Chapter - 2

Language-Game

Like everything metaphysical the harmony between thought and reality is to be found in the grammar of the language.

Zettel

Names and Propositions: : Objects and their Configurations: Suppose following Dummett, Tractatus is described as an essay in the theory of meaning. Being an essay in the theory of meaning it can also be supposed that it has something to do with both language and reality. However, the theory of meaning which is presented in the Tractatus is certainly not directly concerned with 'words', 'sentences' and the 'discourse' in which the words and sentences may occur. While making explicit the nature of meaning Wittgenstein refers to 'names' and 'propositions', and he is using neither 'name' nor 'proposition' as the kinds of things which are parts of language or which make language possible as 'words' and 'sentences' are part of language and make language possible. So also while talking about reality he is not talking about his 'objects' and 'configurations' in the sense in which we talk about tables and chairs and their arrangement in the drawing room. His objects are not tables and chairs and his reality is not the reality with which we are concerned in daily life. Then what kind of reality is the reality with which early Wittgenstein is concerned? And what kind of language is the language with which early Wittgenstein is concerned. Early Wittgenstein is concerned not with reality but with the essence of reality. So also he is concerned not with language but with the essence of
language. But why should he be concerned with the essence either of reality or of language? Perhaps any philosopher would desire that he says something which is of a permanent and enduring nature. But what he says would be of lasting value only when what he says is something about the essential and not the accidental features. Not only did Plato think like this, all great philosophers thought like this, and Wittgenstein was undoubtedly a great philosopher. When Wittgenstien draws his attention to the gross material objects like tables and chairs he rejects them, for all of them are perishable and changing, they cannot exhibit the essence of reality. The objects which exhibit the essence of reality, must be unchanging and substantial, for these "objects make up the substance of the world."\(^{128}\) Though he does not argue on paper he might have thought that the changing objects like tables and chairs presuppose the existence of some unchanging objects, the objects which do not perish. As a philosopher he is concerned with these unchanging, substantial and unalterable objects. So even if no such object is locatable by sight or touch, these objects must be postulated. Concerning these postulated objects he says, "There must be objects, if the world is to have an unalterable form."\(^{129}\) "Objects are what is unalterable and subsistent."\(^{130}\) The language is not very different from Plato's in support of his universals. The final conclusive remark reads, "Objects, the unalterable, and the subsistent are one and the same."\(^{131}\) All these remarks exhibit that Wittgenstein is interested in the essence of language, 'names' are the essence of

\(^{128}\) Tractatus, 2.021. \(^{129}\) Ibid., 2.026.  
\(^{130}\) Ibid., 2.0271. \(^{131}\) Ibid., 2.027.
language. In this sense of 'name' neither 'Tom' nor 'table' is a name. Though 'table' refers to something which is general, and, therefore, has wider application than "Tom", neither 'table' nor 'Tom' represent objects of reality, in the sense in which objects are essences. "In a proposition a name is the representative of an object." The necessity for 'names' is clear. It follows from the rigid dualism of language and reality. "Object can only be named. Signs are their representatives. I can only speak about them. I cannot put them into words. Propositions can only say how they are, not what they are." The essence of reality is qualitatively different from the essence of language, in the sense that an object itself cannot occur as a constituent in a proposition. What occurs in a proposition is only its representative, a name. The relationship between a name and an object is, therefore, very close. The relationship is that of meaning. "A name means an object. The object is its meaning." The harmony between language and reality occurs because of the fact that language has meaning. But the fact that Wittgensteinian names have meaning, does not throw light on the fact that such words as 'table' and 'Tom' of our ordinary language have meaning, for they are not names and they are not representatives of objects in the sentences in which they are used. Wittgensteinian theory of meaning has so far failed in showing how the words of our ordinary language have meaning. Essence of language should not be confused with language.

The discussion of the theory of meaning associated with the 'meaning of propositions', the so called 'picture theory of meaning',

132. Ibid., 3.22. 133. Ibid., 3.221.
134. Ibid., 3.203.
is supposed to be the most attractive feature of early Wittgenstein. At one time to know anything about Wittgenstein's philosophy was to know something about his picture theory of meaning. So many dissertations, books and articles were published throughout the world. The craze was similar to the craze which occurred at a later stage, the craze about "the private language argument". Philosophy has its own craze and fashions. If you are not acquainted with the craze or fashion of the time, then you are outdated; you are not worth respecting as a philosopher unless you are capable of starting a craze or a fashion yourself. Thus, you were supposed to know something about the picture theory of meaning at one time, as you were supposed to know about the private language argument at the later stage of the development of Wittgenstein's thought. The responsibility for spreading the craze about the Tractarian theory of meaning goes partly to the logical positivists. Logical positivism is out of fashion these days, so also is the picture theory of meaning out of fashion these days. To write on the picture theory of meaning these days is to do some sort of an archaeological investigation. I would like to avoid this archaeological investigation. However, in order to know about our present civilization one is required to have some idea of the civilizations of the past on the ruins of which our own civilization is built. It is possible that the civilizations of the past may have left their spirit behind them. It is possible that the Tractatus may have left its imprint on Wittgenstein's later thought.

