CHAPTER I

'LANGUAGE' AS A DYNAMIC PROCESS - 
STATING THE PREMISE
1.1 Introduction

As a first step in the exploration of the kind of conceptualisation of languaging that I consider relevant for teaching/education as a whole, I shall raise the following questions:

1. What is the relationship between knowledge and language?

2. How is language a tool for meaning-making? What is the nature of this quality of the tool that language fulfils?

3. What is involved in the act of using language - which is another way of asking, what is the process of wielding the tool? - A related issue here is the status of 'rules' and their implementation.

4. How do the specific answers to these questions afford a 'theory' or 'model' for language teaching? Does it in any substantial way change the way language is taught?

These questions serve as, an overview of the ground to be covered in this chapter - I do not claim that these questions are answered fully or in this order in this chapter. Discussions here are definitely meant to afford a certain amount of clarity on the issues raised by the first three questions; as to the fourth question though again, I do not exactly answer the question in this chapter itself - clear indications or principles for the classroom
emerge which indications are more fully worked out at the end of Chapter II and in Chapter III.

1.2 Language and Meaning - Reflection vs Interpretation of Reality

Firstly to the notion of meaning or knowledge creation in language then: The issue at this stage is a perspective on thought/knowledge/reality or meaning and the role of language in its construction. Is it that we have a thought in our mind, and language is used as the tool that expresses that thought? This would mean that language - through a definite 'system' of meaning has an unequivocal way of stating them. Particular words or particular structuring of words 'translate' specific states of reality. Two points emerge here: (1) reality or meaning is already present; it is already 'there'. (2) The nature of language is to reflect (truthfully) faithfully this reality. In other words, language is transparent.

Both these points could be challenged.

1.2.1 Language Use as Meaning Constitution

"... images ... must be interpreted, and it is interpretation that constitutes them as this or that image ... a verbal process intervenes and provides order and direction ... We do not first

* Notes at the end of each chapter.
possess an image as an object of thought, then express its nature in conventional signs, automatically reading off its features as if we were reading an architect's plan each of whose features carried an appropriate label as an intrinsic part. Rather, the expressions comprising an interpretation are constitutive. The image is what is because the expressions constitute it as such - it is built up by expressions. A painter does not first intuit or present his artistic object to himself and then search about for the appropriate forms to express it; he constitutes the object through his means of expression. So, too, we constitute our objects of thought through our means of expression."

(Tyler, 1978:59)

What exists pre-linguistically when brought into the framework of communication, or when thought has to be thought about, it demands a tool or medium for expression which medium does not just express it but constitutes it. Meaning is an in-and-through-the-medium phenomenon.

1.3 Language Structuring and Meaning Constitution

A medium in the first place, to be used for purposes of communication must possess form, i.e., must be "capable of being again". "Judgement and agreement in judgement are conditions for communication" (Wittgenstein, 1958:88). This is where a symbolic medium with its virtues of structuring comes in. To expand on this, formness or structure-ness must have the three characteristics of wholeness, transformation and self-regulation (Piaget, 1974). Putting it
slightly differently, Tyler (quoted above) claims that thoughts to be thought about have to be stable over many occurrences; combinable with other forms, even if only in the crude sense of juxtaposition, of being laid side by side in our mind for purposes of comparison; capable of becoming other than they are - stable without being immutable; capable of reflexive and conventional interpretation. This is the formness of the medium principle, which language fulfils. Yet this kind of an apparent sameness, that anything formal, including language, possesses, is something that has been inscribed by us; it is subjective rather than objective. As Tyler himself says:

"I do not suggest that this sameness is an objective feature of a form that, so to speak, attaches itself to it and presents itself to us in such a way that we automatically know it as such - as if it carried a sign saying, in a language mysteriously known to us perhaps in some prior existence, 'I am the form X'. Instead, we must be able to constitute it or interpret it as the form X. Whatever objective status it has is a function of our constituting it as that kind of objective form - the sign it carries is inscribed by us."

(Tyler, 1978:60-61)

This is the principle of objectivity through subjectivity. (I shall come back to this later in another context. See below.)
As soon as images have to be communicated then, (which communication involves that intra-individual act of thinking about as much as the inter-individual act of 'talking about') they have to be contained or coagulised only through - inevitably - a formal system and the thought about image or meaning is in and of the system - i.e., an inscribed stable and common meaning.

This is the 'structuralism' that human thinking apparently is not capable of avoiding. Human thinking by using a formal system constitutes itself. Or, to put it slightly differently, it constructs itself by constructing forms. As Hawkes, discussing Vico, and his book, *The New Science* (published in 1725) points out:

"The one genuinely distinctive and permanent human characteristic is discernible in the faculty ... to deal with the world ... not directly but at one remove, by means of other agencies ..."

(Hawkes, 1977:15)

and later to submit to this other agency dealt world. "Man's universal capacity (is) not only to formulate structure, but also to submit his own nature to the demands of the structuring" (Ibid). As soon as images have to be communicated they have to be contained in and through a
form, i.e., this act of containing is meaning-making or constitution, with an inscriptive meaning or inscriptive form as a consequent. They are interchangeable notions.

