

# THE MEANING OF MORAL

## LANGUAGE: INDIAN PERSPECTIVE

### The Problem:

The value of language lies in expressing knowledge and that of knowledge in causing incentive to action. Different from language as representation and reference, the discussion herein takes language as expression that expresses itself its own nature first from which its meaning is revealed non-differently. Moral language, like other sentences equally expresses its meaning but different from other sort of uses, the knowledge revealed by moral sentences with should/ought mode provides specific impetus to the incentive to do the duty the incentive of which is expressed by the moral sentence. The expression comprises two levels of language: the first level is flashing of the concept that is *sphoṭa* that causes incentive to speak and serves as cause of production of verbal articulations and the second level is verbal utterances or written marks (*vaikharī*) that is verbal creative energy expressed primarily by verb with optative form in case of moral statements that impels the audience or listeners to the duty favorable to the exertion. Language and meaning are only intelligible beings that flash in our mind; mind is consciousness, is ubiquitous and flashes equally in the speakers and hearers when instrumented through tokens-that is through sounds/scripts/gestures/perceived data, etc. Flashing means the cognition expressed by language from which incentive and there upon impetus to a duty is caused. The reason for doing some action opposite to or against the expression and incentive caused there upon lies in imposition of the knowledge expressed by the moral language on our allegiances comprising our desires, fruits of our interest, etc. This, in nutshell, is due to ignorance for removal of which one should value the knowledge expressed by moral language, incentive caused by it and the performance of duty in accordance with the incentive proper. If our performance of duty follows the knowledge expressed by the moral language and incentive caused by that knowledge, it is good and if otherwise there is deviation, it is bad. Follow up of the force proper or the impetus caused by the knowledge revealed by moral language is natural and imposition of it on our allegiances is artificial and evaluation of good and bad, moral and non-moral respectively is made accordingly. A duty is the action we perform towards others as a moral agent and that is evaluated as good and bad on the basis of actions performed in accordance with or in opposition to or different from the knowledge expressed, the incentive caused by that and a duty followed consequently. Positivist's type Verification criterion of meaning is not applicable to the moral sentences which are expressive of duty, basically an object of evaluation and are verified by the duty performed on their basis.

### Centrality of Duty in Scriptures:

Good conduct (*dharma* or *sadācāra*) is the basic concern of Indian Scriptures; they discuss values, a living according to which can not only satisfy the human desires for wealth and sex but treat them as values (*puruṣārtha*) also. Moral value occupies with actions/duties only; it makes the life valuable, that is, it gives meaning to one's life. It is the fact in a rational living and a fact is not a construction that verifies itself but that of which it is a fact. It is verified on the basis of duties performed as per the incentive caused by the knowledge expressed by the moral sentences.

Without cultivation a foolish is not rationally fit to follow the duties. If he is seen to follow in them in some actions it is because of stereotyped following up of the imperative/ order that are because of some abnormality. But a rational human being performs the duties as a part of his responsibility to follow the incentive caused by the knowledge revealed in his mind by the moral sentences. This is perhaps, one among several reasons because of which scriptures are regarded as authority. They are sentences about duty. One gets wisdom by following up the duty according to dharma. Dharma is the performance of duty as per the knowledge expressed by the sentences and the incentive caused by that without any deviation. Here, the good human conduct is established in such a way that it is difficult to differentiate religious conduct from the moral and individual morality from the social as well. For the conduct the term duty or dharmācaraṇa or sadācaraṇa is used that comprises religious and moral conduct in such a way that if you don't follow morality you are doing demerit (pāpa) and if you don't follow religious duty you are called immoral (vidharmī) as well. Fruit of moral duties as taken by the western moral thinkers belong to this life but in Indian philosophy it belongs not only to this but also to life after death. The duty theorists endorse a general belief that one should believe in the existence and utility value of not only one's own but that of others also. The development and progress of one include that of others as well. The concept of unconditional performance of duty as sacrifice and analysis of different sorts of duties with their culmination into non-attached performance of duty has placed the scriptures like Upaniṣads and Gītā respectively as texts of perpetual relevance.

