

An Introductory
Course to Philosophy
of Language

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By

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Cambridge
Scholars
Publishing



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This book first published 2016

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

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ISBN (10): 1-4438-9745-0

ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-9745-7

To my mother

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PREFACE

During the tenth year of my academic career at the faculty of education, deeply focused on teaching languages, I was encouraged to explore the depths of the nature of what I teach. It was then that I started my PhD in philosophy. As I went deeper and deeper I was able to associate what I had already learnt with what I was just learning, recognizing and questioning. My philosophical investigations about language manifested the fact that language is everywhere, sometimes as a tool and sometimes as an obstacle. Initially, in writing this book, I had in mind an audience of undergraduate students of philosophy. However, since many people read philosophy for different purposes, I decided to introduce the philosophy of language in such a way that it could be utilised by people with differing concerns. Therefore, while writing this book I have not assumed any familiarity with philosophical techniques or terminology. I know that the reading of philosophy is a demanding task and that philosophy has no shallow end. Yet you may find an attachment at some point in this book because language is what we all share.

I am indebted to all my professors at the Philosophy Department of Uludağ University. I am also grateful to Prof. Dr. A. Kadir Çüçen for his support and encouragement during the tough process of writing. My dear professors Zekiye Kutlusoy, Muhsin Yılmaz, Zeki Özcan and Işık Eren have given me courage and inspiration during my compelling but exploratory expedition into philosophy.

I hope that when you finish reading this book your own theorizing will begin.

*Ufuk Özen Baykent
Bursa, 2016*

INTRODUCTION

Philosophical investigations about the concept of language have become more and more compelling in the last few centuries. The considerations about language are objects for various areas of scientific research as well as for theoretical questioning. Philosophical study of language sheds light on many different fields like education, linguistics, sociology, politics, psychology, etc. In a sense, where there is human life, there exists a trace of language because language is the most distinctive capacity of man. Philosophy of language provides a deep background for both other fields of philosophy and various scientific studies. My approach in writing this introductory book is both thematic and historical; my major aim is to enable all people interested in language and philosophy to find out connections to their own topics of study while introducing the field of philosophical investigations about language. The book follows a chronological sequence in the presentation of philosophers' approaches to language which is enriched by the occupation of the chapters by certain themes. My choice of the philosophers included in and omitted from the book may seem arbitrary to others. However, the themes and the approaches required this choice. I emphasize it here because I may not have space to do so in the text: I will not spare an independent chapter for Wittgenstein, yet his two different approaches in two periods are handled in the relevant chapters.

Chapter 1 and 2 are preparatory parts of the book illuminating the reader about the concept of language and the general scope of philosophy of language. Chapter one focuses on what language is and introduces the basic terms about the study of language. The definitions are given with reference to linguistic books as well as to philosophy books. The differences between formal language and natural languages and between human language and so called language of animals are discussed. Functions and characteristics of language, the relationship between philosophy of language and other fields in philosophy, and the connection between philosophy of language and other disciplines related to language are outlined in order to assign the dimensions of language and linguistic study. In this way, we will better relate the concept to the philosophical discussions and considerations in the history of philosophy before and after the linguistic turn. The second chapter is on the content of philosophy

of language, basic terms in this branch of philosophy, the distinction of syntax, semantics, pragmatics in philosophical language studies and examples of some basic problems in philosophy of language.

With the third chapter starts the chronological sequence of the approaches of philosophers with considerable impact on the philosophy of language. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 explore the philosophers from antiquity namely Heraclitus, Plato and Aristotle. In antiquity the problem of naming and the truth of names were central to the discussions about language. The truth of names was determined according to the connection between language and world. Aristotle's concentration on the categories and universals gave way to the medieval discussion of language which is covered in chapter 6 of the present book. The chapter includes references to Porphyry, Boethius, Abelard and William of Ockham. The medieval discussion of language is shaped by the nature of universals. The existence of universals and the names used to signify them are discussed mutually. Chapter 7 is a start for modern discussion about language. Chapters 7, 8, 9 and 10 display how language is regarded in modern philosophy by Descartes, Leibniz, Locke and Humboldt respectively. Descartes emphasizes language as an innate human ability that differentiates humans from animals or machines. Leibniz illustrates an ideal language project which would be useful for handling the problems in philosophy and science. Locke's concern was with words and the ideas they represent. Humboldt emphasizes the social and cultural aspects of language.