In other words, when I say the 'meaning' of a sentence is 'X' I deliberately 'create' and 'hold on' to that meaning. And a notion such as a linguistic or grammatical structure (e.g., negativisation) is a stabilised and inscribed meaning.

The three notions which have emerged here are: constitution in expression; the structureness or the systematicity of the expressive medium; and its inscriptive systematicity or objectivity rather than substantive objectivity.

1.4 Signification - Saussure

Interestingly these three notions can be traced back to Saussure's structural linguistics (Saussure, 1959). The first fascinating idea there is the notion of the sign.

"Saussure analysed the sign into its two components: a sound or acoustic component which he called the signifier ... and a mental or conceptual component which he called the signified ... In this analysis, be it noted, things themselves, for which linguistic signs can be asked to stand when we want to refer to the world around us, are ignored. The signified is not a thing, but a notion of a thing, what comes into the mind of the speaker or hearer when the appropriate signifier is uttered. The signifier thus constitutes the material aspect of language ... Signifiers and signifieds can be separated in this
way only by the theorist of language; in practice they are inseparable. A truly meaningless sound is not a signifier because it does not signify — there can be no signifier without a signified; correspondingly, no concept can be said to exist unless it has found expression, ... there can be no signified without a signifier."

(Sturrock, 1979:6)

Thus the fact of signifying brings into existence the signified — i.e., languaging brings forth meaning, thus language (equivalent to Saussure's signs) is an inseparable combination of languaging and meaning.

A linguistic sign is the indissoluble unity of a meaning with a physical sound or mark (signified and signifier). As Saussure writes in one place:

"People have often compared the bilateral unity (of the physical aspect and the meaning aspect of linguistic signs) to the unity of the human person, composed of body and soul. This analogy is unsatisfactory. It would be more exact to think of a chemical compound, like water, which is a combination of hydrogen and oxygen. Taken separately, each of these elements has none of the properties of water."

(Saussure, 1959:103)

The next point made by Saussure is that these signs are not objective but arbitrary. As mentioned above, the signified does not stand for a thing — it is a notion constituted by the fact of signification. The word 'tree' for instance is not what it is because of any 'reasonable'
reason but simply because the structure of language makes it mean that, and only validates it when it does so.

"The extremely important consequence which Saussure draws from this ... arbitrariness is that language is a system not of fixed, unalterable essences but of labile forms. It is a system of relations between its constituent units, and those units are themselves constituted by the differences that mark them off from other, related units. They cannot be said to have any existence within themselves, they are dependent for their identity on their fellows. It is the place which a particular unit, be it phonetic or semantic, occupies in the linguistic system which alone determines its value. Those values shift because there is nothing to hold them steady; the system is fundamentally arbitrary in respect of nature and what is arbitrary may be changed."

(Sturreck, 1979:10)

Altogether the meanings constituted in language which due to its structural qualities/systematicity (note, systematicity or structure always implies inscription) could remain immutable, or objective, becomes a great conservative force. Yet finally it is the same conservative force that also enables its converse, the fact of creativity. Over and above all, language is a form and not a substance, was Saussure's famous summation of this quite fundamental insight about arbitrary inscription of meaning and structural validity of the signifieds.
1.4.1 All Meanings as Language Inscribed

It is this factor of the conventionalisation of the form-ness of language (with its implied inscriptive tone to it) which inspires post-Saussurean thinkers (not necessarily in the field of linguistics) to question and scrutinise the validity of notions such as 'self-hood' and 'I' ness and reality in terms of any other meaning as language inscribed.

I shall take up very briefly two such thinkers - Lacan and Derrida. If they have to be categorised into a common discipline then perhaps the notion which puts them together as thinkers in the same field is the notion of structuralism. Both Lacan and Derrida take up Saussure's 'sign', the signifier-signified relationship to use in their respective fields of psycho-analysis and literary criticism. This is because 'language' plays a central part in their thought. Both of them are obsessed by 'the institutional nature of language, and by its 'infinite productivity'. It is not something we are born with, but an institution "into which we are gradually initiated in childhood as the most fundamental element of all in our socialisation" (ibid.:12). Language thus becomes impersonal; it "exceeds us as individuals". Any use of language involves us inevitably in the surrender of at least a part of our uniqueness, since if our language also were totally unique no one would be able to understand it. Some
of our libido (to use the term favoured by Lacan) must be surrendered to the system: "We must pass from the private, ... to the social order of the Symbolic. Our individuality is correspondingly reduced" (Ibid.).

1.4.2 Language Constituted Meanings: Implications for Creativity in Interpretation

In one sense these thinkers can be criticised for totally obliterating the 'self' or the 'individual' from language. As Sturrock (1979) says:

"Certainly there is much hostility to all philosophies of individualism in these thinkers' writings. They all, some more than others, subscribe to the strongly antibourgeois sentiments traditional among French intellectuals, for whom the bourgeois is a corrupt and thus typical member of the middle classes who has managed to disguise his own insatiable greed for money and power as a noble philosophy of liberal self-development. Thus there is a political slant to (their) ideas."

