

Cognitive Holism in the light of Dynamics of Language

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Abstract-

Philosophy of language in india attracts the scholars of the east and west but since original text are in Sanskrit and the translations sometimes does not reflect the originality of the sense and most of the philosophy scholars find it difficult to go into the depth of the Indian reflections on language. We have scholarly books by KAS Iyer, B.K. Matilal, J.N. Mohanty and R.C. Pradhan on the philosophy of language and meaning in Indian perspective.

There are two sorts of major approaches to the nature of language. Indian Systems of orthodox and heterodox and the Western Representationists like Wittgensteinian's approach to Language as reference and meaning as thought and the cognitive holistic approach to language as expresser and meaning as expressed both make philosophical enquiry into the dynamics of language in different ways. For those who accept language as reference, language, as such, has no meaning; it is dead but it is with its attachment to a meaning that language becomes alive.

Cognitive holistic analysis very nicely follows Bhartṛhari method of grammatical and philosophical analysis and makes it updated and sharpened more for conclusive discussion on the issues at hand. Analysis of a sentential structure by dividing the sentence into words and into letters to make the formation of words and sentences understandable to the beginners through those parts is the device to decipher the whole sentential meaning through the meaning of parts. Philosophical analysis is the method of analysis of reflections of a theory and of the rival theories, to move forward towards the clarity of a concept as it is flashed because our communication is based on the concepts. Confusion cannot be practices and serve the purpose of communication in between the listener and speaker. Clear flashing of the concept can only be brought into practice or grammar.

Research Methodology-

In my paper I have followed the method of Cognitive. The study has used the sources from Primary and Secondary data and have done authentic books. This paper provides a Cognitive study on Bhartṛhari's thought on Cognitive Holism. Cognitive analysis is a process of dividing the indivisible cognition into piecemeal and philosophizing the issue for clarity, conception and wisdom even so without involving any metaphysical, epistemic or ontic allegiances. . It aims at interpreting the cognition as accomplished in communication

Analysis And Discussion-

Word Holism:

Holism is interpreted chiefly as word- holism and sentence- holism. The former, in Indian philosophy, is attributed to PrabhākaraMīmāṃsakas. They are wordists; they take word as meaningful unit; word denotes its denotative meaning (vācya). Word-meaning and sentential meaning, the word conveys, are both denotative meanings. They deny the existence of sentence and explain sentential –meaning as the meaning by the word itself. However, they, unlike Naiyāyikas, Advaitavedāntins and KumāriMīmāṃsakas who are associationists, interpret that the word, when used for communication, expresses a mutually related meanings that is called sentential- meaning. Thus, word expresses their own independent meaning (padārtha) and in use it conveys sentential- meaning (vākyaārtha), that is, mutually related meaning as well.

Frege¹⁰ perceives that meaning of a sentence is determined by the condition under which a competent speaker would assent to or dissent from it. Unlike them, Prabhākaras do not take that the meaning of a word is to be decided in the context of the sentence only. Unlike them, Prabhākaras do not accept the existence of sentence. They simply say that when words are used they express not only their own meaning (word-meaning) but a connected denotation, that is, the sentential meaning also. For example, when we utter ‘shut’, it conveys its own word-meaning and the sentential meaning ‘you please, shut the door’ as well. The word ‘door’ expresses mutually related meaning of words of the set, that is ‘shut the door. In that case, other words only qualify or translate the meaning conveyed by the word ‘door’ and thus, mutually related meaning of a word is sentential meaning and that too being the meaning of a word is also denotative meaning (vācya). Unlike Frege, there is no need for Prabhākaras, to accept sentence and to decide the word-meaning in the framework of a sentence. The word holism of Prabhākara is criticized by other wordists and the sphaṭavādins for accepting that the word has two denoted-meanings of its own and of sentential meaning; there is no need of the logic that word-meaning in a use is to be decided in a structure of a sentence.