Chapter 11 and onwards is a shift in philosophical discussions about language. After the linguistic movement at the turn of the 19th century, language was studied from different aspects such as syntax, semantics and pragmatics. Frege and Russell were concerned with the semantic as well as syntactic aspect of language. Frege's most striking contribution to the philosophy of language was his classification between meaning and reference. His contemporary Russell studied the names and descriptions; found descriptions; he problematic and distinguished between definite and indefinite descriptions. Kripke put forward his arguments about reference and opposed the descriptive reference. His assertions about contingent *a priori* and necessary *a posteriori* propositions were unsettling. Chapter 14 deals with the philosophical discussions about the pragmatic aspect of language and three philosophers, namely Austin, Searle and Grice are discussed as representatives. Austin's proposal of speech acts was developed by his contemporaries Grice and Searle and was shaped as a pragmatic theory of language. It was a hard task for me to decide where to stop and finally I settled on Chomsky who in a sense represents a return to the era of Descartes and reconsiders the innate ability of man to create,

develop and use a language. So while the final chapter reveals the debate between Skinner and Chomsky the focus is on language acquisition. The debate is between behaviourist and mentalist fronts and our emphasis is on the argument by Chomsky, reminding us of the innate human capacity of language. Thus the final chapter broadly brings Chomsky's theory of language to light.

CHAPTER ONE

THE CONCEPT OF LANGUAGE

The concept of language is too broad to be defined in a single expression. As it sits at the heart of the philosophy of language, it is necessary to describe and make clear the concept initially. In general languages are forms of symbolic representation. Certain meanings are represented through the use of other certain symbols. The definition may be used for formal languages as well as for natural languages. Yet the aim of this book is to explore human language and provide a philosophical account of human language. Using language to speak, write, listen and read is a skill for us, special to humans. Human language therefore cannot be considered without people and people's using, creating, developing and changing it.

It is a tool for us to share our ideas, feelings and desires. It helps us to reveal our thoughts and communicate with others. Human language is one of the most developed and complicated means to transmit knowledge. Language is a must for poetry, prose and drama. It is what makes a community out of a group of people.

Language is defined as a unity of multidimensional concepts that is made up of accidental signs and is a system that provides communication (İmer et al., 2013, 87). When the definition is considered it is true to say that there is no reason for naming an object by using the sign "table" but not using "tabe" instead. Language is a unified system of elements associated with one another in one way or another. One of the major aims of this system is to establish a ground for communication. The concepts of language are multidimensional and are therefore studied accordingly. For instance, the dimension of meaning is related to the field of semantics and pragmatics, the dimension of the usage of language in real-life environments is the focus of pragmatics, the way words and sentences are constructed is the problem of syntax, and the sounds and how they are pronounced are discussions in the fields of phonetics and phonology.

In a dictionary of linguistic terms, language is described as something enabling man to constitute an artificial world separate from the real world with its own principles. Language is an arbitrary system based on social convention and is a sum of figure of speech bonded with accidental sounds

in a unity of sound and meaning (Karaağaç, 2013, 274, 275). This definition displays some of the basic qualities of language. Firstly, language has the property of conventionality. To express a being by using another being, namely a symbol, is a property of human language. Language is conventional, for we talk about certain objects by using some symbols that are not those symbols themselves. A second property of language is collectiveness, that is the condition of understanding or thinking the same object or concept when one word is uttered or read. The persistence of languages is closely related to the element of collectiveness. The spread of a relationship between a word in a language and the being it represents in terms of time or space will increase the meaningfulness of language. One of the properties determining accurate use of language is ascertained by its being widespread over space and time. The third property of language is arbitrariness and is acceptable on dimension of vocabulary. The being and the name we use to represent that being is arbitrary, is of no reason.

From the beginning of all the questioning about the concept of language there has been a debate about how words have certain meanings. Is the meaning of a word already existent in the essence of that word or is it attached by humans? This leads us to the question of what came first: the being/ the knowledge of being or the name of the being.

The field of linguistics has exhibited an explanation for this major question. The vocabulary of a particular language is grounded on two types of resources: Internal elements and external elements. Internal elements are fundamental and are formed by adding or removing affixes within the boundaries of that particular language. In the case of internal elements, both the being/ the knowledge of being and the name of the being are existent concurrently. External elements are on the other hand formed by borrowing from other languages. The positions of these elements are different; either the being/ the knowledge of the being or the name of the being arise initially.