In the first half of the present discussion I have argued as to how the logical device of verification misleads the theorist from coming to an amicably acceptable conclusion on meaninglessness of 'ought' sentences and also failure of the attempt in interpreting the meaningfulness of moral judgments by showing the possibility of translating the descriptive into factual or 'ought' into 'is' sentences and vice versa. I have tried to show that the logic of meaningfulness and the logic of verification are different; the two cannot be equated as the same and that the logic of translation of 'is' sentences into 'ought' sentences and vice versa must not be a case of changing the meaning of 'is' into 'ought' but making the possibility of translation without changing the meaning.

In the next half, I have discussed Indian view of Meaning as awareness expressed by language independently from external existence or absence of corresponding referents. An attempt is made to interpret the meaning of moral sentence in context of Sanskrit language.

Since contemporary western theorists have discussed a lot on the issue and most of us are well aware of their deliberations, I think it convincing to proceed on the interpretation of moral expressions and determination of their meaning by pointing out the western controversy on it.

Language has a specific purpose of communicating thoughts for performing our conduct (vyavahāra) and cultivating the wisdom (sanskāra). All our human behavior is performed on the basis of knowledge expressed by language. Isolated from language, knowledge ceases to be so. There is nothing except language that determinates thought or cognition. It is not only determinater but expresser of knowledge also. Spirit can flash in all forms of things and thoughts- High Mountain to the tiny sand particle and is never limited to any of its flashings. Cognition is the flashing and the self- awareness of those flashings of spirit as well; only the intelligible beings i.e. concepts/ or ideas flash distinctly and external things are known by imposition as ontic substratum of the objects that

flash and accordingly we categorize and value the sentences relatively as factual, moral, etc. Taking language as the foundation of knowledge that causes incentive to human conduct that Pāṇini has made aphorism of language the meaning of all units concerning is conduct/duty or at least action oriented. Language is expressive of some or the other action/duty. Even in the analytical scheme, we like Mīmāṃsā, accept knowing also as an action for which verbs are used. Different from Mīmāṃsā, we believe in active theory of knowledge according to which manifested through the garbs including, verbal articulations/perceptual data acquired by senses/ gestures and script, the language reveals itself its own nature of awareness from which its meaning is revealed non-differently. According to our scheme, cognition is not only based on but is confined to the language and meaning that is to intelligible beings only.

I have concluded that if language is reference/representation and meaning and referent are taken as the same, it will lead to cessation of all philosophical activities which are based on the meaning revealed directly by the judgments without any want of verification or empirical referents. Verification is an afterward logical effort for which the meaning directly expressed by the judgments serves as the cognitive ground. A theory like verification will not be possible without a cognitive base of verification. The argument in the present discussion shows not only the deceptiveness of verificationist's premises that moral language is non-sensical or meaningless but also that verification, as the term is taken popularly, is not a criterion of meaning which is directly expressed by language but is the criterion of correspondence between the reference and referent. It is not acceptable that all descriptive and all negative expressions are meaningless only because they cannot be verified. It is also not justified to accept it without the cognitive base on which verification is rooted or the cognition which serves as the ground of verification technique.

### **Critique of 'is-ought' dichotomy in Contemporary Ethical Theories:**

A great discussion centered to the dichotomy of 'is -ought' controversy in contemporary ethical theories of the meaning of moral language has attracted the scholars of our times. It is difficult to find any discussion on such a dichotomy in Indian philosophical tradition and much less has been written by the contemporary and recent scholars on the distinctive characteristic and function of moral sentences in Indian context. Therefore, for my present discussion on the issue of meaning of moral sentences, I think it useful to start with a survey of contemporary ethical thinkers.

In connection with the meaning of moral judgment 'is-ought' dichotomy has been a viable contentious philosophical issue and a long standing debate in western Moral philosophy. They understand moral sentences different from factual sentences. Providing central importance to verifying possibilities they involve in a highly tricky problem of interpreting factuality of the moral judgments. This involvement has a purpose of observing meaningfulness of the moral sentences. They think that if they search a logical device to translate the moral judgments into factual they can well be in a position to search the meaning of ethical sentences like that of descriptive sentences. Is translation of 'ought' into 'is' sentences possible? Can 'ought' sentences be deduced from 'is' sentence? These questions attracted most of the thinkers in the west.

