truth-functional logic is expected to reflect the structure of reality, for the concepts or categories derived by such an analysis are the categories of reality. In other words, the revealed structure of the language conforms to the structure of reality.

Though the characterization of the later Wittgenstein in this line would not be available easily and may be against the general spirit of his endeavour, what ultimately underlies in the philosophical ideas about the nature of our experience or understanding, which is essentially related to our linguistic habits, is an attempt to account for the nature of reality. Sketching of the nature of our understanding in turn portray our conceptual scheme which correlate itself, on the one hand, with our linguistic concepts and, on the other hand, with the categories of the world. Then the question is whether linguistic concepts conform to the structure of the reality or reality conforms to the concept of our understanding. Irrespective of the difference of opinions regarding the question one can argue that though the later Wittgenstein never directly considered this question, his later philosophical perspective provides ground, indirectly, to a conception in which the nature of reality has been accounted for.

Tractatus: A Logico-metaphysical System

The Tractatus is basically a logico-metaphysical treatise which aims at the construction of an ideal language by making use of truth-functional logic. What matters for us in this
project is the fact that it seeks to unearth the structure of the world. This structure could be manifested in the language? Since our ordinary language does not reflect the reality properly we have to construct an ideal language which aptly portrays all the structural features of the world.

According to the Tractatus the world consists of facts or states of affairs. "The world is the totality of facts, not of things" (TLP 1.1). These facts or states of affairs are constituted of objects "A states of affairs is a combination of objects" (TLP 2.01). And these objects are in a determinate relation which makes up the structure of facts. The ultimate substance of the world are objects, but what we comprehend is facts. "Objects make up the substance of the world" (TLP 2.021). What constitutes our experience of the world is the totality of facts. "The totality of existing states of affairs is the world" (TLP 2.04).

Thus Tractatus presents a picture of the world composed of compound facts and, when they are analysed finally, we arrive at simple or elementary facts. This simple or elementary fact is a concatenation of objects, since facts are constituted of objects. These objects are simple and unanalyzable, and therefore, become the basic stuff or substance of the world. These objects are in a determinate relation so that a fact is possible.

Wittgenstein argues that we picture facts to ourselves, therefore a picture is a model of fact or reality. In a picture elements are in a determinate relation. Hence a picture is a fact. Further, these pictures of facts constitute our thought,
and the totality of our thought is the totality of the world. "A logical picture of fact is a thought" (TLP 3). "The totality of true thoughts is a picture of the world" (TLP 3.01). Again, our thoughts are nothing but propositions. "A thought is a proposition with sense" (TLP 4). "The totality of proposition is language" (TLP 4.001). "A proposition is a picture of reality" (TLP 4.01).

For Wittgenstein, then, what we comprehend or experience is the picture of the world which is constituted of facts. This picture represents our thought and language. As in the case of facts, our language is constituted of propositions which picture facts of the world. These propositions are complex or compound and when the analysis of these complex propositions is carried out what we finally reach are simple or elementary propositions. This elementary propositions represent, simple or elementary facts of the world. "The simplest kind of propositions, an elementary propositions, asserts the existence of a state of affair" (TLP 4.21). This elementary proposition consists of names which is counterpart of object in an elementary fact. Like objects, names are also unanalyzable and simple, and are the basic units of the language. The truth or falsity of an elementary proposition depends upon the existence or non-existence of a corresponding simple fact and determination of the truth or falsity of compound propositions is done truth-functionally. "A proposition is a truth function of elementary proposition" (TLP 5).

Thus Tractarian ideas on the nature of the world and language, provide a picture that language reflects or represents
the world. There is an isomorphic relation between language and the world. Can we construe that the actual structure of the world gets reflected or unrepresented in our language or the structural features of the language derived out of the logical consideration are transplanted on to the world? Possibly the latter, since the Tractatus is not a result of an elaborate empirical survey of the world. Therefore, what determines the nature of reality or world is the notion of the capability of arriving at the structure of the world through language, since what we experience of the world is to be formulated in our language. One aspect which should be noticed is that the Tractatus presents a rigid notion that propositions of natural science only qualify to be meaningful propositions because those propositions are capable of being true or false. Hence all other propositions disqualify to be meaningful and sensible.