When he discusses the concept of language, Ferdinand de Saussure points out a triple classification of the term in question: *Langage*, *Langue* and *Parole*. *Langage* is the ability to use a system for communicating ideas and feelings using sounds, gestures, signs, or marks. This skill is peculiar to humans. *Langue* refers to the ideal abstract system composed of socially conventional symbols. It is the term Saussure uses to point out a particular natural language like English, Turkish, and Russian etc. *Parole* expresses the actual use of language in real environment conditions. According to Saussure language is a distinctive biological capacity of human beings and is an element governing human behaviour.

Another issue of debate has been the use of a language by animals. Do animals communicate with each other? If yes, how is their communication different from that of people? What differences exist between animal language and human language? The questions were posed as new experiments put forward various conclusions. Animals use a medium of communication which is non-verbal. The communication of animals is instinctive, innate and is transferred heritably. Human languages are acquired and learned by education. They are inherited by the generations that follow as a cultural heritage. Animal language is an expression of sensual conditions. On the contrary, human language goes beyond the expression of feelings and is used for argumentation, description, classification and figuration. Unlike humans, animals use signals instead of symbols. Human languages are composed of symbols to be used for recurrence and transfer.

In his *Objective Knowledge*, Karl Popper identifies four functions of language: Manifestation of oneself, sign interchange, description and argumentation. According to Popper animals are similar to humans in the first two and basic functions. Both animals and humans can manifest any sort of physiological conditions. Likewise both can react in certain ways as a reply which is considered as an exchange of signs. But when the two other upper level functions are taken into account he asserts that animals are different from humans in that they cannot set forth descriptions and argumentations. In order to realize these two upper level functions, the human mind is required. The development of these upper level functions will provide a better use of the two other lower level functions. For instance the more a person develops argumentation techniques, the more he will succeed in exchange of ideas in a debate.

Another classification in the discussions about the concept of language is the variation of language as being formal or natural. Natural languages and formal languages are commonly considered as being wholly different. However, when deeply questioned, many similarities will be found. Natural languages are formal in principle. In both types of languages there are the distinctions of form and content or expression and meaning. The use of a natural language under real life circumstances is parallel to the relation between theory and practice presented in formal languages. The main significant difference between natural and formal languages lies in the formation processes of both. Natural languages have not actually been formulated artificially. The fundamental formation processes of such languages are natural and the principles and rules grounding these processes are various, unique and complex. Such an obscure structure can

not only be explained by the syntactic and semantic principles of formal languages.

Philosophy of language is closely related to some other disciplines in philosophy like logic, epistemology, ontology and philosophy of mind. The questions about the nature of justice, knowledge or being are of great interest and debate in the history of philosophy. Finding the appropriate answers is, in a sense, a problem of understanding the question. Is it the meaning of the word being questioned or is it the content of the concept? For instance, Wittgenstein claims that the question of “what is knowledge?” is meaningless when considered as a philosophical question. Wittgenstein exemplifies this with the concept of “family resemblance” and explains that when the word “game” is taken into account and defined, it is impossible to find features shared by all games. The reason why we call them games can be explained by the fact that they all resemble each other in some or other ways like the members of a family. Thus any kind of philosophical questioning may be relevant to the language used in our questions or in the definitions of concepts.

Logic is one field of philosophy that is connected with philosophy of language at the syntactic level. Logic is an inquiry into the logical form of propositions which is the syntactic level of questioning language in philosophy. Logic displays a formal and artificial language which is often contrasted with human language. Philosophy of language is another field in philosophy whose path intersects with that of philosophy of language regarding the concepts of such mental processes as conscience, thought, belief, cognition and learning. Some of the propositions in language are on belief or perception. The philosophical analysis of an utterance like “I believe it will rain today” requires understanding the mental processes involved. Another concept in philosophy of mind is the concept of mental representation which binds the field to language. There is a relationship between mental representation of something and referring to that thing. Thus, the concept of reference and mental representation of the thing being referred to, have a bond. As for epistemology, the relation is that many philosophers agree that knowledge is propositional. When the relationship between a subject as a knower and an object as the thing known is considered, many argue that the object is a proposition. Besides the concept of proposition, the two fields of philosophy are linked with the concept of truth. The argument is that for a subject to know a proposition, it is necessary that the proposition is true. Thus, the question of truth of propositions binds knowledge to language. When ontology is the case, language is questioned in terms of propositions of existence. To propose that something exists or does not exist is problematic for many

philosophers of language including Frege and Russell. The discussions about such propositions will be handled in the relevant chapters that follow.

