CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION
My objective in the foregoing chapters is an attempt to understand Strawson's philosophy of language, to see wherein consists his intellectual leadership for which he has been recognized. The method adopted is to set his views on language vis-à-vis other views especially the view which he terms as the truth-theoretic approach. This truth-theory has drawn the attention of many philosophers and consequently it is worked out with a greater zeal and enthusiasm. It has a plausibility such that in matters of detail it appears as if this is the only way that language can be viewed and described. A theory of language, according to such a theory has a detached character from the human needs and situations and consequently it gets an objective treatment. In theoretical discussions an objectivity accords well with the scientific spirit but too much objectivity that roots out language from its original home, the human needs and situations, seems objectionable on the ground that to the extent it is removed, it gets distorted. The situation in philosophy of language seems to be more or less similar to the pre-Kantian situation in which 'knowledge' was discussed as a non-human affair. It called for a Copernican revolution and knowledge was regarded, due to Kant, as a human concept and it had something to do with human mind or consciousness in general. Though the analysis in terms of faculties of
mind went wrong, the essential point that knowledge has a human character, whereas the object of knowledge - the world of nature - was something objective in character for our thought and talk, involved an insight which is preserved and respected for any inquiry that concerns knowledge. It shows a direction for philosophical inquiry. Strawson's effort may be said to consist in giving such a direction.

It is a direction in the sense that language was discussed before hand as if it had nothing to do with human needs and hence nothing to do with speech. While speech involved a speaker and a hearer, language needed no such context. Whenever a philosophical problem was realized to have a linguistic origin, the problem, it was felt, needed a therapeutic treatment and the concept was analyzed with full explicitness. The problem dissolved. But without a background theory of language the problems reappeared in some form or other needing a permanent cure rather than a piecemeal analysis of the sort practiced. But a theory that explains and correlates the practice of a community of speakers has to take not only the conventions and the rules of language-use but also what as speakers the people do with that language. To see language as a perceptual data of sound for interpretation of the same as a significant speech act is the reverse of the case.
What actually happens is human beings have a communicational need and they refer to things or persons or things of the sort by use of words and expressions and naturally from a piece of such a use what we can work back is that the use has a communicational origin. That the speaker wants to do something by the use of words and expressions is too obvious, but to take something that is too obvious as absent distorts the entire picture of what goes on in language. Forgetting that language has a human origin makes the study of language more complicated. Hence the theory that takes language as something given to us like a perceptual data commits a mistake in principle. Naturally the solutions it offers to the problems are tainted with a wrong view of language. But it is natural to expect that a correction of the very principle at the outset will make the truth-theoretic approach, as regards the details, the correct approach to language. But it does not. The reason is that the concepts of the theory are based on the basic principles of the theory and hence they need a revision at several places before it is accepted as the right approach.

Now there is a conception of philosophy of language which views that it should be nothing other than a philosophy of linguistics. Linguistics as a sophisticated and highly specialized discipline takes the empirical data from a
comparative study of different empirical languages and the linguistic intuitions of their speakers represented by their experts. It tries to arrive at linguistic universals on the basis of such empirical studies and hence has a theory of language that describes the behaviour of language speaking people. But any characterization of the linguistic practice that forgets the essential nature of language as a mode of communication and hence leaves the semantic aspect unrelated to structure, suffers a drawback which can only be remedied by a consideration of the role of the semantic categories that provide a basis to syntax. This semantic basis of syntax, though a difficult thing to achieve, is a possibility that can be realized if we consider the a priori structure of our conceptual framework. A grammar that arranges languages according to the semantic features of their types has fulfilled the condition or will fulfill the condition. Now on the basis of a study of such language-types we can declare what semantic categories will be found in those languages without carrying any empirical study of the same languages. The empirical study might go wrong if the languages under study are either less developed or not developed to the desired kind or degree. In a way the theoretical semantic concepts may be found to lie implicitly there in the languages or some stage setting can be done to derive the concepts of the theory. But then there
is a risk, risk that it is not a theory of the practice, rather, it is a theory for the practice of a language speaking community. However, for a study of language as a human event, it can be classified according to the characterization and a theory binding them together will give us the required perspective on the practice of the speakers. Of course, the linguists classify the different empirical languages but their classification is based on the availability of structural facts. These structural facts provide them with a kind of descriptive adequacy that still is not sufficient for the explanatory adequacy that they themselves seek. They seek it because their theory does not happily explain the structural facts available to them.