(13)

Yet, as Sturrock continues, "Their war on ... ego-philosophies goes deeper than that." It is in showing up that this self or individual is an institutional or language construct that they deny the concept of self and meaning as embodied in any language (spoken or written) text, of individual authorship and hence 'one meaning' and release it from authorial tyranny and into plural interpretations. The impersonality of
language is ultimately what brings out the truly personal.

"The self arises then not from any consciousness of thinking and of being the master of its thoughts but from an awareness of its limitations, of there being things within its own domain of which it may be the object rather than the agent."

(Tyler, 1978:83)

Echoes of the concept of the limited self that language constitutes in its heralding, the beguilement into transcendence that language effects (see Tyler, cited above for more on this) can be related to the work of Lacan once again. He (i.e., Lacan, as Sturrock again points out) "has done much to persuade us to abandon whatever belief we cling to in the autonomy of the ego, not as an agent in society but as an agent controlling our own words and actions ... Lacan, after Freud, dwells on the function of the Id, those disruptive impulses of the subconscious which refuse all authority and stability to the Ego" (ibid.:13). Thus the self in the traditional sense would appear a false transcendence.

This idea of the ego's transcendence as false helps much in making this linguistic construct become open (lend itself) to other possible interpretations. Multiple interpretations are conducive to exploiting the institutionalisation - an inevitable feature of language (i.e., form, which term pre-supposes inscription).
1.4.3 Open Signifieds in Language - Potential Proliferation of Meaning

It is through surrendering to the impersonal nature of language (or its intersubjectivity in Tylerian terms) that its false individuality and singularity arising out of it are exposed and scope given for plurality and freedom from a false 'author'-ship and one truth source.

"... the interdependency of communication, intersubjectivity, and the conscious, reminding us that our sense of private, inexpressible thought and experience is possible only in a context that presumes the opposite: a world of shared, communicable meanings."

(Tyler, 1978:85)

In the foregrounding of the 'impersonal' what is happening here is an advancement of the...

"... claims of the signifier above those of the signified. The signifier is what we can be sure of, it is material; the signified is an open question. The same signifier is sure to have different signifieds for two different people, occupying a differently defined semantic space because of the dissimilarity of individual experience; again, the same signifier will have different signifieds for the same person at different times, since the configuration of our semantic space is never stable. Structuralism invites us to delight in the plurality of meaning this opens up, to reject the authoritarian or unequivocal interpretation of signs."

(Sturrock, 1979:15)
It is this same principle that accommodates this differential configurations of semantic space that also informs the stand that 'lucidity' in language style is the virtue appropriate to the "discourse of persuasion and autocracy". Lucidity affords us the illusion that we control language that we are making it do exactly what we want - we can say what we mean. Lacan and the others endeavour to remove that illusion. They show what a large degree of autonomy language enjoys, and "there is infinitely more to be said on every topic than will ever be said by those who believe that anything worth saying must be said unambiguously" (ibid.:17). Thus a reader (or listener?) who works her way through ambiguities picking up meanings ratifies the "awful productiveness" of language.

What all this amounts to is that the concept of the signifier (the constituter of meaning) its arbitrariness and the nature of signification, i.e., its non-reference to reality and its relational validity leaves languaging an 'open' phenomenon and makes communication (intra- as well as inter-individual) not a matter of pure transmission but a working out of meanings which meanings once again are only the relational open meanings and hence without substantivity or conversely without substantive reference and so relational and open.
1.5 **Non-Essentialism of Language Use: Another Perspective**

This materialist (as against the essentialist) explanation of languaging, a logical conclusion to Saussure's theory of signs is brought out by Silverman and Torode (1980). They, however, start by pointing to a curious discrepancy in Saussure's theory of communication. According to Saussure, communication simply involves a message, an encoder, and a decoder and a message retrieved at the end. Yet this is not possible since as Silverman and Torode point out, in understanding speech (and producing it), we do not give shape to a concept of reality, in the first place (see Tyler above). The speaker (or the text-producer) in producing a text produces it with certain presumptions about the character of reality. Yet speech can never correspond to reality. This paradox defines what may be called a dialectical (through speaking) account of speech. Similarly understanding (and re-producing it in another text) can never correspond to the 'intended' "... but since this is necessarily so there is no reason to deplore it" (Silverman and Torode, op.cit.:5). We have simply to acknowledge the fact that language is always in change and that the reality thus meant to be expounded by language is in a constant state of changing.
Taking this to its next step, Silverman and Torode view language not as a reality *sui-generis* whether transparent or opaque but as necessarily referring as appearance, to a reality, other than itself.

"But, we propose, the way in which it does this is to refer to other language. Thus plurality is inseparable from language, and it is the play of reference from one language to another language that suggests the reference of language to a reality other than language."