Language is a questionable concept not only in philosophy but also in social and educational sciences. For some sciences language is a major concept of research and for others a secondary discussion topic when handling another problematic object. In brief, language is the object of many sciences either directly or indirectly. Linguistics is the science that studies language and puts the concept at the heart of its research. Psychology of language, physiology of language, philology and literature are the other fields and sciences in which language is either a primary or secondary concern for research.

To begin with the scientific study of language, it is true to say that linguistics has gained popularity as scientists are more and more emphasizing the relationship between language and human culture, belief and behaviour. In the 1960s, as the complexity of linguistic phenomena was taken into account, it was crucial for the scientific arena to carry out research about language as an independent field. In this respect, as successful researches pointed out new findings, there developed many subfields within the major field of linguistics. Saussure put forward a distinction as to how language can be investigated in two systems. The diachronic system examines language on a historical scale and studies the changes in language and classification of languages into families. 19th century linguistics was mainly diachronic. The synchronic system studies various linguistic conditions regardless of historical changes. Synchronic linguistics focuses on analysis and description of language as used by its speakers. Humboldt was an important contributor to synchronic linguistics and shed a light on the importance of typological comparisons among languages. Synchronic linguistics became a more general type of linguistics with its considerable number of subfields which are related to the discussions in philosophy of language. Studies in synchronic linguistics were largely about analysis of language structure. There are some fields like sociolinguistics that bridge synchronic and diachronic linguistics. Morphology, phonology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics and discourse analysis are some of the subfields in linguistic study. Phonology is the study of speech sounds and their functions. Morphology examines words, their internal structures and formation processes. Syntax is related closely to the grammar of a language and it studies units like sentences, clauses, phrases and word classes. Semantics is the study of traditional meaning concerned partly with sense and reference distinction. Pragmatics studies social and affective meaning. The use of language in real-life

situations presents signals about speakers and their social relations. The linguistic units of study in pragmatics are utterances in authentic language use. Discourse studies written or spoken texts in terms of unity, coherence and emphasis.

The linguist searching for general principles for all languages is thought to be carrying out studies in theoretical or general linguistics. However the one trying to reveal facts in the system of a specific language is practising descriptive linguistics. The field of linguistics that investigates differences and similarities among languages is called comparative linguistics (Crystal, 1987, 412).

Like other sciences, linguistics aims at achieving objective, systematic, consistent and explicit standards. As a scientific area of study, the researches are carried out with data collection, analysis, testing hypothesis, formulating models and theories. As for the uniqueness of its basic research topic, linguistics is bound to many scientific or artistic fields. Likewise, it is an empirical concern that takes into account the philosophical consideration of language. The formation and development of languages, the variety of languages, the language and culture relationship, meanings represented with linguistic units, the relationship between language and world and language as a medium of expression of thought are the topics that bring philosophy closer to linguistics. However, it is important to realize the differences between the ways linguistics investigates language and the ways philosophy of language questions it. Firstly, linguistics carries out empirical studies based on the observation of linguistic facts. Therefore linguistics is a science of factuality. The investigation of language is grounded on the observation of language in real life circumstances. Various natural languages are examined to find out the features of them, similar and different characteristics among them and changes in them. Individual languages like English, Turkish or Russian etc. are studied in terms of explanation and problem solving. The morphological, phonological, semantic, syntactic and pragmatic levels of such languages are investigated in order to find answers to certain linguistic problems. Linguistic phenomena are explained and described. Contrarily, philosophy of language doesn't question individual languages but rather tries to understand the content and nature of language, language ability, and concept of language. It is a process of problematizing. It brings up the questions and problems about the concept of language without a major aim of solving them. The philosopher considers and questions the findings of linguistic studies in general which might encourage him towards pointing out new problems. He questions the relations among thought, truth and meaningfulness.