My method in trying to understand Strawson's contribution consists in finding a contrast with what he calls truth-theoretic approach and the popular Chomskyan approach through grammar. But, I feel, I owe a word of explanation for the excessive emphasis given to Davidson-McDowell line of approach. This line is more properly described as semantics of natural language. Formal semantics advocated by those who are out to reconstruct natural language, because of its ambiguous character as regards syntax as well as vocabulary, takes a purely formalized language for study of the features of language. The expressions in such a
formalized language being free from ambiguity shows how things are. But the sentences in such formalized language are more like schemata which show positions for the expressions to occur. They cannot be taken to be true of the sentences of natural language. They are semantically closed sentences and they contain their own semantic character. They serve more or less like axioms of a theory. The sentences of natural language, in contrast, do not contain their own definitions nor are they so well defined. They are semantically open sentences and they are not quantified in a way that is required in formalized languages. Hence the features that are derived from such languages to be captured by a theory do not serve the purpose of a theory that tries to solve the problems of philosophy that arise due to a misuse of language or due to any ambiguous or vague character of language. Of course all problems in philosophy do not arise because of the ambiguous or vague character of language. To the extent they do not and to the extent the problems need the inferential power of logical forms for their solution, the theory can help in solution of philosophical problems. The case of semantics of natural language is a different story. They admit that natural language can be taken for study of the features of language, they admit the communicative nature of language use but they apply the model of formalized systems on natural language and as such take the
meaning of the expressions in natural language as well understood as if they encode a message for the hearer to decode, as if any utterance has a fact-stating content and it is only required for the speakers of a language to have a competency in the system. The so-called competency in the system limits the global character of the theory. The theory is so very restricted in scope that anybody who does not have a mastery in the sense of knowing the rules does not have the right to use language. But it is a fact that native speakers of a language continue to use language despite the fact that they are not aware of the rules that govern their behaviour. The so-called rules of language-use are best known to those who have a mind to work them out but it need not hinder the practice of a linguistic community. Hence the theoretical character of language as it is used by the speakers escapes the theory of these semantists. This is reflected in their refusal to explain the concepts of the theory in more familiar or basic terms. Again the theory does not make any distinction between the intentional use of language meant for communication and that is not meant for communication. The difference is that the non-serious and the reflective utterances of sentences cannot be responsible for raising philosophical problems. Now with so many constraints the semantics of natural language does not play the role desired by the theorists. The central semantic concept 'truth' takes for
granted that language is unrelated to reality and the task of connecting the two rests with itself. To declare a statement to be true is to relate language with reality. This is to neglect the role of conventions. If the truth of a sentence shows the nature of reality or how things are, then it is not clear how the sentence is structured out of the repeatable parts, the words, and how the meanings of words contribute to the meaning of the sentence. Some amount of holism is bound to be there. The difficulty with holistic view is that it tends to regard language as a code and the sentence as unstructured or to contain the same structure as that of the object language. Even some thinkers have put forward the argument that ambiguity should be transferred from object language to the metalanguage. McIowell has tried to put forward a defence in favour of truth-theoretic approach of the 'avisonian kind. That is one of the reasons for the kind of elaborate treatment given to McIowell's ideas.

Though the take off point for Strawson is Russell's theory of descriptions, Strawson always tries to set his system against Quine's. But the recent revival of interest in the concept of truth is due to Tarski. Tarski confined his truth-definition to formalized languages. It was Davidson who attempted to apply the concept to natural language. The recent interest in truth is due to the scope it provides for
controversy and discussion. Even among the truth-theorists there is a controversy as regards the structure of the theory. Thus Lummett demands that a theory of shell should surround the theory of the truth-conditional core while Kitchwell controverts it by saying that the joint deliverance of the theory of force and the theory of sense will be sufficient for derivation of content.

These divergent views constitute the backdrop for my discussion of Strawson's philosophy of language. Strawson, very much a philosopher's philosopher is brought out best in his debates, polemics, controversies and seminars. He is very much active and participating. I have tried to show the main trend from his published books and papers. Now I bring out the content of what is Strawson's philosophy of language in a nutshell.

Strawson for the first time has distinguished the philosophical systems which appeal to concepts that went beyond or below the actual conceptual structure that we have, from those systems which try to describe the actual conceptual structure and the framework in which the language of our thought and talk are significant. In drawing the distinction Strawson rejects the attempts made by philosophers such as Berkeley and Hume going below the available concepts to a level of thought in which we do not have a use for such hypothetical entities as sensations, impressions etc. in our day to day life. In a process of analysis it is very likely
that we may come to such perceptual data. But from the standpoint of identification they do not enjoy an identity of their own. They are rather identified with the help of those objects whose states and processes they are. Slightly, these data are a step back from our ontology of particulars. It is not only true in case of material bodies but also in case of persons. The concept of a person is such that it has certain predicates such as \textit{M}-Predicates and \textit{P}-Predicates. This is due to an analysis of the concept of a person. But the attempts to go below the concept to such constitutive features or attributes such as 'thinking' and 'being extended' and to put forward ontological entities such as 'mind' and 'body' through their paces is a faulty approach to our conceptual structure. This faulty approach has given rise to the problem of mind-body dualism, the problem of relating two independent substances, the problem of their interaction on one hand and the problem of disembodied existence on the other. It is an attempt to see the concept of a person as not somehow logically primitive. The concept of a person is primitive; it is not to be analyzed as constituted by two independently identifiable substances such as mind and body. States of consciousness and physical conditions are identificationally dependent on the concept of a person. This concept of a person is our empirical concept; a person has spatio-temporal existence. There have been some attempts to
stretch the concept of a person beyond one life, as if one and the same person has to undergo a cycle of births and deaths. Though the body is destroyed there is a kernel, called soul or self of the atman which can be identified as the same. Identification is an empirical concept and the criteria of identification are empirical criteria—the spatio-temporal existence etc. There might be some difference of opinion as to what exactly constitute the criteria. But that is a different issue. For practical purposes we generally use the identity of a body, its experience and memory, a certain trait of behaviour etc. But to call it a person we must have some empirical criteria. To call somebody a former person does not involve contradiction. We have a use such as ex-M.I.A. former Principal etc. where the identification is tied to the person's being an M.I.A. or being a principal some time back but not now. Hence the ex-M.I.A. depends on his being M.I.A. and former Principal depends for identification on his being a Principal of some college. Exactly the same is the case of a former person. But there is a difference. While the person who is now ex-Principal exists and therefore needs to be referred to in some or other discourse about him there is no such thing available in case of a former person; he is dead and gone. He cannot be referred to as constituting a spatio-temporal entity. But reference need not always be a
demonstrative identification of a particular. The only requirement is that what is referred to must have its own identity. If we have a necessity to refer in our talk to a former person, then the same can be done through the attributes he used to possess. This is what Strawson calls a logical possibility. Now there are attempts which might be seen to go beyond what our conceptual scheme in relation to our spatio-temporal framework of reference does permit. In such attempts the problems of solipsism and scepticism threaten our conceptual structure. But such problems do not arise if a proper perspective on identity and individuation of particulars is taken into account. In talking of identity through sensations and impressions that they cannot provide us with the conditions of identity and individuation of particulars and hence doubting the concept of particulars as we have, these philosophers applied a trick: the trick of accepting our conceptual structure and at the same time quietly forgetting one of the conditions of its employment.

