The more narrowly we examine actual language, the sharper becomes the conflict between it and our requirement (a pure and ideal language). We have got on to slippery ice where there is no friction and so in a certain sense the conditions are ideal, but also, just because of that, we are unable to walk. We want to walk: so we need friction Back to the rough ground (Wittgenstein. Philosophical Investigations. 107 bracket added).

This rough ground is the sphere of the multitude of language-games we are engaged in, in our various concrete life situations. The domain of language where meaning is located, therefore, is immensely vast, due to the variety and diversity of these life situations and associated language-games. The search for a way out, therefore, appears as a pressing philosophical issue. This essay is concerned with the analysis of certain conceptual problems associated with such an issue. And basically two models of understanding meaning have been examined, namely, the representational model and the hermeneutic model.

The representational model is considered, because it offers an immediate solution to the problem of understanding meaning by narrowing down the horizon of language into the framework of language-world representation. The hermeneutic model, on the other hand, admits the vastness of the horizon of language with all its diversities and seeks to derive a comprehensive framework to explain the problem.
The categorisation is based on a broad criteria. Approaches to language that conceive it as a representation of reality, or more precisely, that conceives a structural identity between the two realms of language and factual reality were categorised into the first group. Again, approaches that conceive historicity as a vital element in our various cognitive encounters in relation to language and reality were put under the hermeneutic model.

But both the models share a common assumption, as they emphasise the linguistically of understanding. Both the models take language as perennial. While the representational model conceives language as the necessary 'medium' of expression and representation, the hermeneutic model goes even further, and associates the very being of man with language. Hans-Georg Gadamer interprets the Aristotelian definition of the nature of man, the "living being who has logos", by arguing that the primary meaning of the word logos is language. This factor places the "problem of understanding meaning' at the forefront of philosophical inquiries.

Understanding meaning is a necessary prerogative for linguistic practices. And with the acknowledgement of man's fundamental linguisticality - language is the part of man's natural history, says Wittgenstein - it naturally follows that understanding meaning is a necessary mode of the being of man (Heidegger).

The analysis of the nature of man's relationship with language, therefore, is a major topic of discussion in this study. The question which acquires prominence is: how understanding meaning takes place in and through language?
Along with the examination of the representational model and the hermeneutic model, some anti-representational doctrines which do not ascribe any relevance to the hermeneutic problematic are also being examined. But ultimately, this study has come to the conclusion that, it is only with the recognition of the hermeneutic problem, many problems connected with language and linguistic understanding can be consistently explained.

The first chapter of the thesis entitled **Understanding Meaning: Representationalism vs. Anti-Representationalism**, gives an overview of the problem of understanding meaning, as it has been dealt by different philosophers and different traditions of philosophy. Here both representational and anti-representational standpoints are being examined. The representationalists, by making language a representation of the factual reality, consequently proclaims a conception of language, which very well confirms to the parameters of natural science. But such a unidimensional view of language puts the representationalists in trouble. This Chapter examines how, led with the ideals of the scientific conception, the representationalists envisaged to construct a universal language, and, how with such a language and its inherent logic they tried to evaluate the various language-games we are engaged in. The different logics of enquiry, they argue, have the same logical pattern.

To substantiate such a unitary conception of language, the representational tradition identifies a set of linguistic expressions which can be considered as basic. These statements are directly related to the world and they are the faithful pictures of the facts in the world. Wittgenstein's concept of elementary propositions are examples for such linguistic expressions. With such a conception of language, and the associated concept of objective knowledge, the
representational tradition tries to explain all phenomena, adopting the causal-explanation framework.

The first chapter again discusses the inadequacy in explaining the cultural and social phenomena with the causal-explanation pattern. Attempts are made in the representational tradition to accommodate the human and social sciences into the sphere of 'science', by explaining these phenomena also with the imposition of causal-explanation model. But all such attempts prove inadequate, because, in human sciences we encounter a different dimension of reality which does not fit the ideals of the ontology of natural sciences. As Karl Otto Apel points out, in the human sciences, attempts are made to understand the human actions from their motives and hence there we encounter an altogether different kind of knowledge and not a residue of metaphysics. These departments of human enquiry like social and human sciences, art, religion, etc., have different conception of reality and different modes of coping with reality. With the causal-explanation model of the representationalists the noetic aspect of human behaviour cannot be justifiably accounted.