In addition to linguistics, there are other fields of study that inquire into language indirectly. Psychology of language is one of them and it searches into all sorts of linguistic acts such as cognitive phenomena displayed during the processes of speech and understanding. It follows that there is a relation between linguistic behaviour and the psychological processes like memory, attention or focus that underlie the linguistic behaviour. In this respect it is emphasized that there is a connection between language and personality, intelligence or other psychological factors (Crystal, 1987, 412). Sociology of language deals with language in terms of sociological matters. The question of what kinds of relationships exist between society and language use or culture and language use and ability is a problem of this field. Another empirical study concerned indirectly with language is physiology of language. This investigates organic ties that make speaking possible (Bumann, 1997, 511). The conditions and terms of human physiology are examined in terms of its necessary features like diaphragm, lungs, palate, lips or teeth. Philology, the science started in the 19th century, takes language as its direct research topic and investigates cultural phenomena in the light of language studies. However today philology focuses on the individuality of languages and heads towards the field of literature through research of individual linguistic phenomena in literary texts (Bumann, 1997, 512). In the field of literary criticism the style, rhetoric and aesthetic levels of language are studied. As a last example of fields connected closely to language, we can mention translation studies. This is a field investigating the ways to establish equality of texts in different languages. Different theories of translation are proposed according to the different types of texts and target listener/reader.

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CHAPTER TWO

THE SCOPE OF PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE

Many references date the field of philosophy of language back to the linguistic turn in the early 20th century, a major development in western philosophy that emphasized the importance of the relationship between philosophy and language. The turn towards linguistic philosophy drew attention to solving philosophical problems through understanding the language we use to express them. However, philosophical questioning about the concept of language dates back to much earlier, to antiquity. The present book embraces the whole history of philosophy associated with philosophical thinking about language. The philosophy of language is the field in which philosophical questions about language are discussed and where the concept of language, language ability and the language we speak are viewed philosophically. As mentioned in the previous chapter, unlike linguistics, philosophy of language treats all languages as one and looks for what is common among them. Starting with the observation of language facts, linguistics focuses on the differences among the individual natural languages, contrary to philosophy of language whose target is what is similar in all of them. For instance, the argument that the common feature of all languages is that they share the distinction of subject and predicate is a matter of philosophy of language. “Philosophy of language is the field in which philosophical questions about the structure of language, the meanings of terms and sentences, the relationship between language and world, language and thought, language use and communication through language are discussed” (Inan, 2013, 3).

When we look at the distinction between linguistic philosophy before and after the linguistic turn, it is clear that before the turn language was the major topic of discussion for the philosophers. Rather, before the linguistic turn, language was a subject for discussion only if it was necessary when pursuing the answers for epistemological or ontological questions. Before Frege, no systematic theory of language could be seen for language was not at the heart of argument but was a secondary element for the purpose of finding support for another primary subject. For Plato, language was a subject to contemplate for understanding the nature of being that we talk about. For Ockham, language was a matter of discussing the nature of

universals. For Descartes, it was important to understand the language ability of human beings so as to comment on the nature of humans. For Locke, the discussion about words was essential for his theories about *episteme*.

However, after the linguistic turn led by Frege and Russell at the beginning of the 20th century, language was at the focus of interest and became the primary subject of philosophical consideration for the sake of itself. The major aim happened to be the understanding of the concept of language, handling it in different dimensions like syntactic, semantic or pragmatic and inquiry about the human ability to use and develop language. It was claimed that only after the unity of the concept of language is internalized, could it be the time to discuss all other unsolved philosophical questions. The relationship between language ability and ability to think has been an issue for curious minds. What makes it possible for humans to be able to think is a question that has puzzled the mind for centuries. In this respect many philosophers argued whether language was essential in order for men to think and turned towards the relation between language and thought. "In general, philosophy of language examines the relationship established by man between the world and his thoughts regardless of their content created by means of language" (Īnan, 2013, 4). With the linguistic turn, philosophers of language claimed that once language has been comprehended in depth, it will be possible for us to find answers for many philosophical questions.

All through the history of philosophy considerations about language have given way to the appearance of new and basic terms associated with the concept of language. Before the book moves on to language discussions put forward by different philosophers, it may be beneficial to introduce basic terms in philosophy of language like term, subject, predicate, meaning, reference, concept, intension, extension, context, truth value, identity statements, syntax, semantics, pragmatics and discourse.

Words and the sentences formed with a combination of words are important for philosophy of language. The sentences in a language are constructed according to a logical structure. After a philosophical analysis of a sentence, we come up with parts of the sentence which are called terms. Let us take the sentence "The hotel across the street is very popular". It is made of two terms, one being "the hotel across the street" and the other one "is very popular". The first term in the example sentence is the subject, the second is the predicate. Thus the example sentence consists of two terms in the form of a subject and a predicate. Frequently, the terms in the position of a subject are proper names like "Plato" or "Aristotle". In some cases, pronouns like "he", "they" or descriptive

phrases like “the girl with the red coat” are terms that appear as subject in a sentence.