Language and Reality in The Philosophical Investigations

There are varied opinions whether there is a clear cut distinction between Wittgenstein’s early and later philosophical writings or there is a continuation and extensions of the theories put forth in the Tractatus in his later works. If we look through a particular perspective, which, it seems, more or less reflects the general spirit and intentions of the philosopher, a complete rejection of the Tractarian view lays ground for the latter philosophical developments. The very idea of ‘picture theory’ as the cornerstone of the Tractarian system has been severely criticised because of its shortcomings and narrow conception. Along with it his idea of meaningfulness of
proposition and conception of truth have been criticised. This could be the reason for the rigour and conviction of the early part of the Investigation's criticism and reconsideration of the Tractarian views. Does it really pave way or give ground for the argument to the effect of saying that the later philosophy is totally disjoined from the earlier? Can't it be possible to argue that it is an attempt to have a comprehensive scheme to accomodate our varied experiences of the world?

It has been widely accepted or agreed, in philosophical circle, that to discern a pattern or system of philosophy in the later Wittgenstein's work, especially in the Philosophical Investigations, would be difficult. Some of the critics went to the extent of saying that what matters in his later work is the method rather than the system. These varied opinions have their bearing on the style and context of the work since what he did is in a sense a complete, repudiation of the Tractarian view of language and the world, which is essentially of an 'Augustinian picture of the essence of langauge'. In the place of a demolished one what is discerned is nothing but remarks on various subjects questioning the very possibility of philosophizing.

In spite of this, his treatment or ideas over various subjects like theory of meaning, language-game thesis, thesis concerning status of grammatical propositions, family resemblance theory, and nature of philosophy provides, subtly, some clues about what they all meant for him. It would be impossible and unjustifiable for any philosopher to have his ideas hanging in the air. Moreover, that would be negation of
the basic spirit of what philosophy is meant for, what emerges out of his considerations and remarks over different subjects, it seems, is an urge to account for the nature of our understanding, i.e., how language functions vis-a-vis the nature of reality. "There is a metaphysical orientation as the rationale of his appeal to the use of language; certain position or stand regarding the nature of thought and reality and of the relation between them."16 This, of course, does not suggest that he has been engaged in a system-building exercise, he rather suggests, indirectly, what all his endeavour is about.

His appeal for a use theory of meaning lays ground or becomes the substratum from which emerges either directly or indirectly all other philosophical thought. This appeal for use theory of meaning and language is invariably related to the repudiation of Augustine's, picture of the essence of language. The meanings of words, the meanings of our discourse about things, are not determined by the nature of the things the words stand for, the nature of things we talk about. The determination of meaning rather takes the other way round, i.e., the nature of things our words are for, the nature of things we talk about are determined by the use of those words in a language with regard to them, by what it makes sense to say about them, by their grammar. "Grammar tells what kind of object anything is."17


Logical grammar, for Wittgenstein, becomes an explanatory tool in his conception of meaning and truth of an expression. Does it mean that his new theory repudiates completely logical necessity presented in the Tractatus? Instead, it seems, he could find that the Tractatus explanation of logical truth was simply insufficient to account for various expressions which serve as a necessary truth. And thus he wanted to supplement his earlier conceptions with a subtle account of logical grammar of necessary truths. The philosopher's interest, according to the Investigations, in the grammar is merely not for the sake of getting our language clear in its use, but rather to solve the puzzling philosophical questions through the clarifications of language. Hence the criticism that Wittgenstein confines philosophical activity to the realm of the grammarian does not stand in itself.