Further, an examination is conducted on, how a different concept of language is emerging. Wittgenstein's language-game theory is briefly considered, where the 'use' of language in different life situations acquires prominence. Meaning in this context is related to a system of practices and habits and is not conceived as the abstract essence of linguistic signs. Again, both reality and human self are conceived as evolving out of the various ways language is being employed in the multitude of concrete life situations.
An important concept mentioned in this chapter is the notion of historicity. The evolution of reality and human self through various linguistic practices suggests that reality is a "historical-cultural opening up in language". A brief analysis of this concept of reality has been carried out in the light of Edmund Husserl's notion of life-world. The concept of life-world provided the hermeneutic tradition a very strong justification to accommodate historicity. Husserl stresses on the idea of a world which is "given to us in the subjective modes of givenness". This idea will take care of the notion of historicity. Our relationship with reality in this context has also changed. Heidegger explains this relationship with the concept of the being-in-the world. This, in turn, will give a picture of how the being of man is related to both history and language. The first chapter concludes with an evaluation of the role of language in the two traditions.

The second chapter entitled **Representational semantics and Linguistic Understanding**, examines the important conceptual peculiarities of the concept of language propounded by the idea of world-language direct relationship. The idea of 'meaning' as the representational content of language has been introduced in order to explain this relationship more consistently. Meaning has been conceived as the mediating entity that connects the three realms of language, thought and reality. A brief analysis is made on Frege's concept of sense to explain this more clearly. The prepositional character of linguistic understanding, which is an extremely important concept, has been derived from the Fregean idea of 'thoughts mediating the uses of language'.
In this chapter, it has been argued that, the most important notion of the representational model is the idea of the 'structure of language'. Representational character of language has been asserted on the basis of this idea. The notion of proposition itself suggests that what is important in language is its structure - not the syntactic structure, but the logico-semantic structure. Russell's theory of description has been briefly discussed here to make the idea of semantic structure clear. Again, Wittgenstein's doctrine of sense determinism also has been examined.

Regarding the relationship of language with meaning, and understanding, the representational model upholds two different views. While the Frege-Witgenstein conception takes meaning as a logical property and the representational function of language as a matter of logic, the empiricist tradition emphasises empirical expedience and subscribes to different forms of psychologism. These two viewpoints also have been discussed in this chapter.

But in spite of these differences, the representationalists in general agree upon certain common ideas. All of them subscribe to the view that language is a picture of factual reality and the concept of meaning invariance is a central ideal for all of them. For the representational model, in general, the language-game of science is the ideal.

Understanding **Meaning : The Hermeneutic Problematic**, is the title of the third chapter. The hermeneutic model focuses on the problem of understanding meaning that acquires prominence in the social and human sciences. And here, unlike the object of understanding in the natural sciences, the historical and cultural phenomena exist cut off from us in terms of time and place. This makes their objective comprehension a difficult task.
As a central notion of this chapter the recognition of historicity has been examined in detail. The reality we encounter in the human sciences is widely centered by intentional and emotional categories of concrete human beings. Hence, they cannot be relegated into a non-self category. But the object of study in natural sciences - nature - can be viewed as non-self, and as constituted of impersonal objects (personally uncentered). This factor makes these phenomena ahistorical.

With the recognition of historicity, the concept of meaning, understanding and their relationship with language demands a total reconstruction. Hence, an examination of the concept of meaning is undertaken in this chapter. The metaphysical concept of meaning is examined, where the latter is conceived as unchanging and objective. But with the recognition of historicity, these assumptions get challenged.

This problem is examined with an analysis of how the notion of meaning was dealt differently. To maintain objectivity, some philosophers in the hermeneutic tradition like Schleiermacher, Dilthey and Hirsch place meanings in the author's intentional perspective. While Schleiermacher propagates a doctrine of unconscious production, Dilthey endeavours to construe a distinct epistemology for the human sciences. These attempts are briefly discussed in the third chapter.