(ibid.:8)

1.5.1 Language in Process - Meaning in Process

Coming back to 'meaning and self' of individualism and authorship we notice that in this materialist explanation of languaging actually lies the true liberation of the individual in that as Tyler says, it is language which heralds the emergence of self yet also betrays it into the institutionalised or structured self. Thus it offers an identity yet takes it away. Looking at it in another way, by 'taking it away' i.e., institutionalising or structuring it, it reveals the limitations of this selfhood and hence offers scope for keeping the self in process by taking advantage of the 'awful productivity' of language (Derrida, as discussed by Sturrock, 1979). The recognition of the limitations of the self, which recognition shows up the need to proliferate meaning, is the suggestion to a reality
outside language pointed out by Silverman and Torode. The play of reference from one language to another is the limit concept of the self offering scope to "delight in the plurality of meaning" the one principle of structure denying yet affording. "Meanings may and should co-exist, there is no call for one to be exalted at the expense of others. The more meaning there is in our world the better ..." (Sturrock, 1979:15, discussing Derrida).

At this point the issue to be resolved still is the status of the code - the conservative force in languaging. How is this built up? As an initial gambit I posit that in its building-up is seen its status. La Langue itself is meaning and it is constituted (inscribed) meaning.

1.5.2 Immanent Multiplicity in Languaging and Meaning-Making - A Summing-Up

Going back to the stand taken by the post-Saussurean thinkers (above) it can be taken to be a tracing back of the processes or genesis of languaging i.e., the return to the state of non-reductional or non-pruned origins beyond the acts of structuring experience "dealing with experience at one-remove" or languaging. The process adopted by the structuralist thinkers - the exploitation of semioticity (the signifier-signified concept) to multiply meanings (or
structures) seems to me to point to the original basis of multiplicity immanent in languaging rather than starting from oneness of either la langue or meaning. The seeds of multiplicity give rise rightly (later) to multiplicity. It is original richness which gets conventionalised - i.e., it is conservation which is the non-native principle in languaging and not multiple flux. This then is the question: when language is non-substantive and hence plural how is this substantiveness (seemingly) built up? Let us look at what a contemporary of Saussure, Merleau-Ponty, has to offer here.

1.6 Use of La Langue or 'Language Core' - An Act of Creation (Merleau-Ponty)

Merleau-Ponty (His two books that I deal with here mainly are Phenomenology of Perception, 1962; and Consciousness and the Acquisition of Language, 1973) establishes a deeper level of meaning beyond the conventional level that is 'visible'. At a deeper level than this conventional rule-governed arbitrary one then, is the 'natural'ness about language, i.e., a simple "singing of the world" which is varied and open. This is the 'gestural variety' immanent in speech. A subtraction of this gestural variety from actual speaking is what enables us to think "according to others". This subtraction is what gives us the inscribed conceptual meanings, convergence about thinking among human beings. "If we consider only the conceptual and delimiting meaning of words,
it is true that the verbal form ... appears arbitrary" (1962:187). They appear as so many different conventionalised ways of saying the same thing - realising one meaning, i.e., only when we deliberately stick only to the denotational (conceptual) ignoring the connotational (the emotional tonalities, i.e., the gestural) that there is sameness about meaning. 'Convergence' in other words is constituted. The problem (the data) retrospectively is seen to be convergent (Tyler's objectivity as constituted - see above). After we work on it, we 'discover' the commonality.

"... each word of a difficult text awakens in us thoughts that were ours beforehand, but these meanings, ... combine to form new thoughts which recasts them all, and we are transported to the heart of the matter, we find the source."

( Ibid.: 178)

To repeat, after we work on it, we 'discover' the commonality.

"There is, then, a taking up of others' thought through speech ... an ability to think according to others ... Here the meaning of words must be finally induced by the words themselves, or more exactly, their conceptual meaning must be formed by a kind of subtraction from a gestural meaning, which is immanent in speech."

(Ibid.)

So such work-outs which I shall call negotiation (subtraction) is needed to bring about the conventionality (arbitrariness, rule-governedness) seeming sameness, suppression of the actual emotional variety possible,
agreeing to agree, meaning accomplishment, of signs. Possibility of deliberate or voluntary agreement, a feature of the structurality (arbitrariness and differential meaning-value) leads to the security of invariance or conservation.

We keep to the convergent meaning (la langue as the first meaning of the 'silence') yet go beyond it to reach to the meanings immanent in 'silence' itself which are not conventional - i.e., not denuded of their 'richness' of sense (content) and again after this act of languaging we arrive at another new meaning which is a 'coherent deformation' of the structure (both terms operationally important) of la langue; thus producing a new la langue in the process. Thus meaning itself as Merleau-Ponty says is a limit concept. It 'follows rules' which are adequate for communication but not enough for capturing all the richness. This is an important second point: there is creativity already since we only 'pretend' through the work-out that there is stability. This is the force of conservation (institutionalization - see Vico, referred to by Hawkes, above) necessary for communication or coping with the world which is a result of 'structuring' - a deliberate subjective act. But this also means that when needed, instead of agreeing we can deliberately multiply the gestural meaning, play upon several ways of
'singing the world' - new meanings could be created. In fact, it is not a matter 'when needed' but that is how meanings are made. Meanings basically are 'original' and 'new'; they are constituted every time 'speech' or languaging occurs.

