

J. L. AUSTIN'S PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE :
A CRITICAL STUDY

By

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Dissertation

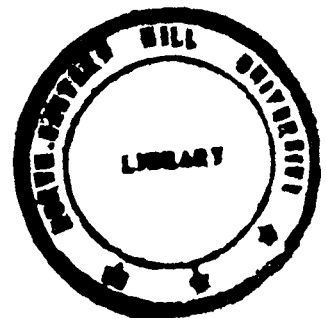
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In habit and character, Miss Satarupa Bhattacharjee is a fit and proper person for the degree of MASTER IN PHILOSOPHY.

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CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Acknowledgement	(i)
CHAPTER ONE : INTRODUCTION	... 1 - 8
CHAPTER TWO : LOCUTIONARY SPEECH ACT	... 9 - 17
CHAPTER THREE : ILLOCUTIONARY SPEECH ACT	... 18 - 39
CHAPTER FOUR : PERLOCUTIONARY SPEECH ACT	... 40 - 50
CHAPTER FIVE : CONCLUSION	... 51 - 62
BIBLIOGRAPHY	... 63 - 73

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

An humble attempt will be made in the course of the **dissertation** to spell out and examine Austin's philosophy of language. It is J.L. Austin, who after Wittgenstein has played an important role in contemporary analytical philosophy. His classification of speech acts into locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary is a classic distinction. It has not only revolutionised thinking on philosophy of language but also the method of philosophizing to a great extent.

^ According to Austin, language reflects human thought. ^ It contains the finer distinction made by human beings about things and events. Language, as it were is an embodiment of history of humanity. He further argues, (in the manner of Lord Buddha) that proper and right understanding leads to right action. This sort of right understanding can be obtained by looking into the logic of different linguistic expressions. Both Austin and Wittgenstein agree on this point. The concept and the method of philosophizing of these two great thinkers have been influenced and prompted, as it were, by their view of language. Therefore to understand both Austin and Wittgenstein is to understand their view of language.

Language is a human phenomenon. It has drawn the attention of both scientists and philosophers. Max Muller even goes to the extent of saying that linguistics or the science of language is comparable to any branch of natural science. It can be said in this connection that man is distinguished from other animals not by possession of so called rationality but by virtue of being able to use and operate with linguistic symbols. 'Man' can adequately be defined not as a rational creature but as a being who is able to use language. It is left to the culture-historians to tell us about the quantum of benefits and advantages that man has obtained over other animals by possession of what is known as linguistic capabilities.

Language is a system of symbols. These symbols may be either speech symbols (sounds) or written symbols (alphabet and letters) or both. Some languages have both the symbols. That is to say, they are both spoken and written. These languages might have some advantages over languages without a script. There can be language without a script. But there can be no language which is not spoken (it is not possible to use this language at all). The idea of an unspeakable language is contradiction in terms. The script of a language can be studied by scientists and historians. One can study the origin and the evolution of

the script of a particular language. To do this is to study science of language. I have said that to the extent sounds are integral part of language to that extent language consists of a system of sounds. Linguistics as a science is interested in the sound pattern of a language. The place and the manner of articulation of different sounds of various languages have been studied by the linguists and the grammarian. Pāṇini, the great Grammarian has studied in detail the sound pattern of Sanskrit language. He has thrown sufficient light on how different sounds combine and give rise to new ones. He has also told us about the basic and elemental sounds of Sanskrit language. This sort of study done by Pāṇini can be characterised as a scientific study of language. That branch of linguistics which studies the sound pattern of language is known as phonetics. Since sound is a physical phenomena, it can be studied by the physicist. As a matter of fact, physicists have been studying this aspect of language. Socio-linguistics and psycho-linguistics are the discipline which try to find out the correlation between psychic and social spheres and the linguistic structure. Sapir and Horf have conducted studies of this type. In other words, they have tried to link-up the world view and linguistic structure of the Hopi community.

Grammarians have classified sentences and words into different types. I wish to suggest in this connection that all these studies about language/languages are scientific in nature. These studies are empirical. Therefore it can be said that linguistic is an empirical study. It employs the scientific method of observation and seeks to establish causal co-relation.

Philosophy of language, on the other hand, is not interested in establishing causal co-relation. It is not interested in causal/empirical/historical questions about any language. These questions fall within the domain of what is known as science of language or linguistics in general. Philosophy of language raises such questions as what is language, what is a speech, how are they related, what is meaning, what is meant to say that a sentence has meaning, whether words have meaning or sentences have meaning etc? These questions are very general in nature. They are not about any language or group of languages but about language as such. A scientific question about language is a first order question; whereas a philosophical question about language is a second order one. If linguistics in general is a first order study of language then philosophy of language being a second order study can be characterized as philosophy of linguistics in broad terms. Philosophy of

language examines questions and criticises the basic categories or concept that a linguist employs in understanding the nature of language.

Though a conceptual distinction between science of language and philosophy of language can be made, yet as a matter of fact, sometimes a linguist steps into the domain of philosophy and vice versa. Pāṇini, the grammarian and the linguist has raised philosophical issues about language and Austin the philosopher of language, brought into bold relief certain empirical facts about language. Pāṇini raises questions about the nature and logic of certain words. He raises questions about language, speech and communication in general. This is not in the capacity of a linguist but in the capacity of a philosopher.

Philosophy of language is being accorded a central place in philosophy in the contemporary period for the simple reason that logical analysis of language can throw light on important issues on epistemology, logic etc. To speak is to use categories and concepts. These categories **and** concepts are expressed by means of language. Therefore to understand the nature of category and concept is to go back to language. Language is a vehicle of thought. It is a vehicle of categories and concepts. Human thought is

primarily concept based. Therefore to understand the structure of human thought is to understand the nature of human language.

Language is a mode of communication. But all modes of communication cannot be regarded as language. Birds including other animals communicate with one another. In fact, studies have been conducted about the network of communication system obtaining in the animal world. But it cannot be said that animals use language. Animals do communicate with one another. But they do not use language.

Sometimes we use gestures and postrures to communicate certain ideas. Language was invented by human beings as a means of communicating their thought because mere gestures proved insufficient. But all these cases cannot be treated as instances of language. The idea of creativity is built into the very concept of language. It is absent in the case of animal communication. So, language is the most valuable possession of human race. Even the gesture language of human being ~~has to be understood~~ in terms of what we call the primary language. All other modes of communication are parasitic on this primary language. I wish to suggest in this connection that the ideas of understanding, intelligibility and the concept of language are

intimately connected. Understanding and intelligibility are conceptual in nature. To understand something means to be able to express it in terms of concepts and categories. In other words, understanding, knowing and saying go together.

Further, in this connection, language can be distinguished from speech. The same speech can be expressed in different languages. In other words, language is a carrier of thought and the same speech can be conveyed in different linguistic forms. The linguist studies the language; the philosopher of language studies the speech form. Science of language treats language as a fact; whereas philosophy of language studies meaning and nature of language.