To see what the picture theory of meaning is, or how it attracted Wittgenstein, one is required to see Wittgenstein's conception
of the essence of reality. Concerning the essence of reality we have already seen that Wittgenstein was led to postulate 'objects' in order to exhibit the essential nature of reality. An object is that which does not change, which is substantial, so the essence of reality is that which does not change, which remains permanent. But at the second stage of his thought on the issue, Wittgenstein develops a desire to introduce change at the essential stage itself. The desire is not unusual. We begin with changes in order to reject them, and we arrive at permanence. But once we arrive at permanence, we develop a desire to accommodate changes rather than reject them. The same thing happened to Wittgenstein. If somehow alteration and change is introduced at the level of the 'objects' themselves, then this change will be as much an essential aspect of reality as is its permanence. What is objectionable is that the changes be introduced at a different level from the level of permanence. It would be unconvincing to say that the objects of the type 'A' are permanent and the objects of the type 'B' are changing. To be convincing both permanence and change are to be explained in terms of the same type of objects. What is substantial and unalterable must be identical with what is contingent and what alters. Wittgenstein succeeds in introducing alteration and change at the level of objects themselves, hence for him change is as (much an) essential aspect of reality as its permanence. In introducing change he is not going beyond essence. Objects do not change, "their configuration is what is changing and unstable." And it is this change, the change of configuration, that produces states of affairs. As he says, "The configuration of objects produces states of affairs."

135. Ibid., 2.0271. 136. Ibid., 2.0272.
How change is essentially connected with permanence becomes further clear when Wittgenstein says "If things can occur in states of affairs this possibility must be in them from the beginning." Thus the birth of permanence and the birth of change do not occur on two different dates. From the very beginning what is substantial is also what changes. This becomes further clear from the remark "There is no object that we can imagine excluded from the possibility of combining with others." If an object is allowed to exist independently of existing in any configuration, then its substantiality would have been of a very different sort. It would have been quite difficult to call it substantial. Thus, by introducing objects Wittgenstein succeeds in securing permanence as one of the essential features of reality. By introducing configuration he succeeds in securing change as the other feature of reality. But in doing this he has created problems for all of us, who have also something to do with reality, and are not bothered about the essential features of reality. In telling us how his objects succeed in forming configurations Wittgenstein is not telling us anything about how Toms and Marys, kings and cabbages, form configurations, how the objects of our everyday life behave with one another. Wittgenstein's essence of reality has started behaving like an independent reality, not very unlike Plato's.

Let us now consider the essence of language which we left at the stage of introducing 'names'. Wittgenstein trains names to ape objects. The training is so perfect that sometimes one may even confuse names with objects, one may confuse the essence of language

137. Ibid., 2.0121. 138. Ibid.
with the essence of reality. "The simple signs employed in propositions are called names." And names too have their own configurations by aping objects. Their configurations are called 'propositions'. A proposition is the configurations of names as a state of affairs is the configuration of objects. And there is no independent identity of a name as there is no independent identity of an object. A simple sign is worthless without combining with other signs. The essence of language is certainly a true copy of the essence of reality. As Wittgenstein says, "The configuration of objects in a situation corresponds to the configuration of simple signs in the propositional sign." It is because of this correspondence that the 'proposition' or 'the configuration of names' happens to be a picture of the state of affairs or configuration of objects. For "in a picture the elements of the picture are the representatives of the objects." Names are the representatives of the objects. As a matter of fact whether we say reality pictures language or language pictures reality we say the same thing. For, as we have already seen in the preceding chapter that according to the Tractarian Wittgenstein "knowing subject" is an illusion, so also the knowing states are illusory. Tractatus is a fight against psychologism; it is a fight against the introduction of mental states in the explanation of meaning. Referring to his picture theory Wittgenstein says "we picture facts to ourselves." But this remark should not be taken seriously; for the Tractarian Wittgenstein can give no sense to "we" and "ourselves". What should be said is 'There are pictures and those that are pictured'. Pictured and pictures, reality and language, nothing more can be said. How can it be wrong

141. Ibid., 2.131. 142. Ibid., 2.1.
if one says, 'states of affairs are the pictures of propositions? A proposition is some kind of original, of which a state of affairs is a picture. How can it be wrong if one says 'objects in reality represent names'? Why shouldn't the essence of reality be considered as picturing the essence of language. It is not ontology, but epistemology, that is prior; it is not reality but language that is prior.

It can hardly be doubted that Wittgenstein's treatment given to 'names' and 'propositions' cannot be given to the 'words' and 'sentences' or our ordinary language. Perhaps this has led Russell to say in his Introduction to the Tractatus that Wittgenstein is "concerned with the conditions which would have to be fulfilled by a logically perfect language."¹⁴³ Some leading philosophers, including Ramsey, objected to Russell's remark.¹⁴⁴ But if what Wittgenstein says about his names and propositions is not applicable to the ordinary language, then his talking about the 'essence of language, is as good as talking about an 'ideal language'. Of course while proposing the theory of meaning Wittgenstein presupposed that what he says about the essence of language holds also for the language of our daily use. Rather it is to know the real nature of the language of our daily use that he was driven to uncover its hidden structure. The essence, he presupposed, was hidden from us. The logical structure of language is hidden behind its grammatical structure. This is also true of reality. It is not any special variety of reality but our everyday reality which is the concern of Tractatus. The reality is also covered. The essence of reality is perhaps hidden behind its phenomenal presentation. Wittgenstein's concern, one would argue, is everyday language. It is as if he is talking about

the essence of everyday language.

