WORLD AND LANGUAGE IN "TRACTATUS"

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      Wittgenstein dominated the 20th century Analytic Philosophy. World and Language are the two important elements which constitutes Wittgenstein's philosophy. Wittgenstein's early philosophy is found in his book "Tractatus Logico Philosophicus". As Wittgenstein was an analytic philosopher, he tried to break down everything into the tiniest part. Therefore, he also tried to break down the structure of world and language into its building blocks. There, he came to realize that world and language has the same logical structure. While sharing the same logical structure, "language mirrors world". This is called the famous "picture theory of proposition". In this chapter, the relation between world and language is being analyzed. How this relationship develops into the picture theory of meaning is shown in this chapter.

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I. INTRODUTION

Wittgenstein played an important role in 20th century Analytic philosophy. Wittgenstein's philosophy had very strong command in areas like logic and language. His philosophy can be divided into two phases early or later phase. In Wittgenstein's early philosophy, his main emphasis was on Language. He wanted to show that language has the ability to explain the structure of the World. In his early philosophy, a keen interest in logic can also be seen. Wittgenstein tried to explain the world through language by applying logic. His book, **Tractatus Logico Philosophicus**, was written in his early philosophy. In this book, Wittgenstein tried to make us understand the relation between language and the world through the use of logic. He attempted to show that there is a relation between thought, language and reality. According to him, there is a common essence underlying all languages. But, in his later philosophy, his views were different from that of *Tractatus*. His book **Philosophical Investigations** reflects his later philosophy. Though these two books i.e., *Tractatus* and *Investigations* are complimentary to each other, yet, there is a vast difference of opinion in these two masterpieces. Wittgenstein himself criticizes all of his earlier views regarding the entire conclusion which he found in his book *Tractatus*. Though, Wittgenstein himself criticizes his ideas of *Tractatus* in his later philosophy, yet it has not lost its importance.

II. TRACTATUS LOGICO PHILOSOPHICUS

Wittgenstein's early philosophy is reflected in his book *Tractatus Logico Philosophicus*. The book, *Tractatus,* tried to explain the basic principles of philosophy which revolves around the concepts like "world", "thought" and "language". *Tractatus* also tries to answer the questions that are grounded in logic and in the nature of representation. When, there is a careful look into the book itself then it is to be found that, Wittgenstein has accumulated the ideas of logic, which he has known from Frege and Russell, with the spiritual and transcendental understanding of the world, which he has known from the ideas of Plato, Kant and Schopenhauer. The book *Tractatus* also has a mixture of mysticism which is reflected in Vedanta philosophy and Buddhism. The unique mixture of logic and reason within the limits of language, with that of the mysticism and transcendental ideas, which is beyond the limits of language, marks the genius of the *Tractatus*.

III. "WORLD" IN TRACTATUS

Wittgenstein is among the few philosophers who consider that there is a relationship of language and world and tried to bring this relationship into the focus of the philosophical discourse. The *Tractatus* starts with a statement about the world: "The world is everything that is the case."[1] Wittgenstein further tries to explain the concept of world and states that "The world is totality of facts not of things."[2] The first two proposition of the *Tractatus* defines what Wittgenstein meant by "the world". "The world is totality of facts and not of things" through this statement Wittgenstein tries to mean that a complete description of the world is not given by a complete catalogue of all the things in it, but by the complete catalogue of all the facts that hold of it. This point of Wittgenstein is explained by George Pitcher in his book "Philosophy of Wittgenstein" by an example. According to Pitcher, "Wittgenstein believed that if the world is the sum total of all objects, then it would follow

that from a complete list of objects it would be possible for us to say what the world is like or to give a complete description of the world. One cannot form an idea about the world by the complete list of objects that are there in the world. For example, to describe a room is not simply to give a list of objects that are there in the room. Simply from the list of objects that are there in the room one cannot form an idea of a room. To describe a room one has to say, for example, how big the room is, that is the length and the breadth of the room, what are the things that are there in the room, how they are like and how are they arranged in the room. With this information we can form the idea about the room. Here the description of the room includes not the list of the things but how they are arranged. It is listing of facts not of objects. Again, from a list of objects that a room contains one cannot make a number of models of that room by combining and arranging the objects in any possible way. Likewise, it is the fact that is the arrangement of objects that determines the world and not the objects that determines the world, the actual world. Depending on the number of possible arrangement of facts, we can take any number of possible worlds. As there are so many possibilities of combining and arranging these objects and so many qualities these objects might have so it would be impossible to state anything about the actual world. But, it can be done only if one were given the list of the facts about the room. Therefore, it is the fact that constitutes the world not the object, which can uniquely determine the actual world as distinguished from other possible world. Thus, according to Wittgenstein, this world is not composed of things or objects, but it is composed facts. It is a "well arranged world" or "orderly world" which can be broken down into facts [like the pencil was on the table, or the flowers were behind curtains (1.2)"