The language of English or Japanese is the bit which has been limited to its inscribed (conceptual) significance through rules which are conventional and arbitrary, i.e., something which is a code; yet beneath such codifications lie the primordial attempt at constituting meanings in so many different ways - the singing of the world. It is to these unknown laws we have to reach if we are to reach back to (more) creativity. Indeed this is what we do every time we language.

1.6.1 Language Universals - (Commonality vs Plurality)

Merleau-Ponty's observations about universality (universal structures) are interesting and relevant at this point. If we continue with the notion of conventionality in languages being inscribed and actual singing of the world being unconventional and nearer to the essences with its emotional tonalities, as Merleau-Ponty says,

"... the full meaning of a language is never translatable into another. We may speak several languages, but one of them always remains the one in which we live. In order completely to assimilate a language, it would be necessary to
make the world which it expresses one's own, and
one never does belong to two worlds at once ...
Strictly speaking, therefore, there are no
conventional signs ..."

(Merleau-Ponty, 1962:188)

Take this notion back to the individual and then we read:
in order to completely understand a person it would be
necessary to make the world of that person one's own, and
you can never be two persons at the same time. Thus there
is no one code of a language i.e., an objective conventional
code, or signs of one language in this sense.

This cancels out not only objectivity and makes subjectivity the only truth, but also cancels out sameness about
meanings for even one person since "you cannot have two
experiences at the same time" - thus past is past and
present is crucial for the present.

When we say that we understand our language, or we
understand what is said in other languages, it is the same
principle of working at ascribing a 'common' meaning to
agree upon.

An echo of Tyler here:

"There is simply no way around the fact that the
more closely a translation attempts to mirror the pattern of the original text, the queerer it seems. It is only by admitting distant approximations that it can be made intelligible at all
to a reader unfamiliar with the original. One gets the distinct impression that those who argue that translatability signifies the underlying unity of language or reason have never struggled with translation or attempted to see the world from the point of view of another language. They have a naive notion that translation is only a process of code-matching, when in fact far more than simple decoding is involved. Every language (I read, every individual's language) presupposes the context of its appropriate world, and it is this context that the translator must somehow evoke without at the same time succumbing so completely to it that the translation becomes unintelligible. To carry the reader into another world without the reader knowing it: that is the skill of a translator."

(Tyler, 1978:70)

What we see here, again, is the dialectical tensions between communication and inscription of commonality towards that end, and creativity and the capturing of the full richness of the meaning intended.

"We conclude then that the mere fact of the legerdemain of translation does not disprove linguistic relativity. Quite the contrary, for when translation is properly understood as something more than mere decoding, we realise that it suggests, without being too bumptious, other ways of being in the world. A good translation makes available a possible world but never lets us forget that that world is not our own. Only in the relativity of languages is their universality fully revealed."

(Ibid.)

(Read: Communication does not disprove linguistic/meaning uniqueness.)
This last is the kind of argument for universality that Merleau-Ponty advances.

To begin with he is against eidetic (logical, a priori) universal structure. Each one is speaking his or her own language making his or her own meaning; or each community speaks its own 'language' with its own special 'hints' at meanings. What is the resolution then which affords an explanation of universal structures on the one hand and a common code on the other?

Existential and Innate Universality

Merleau-Ponty while rejecting the 'eidetic' universality of a necessary a priori logical form reveals the comprehensibility achieved in the "oblique passage from a given language that I speak ... to another given language that I learn" (as quoted by Edie Foreword to Consciousness and the Acquisition of Language, 1974:XXVIII). According to him such an event is "too hesitant and passing" and so does not justify the assumption that some common mind or some explicit convention is responsible for it; at the same time he recognises that it is too systematic, too consistent and hence cannot be considered to be a series of accidents.

On the one hand it is practically impossible to give one, ideal formal analysis of any given language
"which would explicitly show forth its unique logical form and thus enables us to define its essential structure unequivocally by deriving all its various substructures from a common principle that shows their hierarchies and derivations."

(Ibid.)

It is equally impossible as Edie again points out "to account rationally for the historical relationships between languages."

But, at the same time, when one takes up the linguistic history of the human race, the continuous proliferation of aberrant forms in which no structure is ever fully finished or achieved, and in which no innovation can be precisely dated, one sees that there is no precise break between any one language and any other, no clean line of demarcation between one dialect and another. For Merleau-Ponty then, there could be only one language in a state of becoming.