But the dissolution of the distinction between the 'essence of language' and 'ordinary language' would lead to more confusions. These confusions do not arise once Wittgenstein's views are given Russell's interpretation, i.e., Wittgenstein's whole talk about the 'essence of language' is a talk about an 'ideal language'. How confusions arise can be seen from the two remarks of Wittgenstein:

"What constitutes a propositional sign is that in it its elements (the words) stand in a determinate relation to one another."\textsuperscript{145} A proposition is not a blend of words.\textsuperscript{146} In these cases 'words' have been considered as the constituents of a proposition. So a proposition is not any kind of mysterious entity beyond the fold of language. It is a linguistic entity of some kind which allows words as its constituents. But what kind of role can a word play in a proposition. If the word in question follows the dictates of the 'essence of language', then it must be a name; it must be a representative of an object. Suppose the word in question is 'table', then it is the name of the object table. But it is impossible to consider a table as an object, for a table is both contingent and complex, whereas the Tractarian objects are simple and substantial. But then the word 'table' is also not a name. And if not a name, then it cannot occur in a proposition. Further, what about the 'proposition' which is supposed to have \underline{words} as its constituents. Unfortunately the words of our language do not satisfy the condition of being 'names', hence no sentence, in which words occur in our language, could express a proposition. The truth is clear. If we apply Witt-

\textsuperscript{145} Tractatus., 3.14. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{146} Ibid., 3.141.
genstein's idea about the 'essence of language' to the sentences of our ordinary language, we shall gain nothing but confusions. The reason is simple. Wittgenstein has converted something which is abstract into what is concrete, a mistake similar to that of Plato. Plato postulated the realm of essence as distinguished from the realm of particulars, and then used the language reserved (suitable) for particulars to explain the nature of his essences. The result was only confusion. In his Tractatus itself Wittgenstein realised his mistake. For his well known idea that "the logic of language cannot be expressed in language" shows that he realised his mistake. The difficulty is not that one has to go beyond language in order to understand the essence of language. The reason is that what is abstract, what is essential, is not concrete, is not what can be separated demarcated and described. The solution is not that one goes beyond language. If we fail to understand the essence of language while using language, then there is no chance for us ever to understand the essence of language. Once I have transcended language, then I have nothing to do with language; language simply does not exist for me.

Referring to his Tractarian mistake of treating essence as something which is concrete rather than abstract he points out in his Investigations, "It is prior to all experiences, must run through all experience' no empirical cloudiness or uncertainty can be allowed to affect it - it must rather be of the purest crystal. But this crystal does not appear as an abstraction: but as something concrete indeed, as the most concrete, as it were the hardest thing there is."\textsuperscript{147} The invention of 'names' and 'propositions', and then talking

\textsuperscript{147} Investigations, 97.
about the meaning of propositions, and the status of names, etc., is giving a concrete birth to the essence of language. It did not occur to Wittgenstein in the Tractatus, at least in the beginning, that no concrete birth can be given to essence, for essence is abstract. The so-called picture theory of meaning, on which volumes have been written, should not have begun. What is the way in which his Tractatus view concerning essence may be saved? The only way in which it can be saved is to convert his whole talk about the essence of language into a talk about an "ideal language". But then it would not be Wittgenstein's view; it would be a view similar to the view expressed by Frege and Russell.

Words and Sentences: Cogs and cogwheels: The picture theory of meaning was responsible for bringing, what was described in the first chapter, a revolution in philosophy. What created the situation for a counter-revolution in philosophy was Wittgenstein's disillusionment with the picture theory of meaning. He started feeling that what one requires is not a 'theory of meaning' but a 'theory of use'. Consider his remark from the Investigations, "One cannot guess how a word functions. One has to look at its use and learn from it." Function of a word can only be known by looking at its use. There is no such looking at with respect to the meaning of a word. For 'meaning' refers to an extremely mysterious kind of entity; sometimes it is traced in the mind, sometimes outside, and the search never stops. So also is the case of the word 'sense'. 'Sense' leads us to all sorts of directions, yet we fail to glimpse it. Therefore, in the case of 'sense' too Wittgenstein suggests, "Look at the sentences as an instrument, and at its sense as its --

employment."149 There will be no difficulty in looking at the sentence, or its employment, but there will be all kinds of difficulties in looking at the sense of a sentence, if this sense is not identical with its employment. The words, 'meaning' and 'sense' create all kinds of problems by creating all kinds of imagery. It is one imagery created by these words that led Wittgenstein to his picture theory of meaning. It is better for the health of philosophy to abolish 'meaning' and to introduce in its place 'use'. Thus, strictly speaking 'The theory of use' is a 'theory of meaning', though it may look like the latter. Perhaps because it looks like the latter (a matter of 'family resemblance') that the followers of Wittgenstein, so also his opponents, started using the expression 'use theory of meaning', which is a highly misleading expression. The expression is misleading, for it allows the ghost of meaning to continue. And the ghost of meaning seems to be more dangerous than meaning itself. For if 'the theory of use' is considered as a 'theory of meaning', then it will have not only its own difficulties, it will also harbour all those difficulties which are connected with the theory of meaning. Of course it does not matter much, for a counter-revolution accommodates some of the confusions of the revolutionary stage. There would hardly be any doubt that Wittgenstein continued his counter-revolutionary activities with the weapon of 'the theory of use'. The counter-revolution perhaps started in 1929 with the pages which are entitled in English as "Philosophical Remarks", and came to its full swing with the Blue and Brown Books.

