

REVIEW ARTICLE ON LANGUAGE, BEING, AND COGNITION

Jayant Upadhyay*

The book *Language, Being and Cognition, Philosophy of Language and Analysis* was first published by Astha, Guwahati, 2012,¹ and now a modified edition is in the reviewer's hand. Four chapters of the first edition, i.e., Chapter 15- Jain Theory of Language and Indescribability of Reality, chapter 16- Meaning of the religious ideas of Buddhism, and chapter 22- Language and Culture of the first edition are excluded in the modified edition, and three new chapters that are chapter 4- A critique of Relation between Language and Meaning, Contextual meaning, chapter XVIII, resolving philosophical Dichotomy chapter, XXIII have been added. The author has not only modified all the chapters of the earlier edition but has discussed the issues left un-discussed there in the earlier edition in the present edition with more philosophical clarity, research, and comprehensiveness in the way of arguing and discussing the issues. The chapter on resolving philosophical dichotomy is an excellent contribution of the Tiwari. From his holistic cognitive perspective, he has resolved here in the modified edition the dichotomies of – logo-centric and meaning–centric, language centric and meaning centric, meaning a referent and it as intelligible being, wordlists and sentimentalists, mind and body, the relation between mind and matter, mind and language, proposition and sentence, analytic and synthetic judgments, cognition and the object of cognition, interested and disinterested cognition, cognitive holism and cognitive psychology, cognition and desire as the cause of incentive to duties, experience and cognition, that have been highly controversial in the history of philosophy East and West. In fact, the author finds it an original contribution of Tiwari to the field of Philosophy.

It is a fact that the reputed authors have made several attempts in the History of Indian philosophy to make its contribution understandable to the readers who are interested to know it as such. However, most of them have done hard in including the exposition on the controversies over the issues of metaphysical, epistemological, and axiological problems of the heterodox and orthodox systems and have ignored the valuable discussion of Indian systems on their philosophies of language. The reviewer views that one cannot properly assess the basic logic of the Indian philosophical systems by ignoring their views on theories of verbal cognition, language problems, meaning, and their relation. The basic logic of metaphysics on which the rest of their views regarding epistemology and axiology are based can be analyzed and appropriately estimated if their language view is properly understood, analyzed, and

* Dr. JAYANT UPADHYAY, Associate Professor and Head, Department of Indian Philosophy and Culture, Sanskriti Vidyapeeth, Mahatma Gandhi International Hindi Visvavidyalaya, Vardha, Email: drjayantupadhyay@gmail.com.

¹ *Language, Being and Cognition, Philosophy of Language and Analysis*, authored by Devendra Nath Tiwari, (pgs. XXVI +651,) Published by Global Vision Publishing House, New Delhi, 2021.

assessed from the perspective of cognition as it flashes by language. For example, suppose a scholar of Advaita Vedanta claims the self- validity (*svataḥ pramāṇya*) of Veda or Śruti. In that case, he must know how Vedāntins overcome the problem if they adopt the theory of Abhihitānvaya, for which the word meanings are first known and retained in memory. As retained in memory, they are associated with an indivisible sentential -meaning, which is more and above word meanings. In that circumstance, the Vedic statements will be memory on the one hand and figurative on the other. If the meaning of the Vedic statements is figurative, how do they defend their position on the self-validity of Veda? Several problems in all the heterodox and orthodox systems arise, and some or the other responses to those problems have been given in the texts of those systems. But most history writers have not included the philosophy of language while writing on those systems. Moreover, this is perhaps one of the great reasons that Indian philosophy is taken to be confined to metaphysics and a way to sādhanā. Though scholars were involved in defending the charge, they got contented in glorying it as the chief characteristic of Indian philosophy. The seers preached what they realized. Some history writers have made attempts, but their endeavor is confined only to introducing the views on the language of the systems in their metaphysical design. The present work critically analyses the basic arguments of almost all the popular heterodox and orthodox systems to present a true import of Indian philosophy in view of the latest advancement in the learning of philosophy in general and Indian Philosophy of language in particular.

Some scholarly books on the history of Indian philosophy have not included valuable contributions of Āgamic tradition, specifically *Vyākaraṇa Darśana*, in their presentations, owing to which the readers fail to have a proper and comprehensive estimation of Indian Philosophy. Language, being, and Cognition by Tiwari is a critical, comparative, and comprehensive estimate of Indian philosophy in light of advancements made by recent philosophers of the East and the West.

There are chiefly two views on the nature of language. The theorists who take language as a tool, reference, and representation conceive 'powers in language' because language conveys meaning. Indian rhetoric, Naiyāyikas, and Jainas accept three powers: literal, figurative, or implicative and suggestive in language. Advaita Vedāntins, Mīmāṃsakas, accept only two powers -Literal and figurative while Buddhists accept-language figurative only. The tradition of Vyākaraṇa occupies a view that "language itself is power." It is the expresser; it expresses itself its own nature first from which its meaning is expressed non-differently. The Author has gathered influences from the Vyākaraṇa tradition. The presentation in the book is highly philosophical in that it analyses knowledge that is not only confined to but also based on the beings the language expresses, more specifically to intelligible beings only. Proper estimation of the power of language, "language is power," has been the impetus and ground for understanding and analyzing the reflections on the language theory in the book.