Wittgenstein believes that the world divides into facts. Most facts are highly complex facts and some are less complex facts. These in turn are composed of still less complex facts and so on. The facts which cannot be further reduced are the ultimate simples. These simple facts are called atomic facts. They are the ultimate building blocks of the world. They are the "simplest thing" and "self subsistent". They can exist by themselves in isolation. However, Wittgenstein has not arrived at atomic facts by direct investigation of complex facts. He arrived at atomic facts by investigating language. He believed that certain considerations about language require that there must be certain facts which are the atomic facts. Though, the atomic facts are simple, but, it has parts which are "objects". These objects correspond to elementary propositions in language. Wittgenstein believes that our understanding of the structure of reality is possible only through our understanding of the structure of language, i.e. through an analysis of the logical structure of language. The structure of the world and the structure of language corresponds to each other. In the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein writes, "The simplest kind of proposition, an elementary proposition asserts the existence of a state of affairs."

IV. WORLD, LANGUAGE AND PICTURE

Language plays an important part in Wittgenstein's philosophy; there is mostly discussion of language. For him, there must be an investigation in details the actual ways in which the key words involved in "philosophical puzzlements are used". These puzzles occur because of misinterpretation of "forms of speech"; because of wrong and over simplified view of the way language works. Such puzzles are resolved in seeing how words actually do work, what their uses really are. With a careful look we find that there are some

changes in Wittgenstein's view between his two books *'Tractatus'* and *'Philosophical Investigations'*.

Wittgenstein was aware of the fact that there is a world which philosophy must accept as real and intelligible structure which can be only be known through the use of language. Wittgenstein's picture theory is also based on this idea that the world has a rational and logical structure.

Language is first and foremost a representational system. It is with language that we make ourselves to pictures of fact[6] (2.1). Wittgenstein holds that picturing is an activity of representing the world by means of language that is making a copy of the latter in its logical aspects. It is not as if the world is actually reproduced in language, which is impossible, as language and the world are distinct entities. Nonetheless, the world is logically mirrored in language in the sense that the logical structure of the world is perfectly shown in the structure of language. In the above discussion, Wittgenstein wanted to show this point that a proposition in order to be true must agree with reality. According to him, there is a perfect match between the world and language; it is because of this perfect fit between language and the world that the truth and falsity as semantic relations are possible. Wittgenstein's picture theory provides new metaphysics of the world, especially in the view of the fact that language is a picture of the world. The idea of description enters in the very conception of the world-picture.

According to Wittgenstein, pictures are facts. This brings us to the notion of the names. The name stands for objects. As the objects are linked in the world to form facts, the names are linked in the language to form propositions. Wittgenstein holds that a sentence is meaningful if and only if it is a fact which corresponds to a possible fact in the world; it is true if it corresponds to an actual fact. This is Wittgenstein picture theory of language. For Wittgenstein proposition are pictures. Language is used to make these pictures. And it is not accidental that he uses the term 'picture', for Wittgenstein's theory of meaning is one which draws on the visual analogy precisely because the propositions are themselves facts and not mental representational. In the Tractatus Wittgenstein gives us a theory that proposition is a picture of reality. Apart from paintings, drawings and photographs Wittgenstein counts maps, sculptures, three dimensional models as well as musical scores and gramophone records as pictures. All of them are representation of something. They represent something. Any representation can be either accurate or inaccurate, and it can be either true or false in the sense that it can be true representation or false representation, i.e. it can be true picture or a false picture of what it represents. These are two things that are connected with any representation-

- What is a representation of e.g. what a particular piece of painting represents
- whether it represents what it represents accurately or inaccurately, when in case of proposition Wittgenstein states that a proposition is picture of reality he means that a proposition represents reality or it is a representation of reality. Like any other representation, a proposition of representation may also be true or false. If the representation is accurate, then the proposition is true and false if it is inaccurate. Thus, corresponding to these two features of representation concerning a proposition, these are two related things that can be said about the proposition, that is, what the proposition means and whether what it means is true or false, i.e. sense and truth value.