So language is a non-instinctive method of communicating ideas and feelings by the help of a system of sounds or symbols. Though language is a human invention and words are artificial signs, yet the varieties of human language arose from different groups agreeing on different symbols as the most appropriate signs of their ideas. Language is a work of human art and culture. Man establishes it by mutual agreement and understanding. We learn it by speaking without any conscious effort and we may grow old but we never forget it again. It is so spontaneous and natural that we pay no more attention to it than we do to breathing

or to the beating of our hearts. Language is a complex system of settled practices.

But in due course of time, language has endowed man with a special status. Animals are altogether as perfect as men in their physical structure. But human superiority rests on other grounds. Language is the outward sign and manifestation. On the other hand, it depends upon inner faculty which is called the faculty of reason or power of thought. Human language is a system of communication which depends on the distinctively human ability to form and use symbol.

This dissertation should not, therefore, be understood as on one of the criticisms of any particular language even though instances and examples will freely and profusely be quoted from different languages solely for elaborating and clarifying particular points.

CHAPTER TWO

LOCUTIONARY SPEECH ACT

I have already pointed out that language is a human phenomenon. We use language not only to communicate our ideas but to do many other things. In other words, we do various things by means of language. It will not be out of place here to refer to Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations where he says:

"Giving orders, and obeying them -
 Describing the appearance of an object, or giving its measurements -
 Constructing an object from a description (a drawing) -
 Reporting an event -
 Speculating about an event -
 Forming and testing a hypothesis -
 Presenting the results of an experiment in tables and diagrams -
 Making up a story; and reading it -
 Play-acting -
 Singing catches -
 Guessing riddles -
 Making a joke; telling it -
 Solving a problem in practical arithmetic -
 Translating from one language into another -
 Asking, thanking, cursing, greeting, praying."¹

Austin classifies the totality of speech acts into three types. (i) Locutionary, (ii) Illocutionary, and (iii) Perlocutionary.

The English word 'locution' means a word or a speech. A locutionary speech act according to Austin, is one by means of which one says something. To indulge in a locutionary speech act is simply to say something. As for

example, to say that it is raining is to perform a locutionary speech act, for the simple reason that by saying 'it is raining', I am not doing anything. I am simply reporting a fact or describing a situation. I am saying that it is raining. I am giving a description of the weather. Austin puts a large number of sentences from English language under the head of locutionary speech act. According to Austin, locutionary speech act consists of three parts, i.e. (i) the phonetic act, (ii) the phatic act, and (iii) the rhetic act.

The phonetic act consists of uttering certain noises. To say something is surely to produce certain noises or sounds. Without using the vocal cord, the tongue and the palate, we cannot produce any sound. It is known as phonetic act because it consists of sounds. But this is not all. When one speaks a language one surely produces certain sounds. These sounds must belong to certain language or languages. In other words, sounds, in order to be identifiable must relate to certain language. When we utter the word 'cat' we not only produce some sounds but utter an English word. This is characterised by Austin as phatic act. To speak is to produce some sounds; but these sounds must come out in form of words, phrases or sentences. The words, phrases and sentences belong to particular languages. But

the words of a language are not just empty receptacles. They are endowed with meaning. The act of using meaningful words is characterised by Austin as rhetic act. To sum up: a locutionary speech act is complex in character. It is a fusion of phonetic, phatic and rhetic acts.

This model of the relation of phonetic, phatic and rhetic acts has shortcomings of its own. The point of independence seems to indicate that a phonetic act could exist in isolation from the rhetic act. But the question is, when they are taken in isolation are they locutionary acts?

Austin tells us that a locutionary act is any act of saying something in the full normal sense.

Obviously, to perform a phatic act, one must perform a phonetic act or in other words, in performing one, we perform the other. Phatic acts are a sub-class of phonetic acts. So it would seem that phonetic, phatic and rhetic acts must be understood to be not separable parts, but mere aspects of locutionary act.

Austin says that the performance of a locutionary act includes (a), the uttering of certain vocables or words, belonging to a certain vocabulary, in a certain construction, i.e. conforming to a certain grammar.

"Generally to perform the act of using that pheme or its constituents with a certain more or less definite 'sense' and a more or less definite 'reference' (which together are equivalent to 'meaning'). This act we may call a 'rhetic' act, and the utterance which it is the act of uttering a 'rheme'." ²

One can ask, how to determine the meaning of a locutionary speech act? In other words, what are the conditions of meaning of locutionary speech acts? How to decide which one is a locutionary speech act? Let us see what Austin has to say in this connection. According to Austin, there are three types of speech acts; locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary. In fact, he gives a structural definition of speech act. As per his definition, there are certain sentences which describe, report or state and certain others do other kind of job. It gives an impression as if their descriptive and non-descriptive sentences (statements) per se.

I wish to suggest in this connection that the Austinian definition cannot be accepted without a pinch of salt. It is not the structure but the function of that a sentence performs gives the status what it has. In other words, a sentence becomes locutionary or illocutionary as per the function it performs. The sentence it is raining, may be treated as a constative or a performative depending

upon the function that it performs on particular occasions. When somebody who is entrusted with the task of reporting the weather condition, utters the sentence, 'it is raining', we treat it as a statement of fact. But when the another shouts at her children bent upon playing outside 'it is raining' it is treated as a performative. 'It is raining' means do not go out. Therefore, it is the context or the function that decides the nature of a sentence.

The phonetic, phatic and rhetic acts are not subclasses, but parts of the locutionary act - as blossom, leaf and stem are parts and not classes of flowers. And this is what we find Austin to imply when he says that,

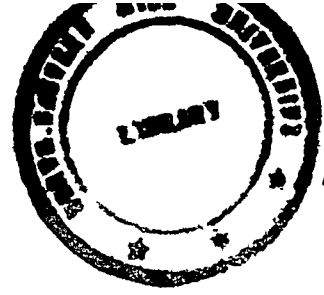
"We shall see that just as the locutionary act embraces doing many things at once to be complete, so may the illocutionary and perlocutionary acts."³

Phonetic, phatic and rhetic acts belong together, not like species to a genus, but like parts of a composite whole. They have to flow together if a locutionary act is to come off. Austin presents his doctrine as a classification of speech acts. Yet this supposed classification changes its character repeatedly and it seems that Austin is not aware of the changes. This division of the class of speech acts changes into dissection of the composite speech

act into its constituent parts. This hidden change is really surprising. Austin tries to introduce his theory of speech act with initial distinction between constative and performative utterances. A constative utterance is one which serves to state a fact, reports something or describes what something is. Constative utterances have the property of being true or false. Performatives are **neither true nor false**.