Contemporary Western referentialists and representationists have attempted to solve the problem of knowledge of Reality, the expressibility of Reality, and the relation between language, thought, and Reality by taking all of them as independent existences. These attempts raise some controversy among theorists and misguide their

conclusion to the extent that furthering the proper current philosophy of language is recently facing stagnation. The perspective of the expressive nature of language on which the whole discussion in the book is put up with philosophizes a thought level language that is concept-language or language as a concept which when flashes express the meaning non-differently and the garb-level language that is a tool helping manifestation of the concept –language. The word "language" comprises both of them –the garbs -comprising of verbal noises/written marks/gestures/signs, symbols, and data acquired by senses. It helps manifest the concept language and the concept language, which, when manifested by garbs, expresses itself and its meaning non-differently. For the exposition in the present work, garbs are potencies that manifest the concept, and the concept language is the potency that expresses or flashes first from which the meaning is expressed non-differently. No thought, even the thought of the language, is possible isolated from language. According to the view of Tiwari, the theory of fusion of thought and language, or language is thought, makes a genuine ground for philosophizing language as power; we can know the Reality as the language flashes it or as the real figures in language. A philosophical reflection of Reality is confined to it as the intelligible being flashed by language. Thus the language and thought, the language and meaning are intelligible beings, and so are Reality known to us.

Some of the problems getting high importance in the philosophy of language like the Autonomy thesis of language, ontic non-being versus. Intelligible being of negation, Language and Possibility of disinterested knowledge, Language and logic of translation and Analysis, Language and Grammar, Language and Communication, Philosophical dichotomies, and Meaning of Moral Expression, much less explored from a contemporary perspective, are discussed conclusively that makes the book pioneer in a proper understanding of these concepts in comparison with Western linguistic philosophers. In the present edition, most of the problems prescribed in courses of the university and colleges on the philosophy of language are added that eminences the book's value. The novelty of the rest of the chapters lies in analyzing the concepts, interpreting them in comparison with Indian and Western counterparts, and concluding them in a way that makes them valuable presentations for the understanding of students and teachers. The idea of giving the incentive to further research in the field has been well taken care of in the discussion.

The Central Problems of Bhartṛhari's philosophy, authored earlier by Devendra Nath Tiwari, and published in 2008 by the Indian Council of Philosophical Research, New Delhi, is by far the most complete and comprehensive work on the Philosophy of Bhartṛhari in one single volume. The reviewer found Ajay Verma, Summerhill, IAS Review, Vol.1-2, pp.55-57, 2008, accurately right in his comment that the book is not only rich in the lucidity of the exposition of main concepts in Bhartṛhari's Vākyapadīya but is equally rich on account of the polemic among different schools. Professor Tiwari has given the Western perspective to the problem whenever it seems necessary and possible. In his experiment with reverse chronology, namely, from sentence to the word meaning, the reviewer thinks he facilitates the readers towards a better understanding of the issues at hand. The book is replete with references giving

clues to the readers for further reading. Overall, the reviewer thinks this book is a milestone as far as studies of Bhartṛhari's philosophies are concerned.

In fact, the tradition of Vyākaraṇa occupies with analyzing and interpreting the world of language and meaning not only syntactically and semantically but cognitively also. Patañjali, the commentator and following him, Bhartṛhari and his commentators Puṅyarāja, Helārāja, Nāgeśa Bhaṭṭa, Kaundabhaṭṭa, and other pundits contributed a lot to Indian philosophy by way of their great works on the philosophy of language and Grammar. They provided the essential insight to analyze language based on cognition as it is accomplished by language. It has influenced almost all the systems of Indian philosophy. If Indian philosophy is practical, an attempt must be there to understand the practicability of the philosophical concepts brought up for discussion by different systems of Indian philosophy and to evaluate the extent of their success in interpreting the world of conduct. In any such attempt, one cannot overlook Mahābhāṣyakāra and Bhartṛhari, who is treated as an authority in almost all the issues discussed here in the book. Great texts like Mīmāṃsāsūtra of Jaimini with commentary of Śabara, Ślokavārttika of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, Nyāyasūtra of Gautama with commentary by Vātsyāyana, Vaiśeṣikasūtra with Upaskāra, Nyāyamañjarī of Jayanta Bhaṭṭa, Brahmasūtra with commentary of Śankarācārya, Vedāntaparibhāṣā of Dharmarājadhvarindra, Madhyamakaśāstra of Nāgārjuna, Pramāṇasamuccaya of Dingnāga, Yogasūtra of Patañjali, Sāṃkyakārikā of Īśvarakṛṣṇa with Tattvakaumudi of Vācaspati Mishra have helped in maturing the thought about the issues discussed in this book.

One can find the utterly philosophical contribution of the rich legacy of India discussed here in this book from the contemporary perspective. It is intensively engaged in analyzing the cognition as flashes by language and even so without intermingling with any physiological, metaphysical, psychological, religious entities and our allegiances that misguide our approach to reaching a philosophical conclusion. It undertakes cognition that flashes by language as the object of analysis and interpretation. It does not view language as a linguistic property only but as a cognitive unit that is also a concept. The flashing of the concept through tools like articulations, written marks, gestures, sensory data, etc., is cognition infused by language

The reviewer is quite impressed by the outstanding erudition, brilliant analysis, and exposition of the issues. He must congratulate Professor Devendra Nath Tiwari for his valuable contribution to the philosophy of language and analysis made a way of writing out the book "Language, being and cognition." The book, as he finds, is fit to serve as a beginner/ initiator of a new trend of philosophizing based on analysis of cognition as it flashes by language. The exposition of the problems faced by students and teachers of the universities where the courses are running, in the light of new advancements of knowledge in the Indian and Western philosophy of language and analysis, is simple, critical, and comparative. The book is a must-read for students, scholars, and teachers, and the reviewer is sure the academic world will welcome the book.