The revolution in philosophy, as we have already seen, made, epistemology a secondary business. Tractatus realised this revolution—

149. Ibid., 421.
nary ideal by forcing language to serve ontology by picturing reality, by creating the models of reality. Thus, the consideration of reality is prior to any other consideration. The counter-revolution brings back epistemology to focus. Reality starts backing out, and language starts emerging as an independent entity. As we have already said language takes a separation from reality even if it has not taken a complete divorce from it. The Tractatus theory of meaning is worthless without the mirroring of reality by language. The language of Tractatus allows the essence of reality to penetrate into it. But later Wittgenstein takes interest in language, not to study reality, but simply to study how language works. He does not allow his language to be corrupted by reality; he does not intend to divide the direction his attention in two different direction of reality and the direction of language. Only one direction, the direction of language is his interest. It is said that early Wittgenstein gave a linguistic turn to philosophy. But the linguistic turn to philosophy, in its real sense, was given not by early Wittgenstein but by later Wittgenstein. For Tractatus is more ontological than linguistic. But with later Wittgenstein emerges interest in knowing how 'words' and 'sentences' work in language, how the grammar of language dupes us into all kinds of confusions.

One may however be shocked to see that the later Wittgenstein does not propose 'the theory of use' as a complete replacement for the 'theory of meaning'. He does not consider the possibility of a strict definition of 'meaning' in terms of 'use'. This becomes clear from his remark, "For a large class of cases - though not for all - in which we employ the word 'meaning' it can be defined
thus: the meaning of a word is its 'use' in the language." 150 Why has Wittgenstein put the rider "For a large class of cases." This rider exhibits that Wittgenstein rejects essentialism or universalism. Even his own definition of meaning in terms of use is not applicable to all the cases of meaning, which simply means that he refuses to give a universal definition of meaning. The fact that his own definition of meaning in terms of use is limited, is not a point of inferiority but a point of superiority of his definition over those definition which claim universality. As he points out in the *Blue Book*, "The idea that in order to get clear about the meaning of a general term one had to find out the common element in all its applications has shackled philosophical investigation; for it has not only led to no result, but also made the philosopher dismiss as irrelevant the concrete case, which alone could have helped him to understand the usage of the general term. When Socrates asks the question, "What is knowledge?" he does not even regard it as a preliminary answer to enumerate cases of knowledge." 151 Thus, Wittgenstein revolts against Plato, and so also against his own Tractarian essentialism. The definition of 'meaning' in terms of 'use' given by him, is not to replace the former by the latter, but only to help understand the nature of the former. The aim of the study of use is ultimately to clarify the nature of meaning. Therefore, one is required to be very careful in interpreting such remarks of Wittgenstein as "We are inclined to forget that it is the particular use of a word only which gives the word its meaning". 152 The use of

150. *Investigations*, 43.
152. Ibid., n. 69.
'only' in the former remark and that of 'is' in the latter remark should not mislead you into thinking that Wittgenstein accepts an exact identity of 'meaning' with 'use'. The slogan 'Do not ask for meaning, ask for use' should not be misunderstood.

Let us consider the use theory in some detail. It would be better to consider the implications of a remark from the Philosophical Remarks, the work which exhibits Wittgenstein's coming out of the Tractarian cave. "If we say 'A word only has meaning in the context of a proposition; then that means that it's only in a proposition that it functions as a word, and this is no more something that can be said than that an armchair only serves its purpose when it is in space. Or perhaps better: that a cogwheel only functions as such when engaged with other cogs."\(^{153}\) It is not for the first time that Wittgenstein has expressed and thought about the sentence 'A word only has meaning in the context of a proposition.' What has happened is only that there is a change in his vision. Now he is looking at this sentence in a quite different fashion than how he looked at it earlier. A change of aspect, to use Wittgenstein's own idiom, has occurred. He saw earlier a rabbit, and now he is seeing the same figure as a duck. This is clearly "dawning of a new aspect."\(^{154}\) The rabbit disappears, and the duck takes hold of his thought. Now he is not looking at this sentence in the same fashion in which he looked at it in the Notebooks and the Tractatus. In his earlier work if he looked at a 'word' the picture of its being a 'name' used to occur to his mind. Then he thought that "one name is representative of one thing, another of another thing."\(^{155}\)

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153. Philosophical Remarks, 12.  
154. Philosophical Investigations, The discussion of duck-rabbit, or seeing as, is instructive in many ways, pp.194-209.  
155. Notebooks, p. 26 (10)
consequently led him to think that "all words are names", and occur in a proposition as names. The imagery was further extended. No name could occur in isolation from other names. This simply means that something is a name only in a configuration of names, i.e., in a proposition. Just as a word brought certain pictures to Wittgenstein's mind, the proposition too brought certain pictures to his mind. A proposition, as we have already pointed out, was not a configuration of 'words', it was a configuration of 'names', or that the words in it occurred as names. The image which emerged to his mind in connection with a proposition was very curious. He thought that "In a proposition a world is as it were put together experimen-
tally."\textsuperscript{156} The three dimensional world was put into two dimen-
SIONAL writing. As he thought about the proposition that in it "we can portray all logical properties of situations in a two-dimensional script."\textsuperscript{157}

Later Wittgenstein does not have that conception of proposition which he accepted in his earlier work. Now the proposition has come down to the level of a sentence; there is no mystery surrounding its existence. A proposition is a cogwheel. To use the idiom of \textit{Tractatus}, a proposition is a configuration of cogs. And a word is nothing but a cog. And unless the cogs form a configuration, no cogwheel has come into existence, therefore, no cogwheel has moved. But the value of cog lies only in a cogwheel; it moves only in a cogwheel. We do not ask the question 'what is the meaning of a cog'? What we ask is 'what function does a cog have?' 'what use does it have?' If the condition of a word in a sentence is not very different from the condition of a cog in a cogwheel, then we should

\textsuperscript{156} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 7 (3) \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{157} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 7 (7).
not raise the question about the meaning of a word, what we should ask is: how is the word used in a proposition (sentence)? And Wittgenstein is so definitive about his view that he does not find it informative to say that the meaning of a word depends on its function in a proposition. It is as unfortunate as saying that an armchair serves its purpose only when it is in space. Where else could an armchair serve its purpose? So also, where else could a word have its purpose?