Again, a constative utterance is liable to just as many types of infelicity as performatives are. Just as I can promise insincerely similarly I can make a locutionary speech act insincerely.

If somebody says, "All the children of Ram are dull but as a matter of fact Ram has no children", we can say that the statement "All the children of Ram are dull" is vacuous. The question of its truth or falsity does not arise at all. **The** truth or falsity of the statement "All the children of Ram are dull" depends on the fact of Ram's having children. If Ram has no children then the question of truth or falsity of the statement does not arise at all. In fact the statement presupposes that Ram must have some children. Without this presupposition, the so called statement is not a statement at all. To be a genuine statement it must fulfill



certain conditions. What are these conditions, what are these presuppositions? Austin has not given sufficient thought to these background conditions of linguistic activities. These background conditions are both linguistic and non-linguistic in nature. Only when these conditions are fulfilled a so called statement becomes a genuine statement. The background condition of a statement is really the context of the statement. It gives life to it. It sustains it. In fact, a string of word becomes a meaningful statement only when it is impregnated with the background conditions. These background conditions work as it were, as the ground water for the plant of human speech. I wish to suggest in this connection that Austin has overlooked it in his analysis of speech act.

The study of speech acts in the total speech situation turns out to be the core of the whole Austinian linguistic philosophy. Locutionary act is simply a part of the speech act. Phonetic, phatic and rhetic acts must not be taken as separable parts of the locutionary speech act. Rather they are different and integral aspects of the locutionary act. Without these aspects being present, the locutionary act is not genuine. If phonetic, phatic and rhetic acts are mere aspects of the locutionary act, then why call them acts at all?

To sum up: the so called phonetic, phatic and rhetic acts cannot be properly called speech acts at all. They are the integral aspects not only of locutionary speech act but even of illocutionary and perlocutionary speech acts. In fact, the Austinian distinction of phonetic, phatic and rhetic acts may be paraphrased in the following manner. To be a sentence (statement) means to be speakable. That is to say, if S is a sentence, it must be speakable. To speak means to utter sounds. But sounds as such do not have any meaning. For a linguistic sound to have meaning means to belong to a particular language, and to be endowed with meaning in accordance with the rules of that language.

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Section 23, pp. 11e-12e.
2. J.L. Austin, How to do Things with Words, pp. 92-93.
3. J.L. Austin, How to do Things with Words, p. 107.

CHAPTER THREE

ILLOCUTIONARY SPEECH ACT

Illocutionary speech act is one of the forms of speech acts. It is peculiar in nature in that to utter an illocutionary expression is to perform an act. It is a kind of deed. Illocutionary expressions are a sub class of performative utterances. There are expressions in language which we use not to say something but to do something. That is to say, expressions are used to perform certain acts. An illocutionary expression is an expression which we use to do something. Austin defines an illocutionary speech act as that which we perform in saying something. When somebody says 'I curse you', it means that he has already cursed. In other words, to say that I curse is to have cursed; to say that I bless is to have blessed; to say that I warn is to have warned. Austin presents a list of such expressions from English language to show how we perform certain acts while saying something. Some of the English verbs and verb-phrases associated with illocutionary acts are: state, assert, describe, warn, remark, comment, command, order, request, criticise, apologize, censure, approve, welcome, promise, express, approve and etc.

To perform an illocutionary act is to engage in a rule governed form of behaviour. Asking questions or

making statements are rule governed just like moving a knight in chess is a rule governed act. In case of illocutionary speech act, the utterer performs the act. This is precisely the difference between illocutionary and perlocutionary speech act. In illocutionary speech act, one who utters performs the action. In the perlocutionary speech act, the utterer does not perform it, somebody else does it. Both illocutionary and perlocutionary expressions are performative in nature. In the case of illocutionary speech act the performer is the agent. In case of perlocutionary expressions, one to whom it is addressed is the doer. When I ask my son to shut the door it is my son who performs the act of shutting the door and not myself.

Austin maintains that illocutionary speech acts are neither true nor false. They are either happy or unhappy. When I say 'I bless you' I cannot be said to have made either a true or a false statements. In other words, to say that I bless you is not to make any true or false statement. The statement 'I bless you', does not have any truth value. It is either sincere or insincere but neither true nor false. Suppose, somebody goes to church accompanied by a lady and then he says, 'I marry you'. Afterwards, the lady follows him. He is taken aback and starts rebuking her. The lady may retort that he has

married her. The gentleman might say that he did not marry her. He simply said that he married her. What is the solution? Can one say in the church that he entered into wedlock with somebody but he actually did not marry her? Austin would reply that somebody might say this in joke.

Austin has classified illocutionary speech acts into different subclasses. For example, (1) Verdictives, (2) Exercitives, (3) Commissives, (4) Behabitives, (5) Expositives. I will try to give a rough idea of each. Verdictives are the ones which we use in giving a verdict, namely, by a jury or an umpire. Secondly, with exercitive force we can express the exercising of powers, rights, voting, ordering, advising, warning, urging, etc. Commissive force is used when we promise, bet, vow, adopt, etc. But behabitives are a very miscellaneous group. We use them when we have to do with attitudes and social behaviour or when we apologize or curse. The last, expositives are very difficult to define. It is related with our utterances which fit into the course of an argument or conversation. Sentences like 'I argue', 'I assume', 'I postulate' etc. are the cases of expositives. Here I can quote Austin, to show how he has defined the five subclasses of illocutionary speech acts.

"To sum up, we may say that the verdictive is an exercise of judgement, the exercitive is an assertion of influence or exercising of power, the commissive is an assuming of an obligation or declaring of intention, the behabitive is the adopting of an attitude, and the expositive is the clarifying of reasons, arguments, and communications."1

Now I find the last two classes are very troublesome and difficult to define it properly. Austin himself says that they are not clear or even some fresh classification may be needed. At the same time, expositives have numerous uses and it is very important also. Now the question can be raised is Austin himself clear about them or not? I think he has some doubt about the exact uses of those behabitives and expositives, though he has given a long lists of examples of each classes.

There are some illocutionary acts which can be conveyed non-verbally e.g. protest, warning etc. An essential condition for the successful performance of an illocutionary act is that 'uptake' be secured. It means that an illocutionary act will not be successfully performed unless the speaker brings the understanding of the meaning and force of utterance to the audience. So an effect must be achieved from the audience if the illocutionary act is to be carried out.

Meaning for Austin is a matter of convention. Illocutions are typically rule and convention governed. We see that both meaning and illocutions are intimately connected with intentions and conventions. We possess and employ meaningful expressions in order, primarily, to convey our intentions to the listener. It is completely circular to explain the meaning of a sentence in terms of illocutionary acts, since one would first have to know what the sentence means in order to know which illocutionary acts are being performed with it. For example, a person says 'shut the door immediately', I may be able to judge from his tone of voice, and the context, that a command is being issued. So to that extent, I know what kind of illocutionary act is being issued exactly which illocutionary act is being performed.