Now the other way our conceptual structure is constrained is that scientists for their various purposes have advanced theoretical concepts for which we do not have a use in our ordinary language. So do not have to do enough of stage setting for our ordinary language. But theoretical concepts that the scientists use in their thought and talk are, in a way,
going below their gross counterparts available for ordinary conversation. Hence theoretical concepts such as 'electrons', 'protons' etc. appear in highly specialized disciplines but not in our ordinary conceptual framework that we use in our common place discourse. Again we talk of crowds, groups of individuals moving and acting as if they were a single individual. But we do not have any entity corresponding to the concept of crowd. Such concepts, therefore, have to be related to their basic ones—the individuals constituting the crowd. So also we have 'mass terms' whose individuation is not unproblematic. But then we provide individuating units to them. That is how they are to be identified.

Our conceptual scheme operates on the principles of individuation and identity which sometimes have to be provided to certain mass terms and sometimes, for the sake of our standard, some composite structures are to be dismantled. However, material bodies are those which possess material bodies are basic from the standpoint of identification of concepts that constitute our framework of reference. Conceptual over-indulgence as well as conceptual poverty are extremes which have no place in our actual conceptual structure.

Having had a good perspective on the conceptual structure which we use in our thought and speech and of which we have some knowledge, about their spatio-temporal position, the
manner of their occurrence (in case of events) and the way we connect them, Strawson now proceeds to give an outline of how language, committed to this conceptual structure, functions.

As a first step, Strawson distinguishes between a simple utterance of a sentence and its use in assertion. While a non-serious, playful utterance does not have reference, predication and truth-value, a serious, intended utterance or use of a sentence can have these characteristics. For truth of a sentence there must be a particular to which the speaker refers and then goes on to speak something by way of attributing a predicate. Now if the predicate is applicable to the particular, then the sentence is true and if not, then false. But if there is no particular or the thing that is being referred to, then the question of applying the predicate to the very same thing does not arise. There is a truth-value gap. Hence a simple utterance unintended for the audience cannot be ascribed a truth-value.

The distinction between a sentence and an assertion or proposition is a functional distinction. To know how one word is combined with another to produce a grammatical sentence is a linguistic knowledge but a logical consideration of the roles of the subject expression and the predicate expression is to know something more. It is to know what the speaker wants to do with the sentence. Hence it is not a combination of three
elements: subject, predicate and copula or that it is a combination of a noun or noun-phrase with a verb or verb-phrase, rather, it is a combination of reference and predication. This is what is known as the basic combination. In a basic combination the sentence is seen as introducing a particular or a universal or a universal-particular as the case may be in the subject place and a universal of higher generality in the predicate place. The traditional role of the copula is played by the predicate which contains the propositional symbolism. However it cannot be viewed as two terms combined by a relation that is external to them. The so-called copula is a non-relational tie.

The special task of this functional combination is to show how the particular and the universal are principles of collection. The universal collects the particulars according to its meaning whereas the particular collects universals according to its continuing identity. The universals are not only the principles of resemblance in the sense of showing likeness but also they are principles of difference. Several universals that are applicable to a particular show how the particular is different from other particulars, in other words a particular can be identified as the same with help of universals that are applicable to it. In a way this is the sense of the particular. A particular is better
introduced by a proper name for it shows the unity and identity of the same. It can be also introduced by a definite description or by a demonstrative. When it is introduced by a definite description the intention of the speaker is not to describe the particular as to how it is like. It is rather to identify the particular. Hence it is not required to enumerate all the properties that may be said to belong to that particular. It simply shows that the thing identified by such and such properties has a unity and identity to be used throughout the discourse. However it does not show that there is a constant informative value that can be attached to the use of proper names. Only in a restricted or limited society, if a name is used with any constant informative value, then it can be understood in that sense but in a large society whose membership is not limited, the efficiency of the name is not to involve any such constraint. They have an empirical load of distinguishing facts but what facts can be brought out to identify a particular going by a name, there is no fixity about it. Sometimes even a very trivial matter may be sufficient to introduce the particular if the same is known by the audience.