Resolving philosophical questions through the appeal to the multifarious use of language and its logical grammar can be construed as Wittgenstein's main interest in his later works. Well-formed sentences formed as per the conventions of ordinary language are perfectly grammatical, but are sources of philosophical problems. This problem is of much interest for philosophers than grammarians, hence requires a philosophical treatment or therapy rather than a grammatical clarification. Ordinarily a straightforward examination of the rules of grammar never reveals anything, since those expressions are not ill-formed, rather formed according to the rules. While for a grammarian the matter ends there, for a philosopher these expressions are the source of profound metaphysical, ontological
of epistemological questions. Accordingly, philosophers attempt to reason out why these expressions are sources of metaphysical, ontological, or epistemological theories and how those theories transgress the limits of the logical grammar.

Wittgenstein suggests that all these philosophical puzzles arise out of our failure to understand that these expressions are the rules of grammar, and do not indicate or refer anything beyond that. We construe these expressions as the ordinary empirical propositions which are used as norms of representations to fix the concepts. Therefore, we have to make a demarcation between those grammatical sentences and the empirical sentences. Treating the grammatical propositions as empirical propositions only leads us to all metaphysical and skeptical muddles which have so far bewildered philosophy. In case of regarding such grammatical well formed expressions in such a line, it becomes a cause to raise questions regarding the source of our knowledge of the truths of such experiences, or what would the ground for the certainty of those truths. These questions are the grounds for the justification to transcend the bounds of sense. Wittgenstein regards these questions as irrelevant since solutions to such philosophical dilemmas do not lie in the transcendence of bounds of sense and in any transcendental theory of truth and meaning. Rather, he suggests, answers to those questions lie in the elucidations of the logical grammar of the expressions involved. When these expressions get identified for what they are, we will be in a position to resolve those problems.

In the case of the so called metaphysical propositions, we
will then see that the supposedly metaphysical truths turn out to be merely shadows of grammar. For "like everything metaphysical, the harmony between thought and reality is to be found in the grammar of the language." ¹⁸ Therefore, what ultimately helps us dispel the shadow cast by grammar is disclosing the linguistic conventions which underpin such metaphysical sentences. We find ourselves in a position to say that those questions regarding the metaphysical truths of such expressions are merely nonsensical and the search beyond the bounds of our sense is all the more meaningless. As a consequence, all problems of unresolvable skeptical dilemmas arising out of those expressions cease when we recognize that all that we are dealing with are the rules of grammar. According to Wittgenstein, the rules of grammar are autonomous and are not in need of justification. It is prior to truth and determines what make sense but themselves cannot be true or false. There is hence no need to justify grammar by reference to reality because any reference to reality pre-supposes grammatical rules. "Grammar is not accountable to any reality. It is grammatical rules that determines meaning and so they themselves are not answerable to any meaning and to that extent are arbitrary." ¹⁹


¹⁹ Ibid., p. 184.
The idea of representational relation between language and reality is one instructive way of looking at Wittgenstein's development beyond the *Tractatus*. The *Investigations* give us the opportunity to have the insight of the need of analyzing the representational nature of language and reality. As earlier perceived, the nature of relation between them is not a sort of natural relation. It is not a dogmatic prescription, as the earlier philosophers of language conceived, that is just based on observing or looking at the expression of the language and of world of which they speak of. Neither the nature of relation can be discerned by looking into nor read off from the mental content of language-users.\(^{20}\) If God had looked into our minds, he would not have been able to see those whom we are speaking of.\(^{21}\) The *Investigations* suggests that representational relationships between language and reality have their mode of existence in certain rule governed human activities which Wittgenstein calls language-games. The creation and sustenance of the relationship between language and reality is in-built in the language-games which are our forms of life.