David Holdcroft also argues on the same point. He maintains that it is very doubtful whether theory of illocutionary act could be used to explain the meaning of most of the words unless certain semantic information was used in such a way that the fact that it was used would make the claim an uninteresting one. All that he has done is to offer a number of considerations which, taken together, indicate strongly that the claim that theory of illocutionary act unsupplemented by semantic information can be used to explain the meaning of all (or most) words is false.

In order to give an analysis of the illocutionary act of promising, Prof. Searle enquires about the conditions which are necessary and sufficient for the act of promising to have been successfully and non-defectively performed in the utterance of a given sentence. He attempts to answer this question by stating these conditions as a set of propositions such that the conjunction of the members of the set entails the proposition that a speaker makes and the proposition that the speaker makes such a promise entails this conjunction. There are various kinds of possible defects of illocutionary acts but not all defects are sufficient to vitiate the act in its entirety. In some cases, a condition may indeed be intrinsic to the notion of the act in question and not satisfied in a given case, and yet the act will have been performed nonetheless. In such cases Searle says that the act is 'defective'. According to his notion the defect of an illocutionary act is closely related to Austin's notion of an 'infelicity'. Not all of the conditions are logically independent of each other. Sometimes it is worthwhile to state a condition separately even though it is, strictly speaking, entailed by another.

∥ Difficulty arises with Austin's distinction between locution and illocution. Uttering a sentence with a

certain meaning is, Austin tells, performing a certain locutionary act; uttering a sentence with a certain force is performing a certain illocutionary act. Austin says that each is an abstraction from the total speech act. But the difficulty arises when a large class of cases - certainly all those involving the performative use of illocutionary verbs - there is no way of abstracting the locutionary act which does not catch an illocutionary act with it. Abstracting the meaning of the utterance will necessarily abstract an illocutionary force wherever that force is included in that meaning.

Hence the class of illocutionary act will contain members of the class of locutionary acts. The concepts are different but they denote overlapping classes. For cases such as the performative use of illocutionary verbs the attempt to abstract the locutionary meaning from illocutionary force would be like abstracting unmarried men from bachelors. So the locutionary-illocutionary distinction is not completely general, because some locutionary acts are illocutionary acts. Take a different example, I might not be in a position to issue orders to him, if, say, he is a teacher and I am a student and so the 'order' would again be 'infelicitous' in Austin's terminology. So one might argue, Austin's distinction

between locutionary and illocutionary acts is still intact even for cases containing the performative use of illocutionary verbs. The successfully performed illocutionary act requires all sorts of conditions not required by the locutionary act.

Austin often speaks as if inquiries into the locutionary and the illocutionary dimension of an utterance are inquiries into different aspect of a speech episode. But his practice betrays that he is not really much concerned about speech acts at all; he is concerned about dimensions of results of such acts or episodes. His inquiries into, saying, stating and promising are inquiries into and not merely studies shedding light on, the nature of statements and of promises. Statements and promises are not speech episodes, although the acts of stating and promising are such episodes. A statement can be true or false; but what has truth value is not, in contra-distinction to a speech episode, something clockable with a certain duration etc. These things are true of the act of stating but not of the statement itself. And there is a parallel distinction between the act of promising and the promise.

Mats Furberg says that the statement or the promise is a result of an act of stating or promising, and that Austin's inquiries into the locutionary and the illocutionary dimension are enquiries into such a semantic result. But then a study of the illocutionary dimension is not a study of the locutionary act at all. The result of the act of making a statement, namely the statement, is no more an act than is the result of an act of scribbling, viz. a scribble. The terminology of 'act' is very misleading.

'The meaning of an utterance, the utterer's locutionary dimension, is governed by the conventions used in the rhetoric 'act'. In a language which has passed its initial stage these conventions govern the meaning of the utterance, independent of what the current speaker intends to say and what the current addressee takes him to mean.'

In P.F. Strawson's contention in 'Intention and Convention in Speech Acts' it is fairly clear that Austin would not define 'illocutionary force' partly in terms of the current speaker's intention in issuing the utterance. And Austin's stress on the conventionality of the illocutionary dimension minimizes the importance of the current addressee as well as of the current speaker. Illocutionary force becomes next of kin to meaning. In an established

language it would be disastrous to define these relatives in terms of the current speaker's intentions and the current audience's uptake of these intentions.

✓ If both locutionary and illocutionary 'acts' are upto a speaker who knows the conventions of the language employed, in what way are they then diverse? Austin's answer seems to be that the locutionary dimension is topic directed and the illocutionary dimension is audience-directed.

The illocutionary interpretation of expression has been developed by W. P. Alston & J.R. Searle. Alston says that we may, using terminology introduced by J. L. Austin, describe an expression as illocutionary (done in saying something). The illocutionary act of expressing is on all forces with other like reporting, ordering, promising and thanking.

Searle thought that

"Wherever there is a psychological state specified in the sincerity condition, the performance of the acts counts as an expression of that psychological state."²

Alston says that expressing is a species of illocutionary act while on the latter there is a genius to expressive illocutionary acts.

So both of them agree that when a person expresses his emotion, belief, intention in language, he is performing an illocutionary act and some acts are performed subject to a rule, requiring that the speaker should have relevant psychological state.

According to L. Jonathan Cohen, Austin's own account of 'meaning' with sense and reference, does not tell us which of the many current views about 'sense' and 'reference' he shares. Certainly, he cannot just have meant by 'meaning' that in virtue of which an utterance is true or false. So many of the utterances with which he deals are not of a kind that can be either true or false. Indeed, if Austin had meant to cite the sense and reference of an utterance's component words he could hardly have considered these two factors sufficient to determine the meaning of a whole utterance for his purposes. So that when to use Austin's term - the illocutionary force of 'Retreat' is made explicit in 'I command that you retreat', this illocutionary force ceases to exist as such, contrary to what Austin suggests and disappears into the reference.

"Austin seeks to distinguish between the clarification of meaning and the clarification of illocutionary force. Precision is the objective of the former, explicitness of the latter. But this distinction between precision and explicitness must stand or fall with the distinction between meaning and illocutionary force. It cannot reinforce that distinction because it has no independent support.

According to Searle, close examination on this matter will help us to discover that in characterizing rhetic acts, Austin has inadvertently characterized them as illocutionary act. The illocutionary acts such as making statements, asking questions, giving commands, but it does not seem that there are or can be acts of using those vocables in sentences with sense and reference which are not already (at least purported) illocutionary acts.

Still Austin thinks that locutionary and illocutionary acts are separate and mutually exclusive abstractions. But Searle says that a rhetic act is always an illocutionary act of one kind or another.