The audience is expected to have some knowledge about the surroundings and his own spatio-temporal position. So may be expected to know something about the topic of the
discourse. This knowledge is possession of the audience can be utilized to give an explanation of how communication functions. When a simple sentence is distinguished from an assertion the purpose is to show how one who hears the sentence takes it up. Now the explanation offered is that he has some knowledge of the background facts that is relevant for the purpose. However if in spite of the facts at his disposal he fails to identify or discriminate the particular, then the speaker tries to provide some other clue by way of providing further information. This is done with a view that the audience will take it up but not to give a full description of the particular which will reduce the function of reference to naught.

In our ordinary language we don't give a full description of a particular. Neither we have it nor do we need it. That the meaning of a word is the object it denotes is an old, but no longer a respectable, erroneous belief. There are several words which have no objective correlate and hence they do not point to any object. And for that purpose the meaning of a sentence is not a state of affairs or reality to which it is mistakenly supposed as corresponding. The meaning of a sentence shows a direction how to use it in different contexts of its utterance. All that is meant by saying that a proposition is true is that a certain predicate is applicable to the subject, that the subject-specifying
expression and the predicate-specifying expression are congruent or can go together. But if somehow the particular introduced by the subject-specifying expression cannot be taken for granted as existing then the question of applying the predicate to the same particular seems out of place. That there is a particular to which the predicate is applicable cannot be deduced from an assertion. The existence of the particular is something which forms the very basis of an assertion. It is rather the presupposition of the assertion. Hence questions of existence, uniqueness and identity constitute no part of what we assert nor can they be derived from any analysis of a proposition. To say that a proposition is true is to confirm what is stated in the sentence in a non-episodic sense. Truth of a statement is not a bare repetition of what is stated. The concept of truth has its own function to do. Just as the intention of the speaker is to confirm what is asserted in the sentence or assertion, similarly the truth of a proposition shows that the sentence asserted by the speaker fulfills a communicational constraint — that the sentence is issued to an audience for his uptake. Hence in Strawsonian scheme any sentence that can be more appropriately described as linguistic in character rather than an assertion is not truth-relevant. But a sentence whether it is taken in a propositional context or in a simple linguistic context, in the sense of being a grammatical combination of words, it has a meaning.
The meaning of a sentence is governed by the rules, conventions and practices of a language speaking community. An expression which has an objective correlate is governed by the demonstrative convention; a universal or concept is bound by descriptive conventions but when a proposition contains a particular and the universal or the concept playing the role of a predicate is applicable to that particular, there is no further convention or correlation binding the sentence with the world at the other end of the relation. The correspondence theory of truth says that truth plays the role of correlating language with reality or that a sentence when true corresponds with facts. Facts are supposed to be at the world-end of the relation, but facts are no parts of the world. They are what the propositions say in a non-episodic sense. Hence there is a distinction to be maintained between meaning of a sentence and its truth.

There have been several attempts in philosophy of language to blur this functional distinction. The reason or better, one of the reasons for such attempts is a failure to appreciate the significance of the concept of meaning. Words have their meaning as specified in a lexicon. A sentence being a combination of words, the meaning of a sentence should be guided by the meaning of words as given in the lexicon.
There are certain rules for the structure of a sentence. Once we observe these rules for the structure there should be no hindrance to sentence-meaning. But there is a hindrance. The dictionary entries do not assign one meaning for one word. There are several entries under one word. This is a peculiar feature of natural language. To make sense of what a sentence says one has to understand the word in the context of its use. Again there are different things done by using the same sentence. One has, therefore, to take the intention of the speaker while communicating that sentence. But the speaker does not use devices other than language to do the same thing. It seems the problem is, as some have felt, how to divine the intention of the speaker beneath the linguistic clothing of the sentence. A study of speech acts is conducted to capture the intentions of the speakers by the linguistic means and it is proposed that if we keep the intentions of the speaker as something separate from the body of the sentence, then the sentence will have a meaning of its own and the intentions of the speaker in uttering the sentence will be captured by the speech acts indicated by the linguistic means. But there is a complex network of intentions and there are various things that speakers want to do with their sentences. We see a man saluting the sun in morning and evening but we do not know what purpose it serves and with what intention he is speaking
the sentences he utters. Moreover the intentions are psychological in nature and therefore they do not yield to any formal treatment. There is another approach available. If intention of a speaker is left to the care of a theory of force through speech acts, then there are certain conditions which when fulfilled yield the sense of the sentence. The sense of the sentence will determine the content of the saying of that sentence. The conditions under which it is true will indicate the meaning of the sentence. But the difficulty is that all sentences do not yield smoothly to truth-conditional analysis. There are modal sentences whose truth-conditions are same but they differ in their meaning. Moreover without knowing the type of discourse in which the sentence forms a part, it is not possible to determine whether it is true or false or that there is a truth-value gap. The problem is that there is no way to find out a comprehensive theory of meaning that explains what the speakers do with their linguistic utterances. Furthermore, the speaker, it is very likely, may commit mistakes of fact as well as mistakes of language. It seems a comprehensive theory has to account for all such things and explain how a competent speaker of a language understands the sayings of others. Of course as a human being sharing the same environmental features and same type of experience is likely to have the same sort of response to environment and thereby develop or has a need to develop a
language that is capable of expressing the same concepts. This is evidenced by the translatability of one language into another. But translatability depends upon intensional concepts whereas truth-conditional approach depends heavily on extensional considerations. Accordingly the truth-theorists view translatability with suspicion. So much so that the entire structure of the sentence of the object language is retained in the metalanguage as per Tarski's Convention (T).