Thus, the idea of language-game is crucial in understanding not only various remarks and arguments such as private language argument, remarks on mathematics, nature of philosophy, but also


\(^{21}\) Ibid., p.217.
to get at an overall picture of what he said and what he is striving to arrive at or establish. It seems, the idea of language-game does not refute or reject in essence his earlier theory of pictorial relationship as establishing link between elementary proposition and reality, rather what it does is depriving of the primacy of the pictorial or isomorphic theory of relationship. Moreover, the determination of truth of propositions is construed earlier as truth-functional. But it is true of the compound propositions of which truth can be established truth-functionally by taking into account the truth of constituent propositions or elementary propositions. Thus, the question is how could we account for or establish the truth of elementary proposition itself? Wittgenstein takes the help of language-game to solve this predicament while preserving a limited role to the idea of pictorial relationship and truth-functionality of propositions.

When the complex structure underlying these relationships is uncovered by the language-game idea, the logic of isomorphism will not be the fundamental link between language and reality any longer. There will be something more of fundamental than the pictorial relation, since logic of picturing will not be able to take care itself. It needs something more to explain the multifarious use of linguistic expressions, which could be given by language-game only.

Thus the thesis of autonomy of meaning, language-game and logical grammar are crucial in Wittgenstein's ideas and are connected to each other to provide an over all philosophical perspective to account for the nature of language and reality.
Language-game is played according to the rules of grammar which constitute the explanation of meaning of the expressions used in the game. Therefore, autonomy of meaning rests in the rejection of the idea that rules of grammar are dependent on the reality. The nature of reality, empirical or transcendental, does not help us in determining the rules of our language. Neither the structure of reality determines that a proposition or sentence is true or false. We play language-games according to the rules of grammar which determine the meaning. What are the bounds of sense of an expression are determined by the rules of grammar. Hence, while playing various language-games, according to the rules, what we conceive is a perspective of the nature of reality which is transplanted onto the reality. In effect, the nature of reality conforms to the nature of language, and reality has a determinate structure in accordance with the linguistic conventions embedded in our forms of representations.

In the history of philosophy Kant made a 'Copernican Revolution.' There is an argument that what the later Wittgenstein was accomplishing is nothing but a second Copernican Revolution in Philosophy. In analytic philosophical tradition philosophers firmly believed that the structure of reality gets reflected or represented in the structure of the language. Therefore, the attempts were to arrive at the logical structure of language which essentially is the structure of reality. But in contrast to this, the later Wittgenstein argues

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that what determines the structure of reality is the multifarious use of our language. Our language is not the picture of reality, rather we play 'language-games' by using the linguistic conventions. Therefore, the essence of language is not the essence of reality, but a rule-governed activity. The backbone of the language is the rules of grammar.

Hence, the essence of language-game is the rules of grammar. Reality conforms to the language game played. Then there are questions of what is the nature of this logical grammar? Wittgenstein’s answer is that logical grammar is nothing but the essence of language-game itself, it is inbuilt in the language. Is this argument a cogent one? Kant, while tracing categories of understanding and forms of intuition in order to account for our experience of the world, considered for this 'game' as given, a-priori, hence transcendental in nature. But for Wittgenstein ultimate ground or bedrock is language-game itself.

3. STRAWSON: ONTOLOGY OF PARTICULARS AND DESCRIPTIVE METAPHYSICS

Concept of Language

Strawson's philosophical approach characterises the concern for ordinary language and its structure through which the
essential structure of the world manifests itself. As a corollary to his approach, he rejects the idea of the construction of a formal language in order to account for the world of reality. Instead, he strongly holds that the traditional subject-predicate logic is sufficiently rich enough to assert the truth and the structure of the world, which are embedded in the ordinary language.

Strawson's approach, consequently, accommodate ordinary sentences as the basic units of language; and in our language we use sentences to assert or to talk about various 'particulars' which are constituents of the world of experience. "One of the main purpose for which we use language is the purpose of stating facts about things and persons and events."23

Strawson draws certain distinctions both in the case of sentence and an expression; in the case of a sentence he distinguishes 'a sentence,' 'a use of a sentence,' and 'an utterance of a sentence.' Parallel to this, the discernible distinctions of an expression are 'an expressions,' 'a use of an expression' and 'an utterance of an expression.'