The illocutionary forces of utterances may be more or less indeterminate but the descriptions of illocutionary acts may be more or less determinate. Again the

distinction between what a sentence means and what the speaker may mean in uttering it, with the special case of serious literal utterance where the meaning of the sentence uttered does not completely exhaust the illocutionary intentions of the speaker in making the utterance.

Austin's discovery that statements are illocutionary acts holds for the act sense, but not for the object sense. This is not necessarily a weakness since the failure take place into account the structural ambiguity of 'statement', however, had very important consequences for certain other parts of Austin's theory of language. For since statements are speech acts and statement can be true or false, it appears that which is true or false is a speech act. But this indifference is fallacious, as it involves a fallacy of ambiguity. Statement acts are speech acts, and statement-objects are what can be true or false. And the view that it is the act of stating which is true or false is one of the most serious weakness of Austin's theory of truth.

Prof. Searle's initial objection to Austin's doctrine is that the distinction Austin draws between locutionary and illocutionary acts 'cannot be completely general, in the sense of marking off two mutually exclusive classes of acts'.

Prof. Searle contends that the concept of an utterance with a certain meaning is indeed different from the concept of an utterance with a certain force. But the conceptual difference will not preserve the generality of the distinction because there are cases in which the class of illocutionary acts contains members of the class of locutionary acts. In cases such as these, an attempt to abstract the locutionary meaning from illocutionary force would be like abstracting unmarried men from bachelors.

Why does Prof. Searle consider this to be a difficulty? Austin was, after all, aware that not all utterances are ambiguous with reference to force. He did remark more than once that both classes of acts are merely abstractions from total speech act. The fact that meaning sometimes determines force would not itself seem to constitute an objection to Austin's taxonomy. I think, this is surely a misinterpretation of Austin's view. As Prof. Searle claims, that every sentence has some illocutionary force potential, if only of a very broad kind, built into its meaning. We have seen that the basic principles underlying Austin's classification of speech acts reflect this fact. Although Prof. Searle thinks that Austin's distinction between locutionary and illocutionary acts is not

tenable he does not think that certain 'real' distinctions underlie Austin's efforts. One of these - the distinction between the propositional content of an utterance and its force - is singled out for special attention as a distinction. This is partially to supplement Austin's distinction.

It may not be out of place to open a short discussion on a related issue which has been highlighted by Searle in the connection of speech act. Searle makes a distinction between institutional fact and brute fact. Illocutionary speech act is intimately related to institutional fact. An illocutionary act has meaning or significance only because there **are institutional facts**. The illocutionary expressions draw their life blood from the institutional facts. But what is an institutional fact? Are there such facts at all?

Searle maintains that there are such facts -

"One might say they share the feature that the concepts which make up the knowledge are essentially physical, or, in its dualistic version, either physical or mental. The model for systematic knowledge of this kind is the natural sciences, and the basis for all knowledge of this kind is generally supposed to be simple empirical observations recording sense experiences."³

He further insists on institutional facts as follows:

"Leaving aside the question of the status of statements in ethics and esthetics, which are controversial areas anyway, there are many kinds of facts, and facts which obviously are objective facts and not matters of opinion or sentiment or emotion at all, which are hard, if not impossible, to assimilate to this picture. Any newspaper records facts of the following sorts: Mr Smith married Miss Jones; the Dodgers beat the Giants three to two in eleven innings; Green was convicted of larceny; and Congress passed the Appropriations Bill. There is certainly no easy way that the classical picture can account for facts such as these. That is, there is no simple set of statements about physical or psychological properties of states of affairs to which the statements of facts such as these are reducible. A marriage ceremony, a baseball game, a trial, and a legislative action involve a variety of physical movements, states, and raw feels, but a specification of one of these events only in such terms is not so far a specification of it as a marriage ceremony, baseball game, a trial, or a legislative action.... They are indeed facts; but their existence, unlike the existence of brute facts, presupposes the existence of certain human institutions."⁴

It can be said in this connection that by 'institutional fact' Searle means a set of conventions. Without these conventions there can be no institutional facts at all. Let us concentrate on marriage. Marriage for Searle is an institutional fact. So is the case with blessing, promising, cursing and so on. Something is a curse, a

blessing or a promise only in the context of certain conventions and these conventions are in the words of Searle, the institutional facts. Conventions are treated by Searle as institutional facts. Questions can be raised regarding the nature of conventions. What is a convention? What is it that goes into making a convention? I wish to point out that Searle is not explicit on this point. A large number of questions both genetic, historical and conceptual can be raised with regard to conventions. Questions of origin and evolution of different conventions are empirical by nature. Besides, questions of meaning of conventions can also be raised. These questions are conceptual in nature. Let us now concentrate on the conceptual aspect of conventions. What is a convention? What do we mean by a convention? How are they related to speech acts?

In answer to these questions the following is suggested. A convention is not something physical. It is not like stone and pebbles in the world. In other words, conventions are relatively settled uses of language. Therefore, to study conventions is to study uses of language; ipso facto, to study institutional facts is to study uses of language. That is to say, the so called institutional facts may be characterized as uses of language. So to

study the institutional facts is to study the uses of language and to study the uses of language is to really study both the linguistic and non-linguistic components. It can be said in this connection that these components stand for the institutional facts of Searle. Further, it can be said in this connection that Searle hypostatizes uses as institutional facts. Searle's arguments given an impression as if there are facts (institutional) over and above the uses of language. It may not be out of place here to point out that Searle's analysis really leads him to a world of linguistic uses but he carves out institutional facts out of it giving the impression as if there are some strange kind of entities known as institutional facts. It is the linguistic conventions and uses that go into the making of an institutional fact. Hypothetically speaking, if there is no language then there will not be any institutional fact. Even the so called brute fact will lose its identity without application of linguistic categories.

Searle distinguishes between brute facts and institutional facts. Brute facts are the raw facts. They are just there. Linguistic conventions have nothing to do with them. As for instance, it is raining, it is thundering, it is very cold today are instances of brute facts.

Searle thinks that language does not make these facts. These facts are there. In other words, according to Searle, institutional facts are language dependent whereas, brute facts are language independent. I wish to point out in this connection that there are no good reasons to agree with Searle. The so called brute facts cannot be recognized at all without application of concepts or categories. To use Wittgenstein's terminology, "all seeing is seeing as." There cannot be bare perception. In fact, bare perception, bare fact or brute fact are logical myths. The world is known to us, is made intelligible to us through concepts and categories. Brute facts are as much dependent on language as are institutional facts. There are reasons to agree with Austin that the world is better understood if linguistic categories are clearly understood. The world is made more intelligible if the categories and concepts in terms of which we think about it (world) are clearly understood. Thus, there are suggestions in Austin that philosophical understanding constitutes the bed-rock of other sorts of understanding. Seen in this light, it can be said that there is no basic difference between Austin and other metaphysicians who claim that metaphysical/philosophical understanding is basic to all sorts of understanding. In this respect Austin comes closer to Kant. However,

space and the scope of the present dissertation do not permit to institute an elaborate comparison between Kant and Austin.