Wittgenstein believed that every proposition of the world "say" something about the world and at the same time "shows" that the world after all has a certain logical form which is an important feature and it is presupposed in the actual structure of the world. But the logical form of the world cannot be described it can only be shown in the structure of language itself. This brings us to the 'saying and showing' distinction. The saying and showing distinction is forced on the theory of forms. The forms being underlying presupposition of saying cannot themselves be described. Description requires a descriptive language and so it is the task of descriptive language to represent what the described objects themselves are. But, for such a descriptive language to be possible, there must have been certain logical features inherent in the language. These features are so fundamental that they cannot be described in the same language or in another. Hence, they must be shown in language in which they are properties. Thus, the logical form of language must be reflected in the language itself, otherwise the language would be meaningless. The distinction between saying and showing is that showing is the more fundamental feature of language than saying. Language says what the world actually is but shows what the logical form of the world is. A question may arise: why is the logical form of the world necessary? Why can we not describe the world without the logical form of the world? The answer is that in describing the world we are presupposing the logical form of the world. Besides, this form is not different from the logical form of language, so if the logical form of the world is not known. The logical form of the language is also not known. Thus, there would be a total collapse of the descriptive language if the logical forms are not taken into account. Therefore logical forms have to be "accorded primacy" in a logical theory. Wittgenstein theory of form is meant to show that the logical form of language mirrors the logical form of the world.

Wittgenstein's book *Tractatus* was primarily concerned with the logical analysis of language. The picture theory of meaning lay at the core of the book and was detailed treatment of the prerequisites of symbolic representation in general. Wittgenstein stated:
"The picture is the model of reality"

Wittgenstein had learned about the practice of representing traffic accidents in Parisian law court through using models and this was when the pictorial nature of proposition, first occurred to him. Wittgenstein gives an example. to clear the statement. He held that "in law courts at Paris, motor car accidents were reconstructed by means of toys and dolls. A real collision between a lorry and a pram would be represented by means of toys shown as between "toy lorry" and "toy pram". This word gives a picture or a model of the accident. This pictorial relationship to be possible the toy pram must go proxy for the real pram and the toy lorry must go proxy for the real lorry. The elements of the model must stand in for the elements of the situation to be represented. This is the pictorial relationship which makes the picture a picture," . The elements of the model to be a picture of reality must be related to each other in a certain spatial relation. It is the spatial relationship between the "toy pram" and the "toy lorry" which represents the spatial relationship between the "real pram" and "real lorry". Wittgenstein calls "a picture is a fact" because the elements of that are related in the way they are itself a fact. The "picture theory" may also be regarded as a theory of language that proposes that language is a picture of reality such that it models the reality in its own structure. The picture talked of here is a "logical picture" in the sense that only in a logical sense language acts as a picture of the world. Picturing in

the context is a model building as language presents a model of the world in its own structure.

Wittgenstein believed that the "essence of language" is present in "how things are represented". Representation is only possible when there is an agreement between an object and a name in their form, i.e, what is being represented and what represents it. Wittgenstein regards a picture to be a combination of elements which constitute together to form that picture. The structure of a picture is how the elements in it must be arranged in order for it to represent how the objects in a state of affair are combined together. Wittgenstein believed that the structure of picture is combined by convention. This structure is called to be the logical form of the picture and the possibility of having a logical form is called the "pictorial form" by Wittgenstein. The "pictorial form" of the picture represents a certain state of affair. The elements of the picture are arranged such that it mirrors the combination of objects in the state of affair. The form of one representation differs from the form of other representations, that is to say, different representations have different forms. The picture and state of affair must share the same pictorial form. Wittgenstein holds that, a picture could be more or less abstract or have a greater or lesser resemblance to what it represents. The logical form must be shared by the picture and state of affair for the picture even to be an incorrect representation.