"If we must renounce the abstract universality of a rational grammar which would give us the common essence of all languages, we rediscover at the same time the concrete universality of a given language which is becoming different from itself while remaining the same. Because I am now speaking, my language is not for me a sum of facts but a unified instrument for a complete intention of expression. And because it is so for me I am able to enter into other systems of expression, at first grasping them as variants of my own, and then by letting myself be inhabited by them until my own language becomes a variant of them. Neither the unity of language, nor the
distinctions among languages, nor their historical derivations from one another cease to be understandable just because we refuse to conceive one essence of language. It is simply that they must be conceived not from the standpoint of the concept or of essence but from the dimension of existence."  

(Merleau-Ponty, 1973, as quoted by Edie op.cit.)

There is therefore not universality of innate ideas but existential foundations for it. Expanding on this kind of universality, we can say that it is "the oblique and lateral universality of incomplete but sufficient comprehensibility" which we are able to bring about in communication. "We must each speak according to common rules or we would not be understood, and yet each act of speech is, in each case, a 'coherent deformation' of rules already given and accepted" (see Edie, op.cit., XXIX-XXX).

Multiplicity and Uniqueness as Native Characteristics of Language

It is the same principle of constituting commonality for comprehensibility referred to earlier in my argument which informs the notion of universality; the basis for universality is this need to be understood, though creativity or uniqueness or differences on a very subjective plane is the order of the day. Speaking a language or speaking more than one language is a coherent deformation of rules already given and accepted. All these discussions and clarifications
about universality have been digressions from the main point. Yet, what they do contribute is, in their reiteration of the uniqueness involved in every act of communication; in every individual's act of communication.

With this proviso then, that it is difference, productivity and multiplicity which is the essential principle, more native to languaging, and commonality the 'alien' or ascribed quality, let us look more closely at this ascribed quality and its status in the act of languaging.

1.7 Language and the Role of Immediate Circumstances of Use (Saussure's Synchronic and Diachronic)

I shall re-quote Saussure from the angle of a slightly different aspect of his thesis. Language, Saussure says here, is "... both a social product of the faculty of speech and a collection of necessary conventions that have been adopted by a social body to permit individuals to exercise this faculty" (1959:9). This former, is his justification for studying language synchronicity rather than diachronicity as was the current practice.

"Each language, that is, has a wholly valid existence apart from its history, as a system of sounds issuing from the lips of those who speak it now, and whose speech in fact constructs and constitutes the language (usually in ignorance of its history) in its present form."

(Hawkes, 1977:20)
What is exercised in this synchronic use, is the "linguistic faculty proper" which lies in fact "beyond the functioning of the various organs" and may be thought of "as a more general faculty which governs signs" (Saussure, op.cit.:11) - "... what is natural to mankind is not oral speech but the faculty of constructing a language, i.e., a system of distinct signs corresponding to distinct ideas" (Saussure, op.cit.:10). The implications of these cobbled together quotations from Saussure when unearthed say: that there is a sense of immediacy about language use. La Langue is the consequence of the very basic faculty of structuralism among human beings and as such is constituted by every act of speaking - thus speaking is not a physical act of producing sounds, but the exercise of the faculty of structure making.

When these ideas are combined with the one about the central (characteristic or) feature of the sign, namely, its conservative force due to arbitrary assignment of signifieds to signifiers, what we have are ascribed qualities in languaging, the sign as a conservative and permanence seeking force and its historical aspect (though the origins and existential facts of these are, forces of multiplicity, productivity and flux, and synchronicity or immediacy of use); its already structured nature - the notion of competence and an a priori la langue (though once again the existential
facts of it are, every act of speaking being an immediate exercise of the faculty of such structuring and hence *la langue* or the so called competence as an act of the moment or of-the-fact construct).

### 1.7.1 Conservation and Creation - Tensions in Languaging

Thus, I claim, that Saussure in postulating the concepts of diachronic and synchronic, the concept of conservation and the arbitrary nature of the sign and finally the concept of not only the socially preserved conventions but the individually produced consequent of the faculty of speaking, which faculty being a structuring rather than a biological/physical faculty, apparently has postulated orderliness and systematicity to language; yet beyond this apparent factor (his postulation of) the notion of non-essentiality itself points to uniqueness, the here and now, and non-permanence.

Paradoxically, it is the pull towards communication and conservation that also underlines the difference (potentially a weapon of exploitation) which means that the shifting sands on which signification is built makes communication an unequal act, i.e., the Speaker and the Hearer are not interchangeable. Message transmission is not a matter of coder, the coded, encoder, and the encoded (see Silverman and Torode above).
Negotiation, an immediacy factor, is the notion to be explored in a conceptualisation of languaging, and exploitation of the productivity of language and negotiation for conservation of meaning are two sides of the same coin.

Every time one speaks one exercises the faculty of veering towards 'structuring' experiences (coping with reality) and so builds up *la langue*. We have to struggle to establish the commonness since on the one hand semantic configurations of different individuals is not the same and secondly one's own semantic configuration does not remain the same.

Every act of languaging brings out immediate polarisation between pre-linguistic self which the very emergence of consciousness and self throws into relief and the attempt at realising that self and resultant self in process. "... our sense of private, inexpressible thought and experience is possible only in a context that presumes the opposite: a world of shared, communicable meanings" (Tyler, op.cit.).