Austin treats illocutionary speech acts as deeds. It is true that Austin has not elaborated the concept of deed. In fact, he has not distinguished between different types of deeds. Surely, promising is not the same kind of deed or act, as swimming or walking. There is a sense in which all cases of the use of language are acts. In other words, I wish to suggest in this connection that there is no good reason to agree with Austin on his distinction between constatives and performatives. Even with constatives we perform certain acts. Austin's classification of illocutionary speech acts into verdictives, exercitives, commissives, behabitives and expositives leads to this point. In other words, if one accepts the classification of illocutionary speech acts into the above said types, one will be led to the conclusion that the dividing line between constatives and performatives vanishes gradually. It is difficult to get a pure constative. Even when one says that it is raining, one can be said to be performing the speech act of reporting. There is no reason why Austin's classification of illocutionary speech acts be not expanded so as to include

all sorts of statements. Further, it can be said in this connection that distinction can be made between different types of speech acts but the fact that even the so called constatives have illocutionary force cannot be ruled out. I wish to emphasize the point that language is a deed and there are different types of deeds. Even interrogations like 'what is your name?' 'Who is there?' can be used to perform speech acts. To ask a question is surely to perform a speech act.

To use language is to perform acts or deeds; but altogether different type of deeds. Austin seems not to have emphasized this point.

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CHAPTER FOUR

PERLOCUTIONARY SPEECH ACT

Perlocutionary expressions are a variety of performative expressions. Austin presents a long list of perlocutionary expressions from English language. To quote Austin:

"For example, there are insinuating (and other non-literal uses of language), joking (and other non-serious uses of language, and swearing and showing off (which are perhaps expressive uses of language). We can **say** 'In saying X I was joking' (insinuating..., expressing my feelings, &c."1

A perlocutionary expression is used to perform a perlocutionary speech act. When I say to somebody "shut the door", it is the other person who shuts it. Similarly, when I tell somebody to get out of the classroom, it is the other person who gets out. In other words, in the case of perlocutionary speech act, the agent uses the expression but somebody else performs the action. In fact, when I tell Ram to shut the door it is Ram who shuts the door. I simply use the perlocutionary expression.

It is clear by now that in the case of perlocutionary speech act two persons are involved, (i) the

user of the expression, (ii) the doer of the act. In the case of locutionary and illocutionary speech acts, there is only one person involved. One who uses the locutionary and illocutionary expressions performs the respective acts also. Whereas, in the case of perlocutionary speech act, the user and the doer are different. As a matter of fact, the user of the perlocutionary expression performs the perlocutionary act. It will be very odd, if I say "shut the door," and immediately I myself rush near the door and shut it. If I do it I may be said to be dramatising the situation. The commander who issues a command on a particular occasion is not expected to carry out the command. In other words, commands are not for the one who commands but for others only. If I tell somebody to get out of my class and subsequently I myself go out then the situation becomes ridiculous.

The Mīmāṃsākas argue that all expressions have perlocutionary force. Even, the so called locutionary and illocutionary expressions do have the perlocutionary force. When the Guru says, "there are trees on the bank of the river"; the statement carries with it the perlocutionary force. This means that the disciples have to go to the bank of the river and collect faggot and fire wood.

So the statement "there are trees on the bank of the river", is not absolutely locutionary in nature. When somebody says "it is raining", the Mīmāṃsākas would interpret it as a piece of warning, meaning thereby, if you go out carry an umbrella. According to the Mīmāṃsākas, all sentences whatsoever have perlocutionary force.

"chodana laxanārtha dharma."²

It can be interpreted as follows: The nature of expressions are to inspire man to action; language has persuasive force. It inspires, guides and persuades man to action. I wish to point out in this connection that the Mīmāṃsākas have given an insight about language which Austin has failed to recognise. Austin discovers perlocutionary force only with certain expressions. Whereas, the Mimāṃsākas find it with all expressions. How do we decide the issue? Is Jaimini to be accepted in lieu of Austin or vice versa?

Let us now turn to this question. Austin seems to think that expressions by themselves have either locutionary, illocutionary or perlocutionary force. The distinction between locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary speech act seems to be absolute for Austin.

Austin forgets the fact that it is the situation, the context that make an expression either locutionary, illocutionary or perlocutionary. In other words, the life blood of speech is derived from the actual situation. Therefore, the structural difference between locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary expressions is no difference at all. The Mīmāṃsākas seem to be aware of it. But they have also gone wrong by treating all expressions as having perlocutionary force. I wish to suggest in this connection that an expression, as such taken out of the context cannot be treated as locutionary, illocutionary, perlocutionary in nature. For Austin, perlocutionary expressions persuade others to perform certain actions. On the other hand, for the Mīmāṃsākas, expressions can have either self-persuasive or other — persuasive forces. A sentence like 'it is raining' uttered, say, by X, not only persuades Y, and Z but also X. This aspect of language has been overlooked by Austin.

A perlocutionary speech act is what is performed by uttering certain words. Perlocutions are unlikely to be of great interest in understanding the nature of the theory of speech act and at the same time the nature of the sentence also. The perlocutionary effects are not, as it were, due to the intrinsic nature of the sentences.

We know that illocutionary acts are conventional acts whereas, perlocutionary acts are not conventional. But the act of both kinds can be performed by some way i.e., more accurately acts can be called by the same name. For example, illocutionary act of warning is equivalent to perlocutionary act of convincing. But they can be brought off non-verbally, even then to deserve the name of an illocutionary act e.g. a case of warning. So, we can call it a conventional non-verbal act. Whereas, perlocutionary acts are not conventional, though conventional acts may be made use in order to bring off the perlocutionary act. A judge gives order by hearing what is said. It means what locutionary and illocutionary acts were performed and not what perlocutionary acts were achieved. To quote Austin:

"...but perlocutionary acts are not conventional, though conventional acts may be made use of in order to bring off the perlocutionary act."³

'In saying X I was joking', the sentence has an illocutionary force whereas, 'by saying X I was doing Y' has perlocutionary force. This is a linguistic formula which will help us to distinguish illocutionary from perlocutionary acts. But I think this formula is insufficient. For example, in saying X you are breaking the

law or running a risk is certainly neither to perform an illocutionary act nor even a locutionary one. Again, I find this formula does not go with perlocutionary verbs like 'convinced', 'persuaded' etc. But it is a known fact that exceptions arise through the incorrect use of language. Sometimes we say 'in saying X he was intimidating me'. Sometimes we can use the same word genuinely in both illocutionary and perlocutionary acts, e.g. 'tempting' is a verb which may easily be used in either way.