Now if we leave aside the claim of truth-conditional theory because it does not make a functional distinction between the linguistic data and the assertions made by speakers for the purpose of communication, then there is another approach in the form of semantics of natural language. This approach takes the communicational aspect into consideration but taking the intentions of the speaker as something psychological tries to do away with that concept as something irrelevant a step in further analysis of communication. It deems communication as sharing of knowledge and knowledge as beneficial information for the audience. In this model it is not the intention to do something that is relevant, rather, it is the intentional performance which helps in theory construction. Now the intentional performance of the speakers can be interpreted in the model of speech acts to be taken care of in the theory of force and the rest of
th sentence, rather the kernel sentence, is subjected to truth-conditional semantics to derive the sense of the sentence. Now the theory instead of becoming a theory of meaning is deemed as a theory of understanding: the understanding of any linguistic data as a significant sentence. A theory of understanding thus has the function to distinguish unmeaning sound from significance. The speakers have a competency with the language-use and as such they can distinguish which utterances are meant to be communicated and which are not. The competency gives the speakers an information-processing capacity in virtue of which the speakers distinguish the available linguistic data first as to their relevance for interpretation. Now an interpreting audience in virtue of their information-processing capacity and the linguistic competency interpret any sound as to its relevance for sharing of knowledge. The speaker's intention in conveying the information or in passing on the information does not have any role to play. It does not play a role because the speaker mechanically passes on the information. The information is encoded in the linguistic data and the same is required to be decoded by the audience. This is where information-processing capacity plays its role. So far as competency is concerned it includes certain semantic concepts in the conscious linguistic repertoire of individual speakers. One such semantic concept is truth. Hence by an appeal to this
semantic concept we can, it is hoped, work out the theory of understanding. It is no part of a theory of understanding to explain the concept of truth for it is included in the competency of the speakers of a linguistic community. Though the theory, it is maintained, may be regarded as a modest theory in the sense that it does not take the responsibility of explaining the theoretical concepts, such a modesty is defensible for we are not required to go very far outside the object language. Our metalanguage, it is explained, contains the object language and as such 'what is truth' need not bother us. The reason offered is that the metalanguage by containing the object language serves as an axiom for derivation of the truth of the sentence. Though truth is not defined in more familiar or basic terms i.e. in terms of the intensions of the speaker, it is illustrated on every occasion of its occurrence. This is a recursive characterization of the concept. And this method though does not take a reductive analysis of the concept it shows what the concept is by illustration. If analysis suggests decomposition or breaking into constituent parts, then we call it 'elucidation'. Though there is a problem regarding the modal sentences being truth-relevant this method explains the assertoric utterances of the speakers.

Now it may be seen that this theory of semantics of natural language works within the framework of truth-theory
and makes truth-application to natural language a plausible claim. It may be further seen that the intention (12) kind spoken of in Gricean analysis, the notion of 'uptake' in Austinian analysis to which Strawson invites the attention of theorists, has been captured by a theory that takes the theory of meaning as a theory of understanding. Meaning of a sentence and understanding of a sentence are one and the same thing in terms of the theory. But this is the take off point for Strawson. This is a point where Platts raises an objection when he invites our attention to the gist of a lecture or a conversation. That shows a theory of understanding proceeds in a way that helps in deriving the gist or the point of utterance trying to grasp the intention of the speaker. Sometimes the hearer works out the implications of what is said. It is not somehow the content or the truth-conditional sense of the sentence. Moreover there seem to be different kinds of understanding associated with different kinds of discourses and their sentence-kinds. Analogical understanding and what is known as syntactical understanding are to be differently characterized from a fullfledged semantic understanding. If understanding has to be something mechanical in the sense that it does not involve a process of inference, then deriving the truth-conditional content or the sense, the way the truth-theorists do, is something that involves an inferential process which cannot be avoided by the notion of competence. Again the notion of competence has been given a
theoretical role that seems too much for it. The notion of competence was urged upon by the transformational generative grammarians to explain the knowledge of language as a system of rules. These rules, as it was realized by the grammarians themselves, might have some descriptive adequacy but they do not have the necessary explanatory power to establish a semantic basis of syntax. It is a fact that native speakers of a language have a sort of mastery with the rules of language but that mastery does not include a thorough knowledge of things. Knowledge of rules and knowledge of things is not a simple grammatical distinction to be ignored by an appeal to the rules of grammar. A man may know whether a sentence is well-formed or ungrammatical and how to understand an arbitrary sentence as regards its structure but that does not mean a full semantic significance is available for the audience unless the theory takes the trouble of providing for a semantic basis of syntax. However that semantic basis of syntax being a requirement for any successful theory and the same being not fulfilled by the grammarians, the notion of competence has some ad hoc nature that cannot be ignored. Now to rely heavily on such an ad hoc notion is a disabling fact about a theory.