But many of these concepts will get challenged, once the ultimate relationship between language and meaning is asserted. The representationalists and also Schleiermacher and Dilthey,
conceive an extra-linguistic realm for meanings. But once meaning is recognised as the immanent and essential property of language, a larger role to language has to be recognised. Meanings, therefore, cannot go out of language. This chapter ends with a conclusion that human linguisticality is universal.

The fourth chapter entitled, Truth, Meaning and Interpretative Understanding, focuses more on the concept of truth and examines the notion of understanding meaning in relation to that concept. At first the concept of truth in the representational tradition is examined. Here the historical and metaphysical conception of truth becomes relevant. Here, like meaning, truth also is accounted for in two different ways. The empiricist-representationalists connect the notion of truth with experience. But in Frege and also in Wittgenstein, we could see a highly logical notion of truth, where truth is conceived as embedded in the logic of assertions. A brief examination of Alfred Tarski's semantic conception of truth also has been attempted.

The criticisms raised against such a conception of truth by different thinkers are further examined. Quine's indeterminacy thesis is discussed to show some problems in the representational conception of the relationship of truth to meaning and language. Here also with a larger role assigned to language, the concept of truth undergoes radical changes.

All these discussions ultimately contribute to assert the fundamental linguisticality of the process of understanding meaning. Language is, therefore, not a mere medium of representation, but something which we live in. With these assumptions, the fifth chapter entitled, Language, Meaning and Interpretative Understanding, discusses the fundamental nature of
linguisticality and the relationship of language with meaning. Here the discussion starts with the perspectival standpoint of language, which forcefully asserts the linguisticality and interpretative nature of understanding.

The justification for the idea of language defining a perspective for us is provided by showing how language functions as ontologically significant. Not only our cognitive encounters are influenced by language but all our actions, or to be precise, our very being itself are determined by it. To make this clearer, the concept of linguistic horizon is introduced. We find ourselves situated in a tradition as a result of our being rooted in a language or linguistic tradition.

The notion of horizon shows how fundamental is linguisticality for our being and at the same time, how, owing to our situatedness in a linguistic horizon, we surpass our finiteness and narrowness as a subjective entity. The notion of linguistic horizon is further analysed in the light of Wittgenstein’s language-game theory and the concept of rule-following. It has been argued that Wittgenstein, with his concept of participation in language-games, does not emphasise the hermeneutic problematic that is pivotal as far as the problem of understanding of meaning is concerned. Such drawbacks are overcome with the introduction of the concept of linguistic horizon. Linguistic horizons, it is argued, do not stand for any fixed structures of thought or action, rather they have the capacity to interact with each other. This is because, language is not a static institution, but a process which emerges and grows with the interaction of individuals in linguistic conversations.
It then appears that meanings to be understood are located, neither in the horizon of the text, nor in the horizon of the interpreter, but are to be discovered from a common language which evolves as a result of an interaction between the different linguistic horizons. Here it is argued that the interpreter has to perform two important roles. He has the participating role in the process of understanding, since he is not a passive observer, but is already placed within a background of meanings as a result of inheriting a linguistic horizon. Then he has to perform a crucial role, which consists in his maintaining an openness towards the text’s claim to truth and its ability to apply the textual meanings to his concrete life situation.

This chapter, therefore, basically defends the idea that the fundamental phenomena of language consist in dialogue. The common language where meanings evolve emerge from a dialogic interaction between the different horizons that interact. This newly evolving language is the intersubjective sphere for interaction between the text and the interpreter. It brings the interpreter and the text together and forms as a common platform for them to interact.

Since meanings are located in such a common language which evolves out of dialogic interaction, it is argued that to understand meaning is to participate in a dialogue. Dialogue, in other words, constitutes the very life of language. The common language that forms out of such a dialogic encounter will eventually be a wider horizon than the respective horizons of the text and the interpreter.

Since this study limits itself to the examination of the two models, namely, representationalism and hermeneutics, many doctrines and philosophical standpoints which
conceive the problem of understanding meaning as perennial (e.g., Habermass's critical theory, Derrida's deconstruction) do not figure in this study. To explain the evolution of the hermeneutic model as a standpoint which makes dialogic interaction pivotal, this study takes insights largely from the theories of Hans-Georg Gadamer. The study could also be viewed as an attempt which tries to see the parallels between the two traditions of philosophy; the analytical philosophy of language and the philosophy of Geisteswissenschaften.