Out of these distinctions Strawson draws some significant philosophical consequences. For Strawson a sentence means any specific sentence which has been used in various times. For e.g., 'The King of France is wise' has been uttered at various times starting from successive French monarchs till now in which France is not a monarchy. Therefore utterances of 'this sentence' are significant or meaningful at various occasions and

thus one and the same sentence uttered in various times has been intended by 'a sentence.'

Strawson argues that, however, though a sentence can be uttered in various times, there is an obvious difference between different occasions of the use of a sentence. For instance, a sentence 'The King of France is wise' can be uttered either in the reign of Louis XIV and Louis XV. But, obviously, when it is uttered in the reign of Louis XIV the sentence amounts to be a true assertion, where as in the latter case a false assertion. In this case the same sentence has been used but it yields different results. Therefore the talk of a sentence being true or false cannot be possible, but it is possible of being used to make true or false assertion. That is what is meant by the use of a sentence. The same sentence can be uttered by two men simultaneously in the reign of Louis XIV to make two different utterances of the same sentence in spite of the same use of the sentence. This is what is meant by an utterance of a sentence.

Strawson makes more or less analogous, though not identical, distinction in the case of 'an expression' also. As in the case of a sentence, an expression does not mention or refer to anything specific but the expression is used to mention or refer to a particular person or thing in case of using the sentence. Accordingly the mentioning or referring is not something that an expression does but it is something someone can use an expression to do. Hence mentioning or referring to, is characteristic of the use of an expression.

Out of the above said distinctions Strawson derives some philosophical consequences. For him meaning is a function of a sentence or an expression, and mentioning and referring and truth or falsity, are the functions of the use of the sentence or expression. Strawson writes, "To give the meaning of an expression is to give general directions for its use to refer or mention particular objects or persons; to give meaning of a sentence is to give general directions for its use in making true or false assertions. It is not to talk about any particular occasion of the use of the sentence or expression. The meaning of an expression cannot be identified with the object it is used, on a particular occasion, to refer to. The meaning of a sentence cannot be identified with the assertion it is used, on a particular occasion, to make. For to talk about the meaning of an expression or sentence is not to talk about its use in a particular occasion, but about the rules, habits, conventions governing its correct use, on all occasions to refer or to assert."\(^{25}\) It is clear that the significance of a sentence does not depend upon what has been asserted on a particular occasion, rather it depends on whether such language habits, rules or conventions exist or not in order to use sentences logically to talk about something.

As pointed out earlier, a sentence consists of an expression which uniquely refers to something and an ascribing part which attributes or describes about that something, i.e., a particular referred or mentioned by an expression. Strawson

\(^{25}\) "On Referring." p.9.
lays stress on the necessity of drawing this distinction because both referring and describing involve different linguistic conventions or rules: rules for referring and rules for attributing or ascribing.

Idea of subject-predicate Grammar

Strawson wants to find out the rationale behind the traditional subject-predicate distinction in our discourse and finds out how it could be possible to describe the world of experience which is inscribed in the language. According to the traditional view, there is an asymmetrical relation between subject and predicate in respect to particular and universals. Therefore, if we are able to establish the cogency of the subject-predicate distinction that would amount to saying that the resting ground for the distinction is the existence of particulars and universals, or the world consist of particulars about which we talk in sentences in our language.

In the complex activity of asserting a proposition, two complementary functions are involved. While making this distinction of complementary function we are making a distinction of things that are done in making a statement. These two complementary functions have been characterised by philosophers as subject and predicate which is essentially a linguistic distinction, and that of object and concept as a non-linguistic distinction. Strawson's attempt is to find out the rationale behind this distinction.
Grammatical distinction

The distinction between subject and predicate, and the non-linguistic distinction of particulars and universals are considered, traditionally, as naturally exclusive. According to Frege a proper name can be a subject but never be a predicative expression, though it can be part of it. Geach says that a name of an object can be used as logical subject but cannot be used as logical predicate without a radical change of the sense. Strawson does not find much ground in this explanation to sustain the distinction.