There is, of course, an attempt by the T.S. grammarians to provide the semantic basis of syntax through the universals of language. The attempt to arrive at a universal grammar is
not new. The Port Royal logicians tried to arrive at such a grammar. However, the success of such an attempt depends upon an empirical study showing certain structural and semantic facts to be common to all empirical languages of the world or showing that these facts are necessary for any language that fulfills a certain standard. But the languages being a varied lot with different structures, an empirical study will have little explanatory power for the purpose. The study shows that some structural facts are common to a group of languages having certain origin. But there is no hope to bind together all languages of the world. The only hope is the a priori provision of certain semantic categories to a group of languages. Chomsky's theory of mind that there is an innate linguistic ability in virtue of which children learn languages while animals do not and that a particular child is not predisposed to learn a particular language, rather he has the ability to learn any language to which he is exposed, shows that only the ability to learn a language is universally present in all children. But this does not prove that the substantive universals and the formal universals would do the job. The substantive universals would be established if any item of a given sort in any language could be shown from a finite set of such items whose characterization does not involve any particular language. The claim is that there are some (finite) phonetic features, characterized in terms of acoustics and articulation, which suffice for the
phonetic component of any language. On the other hand the formal universal relates to the base and the transformational rules. The claim is that any language must contain some rules for transformation. The rules for transformation as linguistic universals may be present in a language but these linguistic universals cannot be specified unless we have a specification of the language-types. That is common or innate may be seen as not so much as deep structural information but some learning principles of a very general kind or a learning ability more or less akin to trial and error. The correct performances are rewarded and the wrong ones are accompanied by punishment. However, much work remains to be done in the field. Hence my remark that the notion of competence is *ad hoc.*

How Strawson advances the theory of language-types and the notion of their essential grammar which would specify the semantic categories in advance, and the natural languages with their variable grammars will actually show how the semantic requirements are met by any language that comes under that language-type. That will give us a semantic basis of syntax and fulfill the condition of perspicuousness.

It may be seen that the theory of semantics of natural language has the same rubric construction as the truth-theoretic approach. The formal semanticists do not admit the role of communication whereas the semanticists of natural
language admit the role of communication but do not realize the import of the intentions of the speaker. Particularly *i*•ewell understands the intentions in the psychological sense and says that the intentions are captured by the speech acts. Moreover it may be seen that the truth-theory in deriving the truth-conditional content of the sentence follows Chomsky's method of deriving back the kernel sentence by detransforming it. We have seen the different transformations and how they transform the kernel sentence. This will be a reverse process of getting the kernel sentence back from the transformed ones. As the rules of transformations are held to be common to all languages in the sense of being formal universals, they form a part of the competence of the language-users. This notion of competence has been assigned the task of explaining the linguistic creativity in the sense of an ability to interpret the significance of an arbitrary sentence. For example it will consist in saying what transformation 'p' has taken - in giving a description in terms of propositional attitude expression the linguistic behaviour of a speaker that the speaker asserts that p, questions whether it is p, requests that p, commands that p etc. Here it has been assigned the task of interpreting the linguistic data or sound into a significant speech act. Thus McDowell says, it would reveal the relations between sound and significance, which in a sense, constitute the language. McDowell says
'it is hard to see what could have a better claim to count as a theory of meaning for a language'.

The point is that the theory of semantics of natural language by interpreting a theory of meaning as a theory of understanding has insufficiently specified the concept of understanding. Rather the concept of understanding has been taken in a generic sense. It was demanded of sentence-meaning that it be specified with reference to simple linguistic data and data as peculiar to assertoric utterances and secondly with reference to the different types of discourses. Whereas simple linguistic data has a conventional meaning, the meaning in case of assertoric utterances is different and that while truth-conditional meaning may be applicable to a particular type of discourse the same is not true in case of others. There are other conditions such as compliance-conditions and fulfillment-conditions etc. But so far as understanding is concerned it is treated as one and the same. As it was discussed, there is a demand to associate different types of understanding with different types of discourses, for example, to associate a mere syntactical understanding where the full semantic significance of concepts could not be realized or where there was none to realize, and to associate a metaphorical understanding with a child's understanding of scientific theories and a native's understanding of sentences without realizing that there is a
complex network of rules generating the sentences. Now if postulation of different types of understanding makes sense, then it is hard to explain why and how there can be one theory of understanding or a general theory of understanding without making a sufficient distinction between the varied lot naturally associated with the types of sentence-meaning. This is reinforced by the argument that understanding does not involve an inferential process - that it should be a matter of perception. If the argument for types of understanding is sound then there need not be so much of pressure on the notion of competence to explain the different types of discourses by a single mechanism.

My point is that the formal semantist approach, the approach made by the semantists of natural languages an’ the approach made by the empirical linguists belong to one type i.e. they are a family of approaches belonging to one tradition. The point is simple - that they do not make a functional distinction and thereby fail to establish a connecting link between the linguistic data of a simple grammatical sentence and the data as belonging to assertions. For these theorists everything is to be treated as linguistic data. And it is the task of the competency or the information-processing capacity to interpret the data.

Strawson’s approach, in contrast, belongs to another type that makes a functional distinction between the sentences
as simple linguistic data and the sentences as assertions and to characterize the former as accessible to a conventional meaning whereas the latter as accessible to an intended meaning showing such semantic features as reference and truth.