The classification of subject and predicate plays a necessary role in the syntactic level of philosophical considerations of language. Predicate is used in two different meanings, one referring to the syntactic unit in a sentence, the other meaning an attribute predicated to an object. Thus the two views of predicate lead to the distinction between a predicate and the meaning of a predicate in a sentence. A common definition of predicate is that it is the part of the sentence left when the subject of that sentence is removed. Following the example sentence of “the hotel across the street is very popular”, it can be concluded that when the subject term “the hotel across the street” is removed, the rest of the sentence is the predicate. In logic, the predicate in “x is popular” is classified under the title of one-place predicate. If we take the sentence “this hotel is more popular than the one across the street”, the predicate links two objects in a certain relationship. Thus “x is more popular than y” is an n-place predicate. The problem with some predicates is that they do not predicate to an object directly. The subject in such a sentence is a concept or is null where the predication is secondary. In a logical or syntactic analysis of a sentence the subject of predication is called syntactic subject. In the sentence “Tom is very tired”, the word “Tom” is a syntactic subject while the person called Tom is a logical subject or object as called by Frege. One of the major problems in philosophy of language is the relationship between subject and predicate and the issue of what makes them stand together in a sentence.

Another basic term in the philosophy of language is meaning, that is what we comprehend when we hear or read a word. When variety of languages is considered it is recognized that the same meaning is conveyed through the use of different words. The meaning conveyed through the word “tree” is also conveyed through the word “*arbre*” in French. This leads us to the distinction between a term and the meaning of that term. A term may consist of a single word or phrase, but the meaning of a term in any different forms must be considered as something different. Today in philosophical discussions the meaning of a sentence is called proposition. Propositions are regarded as the most basic elements of human thought. Just like the difference between a word and its meaning, a sentence and the meaning of a sentence must be treated separately. “*Su 100 derecede kaynar*” and “water boils at 100°C” are two different sentences in form but convey the same meaning.

Another term crucial for both philosophy and science is concept, by means of which it is possible to talk about thousands of things having

similar features. Concept is something general and is what makes us think and talk about many individual things. To conceive the place I am sitting in as an office is to associate this place with the concept of office. Concept in this sense is a kind of meaning. The names for species like “man”, “office” or “planet” can be considered as concepts. A common view about concepts claims that they are universals and that with the help of concepts, we categorize, think and talk about the world. However some philosophers like Frege were opposed to the widespread idea and asserted that there is a difference between meaning and concept. The views of Frege will be covered in detail in the relevant chapter.

Another important issue in the field of philosophy of language is the problem of reference. The object/person/place/event referred to by the use of a word is called a referent. When we look at the sentence “Mr. Smith is our teacher of philosophy”, we think that there is a relation between the name “Mr. Smith” and the person in the real world that teaches philosophy to us. The use of the name “Mr. Smith” refers to the real person as the teacher in question, so the referent is the person himself. In some cases two different terms can be used to refer to the same thing, - such as Frege’s well known example of “morning star” and “evening star” as two different linguistic expressions having the one and only referent, the planet that we call Venus today. Such terms are called coreferential. The terms in the position of a subject in a sentence may be descriptive phrases, as in the sentence “the dean of the faculty knows me well” and the referent of “the dean of the faculty” is the person in the real world holding the position. There are fewer problematic cases about the referents of terms in subject position but the problem about the referents of predicates and sentences remains unsolved. For instance, the predicate in the sentence “blood is red” is claimed to be referring to the concept of red or all things with a red colour or the attribute of being red. Frege answers the question of whether sentences have referents or not and if they have, what their referents are with the concept of truth value. “The world is round” refers to true and “the world is flat” refers to false.

Another important distinction firstly uttered by Rudolf Carnap paved the way for the rise of two new terms in philosophy of language, namely the concepts of intension and extension. Extension is a term for which many philosophers have reached a similar understanding but intension still remains unconventional. The cluster of objects which a predicate predicates properly is called the extension of that predicate. The extension of a predicate is a range of objects that it designates. If we take the example sentence “1 is an odd number”, all the sentences, that will be true if we change the subject term “1”, will form the extension of that

predicate. But for the intension there is no convention; some philosophers claim that it is meaning while some think it is a function that determines extension.