The analogy of words with cogs, and propositions with cogwheels has its limitations. This analogy could be misleading too. There is no doubt that it succeeds in drawing our attention to the use aspect of words. But then it could be as misleading as is the reference to meaning aspect of words. One fundamental objection against the 'meaning theory' is that one is led to assimilate all kinds of words to one and the same kind. Since all words have meanings, therefore, all of them are of one and the same kind: they are all meaningful words. Since the words are of the same kind, therefore, all of them mean in the same fashion. If the word 'Tom' means in the sense that it is a name, then the word 'table' also means in the sense that it is a name. All words are names, therefore, all of them represent external objects in the sentences in which they are used. And consequently, all those sentences in which they are used are also like one another, and, therefore, all of them are guided by the same set of logical rules i.e. by the same kind of logic. There is no distinction between the logic of the sentence 'close the door' and the logic of the sentence 'this tree is green' because of the fact that the former is as much a sentence as is
the latter. If all words are like cogs and all sentences of one kind. Being cogs all words are used in the same fashion, all of them move in the same fashion. So also there is no logical difference between the cogwheels (sentences.) "The name is not a picture of the thing named." Only a proposition is a picture. No cog can move in isolation, only when a word is in the company of other words that it moves. The analogy of words with cogs, and the sentences with cogwheels is clearly misleading. The explanation of words and sentences in terms of cogs and cogwheels is not very superior to their explanation in terms of the meaning theory.

Perhaps the use - theory is presented in a more convincing way by comparing language with a tool-box. Explaining the use - theory Wittgenstein remarks, "Think of the tools in a tool-box: There is a hammer, pliers, a saw, a screw-driver, a rule, a gluepot, glue nails and screws. - The functions of words are as diverse as the functions of these objects. (And in both cases there are similarities)." The diversity of words does not emerge with the analogy of cogs, but it certainly emerges with the analogy of tools. In its function 'Tom' is quite unlike 'table', in the same way in which a hammer is quite unlike a glue-pot. Of course the words of language appear as uniform as cogs in the cogwheels. And this uniformity has misled philosophers. As Wittgenstein points out, "What confuses us is the uniform appearance of words when we hear them spoken or meet them in script or print. For their application is not presented to us so clearly. Especially when we are doing philosophy." Because of the uniform appearance, the diversity of the uses is

160. Ibid.
hidden. But as the tools are used in a variety of ways, the words too are used in a variety of ways. Consequently, the sentences in which words are used would also differ from each other in their logical character. Wittgenstein's immediately succeeding remark clarifies the issue in even clearer terms. He points out by comparing language with the cabin of a locomotive, "It is like looking into the cabin of a locomotive. We see handles all looking more or less alike. (Naturally, since they are all supposed to be handled.) But one is the handle of a crank which can be moved continuously (it regulates the opening of a valve); another is the handle of a switch, which has only two effective positions, it is either off or on; a third is the handle of a brake-lever, the harder one pulls on it, the harder it brakes; a fourth, the handle of a pump; it has an effect only so long as it is moved to and fro." The fact that all words look alike, does not mean that all of them have the same function. Consider the three analogies, the analogy of words with cogs, with the tools and with handles in a locomotive cabin. The analogy with cogs fails because words have diverse functions whereas cogs have only one function. The analogy with tools in a tool box also does not succeed much, for the words look alike but the tools do not. The analogy with handles is most appropriate. Words are like handles, looking alike. And like handles they have diverse functions.

If every word of our language has some function some use, then the word 'meaning' too should have some sort of function or use. What is the function of this word? Does this word have a well-defined

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161. Ibid., 12.
use, regular boundaries? According to Wittgenstein, "Meaning" is one of the words of which one may say that they have odd jobs in our language. It is these words which cause most philosophical troubles.  

Wittgenstein tries to justify his analysis of meaning again by bringing an analogy, "Imagine some institution" most of its members have certain regular functions, which can easily be described, say, in the statutes of the institution. There are, on the other hand, some members who are employed for odd jobs, which nevertheless may be extremely important - what causes most trouble in philosophy is that we are tempted to describe the use of important 'odd-job' words as though they were words with regular functions.  

The fact that the word 'meaning' performs odd jobs itself implies that no attempt should be made to determine its uses. In drawing our attention to the use aspect of a word, Wittgenstein has made an attempt to remove the temptation to deal with meaning. But then 'meaning' too has its function, its use!! We cannot do away with it.

Language however has not only the complexity that it has words and sentences, and therefore requires their logical character to be exposed, it is used in very diverse situations. The context of science is different from the context of, say, religion, ethics etc. This diversity cannot be satisfactorily dealt with by any of the analogies we have discussed so far, it is this diversity which attracted the attention of Wittgenstein to games.