Now I come to a general issue raised throughout in the course of discussions. The issue is precisely this: what should be the nature of a theory of meaning? what should be the nature of a theory of truth? and what should be the nature of a theory of language? The divergent views on the matter invite a clarification before we assess whether Strawson's philosophy has the necessary theoretical requirements.

In the context of the concept of a person the issue is raised by Cartesians that the dual principles of body and mind explained the physical and mental phenomena respectively and, therefore, are necessary. But the Strasanian demand is that the division is a stretched one and it does not explain the concept of a person or the concept as we empirically use it. The empirical concept does not subscribe to disembodied existence nor does it cohere with the imaginative examples of feats of transference etc. The concept of mind as the pure ego does not have a use in our empirical language.

The issue arises in case of proper names. Russell advocated that logically proper names are disguised descriptions.
Strawson by pointing to our use said that they are not always so. 'This' may sometimes fail to refer. Proper names are descriptions on demand; otherwise, the names are referring devices. In our day to day discourse we use them to stand for their continuing identity. There is another extreme advocated by Kripke. According to Kripke names are rigid designators best known to their baptizers. According to Strawson names are or could be regarded as rigid designators but only in a particular context, especially in a small group of language users or in a special name-using community or in the system of its generation. But considered apart from such a context, the names have no constant informative value for referential utility in larger communities having more complicated referring needs. Hence the names be distinguished in their contexts of use and there in no one way of fitting the facts to the fold of logic. There are short definite descriptions which can naturally and easily perform the function of identifying reference to particulars.

Kripke talks of the basic combination but eliminates or considers inessential the singular terms. That differentiation in case of particulars can be achieved through the general concepts. According to Strawson the thought about the world involves general concepts is a truth or a platitude which most philosophers accept. But unless these concepts are related to
a possible experience of the real, those concepts remain empty. A general concept is general in the sense that it is, in principle, capable of being exemplified in any number of different particular cases. This capability is realized in case of spatio-temporally identifiable particulars. Concepts are principles of collection of particulars but they are also principles of distinction. Concepts come in their compatibility ranges as their compatibility ranges are the principles of distinction for particulars which come within a particular range. So also we can view particulars as principles of distinction among the concepts. We could sort out the concepts it exemplifies from the rest. So also one concept may be wholly included in the logical space of another concept and thus we can say 'scarlet' is included in 'red'. Thus there is a combination of a particular and the concept that it exemplifies. This is the basic combination of predication. Quine makes a restricted use of it while Strawson demands that this be related to our natural language.

Ramsay says that the subject-predicate distinction (with reference to Russell) assumed a fundamental antithesis but the same can be doubted to be denied. Strawson points out that this is true so far as the linguistic expressions are concerned but when we see them as introducing the particular and the general concept there is an essential distinction
to be maintained. Hence Ramsey's comment though true in a particular case is not true in most of the important cases.

Ramsey says that to say that 'p is true' is saying nothing more than 'p', hence there is a redundancy in saying 'It's true'. Strawson's view is that 'It's true' has its own job to do. It is not redundant in all cases. It is said to confirm, to corroborate, to agree etc. Hence it might be seen that Strawson's performative formula goes in accordance with a functional distinction between the sentences that are truth-relevant and that are not.

It may be seen that truth-conditional theory of meaning takes into consideration the fact stating type of discourse i.e. the sentences for which truth-conditions count but claims to have arrived at a general theory of meaning that to give the truth-conditions of a sentence is the same as giving the meaning. Strawson's objection is that there are certain types of sentences for which to ask for the truth-conditions is not relevant. In the light of this the theory may take all facts into consideration and give a general theory that explains the individual sentences.

There is another controversy where the issue is raised. Justin distinguished between illocutionary speech act from a
locutionary one and maintained that the force of the utterance is not exhausted by meaning in case of illocutionary speech act. However the illocutionary acts are conventional in the sense the intentions of the speaker are fully explicit. He excludes two cases of speech acts from illocutionary utterances and says that they are not conventional. The cases are 'showing off' or 'impressing' and 'insinuating'. Strawson would regard speech acts in general to be characterized by securing of response 'r' and as such the intentions to do something by the utterance is not captured by the conventional nature of speech acts. LeChowell would say that it is not the intention to perform something that is caught by the speech acts rather it is the intentional performance which is captured by the speech acts. Strawson's point is that all cases are to be characterized by a broader category.

The issue can be also seen in Chomsky's claim of finding linguistic universals to provide an explanatory basis for the descriptively adequate transformational generative grammar. Strawson invites attention to the variety of natural languages and says that unless care be taken to classify languages according to their types, the semantic categories supposed to be the universals of languages may not appear in a particular natural language. Hence in order to make a general characterization available full facts be taken into account otherwise it is not a general characterization at all.
Strawson made a rigid classification into true, false and the cases where the question of truth and falsity does not arise. It was expanded by Hampshire, Crice and Harnock that there are exceptions. Strawson admitted such cases and says that there is a strong tendency to use the terms the way he has done but his errors consisted in canonizing the tendencies and making them rigid and fixed rules.