Another term to be paid attention to is context which is closely related to time and place. When and where is a linguistic expression uttered? Who is the speaker and who is/are the listener(s)? Under what circumstances did the speaker utter the expression? These questions concern the concept of context. For instance the referent of a term like “the rector of Cambridge University” will differ according to the time when it is uttered or the referent of the subject in the sentence “The prime minister gave a speech” will change according to the country for which or time when the linguistic expression was used. Sentences may either be true or false conforming to when they are used. The contextual elements are very significant when determining the meaning and referent in some sentences that include pronouns used for people or things. The pragmatic approaches in regard to the concept of context will be discussed fully in the relevant chapter devoted to Austin, Searle and Grice.

The truth value is another concept considered in philosophy of language. The relation between a sentence and the truth value of that sentence can be seen like the relation between language and world. The traditional view of truth value claims that the truth value of a sentence is associated with its correspondence in the real world. The truth of a sentence is realized if it corresponds to a phenomenon. The truth value of the sentence “the blue house across the street is mine” will change according to the factual world with a blue house existing and being mine. The theories of truth value introduced in the 20th century have gone much further than the classical view. In modern logic for instance there are two truth values namely true or false.

The problem of identity is another matter discussed in philosophy of language and is related to sense and reference distinction. The identity problem in philosophy gives rise to the idea that if two things share all their properties, they might be considered as one and the same thing. Informativeness of sentences is closely connected to the problem of identity. Identity in sense is said to be corresponding to the concept of synonymy. If Frege’s example is followed, we would have two sentences such as “the morning star is the evening star” and “the evening star is the evening star”. The unsolved problem about these sentences is that while the former is accepted to be informative, the latter is not (Miller, 2007, 45-47).

As pointed out in the previous chapter, language is analysed from different dimensions like syntax, semantics, pragmatics and discourse analysis. How words appear together to construct sentences and whether

syntactical structures common among all languages exist are the issues for syntax. The first discussions related to syntactical perspective of language appear in Frege's and Russell's writing, then Wittgenstein and Carnap followed them and today they are pursued by Chomsky. Frege started syntactic analysis of simple sentences as having two terms, subject and predicate. Subject and predicate are two logical categories. The term in the position of a subject refers to an object and the predicate refers to a concept by predicating a certain attribute to that object. The predicate's attribution to various subjects enables construction of an unlimited number of sentences. The semantic dimension of language is in the form of questioning the meaning of words. What meaning is, how words gain meaning and how the semantic relation between language and world is are at the core of interest. Until the beginning of the 20th century no theory of meaning can be encountered. Frege's sense and reference theory of meaning has been embraced by many philosophers but other theories have also been put forward by different philosophers, all of which will be touched upon in the chapters that follow. An important issue discussed in terms of meaning is how the meaning of a sentence is related to the meanings of terms in that sentence. Herewith the distinction between a sentence and the meaning of a sentence is differentiated. Contemporary philosophy of language emphasizes the classification of sentence meaning of a sentence. Most philosophers agree that the meaning of a sentence would be regarded as a proposition. Another important problem for semantics is the relation between language and world, a relation which is studied with regard to the concept of reference. As mentioned above the referents of predicates and sentences are problematic issues discussed in the semantic dimension of language. In the pragmatic dimension of language the use of the sentences in context is examined. The conditions of expressions used to convey thoughts by using a sentence are questioned at the pragmatic level of language.

One of the philosophers of language examining the pragmatic perspective is Grice who differentiated between the meaning of a sentence and the meaning intended to be conveyed by the speaker. Austin on the other hand pointed out the concept of speech acts moving from the point that all utterances are linguistic acts. Discourse analysis is simply described as "the analysis of language beyond the sentence" (Thompson, 2009, 59). In discourse analysis language is studied beyond the sentence boundary. Coherence and unity of the texts, coherence in the sequences of sentences and propositions, speech and turns at talk are at the focus of attention in the field.

This chapter aimed to shed a light on the field of philosophy by touching on the basic terms discussed and by relating the field to others associated with language. It was also necessary to differentiate between linguistics and philosophy of language. After drawing a framework of philosophy of language it should be easier to keep up with the questionings of the philosophers about the concept of language in the following chapters. In the history of philosophy, the discussions about language date back to antiquity. Therefore the following chapter is about Heraclitus and language.

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