Analogy and Lack of Analogy: Wittgenstein's discussion of games in the Investigations is connected with his discussion of

162. Blue Book, pp. 43-4
163. Ibid., p. 44.
names in the Brown Book. It is not only analogy but also the lack of analogy which works in calling a word a 'name' consider his remarks from the Brown Book, "Our use of expressions like "names of numbers", "names of colours", "names of materials", "names of nations" may spring from two different sources. One is that we might imagine the functions of proper names, numerals, words for colours, etc., to be much more alike than they actually are. If we do so we are tempted to think that the function of every word is more or less like the function of a proper name of a person, or such generic names as "tables", "chairs", "doors", etc. The second source is this, that if we see how fundamentally different the functions of such words as "table" "chairs", etc., are from those of proper names, and how different from either the functions of, say, the names of colours, we see no reason why we shouldn't speak of names of numbers or names of directions either, not by way of saying some such thing as "numbers and directions are just different froms of objects", but rather by way of stressing the analogy which lies in the lack of analogy between the functions of the words "chair" and "Jack" on the one hand, and "east" and "Jack" on the other hand. There is nothing paradoxical about an analogy which exhibits the lack of analogy. We provide the same name to two different individuals, because of the fact they they resemble each other. But we also provide the same name to them in spite of the fact that they do not resemble each other, or positively differ from each other.

Now consider Wittgenstein's remarks on 'games'. He says, "Consider for example the proceedings that we call "games". I mean board

164. Blue and Brown Books, 6, p. 82.
games, card-games, Olympic games, and so on. What is common to them all? Don't say: "There must be something common, or they would not be called 'games'" but look and see whether there is anything common to all. For if you look at them you will not see something that is common to all, but similarities, relationship, and a whole series of them at that. To repeat: don't think, but look! Look for example at board-games with their multifarious relationships. Now pass to card-games; here you find many correspondences with the first group, but many common features drop out, and others, appear. And we can go through the many, many other groups of games in the same way; can see how similarities crop up and disappear.\footnote{165} In the immediately succeeding remark Wittgenstein informs us about his conclusion, "I can think of no better expression to characterize these similarities than "family resemblances"; for the various resemblances between the members of a family: build, features, colour of eyes, gait, temperament, etc. etc. overlap and criss-cross in the same way. - And I shall say: 'games' form a family."\footnote{166}

The concept of 'family resemblance', as used by Wittgenstein, has a restricted sense, it requires further explication. For the concept of 'family' with which we operate is not strictly 'genetic', so it would be a pure coincidence that a husband and a wife may have \footnote{165. \textit{Investigations}, 66.} \footnote{166. \textit{Ibid.}, 67.} resembling feature in common: colour of eyes build, gait, temperament etc. There is no 'genetic necessity' in operation. And even if we take the cases of genetic necessity (whatever that term means) it is not necessary that a brother may have any of his features in common with a sister. The resemblance may not occur

because of mutation. Mutation sometimes brings out drastic changes.

The notion of 'family' which is accepted by us refuses its description, not only in terms of a common essence, but also in terms of resemblances. A family is found on genetic, religious and political (social) grounds, and not on the ground of seeing whether the nose of a girl is similar to the nose of a boy or that the two girls from a family have the same gait. A group of people belong to a family for various reasons. And it is certainly not one of those reasons that they are fair-complexioned, though it may be true that they are fair-complexioned. So also it is not one of those reasons that the colour of their eyes is the same, though as a matter of fact they may have the same colour of eyes. If the Platonic essence for membership in a family is rejected, so would the Wittgensteinian resemblances be rejected. Two people are members of a family by marriage. Two other people belong to that family because they are the offspring of the same parents. And the fifth one is an adopted child, so is neither an offspring of the same parents nor came to join the family by marriage. The notion of 'family membership' is quite complicated, more complicated than it seems to Wittgenstein. Wittgenstein is right in thinking that 'games form a family', but they do not always form a family on the bases given by Wittgenstein. Their bases are sometimes very different from those given by Wittgenstein. The features of a family which have attracted Wittgenstein's attention are not persuasive features even for supporting his view. The features to which we have referred give better support to his view. For example, board-games may be considered as brothers and sisters (sometimes half-brothers and half-sisters). Sometimes a hus-

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band differs from his wife as cricket differs from chess. In the case of a family we find analogy and also a lack of analogy in operation. What Wittgenstein says in the case of 'names' quoted above seems to hold in the context of 'games' too, but he does not stress this. He avoids stressing this similarity perhaps because he does not want to stress the lack of analogy. What is further misleading about his remark on 'family resemblance' is as if 'resemblances' play a special kind of role in the case of a family. 'Family resemblance' is a paradigm, and resemblances in other context are to be judged in terms of resemblances occurring in a family. But the resemblances in a family which caught his eyes are in no way superior to the resemblances that occur in the context of a drawing-room a dining-hall or a class-room. Wittgenstein is simply following the tradition of those philosophers of the past who reject identity or essence and opt for resemblances. Only he intends to reject essences in his own original way.