The subject expressions and predicate expressions are used to make an assertion by attaching suitable expressions among the either sort. In this we can discern a common feature, that an expression serves to introduce a term into the remark; in the case of a subject the expression introduces a particular whereas a predicative expression introduces a quality. Strawson argues that the style of introduction of terms into remarks is different between subject expression and predicate expression. Though both of them are introduced alike, they are introduced differently; one is used to refer to and the other to predicate. The term 'referred to' introduced is a substantial expression whereas the term 'predicated to' is introduced in an expression containing a verb in an indicative mood. But in the case of predicative expression introduced, the introduction is distinctive and important in style, i.e., the assertive or propositional style. The use of the indicative form of a verb characteristically involves the introduction of a term in such
a way as to show what is introduced into a proposition. The use of the substantial form, on the other hand, has no such implications." Therefore, on the one hand, the overtly grammatical style of distinction, i.e., substantial and verb-like introduction of terms and, on the other hand, the rationale behind the style of introduction, i.e., assertive or propositional style of introduction of the predicative expression can be taken, though not adequate, as grounds for the subject-predicate distinction.

Strawson finds a supportive element in Quine's quantification of proposition. Accordingly, singular terms and predicate expressions constitute the elements of a proposition in which singular terms stands for quantification. Only singular terms have access to position appropriate to quantified variables while predicative expressions do not.

Category Criterion:

A proposition is the result of the capability of a term of being assertively tied to some other terms so as to yield a significant result. These assertive links between terms are not be construed as ordinary relation, but as non-relational ties. Among universal terms which are supposed to have different non-relational ties, Strawson draws a distinction between universals which apply or collect particulars. These distinctions amount to be two kinds of non-relational ties which bind particulars and universals. This is the distinction between sortal and

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characterizing universals and, hence, between sortal tie and characterizing tie.

The different kinds of non-relational ties, according to Strawson, give ground for setting up another criterion for the subject-predicate distinction. In a proper sense of 'is an instance of,' in the case of sortal tie and 'is characterized by,' in the case of characterizing tie, it amounts to ruling that universals can be predicated of particulars, but not predicated of universals. Strawson argues that on analogous ground, we can assume different non-relational ties in which universals collecting other universal in a way analogous to the ways universals collecting particulars. But we cannot assume or think of particulars collecting universals or other particulars in a way analogous to these. In this way we can develop a sense of 'to predicate' for which it is true that universals can both be simply predicated and have things predicated of them. But particulars can never be simply predicated, though they can have things predicated of them and can be part of what is predicated.

A theoretical explanation can be given about the association or affinity between grammatical and category criterion. This explanation could be made from the conditions of introducing particular and universal term into proposition. Strawson says the term introduction essentially involves the idea of identification. While introducing a term into a proposition the speaker and hearer should be able to identify the reference. In the case of a particular, a deep consideration of essential conditions shows that both the speaker and hearer should have a knowledge of the empirical fact which suffices to
identify that particular; whereas knowing what a universal meant
does not entail knowing any empirical fact. It just entail
knowing the language.

Introduction of a particular term essentially involves
knowing some distinguishing empirical fact about what it
introduces. But introduction of a universal term does not
involve this. Therefore, in a sense, an expression of particular
has a kind of completeness or self-sufficiency, which the
universal expression lacks. The propositional style or assertive
style of predicate expression, while introducing its term, shows
an incompleteness. This feature of predicate expression, which
we have seen in the grammatical criterion, perfectly coincides
with the incompleteness of universals in its style of
introduction. "A subject expression is one which, in a sense,
prevents a fact in its own right is to that extent complete. A
predicate expression is one which in no sense presents a fact in
its own right and is to that extent complete. We find that this
new criterion harmonizes admirably with the grammatical
criterion." 27 Not only the new criterion harmonizes with the
grammatical criterion but also with category criterion. The
particular introducing expression can never be incomplete,
according to the new criterion, consequently it never can be a
predicate expression.