Sphaṭa holism (Sphaṭavāda):

It is particularly a theory attributed to Bharṭṛhari and is interpreted as sentence holism. The word ‘holism; stands for a theory of wholeness that accepts the reality as an indivisible whole; a whole, that is not constituted of parts and does not break into parts. By analysis, the whole is understood in the part-whole scheme. With Bharṭṛhari, the whole is indivisible and all divisions come out of the analysis of the whole¹¹. He observes that the communication is beginninglessly performed by human community and it is accomplished by a complete sense. The complete sense is expressed by a sentence and not by a word. Therefore, the original unit of communication is sentence. In verbal cognition, it expresses its indivisible nature first from which its meaning is expressed non-differently. Meaning is also indivisible whole and is non-different from the sentence. Sentence is of awareness in nature and there is no possibility of any

real division in indivisible sentence that is unit of awareness. The whole- part scheme of dividing the indivisible sentence into words, nominative, verb, prefixes, particle and post positions and words into roots, suffixes, prefixes, letters, etc., is practical skill that helps only to make the sentence understandable in syntactical and semantic scheme of analysis. But through the divisions of the artificial skill, the indivisible sentence as such is not divided.

The active theory of cognition by language comes into existence with the theory of sphoṭa. The language, in this view, is śabda that comprises both the verbal articulations as instrument/tool and the sphoṭa as the expresser that is, expressed through the tools we learn conventionally. The sphoṭa is expresser and the expressed is pratibhā¹²; the two are the name of the same indivisible awareness from two perspectives that is from the perspective of expresser and the expressed. The sphoṭa is indivisible and is analyzed through into different parts of language as per the sequences occurred in manifesting and approaching the indivisible sphoṭa in an analytic scheme. Sphoṭa is neither metaphysical, nor psychological substance; it is the flashing of the consciousness that is directly expressed.

Sentence holism:

Sentence holism can be understood in Indian context as a theory that perceives that the cognition a complete sense and communication is accomplished by it. The complete sense is expressed by a sentence. Conversation and communication are not confined to speaking and listening of verbal noises; it is accomplishment of cognition (sampratyaya) by language. Verbal noises produced by the speaker when grasped by the audience manifest the sphoṭa and thus cognition is not abstraction out of the utterances which are only vehicles helping manifestation of intelligible being of language. Manifested so its own self is expressed by itself from which its meaning is revealed non-differently. The indivisible flash, in some cases, as I have pointed out earlier, is revealed even by uttering a single letter,¹³ a single word¹⁴ by a sentential garb, a gesture, by perception, and in some cases it may not be revealed even by hearing a large number of subordinate sentences and sentential garbs. Thus, the question of its long or short is useless. It is a flash of awareness having no length, breadth, no parts, and no division but in all cases, the cognition is a complete sense expressed; a complete sense is indivisible sentential cognition revealed by a sentence, an indivisible sentence.

Sentence and its meaning are of awareness in nature and there is no possibility of any real division in indivisible awareness; it is not a construction out of letters and words, or a grouping of words. The whole- part scheme of dividing the indivisible sentence into words, nominative, verb, prefixes, particle and post positions and words into roots, suffixes, prefixes, letters, etc., are artificial remedy that only helps to make the indivisible sentence understandable in syntactical and semantic scheme of analysis as construction of parts that is association of words and word-meanings. But through the artificial divisions, the indivisible sentence, as such, is not divided; it is made understandable through the divisions that are steps to understand the indivisible. Taking

this sense into consideration, the theory is called sentence-holism. Let us observe the popular and possible kinds of holism.

Meaning holism (Akhaṇḍavākyaṛthavāda):

Meaning Holistic trends are observed therewith metaphysicians who take the reality as substance beyond the grasp and independent of knowledge and its analysis. The analytical skill is taken just a step to exercise intellect about the things beyond intellect. Analysis cannot involve and affect the cognition of transcendental meaning. Assuming divisions of indivisible, using language about that which is beyond language and cognition, thinking of cognizing a non-intelligible, transcendental are all metaphysicians 'intellectual game that destroys the light and beauty of cognition and proper utility of analysis.

As different sorts of ornaments having different shape, size are the same substance gold likewise all the diversities are the diversity of the substance. It is the reality of the diversities. The pure gold remains the same even if the different ornaments are melted and destroyed. Likewise, meaning remains the same despite of ascribing divisions of sentences, words, suffixes, etc.