The "picture theory" consists of two sub theories namely – the theory of proposition and the theory of sense. These two are conjoined to provide the broad structure of the picture theory. The theory of proposition brings out the structure of the picture of propositional symbols and the rules governing the logical syntax. It takes into account the nature of simple as well as compound sentences and thereby fixes the truth functional limits of the nature of propositions. The theory of sense on the other hand makes room for the use of proposition in making representation of the world. According to Wittgenstein, a proposition represented a possible state of affairs and its sense, was determinate. "No proposition will itself show whether it is true or false because for this the proposition has to compare with reality."

"Every picture represents possible states of affair that may be termed as its sense"

If a proposition is true it represented a state of affair which existed. This portion of representation, allowed Wittgenstein to explain how it is possible for a proposition to be false. A false proposition represented a state of affair which did not existed. Wittgenstein raised questions about the creativity of language; such how it was possible to understand sentences which were not heard previously.[7] The solution which he gave for these problems rested on the picture of language. Therefore, according to Wittgenstein, the sense of the proposition is the situation it depicts or represents. But, there is an issue related to this view: what to do with "false proposition"? If the sense of a proposition is the situation it depicts then either all false proposition have no sense since they describe no existent situation, or there must be "nonexistent situation" which they describe or represent. The first alternative is unacceptable, in view of the fact that we can understand false propositions. Hence the second alternative is forced upon us.

V. CONCLUSION

From the above discussion, it can be stated that *Tractatus* presents a very influential theoretical system of language and world yet there are certain difficulties related with the views of Tractatus. In his later book, *Philosophical Investigation,* Wittgenstein himself came to questioned some of the views which he held in *Tractatus,* as his earlier views were not satisfactory for him. *The Philosophical Investigation* begins with a quote from Augustine's "Confessions" which states that there is an essence of language, this view of essence, is also based on the idea that "the words in language name objects", and that "sentences are combinations of such names."[8]

According to Wittgenstein, Augustine believes that, "language contains names and there is a name to every corresponding object", "a name means an object. The object is its meaning", which was also held by him. In *Philosophical Investigation,* he finds it too basic. It is a fact that some words in language are names, but that does not mean that all words are names. Name-object relation is only one part or it is only one aspect of language. However, language has many more aspect other than this. It is believed to be like an old center of linguistic town, however, just like a real city has many suburbs, and as such language has many different uses other than the naming function. In *Philosophical Investigations* Wittgenstein has shown language can be used in a variety of activity.

Wittgenstein criticized his point that "objects are simple"; "The requirement that simple signs be possible is the requirement that sense be determinate". Later, this view is rejected in *Philosophical Investigations* by Wittgenstein in very strong terms. He argued that "what are the simple parts of which reality is composed of? What are the simple constituent parts of a chair? - The "bits of woods" of which it is made, or "the molecules" or "the atoms"? "Simple" means not composite. And here, the point is in what sense "composite"? It makes no sense at all to speak absolutely of the simple parts of a chair".

Wittgenstein himself was not satisfied with his view, that language is a "picture of world". He later realized that picture theory was a concept with a misunderstanding of language. He wrote, "A picture held us captive. And we could not get outside it, for it lay in our language and language seemed to repeat it to us inexorably" (PI, sect115).

The later Wittgenstein also questioned these assumptions regarding picture theory. His criticism of the assumption (1) is that the idea of analysis in the *Tractatus* is misconception. There are many contexts in which sentences are used and therefore one cannot impose only one kind of analytic framework on language. The assumption (2) is logically followed by the assumption (1) because the notion of analysis is connected with the idea that language has one and only one logical structure which needs to be dug out from beneath the "surface-grammar". This seems to be the most unacceptable thesis in the *Tractatus,* according to Wittgenstein.

Thus, Wittgenstein finds it unacceptable to take language as a picture of reality in the sense that language is inherently constituted as a picture independent of our requirement of it. According to him, there is no warrant for such a view when language functions normally and when there is no illusion regarding the language-games we play in language.

Although Wittgenstein, in his later philosophy, never came back to the picture theory, yet he believed that, language is always connected to the world not as a picture, but as a totality of representations concerning reality. Wittgenstein believed language to be a

field where we can establish our contact with the world. We can understand the world only through language since in language alone we can make necessary moves regarding the world.

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