Introduction of a particular presupposes knowledge of a
fact which may introduce another particular. This particular
introduced in the second stage may, in turn, presupposes another

proposition of fact. Obviously it is leading into a regress. But Strawson contends that the proposition thus presupposed does not necessarily introduce another particular because in the ultimate analysis those presupposed propositions rest on facts which do not contain individual particulars, but universals. Thus, a class of facts exist which supply a basis for the introduction of particular upon which introductions of all others directly or indirectly rest.

The class of facts presupposed thus yield propositions containing universals. But these universal are neither sortal nor characterizing universals. These universals, Strawson calls, are feature-universals or feature-concepts and statements which express those facts are feature-placing statements. These feature-placing statements do not introduce particulars in to our discourse, but they provide basis for the introduction. Introduction of a certain kinds of particulars presuppose facts which feature-placing statements state. Therefore the existence of such facts is the condition for being proposition into which particulars are introduced.

This transition, according to Strawson, from feature-placing statments to propositions into which particulars have been introduced involves a conceptual complication. This involves adoption of a criterion of distinctness, criterion of reidentification of particulars as well as the use of characterizing universals which can be tied to a particular. In this process of evolving a conceptual scheme, from presupposed facts to the particular introducing proposition, basic particu-lars, in the point of view of identification, have an important place.
Ontology of Particulars

Our ontology of the world comprises objective particulars. These particulars and events are the subject of common discourse. These particulars and their inclusion in our discourse characterises our conceptual scheme. In our talk usually we make some identifying reference. When a speaker mentions or refers to a particular in his talk he is identifyingly making a reference, he knows what or which particular he is talking about. In the same way the hearer may or may not identify the referred to particular. But success of the discourse depends on the identification of the particulars by both speaker and hearer. Identification of some kinds of particular depends upon the identification of some other kinds, in a general way, and thus gives us the way for the enquiry into our conceptual scheme.

How can we say that a hearer identifies a particular being referred to by the speaker? When the hearer successfully locates the particular being referred to in his general frame of the world, he can be said, partially, to have identified the particular referred. But as a necessary condition, the hearer sensibly discriminates the particular being referred to by the speaker by knowing that it is that particular. This identification, which the hearer is able to do is by directly locating the particular. This is, Strawson says, the case of demonstrative identification of particulars.

But in the case of non-demonstrative identification we resort to identifying description with a certain reference which
the speaker and hearer use by knowing that they are referring to the same particular. But its adequacy is doubtful. This can be solved, Strawson argues, by showing that in the case of non-demonstrative identification, though it is not possible to locate directly, the description of non-demonstrative particulars depends somehow on some demonstrative particulars which appear in the description. "Though particular in question cannot itself be demonstratively identified, it may be identified by description which relates it uniquely to another particular which can be demonstratively identified." All identifying description of particulars may include, ultimately, a demonstrative element.

The identification of particulars in this way gives us a general unified framework of knowledge of particulars, since in both demonstrative and non-demonstrative particulars the identification is directly related to the location of the referred to particular in a spatio-temporal framework. This condition of a spatio-temporal framework, in which we locate and identify particulars and ourselves, is a necessary condition for the kind of knowledge of the world of experience we ordinarily have, says Strawson: "We may agree, thus, that, we build up our single picture of the world, of particulars and events... This we do quite rationally, confident in a certain community of experience. Yet it is a single picture which we build, a unified structure, in which we ourselves have a place, and in which every element is thought of as directly or indirectly related to

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28 *Individuals.* p.21
every other, and the framework of the structure, the common unifying system of relations is spatio-temporal."  