David Hume (1988) takes it impossible to derive 'ought' from 'is' because moral sentences for him are just effects of emotional reaction that cannot be verified either as true or as false. He referred to

morality as vulgar system presuming immense role of asylum of God and did not accept non-moral foundation of morality. No set of non-moral premises can entail a moral conclusion. G.E.Moore (1930) approached to the same conclusion but by a different analysis. According to him the ethical term good which is a non-natural, cannot be derived and defined in terms of descriptive /factual term which stands for natural. Any such attempt of deducing will amount to naturalistic fallacy. Putnam (2002) against the view of logical positivists, attempted to resolve the 'is-ought dichotomy' by claiming that 'ought' sentences can logically be deduced from is sentence on the basis of epistemological values that play role in determination of facts. The two sorts of sentences, for him, are not different because every description according to him represents evaluation which is based on empirical facts. Against Putnam's view, Black Max (1969) was of the opinion that the two sorts of sentences are so different that there is no possibility of translating 'ought' sentences into 'is' sentences. Agreeing with Putnam's view, Searle (1993) attempted to find out passages for deducing 'ought' sentences from that of 'is'.

### **Critique of Emotive Theory:**

Ayer, a staunch positivist, in his book 'Language, Truth and Logic' (1935) accepted language as reference and meaning as verification. According to his thesis 'the meaning of a proposition is the mode of its verification 'there must be a corresponding referent the language refers to; if not, the sentence is meaningless. Since ethical sentences do not refer to empirical facts or referents they are meaningless. Despite being factually meaningless, ethical sentence have been serving as guide to human societies, and hence, are important type of meaningfulness. They possess non-factual meaning that he characterizes emotive meaning in contrast to other types of non-sensical meanings. One has a bad feeling for 'killing' and by passing on the sentence 'killing is bad' one intends to cause the same feeling in the audience and nothing more than that.

Stevenson, another positivist, in his book 'Ethics and Language (1944)' has tried to modify the position expressed by Ayer. He takes the term emotive as a tool for use in a careful study, and not as a device for relegating the non-descriptive aspects of language to limbo. He attaches persuasive meaning to ethical sentences. It is on the basis of the persuasive meaning of the ethical sentences that he interprets the element of universality. The solution he provides for diluting the conflict of disagreement of attitudes may be useful for the cause of universality but the independence of one of the two -the persuader and the persuaded- is not only overlooked but is subordinated . This is also against the freedom of will which is important for both of the parties. Here, universality ceases to be so. The role of reasoning, Stevenson prescribes for diluting the conflict of attitudes is not reasonable and ultimately it is useless if the conflicting persons are equally strong to their reasoning for disagreeing or if the other side is not ready to surrender his own reasons at variance.

### **Critique of prescriptive theory:**

R.M.Hare in his book 'The language of Morals (1952)' takes ethics as the logical study of the language of moral. The function of ethical principles is to guide human conduct and the best way to discover the moral principle operative in a man is to observe how he acts. Ethical Language according to him is a prescription for a duty.

In fact, the issue of meaning is centered more to the issue of language. The nature of language one perceives is the boundary of his conception of meaning. If he does not care that boundary, his ideas may either be inconsistent or be arbitrary. The contemporary philosophers of the West accept language mostly either as reference or as representation of meaning and by meaning they understand referent, fact or the things represented. Non-factual descriptive uses have no referent or thing represented in the empirical world and only on that basis they accept differences of language with difference of uses -factual, non-factual and again the non-factual as religious, moral, functional, fictional and likewise. They attach only emotive meaning to ethical language.