The distinction between doing and trying to do is already there in the illocutionary verb as well as in the perlocutionary verb. Further, many illocutionary acts are not cases of trying to do any perlocutionary act; e.g. to promise is not to try to do anything. Again, formulas having 'by' are not only confined to perlocutionary verb. Both locutionary and illocutionary uses can be possible with 'by'. The uses of 'by' are of two types in general. In the first case, 'by' indicates the method by which we can bring off the action. Again the second sense of 'by' is used in a criterion-sense. The question arises; is the 'by' can ever be used in the 'means to end sense' with an illocutionary verb? It can

be used in two different senses. (i) When one adopts a verbal means of doing something instead of a non-verbal means, (ii) when we talk instead of using a stick.

So there are many ways in which illocutionary acts are bound up with effects and these are all distinct from the producing of effects which is characteristic of the perlocutionary effect. The perlocutionary object of warning, to alert someone, may be a sequel of a perlocutionary act which alarms someone.

It is characteristic of perlocutionary acts that the response achieved, can be achieved additionally by non-locutionary means. Even in the cases of convincing, persuading, getting to obey and getting to believe, we may achieve the response non-verbally. But this is not sufficient to distinguish illocutionary acts.

So, we need some more grounds for distinction. It is a necessary condition for the performance of a perlocutionary, but not an illocutionary act, that the utterance must have a certain sort of results. I cannot be said to have brought you to learn something, to have moved you, frightened you, unless as a result of my utterance you have acquired some knowledge, have had certain feelings aroused.

A perlocutionary but not an illocutionary act can be performed without the use of language, or any other conventional device. I can get you to pass the salt by simple looking around for it. But there is no way in which I can request you to pass the salt, without uttering a sentence or using a conventional device. This difference is closely connected with the first. It is because a perlocutionary act is logically dependent on the production of a state of affairs which is identifiable apart from the movements which produces it, that I can be said to perform that action I do anything which results in that state of affairs. The result provides a sufficient distinguishing mark.

Lastly, I find illocutionary acts are more fundamental than perlocutionary acts in the hierarchy. I can request you to pass the salt, in order to get you to pass the salt. But I could hardly amuse you in order to request you to pass the salt.

The conclusion must be, however, that formulas are very slippery test for deciding whether an expression is illocutionary or perlocutionary. Again there is a close connection between three kinds of acts and at the same time, we can define them individually.

I wish to point out in this connection that Austin's definition of perlocutionary speech act is not adequate for the simple reason that it fails to distinguish between perlocutionary and illocutionary speech acts. Austin defines a locutionary speech act as a case of saying something. An illocutionary speech act is doing something in saying something and a perlocutionary speech act is doing something by saying something. The concept "saying" and "doing" have not been explicated in detail by Austin. Can there be just a case of saying something? In other words, cannot just say something without doing something? In answer to these questions I may point out that the concept of pure saying is a logical myth. When I say, it is raining I simply do not say something. I say something to report a fact. In fact "it is raining" is a reportive statement. To the extent it is reportive, to that extent it is not a case of pure saying. It is reporting in saying. Seen in this light, the so called distinction envisaged by Austin between locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary speech acts vanishes. There is a sense in which it can be said that both locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary speech acts differ only in degree but not in kind. Language is a deed, so also is speech. To use language is to perform

certain act but the acts may vary. Austin's analysis of speech acts is an attempt to find out the ideal types of locution, illocution and perlocution. But these ideal types are only logical constructions. As a matter of fact, in ordinary language, in common discourse such ideal types are not all available. Locution per se is a logical myth. So also is the case with illocution and perlocution.

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CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

J Austin's philosophy of language has affinity with that of Wittgenstein. It is difficult to say who has borrowed from whom. But the fact remains that both Wittgenstein and Austin belong to a generation of philosophers who are primarily concerned with analysis of language, concept and categories. Both Austin and Wittgenstein were engaged in analysis of language. Now, the question arises how is Austin's analysis of language different from that of the linguist? Is Austin analysing English language? Are philosophers required to study particular languages? Austin in his article 'A Plea For Excuses', maintains that it is possible to make a list of words from English language preferably from Concise English Oxford Dictionary. Austin thinks that this method might prove successful in philosophical analysis.

"First we may use the dictionary - quite a concise one will do, but the use must be thorough. Two methods suggest themselves, both a little tedious, but repaying. One is to read the book through, listing all the words that seem relevant; this does not take as long as many suppose. The other is to start with a wide selection of obviously relevant terms, and to consult the dictionary under each: it will be found that, in the explanations of the various meanings of each, a surprising number of other terms occur, which are germane though

of course not often synonymous. We then look up each of these, bringing in more for our bag from the 'definitions' given in each case; and when we have continued for a little, it will generally be found that the family circle begins to close, until ultimately it is complete and we come only upon repetitions. This method has the advantage of grouping the terms into convenient clusters - but of course a good deal will depend upon the comprehensiveness of our initial selection."¹

✓ He maintains that language contains the subtle distinction made by its users. So, language in this sense can be regarded as the repository of human wisdom. This wisdom has to be explored. By 'language', Wittgenstein means ordinary language, the language of day to day life as opposed to scientific or technical language. On this matter, there is a point of similarity between Austin and Wittgenstein. ✓ Both Austin and Wittgenstein argue that ordinary language is the basic language. It is primary. ✓ All other languages are parasitic on it. This is the point which has not been made explicit either by Austin or by Wittgenstein. What is ordinary language? What is the criterion of ordinary language? How to distinguish ordinary language from non-ordinary or technical language?

One of the meanings of 'ordinary language' is common, rustic and non-sophisticated. Ordinary language has not been used by Austin in this sense. Rather, ordinary language has been used by Austin in the sense of fundamental, basic and primary. Historically speaking, man first began to speak and perhaps millions of years after science technology and other branches of knowledge evolved. The categories and concepts evolved in due course of time got embedded in language. Thus, language not only became a vehicle of thought but a mirror of human thought. Language not only facilitates communication but reflects human thought. But in this sense, language is not only a vehicle but an embodiment of human thought. That is why study of language has been treated as a prelude to study of philosophy of ordinary language. Language contains the subtle distinction made by man from time to time about reality as a whole. Study of language, in the words of Austin, is not the end-all but surely begin all of philosophizing. It is not proper to say that Austin indulges in linguistic exercise. In fact, linguistic exercise, if any, is just the initial point. Study of language per se is not the objective of philosophy. It is an instrument. Words are our tools. Rather we can say, our common stock of words embody

all the distinctions men have made in the life time of several generations. It is preferable to investigate a field where ordinary language is very rich. But sometimes ordinary language will become infected with the jargon of some theories and at the same time our own prejudices help it to be more clumsy. Austin maintains in his article 'A Plea For Excuses', thus:

"In view of the prevalence of the slogan 'ordinary language', and of such names as 'linguistic' or 'analytic' philosophy or 'the analysis of language', one thing needs specially emphasizing to counter misunderstandings. When we examine what we should use in what situations, we are looking again not merely at words (or 'meaning', whatever they may be) but also at the realities we use the words to talk about: we are using a sharpened awareness of words to sharpen our perception of, though not as the final arbiter of, the phenomena. For this reason I think it might be better to use, for this way of doing philosophy, some less misleading name than those given above - for instance, 'linguistic phenomenology', only that is rather a mouthful." 2

Austin's method of philosophising is different from that of his contemporaries, particularly the so called linguistic analysts. For, the latter, philosophical analysis is treated as a therapy.