According to another theory, meaning is universal and a universal is that in which enumerable individuals belonging to past, future and present of the class of individuals, inhere. The individuals manifest it and different category of individuals manifests different universals and, hence, there is discrete cognition by all words. Universal is not reduced to analysed individuals falling under they just help manifest the universal.

Meaning, is whole, an indivisible flash revealed by language and while understanding meaning in communication we do not search the meaning of its parts. Anything that flashes determinately is Pratibhā; even the language¹³ as flash is pratibhā that is meaning as intelligible being and that is what serves as the basis of analysis of language by language. All artificial divisions are attempts of understanding indivisible pratibhā or meaning. However, isolated from language, no meaning is acceptable for Bhartṛharians.

Meaning holism of Linguistic philosophers of the West cannot sustain because they give primacy to meaning but accept it transcendental to language; in that case, the door of philosophy that moves with language will remain closed. Perceiving death of language for giving space to independence of meaning is declaration of the death of philosophical reflections.

Cognitive holism:

Cognition is a complete indivisible whole; it is the flashing of consciousness. Focusing the primacy of meaning, language philosophers of the East and West are motivated in way that they stick to meaning as whole and overlook the proper role and estimation of the power of language. They accept language only a tool for conveyance of meaning. Not only that but they negate the

role of language and forget that if language expresses meaning it can express language itself, as we find in the case of language as the meaning of language. For example, dog is a word and when one asks what does 'dog' mean, we quickly reply 'svān' in Sanskrit, kuṭṭā in Hindi, hound in German and 'chien' in French languages. In this case, we are putting only words from different languages for the meaning of a word. Not only that but if meaning is separate from language that is if they are two level, higher and lower, of existences and the later is transcendental to or beyond the grasp of the former then analysis of meaning by the analysis of language will not be possible. There will be no way to explain analysis of language by language itself, if the meaning status of language in a cognitive activity of analysis of it, is not accepted. If the language expresses language the expressed language, at the same time, will not be the expresser language because the language that is analyzed artificially stands as concept-language and the language in our hand that serves as tool for the analysis of the concept language is means; former stands in the capacity of meaning and not the language. Cognitive holism resolves all the above problems on the basis of infusion of cognition by language that is a theory of the non-difference of the thought and the language.

Not only that but unlike, the referentialists and representationists theory of cognition by language, cognitive holism discussed herein maintains a remarkable difference between the cognition and the object of cognition we know. Cognition is not an object in that or in any cognition; it is always in present but the object of cognition that flashes in present cognition may be the memory of that object or another flashed in past. In cognition, the object of cognition i.e. the universal is known but it is not the cognition itself. It is neither individual nor universal but the light that flashes the objects and its self-consciousness as well. The objects of cognition are analyzed by the analytic devices but in that analysis cognition of that cognitive object is not analyzed; it remains indivisible though it serves as the light of flashing and its self-consciousness. Cognition is the cognition of the objects and self-awareness of the object (object-awareness) as well. Otherness is the character of objects but not of the cognition itself. As in cognition so in memory and recognition, the object of cognition is not the cognition of the cognition but the object figuring in that cognition.

All words and, hence, the word 'Jñāna'(knowledge), Brahman, sky, universal and individual expresses universal; the universal the word expresses is imposed on individual objects by some similarity or as the ontic substratum of the universal the language expresses. However, the knowledge itself is not an object itself. The universal is the object of awareness and Individuals are known by implication of the universal expressed by the word. As a lamp does not need another lamp in order to light, the knowledge need not be known as object or another in that knowledge.¹⁵ knowledge, for us, is not relational but foundational and as such free from any allegiance to object, private feelings, etc; it is the self-consciousness of the object of cognition.\

Practical Utility of cognitive holism:

Unlike metaphysics, Philosophy of Cognitive Holism, assumes conscious as ontic whole, perceives cognition as indivisible whole; it concentrates on knowledge that is directly known to us determinately because the language infuses it.

The highest philosophical point of the holism is that it accepts the artificial division made on the basis of utterances or marks only as a remedy and assumes that even the uttering of a single letter or a single word can express the complete meaning and in that case, the unit is a complete sentence. 'Language is power, the light' is the basic argument in cognitive holism. The length and breadth of the written marks or the time duration of the verbal utterances are not important. The revelation of cognition is primary and if a single letter expresses the complete sentential sense, it is a sentence. It, as such, is not divided but the division scheme helps illumination of the indivisible whole to an ignorant and beginner through these steps.