Wittgenstein intends to exhibit that what is called essence, what binds different individuals together, is itself the product of resemblances. The description of games in terms of a family is meant for justifying his view expressed throughout his later period. Consider his remark from the Brown Book, "What ties the ship to the wharf is a rope, and the rope consists of fibres, but it does not get its strength from any fibre which runs through it from one end to the other, but from the fact that there is a vast number of fibres over-lapping." 167 Though the rope is one, it is not constituted out of one fibre, but out of many, and there is no one fibre which gives the rope its strength. What is essence, what is

universal, is nothing but that which is constituted out of the threads of resemblances. And no resembling feature can be specially favoured, because none of them is specially favoured. If it is specially favoured then it would function as an essence, and Wittgenstein rejects essences. Consider now the case of a family. Suppose a husband differs from his wife (lack of analogy), they stand on two different poles agreeing neither in temperament nor complexion nor in their physiology. But the features of the father are visited by the sons and daughters. The father however is sweet-tempered, and the daughter is ill-tempered. Mother may be ill-tempered, and the son sweet-tempered. So the resemblances and differences mark different members in different ways. There is no common essence running through the family yet they are members of the same family. It is one and the same rope which binds the members of the family, but the rope is constituted out of different fibers. Wittgenstein's idea could be expressed in a less misleading fashion by saying that there is no hidden common bond in a family, because some members of the family have the bond of marriage, other, blood relationship, and still others, the social custom has brought them together (custom of adoption). "Games form a family", in the sense that the set of rules which govern one game may be of a totally different kind from the set of rules governing the other game. Someone is a member of a family, not by birth but by marriage. And there may be newness about a game as there is newness about a newly married couple.

Now consider Wittgenstein's exhortation "don't think, but look". "Don't think" simply means "don't think that there must be something common to different instances", not that you should give up thinking. Look and see whether there is anything common. If you look and see,
you will not find anything common, you will simply find similarities overlapping with each other. But Wittgenstein's exhortation may perhaps bring proper results in the cases of games, but quite improper results in the cases of families. Just by looking and seeing you cannot know that two different persons belong to the same family. Even if all the features of one person resemble with the features of the other person, these persons may belong to different families. We do not see any common essence in them in order to say that they belong to the same family. But so also we do not decide that they belong to the same family because their noses and chins resemble. We have to go beyond 'looking and seeing' if we have desire to know whether the persons getting down from the car belong to the same family. Thus, to say that "games form a family" does not necessarily mean that you know what the games are just by 'looking and seeing them'. You may require information about the game in question, the information which may be as relevant as are the birth and marriage certificates in the case of a person's family linkage.

The above discussion however is not meant for showing that 'games do not form a family'. Games certainly do form a family. What was attempted was simply to reinforce Wittgenstein's view by referring to an aspect of 'family' which was not taken by Wittgenstein into consideration. There are diverse grounds for membership in a family. Individual games in the family of games also exhibit a similar diversity.

Now I would like to discuss some further implications of Wittgenstein's view on games. In the immediately succeeding remark Witt-
genstein says, "kinds of number form a family." And the fact that he talks about numbers that they form a family shows that he is simply talking about the concept of game that it forms a family for a number is not an activity but a concept. To say about a concept that it forms a family means that the 'particular instances' which fall under the concept exhibit the character of 'family members' Whether what Wittgenstein says about the concepts of 'game' and 'number' also holds for all possible concepts, is a question which we should not discuss. If Wittgenstein's job is to oppose essentialism, then he would not like to apply his analysis to all possible concepts he would like it to be restricted to "a large class of concepts". We have already seen how he treats 'meaning', 'meaning' is 'use' for a large class of cases, though not for all.

In saying about the concept of game that it forms a family what is further meant is that it is not a closed concept. Its doors are open for new membership. The family-planning measures are restricted, so also the mortality rate is controlled. Neither the birth of new members in a family can be prohibited nor the death of old members can be stopped. This is how family, the concept of family, survives. Old games die and the new games take their birth. This is a crucial analogy between games and family. Olympic games played now are not the same as played before the birth of Christ. Games, like music, seem to depend on culture. New cultures evolve new games. And in some cases the distinction between wars and games disappears, or, what may start as a game may end in a war. As Wittgenstein reacts, "What still counts as a game and what no longer does? Can you give the boundary? No." It this implies that the concept

'game' is a blurred concept. But this leads to difficulties. Keeping Frege in his mind Wittgenstein raises the question "Is a blurred concept a concept at all?" For Frege the notion of a blurred concept would appear as some kind of contradiction. A concept is by definition clear and precise. If a blurred concept is not a concept, then one solution to satisfy philosopher like Frege is that we invent a new name for the blurred concept. We retain the name 'concept' for those that are rigid and precise concepts, and introduce a new name 'compets' for those that are blurred ones. This is similar to John Wisdom's procedure for inventing new demonstrative expressions. As Wisdom says, "Owing to the paucity in language of words like 'this' and 'that' we must now invent new ones - 'thet', 'thot' and 'thit'.' Like Wisdom's new demonstratives we introduce a new name 'compets' for those concepts that are blurred, for which boundaries cannot be drawn. However, Wittgenstein would reject such a move. For such a move presupposes that there really is a class of well defined concepts, concepts that have rigid boundaries. But if an ill-defined concept is the only concept which suits a particular situation, then the ill-defined concept is the most well-defined concept for that situation. If I want the picture of a cloudy weather, the camera would certainly be cheating me if it produces the picture of a clear weather. If I want darkness to be depicted, then the showing of sunshine would not satisfy me. It is only the blurred concept which is the most suitable concept on certain occasions. As Wittgenstein explains by referring to a situation. "Is it senseless to say 'stand roughly there'? Suppose I were

standing with someone in a city square and said that. As I say it
I do not draw any kind of boundary, but perhaps point with my hand
—as if I were indicating a particular spot. And this is just how
one might explain to someone what a game is. If what is required
is only the reference to the spot where you are supposed to stand,
it is not required for me to give you exact spatio-temporal co-ordi-
nates. Not because I do not carry with me all the time scales and
measuring rods so I fail, but that I am not required to carry any
such procedure; this is not the situation for any such procedure.