Re-identification of particulars is important, Strawson argues, because in a unified spatio-temporal system the inability of continuous observational identification of particular necessitates re-identification. "There is no doubt that we have the idea of a single spatio-temporal system of material things; the idea of every material thing at any time being spatially related, in various ways at various times, to every other at every time. There is no doubt that this is our conceptual scheme... a condition of our having this conceptual scheme is the unquestioning acceptance of particular identity in at least some cases of non-continuous observation." The re-identification of particular is related to the re-identification of places. But re-identification of place is possible only in relation to things. In turn the identity of material things requires the existence of time as well as being continuous in time and space.

The particular-identification ultimately rests on the possibility of locating the particular thing in a single unified spatio-temporal system. These particulars identified in a single unified spatio-temporal system constitute our conceptual scheme. Among the particulars identified physical things or material bodies possess some special characteristics, from the point of view of particular-identification, which enable them to be

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29 *Individuals.* pp. 28-29.

'basic' among particulars. This class of basic particulars enables us to make identifying references to particulars of other class. Whereas to make identifying references to the particulars of this class we do not depend upon other class of particulars, since material bodies possess enough 'diversity, richness, stability and endurance.' This independent status from the point of view of identification enables them to be basic to our conceptual scheme. In fact conceptual scheme is not something extraneous to the particular we speak of. What constitutes our conceptual scheme or framework is this class of basic particulars and persons.

Ontological absolutism and the transcendental argument

Strawson portrays structural features of our ordinary language in which rules and conventions govern the use of sentences; and such a language consists of subject-predicate sentences. What qualifies to be subject of a sentence cannot be treated as predicate except as a part of predicate expression and vice-versa. This picture of the language on which, ultimately, we depend for the subject-predicate distinction, on the presupposed facts, over which subject expressions rests, takes us to the question what would qualify to be the subject.

This enquiry into the ontology presents a picture of the world constituted or comprised of particulars as the subjects and their properties as predicates in our language. Among particulars material bodies including persons qualify to be basic particulars. These particulars being spatio-temporally

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31 Individuals, p.39.
located constitute the structure of the world and, in turn, our conceptual scheme.

Strawson does not support the assumption that things and objects offer nothing to our experience but fleeting sense impressions, feelings and images and, hence, rational justification should be given to the ordinary picture of ours which contains continuously and independently existing things and events. "The central problem of classical empiricism was set by the assumption that experience really offers us nothing but separate and fleeting sense-impressions, images and feelings; the problem was to show, on this exiguous basis, we could supply a rational justification of our ordinary picture of the world as containing continuously and independently existing and interacting materials things and persons."\textsuperscript{32}

Instead of starting with this 'exiguous basis,' i.e., what we have in our experience Strawson confers absolute and independent existence on material bodies and persons. Further, not only particulars exist independently but these spatio-temporally located particulars constitute our conceptual scheme, the very basis of experience by which only we can construct our picture of the ordinary world.

This conceptual structure or scheme represents the most general and fundamental features of experience and an investigation into the limits and ideas which form the framework of all our thought about the world of experience could be considered, Strawson maintains, a legitimate enquiry of

philosophy. He names it as the 'descriptive' metaphysics and characterises it as the study of the most general and fundamental features of the world, and its method is taken as non-empirical, or a priori, not because, like transcendent metaphysics, it claims to be concerned with a realm of objects of inaccessible to experience, but because it is concerned with the conceptual structure which is presupposed in all empirical enquiries.  

33 And his Individuals is an attempt to that effect and calls it a descriptive metaphysics because it is 'content to describe the actual structure of our thought about the world.'

The sceptic's doubt about the legitimacy of the external world of experience can be met by adopting a kind of naturalism in which the framework or scaffolding is given and are beyond doubts. This framework, for Strawsonian, is a natural one, unlike Carnap's (for him it is a practical choice), is an absolute one and 'only connects' 35 elements of the conceptual system.

33 Bounds of Sense, p.18.
34 Individuals p.9.