Since meaning in all philosophical systems is observed as awareness in nature, we perceive the unit that expresses it, is sentence and that in its conceptual form is also of awareness in nature (bauddha-śabda). The two being the objects of awareness or of awareness in nature are non-different. That is the reason we understand the sense, communicate, converse, discuss and respond without the want of a referent outside in empirical experience.

Cognitive Holistic philosophy analyses and explains the meaning of all words and sentences including negative sentences, empty words/sentences and pseudo sentences as well on the basis of cognition as it figures when presented by language so. 'Language infuses cognition' is the cognitive ground not only for the idea of non-difference of language and thought but for the determination and communication of thought also. Thought can be determined only by language and it is the determinate thought that gives incentive to speak.

Cognitive holism, maintains a difference between the sentence as intelligible being (idea) and the syntactical the structure of the sentence as association of words articulated in a sentential set. Both are involved in cognition, the former as the expresser and the later as the instrument or tool through which the former is manifested and analysed. The syntactic and analytical remedies to make the intelligible being understand may differ as per the competency of the interpretations. But they all have a purpose to make the indivisible, intelligible being, that is, indivisible concept/thought or idea, understand in a piecemeal scheme. The language is not confined to uttering and listening only but the awareness also and hence the blend of the two-one the external articulation and the other the thought level. Without the understanding of the blend of two levels of language, no cognitive activity can be explained logically and cognitively possible.

Conclusion-

Cognition is the light; it lights itself and the objects; it is self-consciousness of consciousness of the objects. When we impose intelligible beings on things of our allegiances which are outside it,

we involve consciousness in on extraneous ontic and psychic entities and fashion some or the other relation with them; we are thus, deviated ourselves from the cognition as such and accordingly feel pleasure and pain according to satisfaction or dissatisfaction of our passions. Thus pleasure and pain are the products of our deviation from the cognition; a lower level activity of consciousness, lower to cognitive activity. If we confine to flashes and the incentive caused by them and do accordingly without deviation, there will be no pain, no pleasure blended with pain. Cognition, being light, is independently of pain and pleasure caused by our allegiances to desires and interests; it is guide to perform duties as per pure knowledge expressed by language and, hence, doubtless and blissful. No problem is problem for itself; all problems are problems for a reflecting mind that confronts with the problem; all problems are at thought level and can be solved by thinking and reflecting. Cognitive holism prescribes all the means required for cultivation and sublimation of rationality and conduct because only that way one's mind can attain pure knowledge. Knowledge and ignorance both are illuminated only when they are cognized so and we know their difference by cognizing them only. When we concentrate on them as they figure in cognition, we confront with problems if any and then we analyze them, reflect over them to remove and get clarity and wisdom.

Cognitive holism unlike language philosophers of the West, do not perceive that problems are caused by the misuse of the language but by the misunderstanding of the meaning the language expresses. It perceives that language is power and can express all meaning; the meaning which others may find beyond context of reference and referents -empirical and transcendental; non-referent, non-context as well are also known only as the language express them so.

Cognitive holism is an understanding of pure cognition and, thus, has a concern with a spiritual purpose in philosophizing the practice of controlling knowledge from being the interested with we call cultivation and, finally, understanding and practice of disinterested knowledge¹⁹ which we call pure knowledge or wisdom. It is the practicing of natural and simple from complicated and allegiances and thus, getting spiritual freedom where all the possibility of meaning of language is open. It is a remedy against spiritual sickness, the ill of thought and defects of misguided thinking.²⁰ Cognitive holism perceives²¹ that one's thoughts cannot excel, if one rushes, with his own prejudiced reasoning; the intellect can get the discriminating pure knowledge only if one discriminately knows different sources of traditional wisdom. Practice of avoiding and controlling interestedness of the cognition and follow up of the non-interested makes man simple and wise, more creative and free from all relative limitations. It is the spiritual technique to engineer the life by managing the desires and knowledge that leads to spiritual freedom where language opens its all possibilities of disinterested knowledge free from our passions and non-intelligible desires of things.

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