The denial of essence does not necessarily mean that Wittgen-
stein denies that there is anything common to two different games.
What is denied is simply that what is common to two different games
is something abstract, a Platonic concept. What is common to them
is a feature which could be indicated and pointed out. Again, this
may not be common to other sets of games, they may have their own
sets of features in common. Explaining his position Wittgenstein
raises the question, "Could you tell me what is common between
a light red and dark red." Instead of answering this question
directly he refers to another situation where one actually refers
to what is common. "I show you two pictures of different landscapes.
In both pictures, amongst many other objects, there is the picture
of a bush, and it is exactly alike in both." But the bush is
something that is concrete, it is what is 'exactly alike' in two
pictures. So what is common is what is exactly alike. What is exactly
alike is certainly not what is identical. For what is identical
is supposed to be numerically the same, but the bush in two pictures

174. Ibid.
is not numerically the same. The bush is one picture is numerically different from the bush in the other picture, yet these different bushes are 'exactly alike', and it is they that represent what is common to two different pictures. The same is true about what is common to two different colours or to two different games. In referring to what is common you are not referring to any hidden or unknown and unknowable essence. Wittgenstein does not reject the raising of the question 'what is common to two different particulars,' he simply rejects the Platonists' answer to it.

Since games do not have any essence, they form a family, no such definition of game is possible which may lead you to understand about all games : what they are and how they are played. If you do not know what 'game' means, what is done with it (or about it) the best way is to show you a few games. Once you are shown a few games you will be in a position to imagine their variations. As Wittgenstein reacts, "How should we explain to someone what a game is? I imagine that we should describe games to him, and we might add: "This and similar things are called 'games'". And do we know any more about it ourselves? Is it only the people whom we cannot tell exactly what a game is? But this is not ignorance. We do not know the boundaries because none have been drawn."\(^{175}\) In actual showing of games, in letting others see how they are played, one may think that you are ignorant of the definition of game, you are not aware of how the concept of game operates. But this is not ignorance, for no definition of game has been given (unless it is a limited definition, and none could be given. The concept of game,

\(^{175}\) *Investigations*, 69.
as we have already seen, cannot be bounded. To introduce boundaries
to introduce a universal definition, to games, would be to stop
the birth of new games. It is not the new games which will stop
having birth, it is your definition which will be rejected. The
concept of game is not an 'armchair concept'.

Words and Chessmen: As has been pointed out earlier Wittgenstein
attempted to divert the attention of philosophers from the issues
concerning the meaning of words to the issues concerning their use.
He attempted to reduce meaning to use. It is this issue that led
him to compare words with cogs and sentences with cog-wheels. But
this analogy failed to exhibit the multiplicity of uses to which
words are open. The comparison of language with toolbox also failed
because the visual appearance of a hammer is very different from
the visual appearance of glue, but the visual appearance of 'cut'
is not very unlike the visual appearance of 'but', and they also
sound the same if spoken. The comparison of words with handles in
the cabin of a locomotive engine is quite fitting. There are long
handles and there are short handles' 'caressing' is a long handle,
'put' is not. But the function of 'caressing' is very different
from the function of 'put'; long handle is used for a very different
function from the function of a short handle. But the analogy of
handles is not very helpful. Granted that words are like handles,
one would like to react - 'so what? It is the search for a compre-
hensive analogy that led Wittgenstein to games. The study of games,
Wittgenstein discovered, can lead to the solution of a host of philo-
sophical problems. He thought that 'the question 'what is a word' is completely analogous with the question 'what is a chessman?'

176. Philosophical Remarks, 18.
Language is completely analogous with chess (game). This completeness does not occur in connection with a cogwheel or a toolbox. It is because Wittgenstein does not find any incompleteness in the analogy of language with game that he was led to coin the expression 'language-game'. This expression may mean two things. 1) Using a language resembles playing a game. 2) Using a language is identical with playing a game. Wittgenstein uses the expression 'language-game' in both the senses: he often slips from one sense to another as if it is of consequence whether one considers language as a game or something resembling a game. Consider his remark from the Blue Book where Wittgenstein refers to five different systems of communication while introducing the expression 'language-game'. He says "Systems of communication as for instance 1), 2), 3), 4), 5) we shall call "language we call games. Children are taught their native language by means of such games, and here they even have the entertaining character of games."\(^{177}\) The expression "more or less akin" does not identify a language with a game, it only brings the former very close to the latter. But he thinks that while teaching language to children, it is used as a game, having even the character of entertainment. In the Investigations he adds, "Think of much of the use of words in games like ring-a-ring-a-roses."\(^{178}\) There is a tendency in Wittgenstein to assimilate language to game: language is literally, and not only metaphorically, a game. It is a species of game. We play chess, in the same fashion we speak and write language. The role of words in language is completely analogous with the role of chessmen in chess.

\(^{177}\) Blue and Brown Books, 5, p.81.  \(^{178}\) Investigations, 7.