Wittgenstein maintains that philosophy is a kind of therapy. It leaves everything as it is. Philosophy is analysis of the categories and concepts. Philosophy has been treated by Wittgenstein as linguistic analysis. The followers of Wittgenstein also maintain that philosophy is a conceptual and second order inquiry. It has nothing to do with facts or realities. On the other hand, according to Austin, right understanding of the language is only the first or initial stage. This sort of understanding gives insight into the nature of reality. In fact, Austin says that right understanding leads to right action. So it can be said that for Austin, analysis is just a means or an instrument. Understood in this sense, Austin's philosophy of language can be characterized as an instrumental study to understanding of reality. Austin maintains that language is a tool. He agrees with Wittgenstein on this point. Austin further maintains that as far as possible we should have a clean set of tools.

Austin's argument is that language (ordinary) contains the fine and subtle distinctions made by man from time to time. Therefore, going back to ordinary language is a rewarding experience. One may agree with

Austin on this point. But the fact remains that a fresh distinctions are also initiated by man from time to time. In other words, age old distinction are sometime replaced by fresh ones. Austin seems to have overlooked this fact. He treats the distinction already existing in language as sacrosanct. In a way, Austin treats the ordinary language as the Cartesian Cogito. It is as certain as anything. Can we conclude that Austin treats language as a static phenomena? Can we agree with Austin that language is a finished product for all time to come? It will be difficult to give answer to this question. I wish to say that Austin has not taken sufficient care of this question. He seems to forget the fact that language is a growing phenomenon. It is dynamic in nature. It grows and sheds off the vestigial remains of the ancient days. It acquires fresh idioms. Fresh distinctions are required for a living language. These facts cannot be explained by models set up by Austin.

Now, let us turn to the method that Austin employs in study of language. He tells us to note down philosophically important words and expressions and then to find out the meanings of these words in the dictionary. If somebody is doing some works in philosophy then it is essential to have a concise pocket English dictionary.

These are the preliminary stages to do philosophy. Austin maintains that these steps are necessary for **any** fruitful philosophizing.

But this position of Austin seems very ambiguous. One does not know what **to** do next? At the same time one does not know what **to** do **after** collecting words and then finding out meanings from dictionary. Austin says nothing clearly on this point. But from his analysis one gets the idea that one has to reflect on the meaning of these words. This means that one has to meditate or cogitate on the meanings of these words. How to decide the meaning of a word? How to decide correct or appropriate meaning of the expressions? What is the method of going about it? There are two ways or methods to clarify the meaning of a word; namely, (i) one can either employ the empirical method; that is to say, one can go to the people and ask them about the meaning of an expression, and (ii) one may fall back on one's intuitive capacity. Austin seems to be falling back on his linguistic intuition. Austin takes for granted that philosophers have necessary linguistic intuition to decide the meaning of different expressions or words. This becomes evident from his analysis of expressions like 'voluntary', 'involuntary' and a host of others.

I wish to suggest in this connection that subjective intuition cannot be treated as the sole criterion in philosophical discussion. It has to be supplemented by other methods. Or else it may lead to subjectivism and ultimately to solipsism. Austin seems not to have taken note of this point.

It is worth noting in this connection that Austin's philosophy of language has opened a new dimension about language. Austin has laid emphasis on functional aspect of language. The structure of a sentence is no sure a guide to the nature of it. One has to take note of the functional aspect of language. Further, I wish to suggest in this connection that both linguistic intuition and empirical evidence are necessary to determine the function of different expressions. There is a sense in which it can be said that evidences relating to language are different from those of other subject. As for example, to ascertain whether white tigers are available or not, one has to do a bit of field work to collect the empirical evidence. That is to say; it is only empirical evidence that can decide either the truth or falsity of the proposition that there are white tigers. One may get an inkling of it through intuition; but its truth and

falsity can be ascertained only through empirical evidence. But in the case of language it is somewhat different. Man as a language using animal grows with language. That is to say, a human being not only learns the use of language but also the so called evidential elements about language. Language gets into the very structure of man. On occasions, without looking for the word in the dictionary or asking others one can find out the meaning of words through reflection, cogitation or what is known as linguistic intuition. This is a peculiar feature of language. Besides, there are occasions when the so called linguistic intuitions have to be supplemented by external evidences. This point has not been reasonably emphasised and elucidated by Austin.

Moreover, Austin has emphasised (like Wittgenstein) that language cannot be understood in isolation. I wish to characterise this as an idealistic element present in the so called analytic or linguistic philosophy. To understand language is not to understand linguistic symbols only, it is to understand the total situation, both linguistic and non-linguistic. In other words, to understand language means to understand thought and culture. I like to emphasize in this connection that language,

thought and culture are always found intermixed. To understand one is to understand the other and vice versa. The Austinian thesis can be interpreted as follows: to understand man is to understand language. Again to understand language is to understand thought and culture. Man can be adequately understood in the context of language, thought and culture.

Austin's method of philosophizing may be likened to that of Kant in European philosophy. Kant maintains in his Critique of Pure Reason that ontology/metaphysics which is not based upon critical epistemology is bound to be dogmatic. In other words, sound philosophy presupposes sound epistemology. Critical examination of the nature, scope and limits of knowledge is a prerequisite to any philosophizing. That is why, Kant in his 'Critique of Pure Reason', embarked upon an examination of what is known as the apparatus of knowledge. This is what we call critical epistemology. Austin, almost in the same fashion maintains that examination of the tools of knowledge is a prerequisite of any kind of philosophizing. But the only difference between Kant and Austin is this. Kant wanted to examine the structure of Thought or Knowledge, whereas Austin sought to examine the important or basic

words/concepts/categories that human beings employ. Is this all? The Kantian epistemology can also be given a linguistic interpretation. In other words, there is a sense in which it can be said that the Kantian epistemology is an examination of the basic categories/concepts. Both Kant and Austin wrote in two different traditions. The former wrote against the background of the conflict between rationalism and empiricism in the broad spectrum of Newtonian mechanics and the latter against the background of logical empiricism and linguistic/conceptual analysis. Given these background conditions, the jargons and idioms of both the philosophers are bound to be different. But the fact remains that both Kant and Austin were trying to understand what is broadly known as reality in traditional philosophical literature.

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