There is a great controversy between McEowall and Lunett. It is a great controversy for they are still engaged in the controversy. According to Lunett a theory of meaning if it is to be regarded as a theory of understanding it must include a theory of shell surrounding the truth-conditional core that will explain the concepts of the theory to one who does not already possess them. For McEowall such a theory is not necessary because of mind's involvement in speech and because the speaker has competency that includes some amount of knowledge of theoretical concepts. Hence a theory need not be full-blooded; it can presuppose theoretical concepts in the conscious linguistic repertoire of a speaker. But if we take a full view of facts then it will be evident that theoretical concepts not only in case of philosophy of language but also in case of any study whatsoever need an explicit introduction. What the speakers may be said to possess is a working mastery of the native language but not
that a speaker can make an explicit statement of the system of rules. No doubt, we as the speakers of our native tongue can use grammatical sentences but the theoretical concepts which facilitate the understanding of a theory that relates sound to significance may not be known to a speaker. I may know a book about the author of the book and the contents of the book and know so many other things that a book requires of me but I may not know what is theory of knowledge—all that philosophers laboriously discuss and arrive at. It may be natural for me to speak true sentences but it may not be a case that I know the theory of truth. Hence one point is there is a difference between the ordinary use and a theoretical use. It seems Luzzetti's insistence on an introduction is right. But the issue is deep rooted. Now the point is whether such an introduction should form a part of the theory or not. L. Lowelli says that Luzzetti's do and could be taken as that a theory should be as full-bodied as possible but it need not be a global requirement on the theory.

The general issue is what should be the nature of a theory whether it is about the concept of a person, a referring expression, the logical form of sentences, the intentional characterization of speech acts, the concept of truth, communication, knowledge etc. or some such thing.
Strawson's attempt in giving a right approach is to take a full view of the instances to be covered under the theory and see whether the theory has a generality that explains the cases under its purview. If the theory does not explain, then to make it specific, as specific a claim as possible rather than making a general claim and losing the ground. Though we use language in our thought and speech, the conceptual structure of our language lies submerged and the task of a philosopher is to unravel that structure. It lies submerged because the concepts of a specialist and sophisticated discipline can be connected with the day to day, ordinary, common place language. We have a practical mastery with this language not with the language of the theory. Any explicit understanding of a theory requires an introduction about the concepts connecting the same with our ordinary language. As Strawson very often says, clarity lies in connections - in establishing connections with that which we understand. There may be some circularity involved in this but the circle if it is quite big and we have to traverse a long way before we come to the same concepts, then there will be some illumination. Connecting one concept with another which is equally unilluminated or unfamiliar or less primitive or vague will not, however, give philosophical illumination that we seek. Nor can a reductive analysis
in terms of basic will be illuminating if the basic is somehow not empirically rooted in our language and experience. It is not necessary to give an extra turn to the wedge as empiricists and the positivist philosophers have done. It is sufficient to be empirical. Ordinary language is empirical in this sense and all our theories need to be empirical in the sense that they can be or they are capable of being related to this ordinary language. This is the touchstone of philosophical enterprise.

My objective was a study of Strawson's approach to the problems in Philosophy of Language. I have tried to do it with special reference to certain key notions in the area. I do not claim that these are the only notions involved nor do I claim that I have done full justice to these notions. A full justice demands a more detailed work. The issues are living issues and hence have an open-endedness about them. Many contemporary linguists, psycholinguists and philosophers are currently busy in linguistic theory construction. Revisions and refinements of the old standpoints as well as completely new standpoints may emerge. Fresh studies will always be profitable in the sense of throwing new lights on the old issues. Moreover these notions have been discussed as belonging to a theoretical framework which directly goes against or shows some amount of difference with Strawsonian approach. The truth-theoretic framework has a natural home in a completely
formalized language. But that involves a complicacy which I could not bring in for the present purpose. I have simply worked out the implications in the context of natural language. That is the reason of my so much emphasis on the work of Davidson and McDowell. So is the case with linguistics. The transformational generative grammar is a highly technical and complicated developing system. I could not work out in detail all the transformations nor the substantive and the formal universals. It is so involving, I was afraid, I might lose sight of purpose at hand. I have only worked out the implications in general and tried to see how far these help in construction of a theory of meaning and language. Even the theory of language-types that Strawson advances has not been worked out here in full. I have only taken those features that help in a general understanding of the principles involved. Much work needs to be done in this field and the programmatic character of Strawson's language-types will find a fruitful manifestation only when the substructures can be worked out to give a fullfledged natural language with its enriched actual grammar. Even if this is done a full appreciation of Strawson's work demands a thorough discussion of a theory of perception and knowledge, identity and individuation, a theory of mind and its involvement of speech, a theory of actions and events and the way they are connected among themselves and with the
particulars. Moreover I have confined myself to assertoric discourse which has been taken as fundamental in Strawsonian scheme. He does not believe in a reduction of other modes to this fundamental one but then others do. Hence it is also necessary to show how such a reduction involves in general a problem and how the problem thus generated will be overcome by a postulation of understanding-types naturally associated with them. This will involve a thorough discussion of speech-act theory. Because a right appreciation of his work involves such a broad perspective on the issues, there is enough room for departmental study as well as interdisciplinary studies. Mine is an humble attempt to understand the broad, basic and the general principles involved in his philosophy of language. If my argumentation is right, this will, I hope, give a plausible account in spite of the limitations.