1.8 Constitution and Reconstitution of Core - A Dynamic Model

The status of the universal core, or *la langue*, that we have been trying to assess, is one of a phenomenon constituted and re-constituted in every act of constitution. So ultimately what I am saying is that there is the fact of semantic configurations being different for me especially and for me
at different points in time; and the 'common core' I build up implies: I allow myself to 'say' what everyone wants said and everyone claims is saying. Such a core that I construct is in response to communicability - I retain it. But underneath that is my wealth of semantic configuration which is my non-arbitrary non-conceptual 'meaning' my own singing of the world which gets structured, the limit concept when 'coping with the world' becomes an issue (thoughts to be thought about). 4

Yet every act of languaging is once again a dip into my wealth of semantic configurations alone and so depending upon the extent to which I want to 'communicate', I engage in the acts of negotiation (or subtraction of my own special 'meaning-richnesses' to arrive at conceptual meanings), or exploitation; or negotiate for a longer or shorter period. (See Chapter II, where these three ideas, negotiation, exploitation and degrees of negotiation are clarified.)

Unless there is the wealth of such individual/personal singing of the world (see Note 4), it cannot be plundered. Though on the other hand, such a wealth is there, is a 'natural' fact - yet can be stunted or obscured and even obliterated through a suppression of it, through ignoring it. That is, though there is no transmission possible, the fact
of forcing a pretence of total meanings on the language learning child can make for a forcing down of ideology or the work of an unimaginative caretaker (see Chapters 1 and 2, \textit{Rama Devi}, 1985).

1.9 \textbf{Languaging as Creative Meaning-Making - Implications for a Model of Language}

There are several implications of the view of language and meaning discussed above. Yet at this point of a summing up of the discussion I would like to focus on the issue of 'subjectivity' as against objectivity of \textit{la langue} and through that knowledge/meaning core, or the question of 'subject' intrusion and along with that the intrusion of the moment's demands partly in the form of intersubjectivity (which is itself a by-product of 'other' subject intrusion) in the making of \textit{la langue}, knowledge etc., which factor is due to the principle of gap between the intended and executed and which factor makes intra- and inter-individual transmission not possible.

I will start with Derrida's statement that configuration of semantic space happens to be different under different circumstances due to the 'signified' being open. (see discussion by Sturrock quoted above). This means that initial intended - the total essence of the 'floating images' (the term is Tyler's)
is never fully made to materialise by any one individual or by any one individual at any one moment.

So chronologically (looking at language acquisition for instance) la langue or meaning is built-up, inscribed or worked towards; or to put it according to Tyler, "subjectively apprehended." This, inspite of what can be called a general conventionalised or idealised la langue - conventionalised albeit subjectively at its moment of building-up.

And existentially the same building-up process holds true.

"For the speakers of a given language, for the child learning the language, and for the mature speaker or writer using it to express what has not before been said, the pairing of meanings with word-sounds is accomplished by 'an unknown law' that enables us to make use of our bodies and their natural powers of vocal gesticulation for purposes that transcend them, namely, to mean, express, and understand the world as humanly comprehensible, as the intended correlate of behaviour that themselves 'make sense' and to confer a sense on the objects that polarise them."

(Edie, op.cit.)

The built-up core is only a 'first meaning' (the term is borrowed from Merleau-Ponty) which has not fully captured the intended. And it is impersonal or subconscious without the immediate stamp of the subject of consciousness. Hence in language use or acquisition, it is part of the intended,
without a subject apprehension hence remaining static/'lifeless'. In actual languaging when the subject is brought to bear upon it, in attempts at completion of what has remained incomplete, there happens shifts in the configuration of the semantic space and what emerges is another 'meaning'. Languaging, thus, is a dip into the wealth of configurations of semantic space which lie behind la langue - the open signifieds behind the signifier.

What we arrive at finally is, - the principle of: a
1. new, 2. subjective, 3. (tentative) core, which accommodates the self seeking completion (and so rejecting what was before except as a reference point) and the important, 4. immediate situation of intersubjectivity.

1.10 A Summing Up of the Argument for a Dynamic Core for Creativity

Now, I shall gather together the entire argument till now in detail with the focus yet on 'subjectivity'.

The first point is the fact of structuring - coping with reality asks for structures, i.e., reality construction in and through a symbolic tool. Meaning then, is constituted in the semiotic (structured) act of languaging. This involves artificial arbitrary stabilisation; objectivity of language and meaning is inscribed.
The inscriptional process the essence of symbolic tool-wielding, makes for underlying dynamism or flux in meaning - no one standard meaning can ever be established. Ultimately, this very fact of semioticity then points to a state of flux and tentativeness of meanings constructed and absence of transmission in communication or the existence of a gap between the intended and executed; this becomes an invitation to keep creating.

The underlying dynamism of meaning core construction consists in a multiple configuration of semantic space and every act of languaging (which is meaning-making) calls forth a dip into a different configuration amidst the varied configurations - an inevitable consequent of inscription and flux. Yet the effort at communication, has got again to be only a structure-making effort - i.e., 'building up' or inscription.

