Philosophical Prose and Logical Positivism

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Abstract – It has been seen that we normally try to interpret the philosophical words of great philosophers. There is huge possibility that philosophies have been interpreted subjectively by generation after generation. The connotative and denotative meaning of every word is different. Thus, the philosophical meanings derived from the actual words are possibly different. In last century, much effort has been taken to consider philosophy as a science. The scientific analysis and result derived by the curious modern philosophers supported the claim of philosophy itself a science, but there was a rift in between the thinkers over to give the pure status of science to philosophy. Especially when logical positivism was introduced the discussion went to the peak. The present research paper throws a light on philosophical prose under the scanner of logical positivism.

- x -

INTRODUCTION

J Krishnamurthy says 'Truth is a pathless land', one has to follow their own path. Till the date all the philosophers were engaged in interpretating 'the truth' they had experienced. Knowing is different than expressing that particular thing. All the philosophers throughout their life confronted with the different experiences and tried to express their expression in the best possible words.

When we talk about the words, we talk about the language. Language is noting but the symbols, the sound patterns. All the great philosophers thus used their contemporary known sound symbols to express their experience and knowledge. It was appropriate according to contemporary needs but when we examine the words as a part of symbol, the connotative meaning is different and denotative meaning is different. In modern century the very symbol and its meaning is under the scanner. The first objection was raised by logical positivist during 1920.

LOGICAL POSITIVISM AND PHILOSOPHY

The logical positivism was a philosophical movement that developed in Vienna. The movement was also named as logical empiricism. It represents the view that scientific knowledge is the only kind of factual knowledge and that all traditional metaphysical theories are to be declined as meaningless. They pointed out the doubt on very existence of metaphysical questions, later they kept the heel on the language, not about the nature of language, but about the meaning of language.

The logical positivists were originally scientists who had gone against the over weaning and high attitude of philosophers of that time who little understood science but, interpreted to know its basic and fundamental principles. These scientists in reaction so overvalues science that they applied whole the methods, techniques and criterion of science to philosophy. Thus, they suggested that only scientific analysis and physical demonstration were the criteria of meaning and truth. As a result of this application of science to philosophy, the philosophy appeared to be woolgathering. Thus, metaphysics was rejected.

Philosophies do not provide the single interpretation of anything. No interpretation can be accepted without proper methodology of verification. Thus, an attempt to extend the scope of principle of empirical verification to whole realm of knowledge is exaggerated, there are many beliefs which are so basic that without them life is meaningless but, they are unverifiable. This is because all experience is a part of them.

No philosophy in the world can be expressed without words and language. Every philosopher is essentially a best orator and skilled in language. This is common fact, that most of people understand the life but very few try successful to interpret the life. The Society gives recognition to only those who know the language of society. Moreover, those who change the difficulty to simplicity, unknown to known, unattainable to attainable, those who changes the complicated into clarity, is imitated by society but in all this situation language is very important.

According to **Wittgenstein**, Philosophy is nothing but, analysis and discussion of language. The language is nothing but, a symbolic expression of the facts of experience. The language represents of two kinds of expressions or statements: the simple and compound. The entire thread of language is analyzable in compound statements which, in turn, are analyzable in simple statements. Hence,

language is nothing but, the totality of propositions. A simple or atomic proposition is a mirror or reflection of the reality. (Wittgenstein 84). According to Wittgenstein, A proposition is a picture of reality. Since, language conveys the facts of experience. The relationship between facts and the linguistic expressions therefore must be very close. It is the fact which conveys a proposition true or false. If the proposition is correspondent to the facts it is true: otherwise false. (Wittgenstein 86). Wittgenstein is here giving new dimension to the correspondence theory of truth, according to which a proposition is true if and only, if it narrates what the facts indeed are.

A compound proposition can be transferred or analyzed as to give us simple proposition and that each simple proposition is a symbolic expression for a single fact. Since, a simple proposition implies for some simple fact, the truth of the proposition can be fixed by comparing the two. A significant and crucial fact which suggests from this analysis is that each linguistic expression is, directly or indirectly, overtly or covertly, connected with some or the other fact of experience. Therefore, if there is any linguistic expression which pretends as a proposition but, on analysis fails to show any connection with any fact of experience then, that linguistic expression is not a proposition but, a pseudo-proposition. A pseudo proposition is not only connected with any fact but, it is impossible to think that it can be so connected. In this way modern counter verification of language has increased the scope and challenge in front of philosophy. The new interpretation of logical positivism about language has pointed out several doubts against metaphysical interpretation of language. They tried to eradicate the metaphysics.

The elimination of Metaphysics was not only agenda before logical positivists. They were interested in filling up the vacuum created by the rejection of metaphysics by a new role. According to **Carnap** to analyze the statements narrated by philosophy, study the kinds and relations and analyze terms as components of those statements and dogmas as ordered systems of those statements (Carnap 216).

The linguistic analysis of the scientific statements has been called 'Logic of Science' by Carnap. According to him only sciences can give us the knowledge about Truth. Philosophy has no technique and methodology to examine and determine the facts. Philosophy, therefore, must not try to examine facts but, accept them on the part of scientific knowledge. That is why the Philosophy should concentrate itself exclusively to the task of analyzing the language of science and to follows the logical syntax.

Philosophy was then come under the scanner of **Semantics**. In semantics the concepts of meaning and truth are studied and the various theories accordingly examined. Semantics follow the relation of linguistic expressions to objects, designated by them. The semantically verification of the scientific language reveals that a word may represent a particular object or a certain property or a relation between two things or a physical function.

In Semantics, Carnap classifies the language in two parts: the object language and the metalanguage. The metalanguage is something about the object language. The simple most unit of a language is sign, a series of signs is known as expression. Furthermore, signs are also of two types: sign events and sign design. The semantics has two types: descriptive semantics and pure syntax. The descriptive semantics studies the historical changes in the forms of semantical signs and expressions. The pure syntax follows the methods and techniques of semantics. Besides formulating the semantical rules, Carnap has also developed a number of metalanguage systems. He has shown that metalanguage has four elements- (1) the logical; (2) the sentential syntax; (3) Translation, and (4) Semantial. These elements in a metalanguage are interdependent. According to Carnap, The semantics is not a science, because, it does not help to gather facts about the physical world. It is only a tool for acquisition of knowledge. (Carnap 178). It fixes and arranges modern logic. The modern logic has two chief constituents – the sentential syntax and semantics. According to Carnap, the tool of modern logic is applicable to and helpful for philosophy and sciences as well.

The modern philosophy, thus, statements and expressions of great philosophers are examined thoroughly in semantic point of views. The cross examination of fact and actual meaning of word (sign) by applying the parameter of logic.

CONCLUSION

Philosophers are the product of contemporary needs. They try to seek the truth and explore knowledge as a representative of common man. By vision and imagination they touch the zenith of reality and then for entire life they preach the philosophy. There are various philosophical trends which either they follow or create new one. There is a huge possibility of verification of traditional knowledge we carry and hand over to one generation to another generation as a part of cultural heritage. There is need to examine the validity of philosophical words. It will be very controversial in Indian point of view to raise the doubt on very existence of the words. But under the concept of faith we never allow to re-examine the symbols and its meaning. The logical positivism and semantics has extended the new dimensions to the language. In fact there is need to apply the scanner of logical positivism to examine the philosophical prose for the factual meaning.

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