This inscriptional act is a co-operative intersubjective creation (or the objective is through the subjective and vice versa). These principles of subjectivity--intersubjectivity become better clarified in the next chapter. At that point, in the next chapter, it would be profitable to keep in mind the two points made in this chapter, viz., meaning construction in languaging as a construction inclusive of the self itself; and the existence of a basic need for structuring, i.e., creation of commonality in co-operation.
Let me at this point in the summing up, reiterate and explicate further in a separate section, the status of structure or the core in language since this becomes important for my thesis as we progress. The basic purpose of structures, it can be conceded (by implication from what Saussure says) is 'conservation'. Structuring is needed for the purpose of 'coping with the world', for communication. Intersubjective co-operation partly constituting momentary demands of the situations of living ask for such building up of conservative stable structures. Yet such built-up structures also expose in their artificiality, a tenuous holding on to these structures. Thus, the existence of structures or pre-existent meanings, their original need-basedness, simultaneously revealed artificiality and flux, in the moment of use, leads to negotiation for other more satisfactory meanings within the framework of the principle of conservation (the pre-existent meanings).

Yet such negotiations are always against the background of (the possibility of) multiplicity/plurality - i.e., an exploitation of the systematicity which includes the three factors of inscription, arbitrariness and relationality by proliferating the signifieds underlying the signifier.
In either case of negotiation for conservation or negotiation which is exploitation for open meanings, the structure or *la langue* is only a tentative reference point.

Thus 'language' is not considered a core but a 'tool in use', i.e., the meaning-making process itself. The process is the product. (More of this later in Chapter II.)

Having thus more or less answered the first three questions that I set myself at the beginning of this chapter, I shall defer a clear statement on the fourth question until after the next chapter.

1.11 Conclusion

In the next chapter, I re-state and slightly extend these principles - seen from a different perspective; in this, I bring the principles stated here within the vocabulary of practical arts such as teaching and curriculum making.

Putting it succinctly, the principles reviewed there are as follows: The status of the objectified core is decided to be peripheral since it is impersonal and hence a dead, static and an analytic construct; the existence of variation in semantic configuration underlying the code is - more important since it changes the nature of the core into a
dynamic construct, and potentially changeable in further use. Such configurations are accumulated and the potentiality of the core is realised at the moment of an act of constitution by the interference of the individual and in intersubjectivity. And thus overall what will be after or what was before are not the issues - but what is present and is in process is more relevant as the crucial factor in creativity.

...
NOTES

1. When I talk about the relationship between knowledge and language, I tend to deal with the development of Knowledge in a growing child at certain points and at others, more generally with the notion of 'Knowledge' as a quantum without quite a reference to the developmental aspect of it, and language in relation to it. Though this is more or less clear in the particular instances in the thesis, an additional mention of this feature here seems in order. My arguments concerning the nature of the relationship between language and Knowledge justify such a simultaneous reference to both aspects of Knowledge.

2. See Rama Devi (1985), Chapter 1, in this connection. There, this notion of the self, as created in and through language is discussed more extensively from a slightly different angle.

3. Merleau-Ponty gives the same kind of existential explanation for the universality of a code too in one language. It is consistent with his arguments; only as Edie, discussing Paul Ricouer's objection here, points out, "by claiming that the ideal system (la langue) is only an accident or by-product of the subjectively experienced acts of speakers, ... Merleau-Ponty does not take the formal, algorithmic aspect of language, which he otherwise recognises, with sufficient seriousness. 'The fact that the notion of language, taken as an autonomous system, is not given consideration weighs heavily on this phenomenology of the speech act. Its recourse to processes of sedimentation puts it back beside the old psychological notion of habit, an acquired ability, and thus the structural aspect as such is lost'"(Edie, op.cit.).
4. I am aware that for Merleau-Ponty the phrase, 'singing
of the world' connotes a primal untouched-by-language
or any other conventions 'state of innocence'. I am
most definitely not using the phrase in the same sense.
For me, non-conventionalisation does not reach down to
such primeval states.

When I say, using Merleau-Ponty's phrase, 'singing of
the world', 'reaching to the silence beyond language'
etc., I only mean the already socialised silence or
'determined' singing of the world. They are only
relative terms for me. See/my arguments about even
the notion of 'self' (Tyler quoted above and below)
being a language construct and the strong language
determinism I favour. As a continuation of this my
schema, the post-Saussurean's 'configuration of semantic
space' seems to be near to such 'socialisation' more
than Merleau-Ponty's 'silence' beyond la langue.

Yet since I am using literature in several disciplines
here only analogically, such a collation and connotation
assignments to terms from Merleau-Ponty, here, for
instance, seems justified. See the Introduction in
this connection.

5. Though Merleau-Ponty is saying this about the non-
conventionality of different languages, in spirit, this
points to the non-conventionality or 'richness' of any
beginnings of languaging - language acquisition or
language use.

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