No doubt R.M.Hare is most influential regarding his prescriptive theory of meaning. Ethical sentences can be attached with prescriptive meaning only to the extent the agent has right to follow or not to follow the prescription. Why the ethical sentences are prescriptive? Why should one choose to do according to prescription? One can respond that by not following to act according to prescription, the individual and society will not run in harmony; they will be ethically ill. The point is: if all will be free to claim their sentences as ethical prescription, then, there will be a clash and the prescription will fail to serve the purpose of a prescription. Each one will justify their own prescription against others as wrong. There are occasions that one changes his prescription as per the changes of the desires and circumstances and thus there will be a case of fighting about goodness of reasoning that will lead to controversy. For instance, a father can prescribe non-killing at a time to his child, another time, he may prescribe killing of someone lest he will kill him. The father may say that at the first instance he was not sincere because he looked at it merely conventionally. But this pretext shows Hare's failure of explaining 'to do what we ought to do'. This weakens his criticism of an imperative that it entails to the effect that one must carry it out. We cannot save this position by constructing two selves- the ideal self and the everyday self as A.C.Ewing (1947) does, that is, our everyday self is not subscribing the voice of ideal self. This position will not be different from emotivist's ideology. Immanuel Kant was safe in defending his view on moral promises that is if once the non-killing is a moral duty it has to be followed by utmost effort otherwise a question against your being a rational will arise. The basic wrong with Kant was that he gave ultimate position to reason either it is in you or in me and not to the duty; in that case, duty must not be equal to reason. Reason itself in some cases is directed by the habitual practices of one in a milieu and the expertised skill required in an area.

Moral judgments for R.M.Hare are prescriptions that can be translated into descriptive judgments and universalization on the basis of factual content of 'prescriptive sentences translated into descriptive' can be made possible. While accepting so, he does not care that there may be some prescription without fact. To accept that all sentences are either prescriptive or descriptive is arbitrary. The character and value of prescription after translation into factual cease to be prescriptive and lastly the logic that of non-difference of the descriptive and the prescriptive - translated into descriptive may have same value is not logically acceptable and moreover, religious sentences are also in 'is', 'was', 'were' mode but Hare will not feel free to translate it into factual sentences.

The cause of the controversy does not lie in understanding a sharp distinction between sentences as analytic and synthetic, factual and non-factual, descriptive and moral but in understanding and

interpreting different sorts of sentence in terms of empirical verifiability and to assume verifiability as only measure of meaning of all of them. If the two are different sort of judgments then no attempt is justified for verifying them through single criterion based on facts. If they are non-different, any criteria made for one sort of judgment must not be fruitful and logically useful for the other. To accept all sentences either as descriptive or as prescriptive is to negate distinct character of both of them. Conclusively, no theory will be steady in meeting out 'is-ought' dichotomy if it overlooks the difference of the two and underestimates the value of one from the perspective of the other. W.V.Quine raised the issue of analytic –synthetic dichotomy and argued well that the assumption that 'analytic sentences provide necessary truth knowledge' is not steady.

### **Expressive Theory of Moral Sentences:**

In my view all sentences are expressive by nature. Factual –non-factual, descriptive, emotive, prescriptive, all are expressions and they express their respective meaning because of which we know them so distinctly by the respective sentences. In such a cognitive background it is not necessary to deduce one from the other; rather, it is natural to accept them separate type of sentences expressive of their own meanings. Now, accepting the difference of descriptive and emotive expression and their descriptive and emotive meanings one can side with positivist's conclusion but that is not the right way because searching for term about fact and non-fact and considering non-factual in the terms of fact may naturally lead to an arbitrary conclusion. Any questioning against the expressiveness of moral expression is not only a questioning against expression as such but overlooking the fact that cognition is always an expression that serves as the cognitive ground of all logical devices.

A.J.Ayer type meaningful-meaningless and primitive data -type Boolean true-false may be the values of factual propositions according to which a proposition can have only one of the values: meaningful or meaningless, true or false. The same criterion is not applicable to the value of moral sentences. Testability thesis failed with the acceptance of falsifiability criterion of descriptive sentences and no new theory is emerging about the meaning of descriptive sentences. Why should one apply an arbitrary criterion of artificial skill of valuing concerning formal science and mathematics for verifying sentences of real skill which make great changes in life? Moral sentences are based on human conduct the performance of which is evidential for their value; their meaning is expressed by the sentences themselves and thus need not require verification based on corresponding fact in the empirical world. They are valued as right or as wrong, good or bad, meritorious or demeritorious and moreover all sorts of valuation are possible only if the expression whether factual or non-factual are expressed first by the sentences. It is not that factual sentences are only expressers of cognition but all sorts of sentences express their own meanings which are their value. Moral sentences are valued so because of the meaning they express and the effect they cause on moral agent. Consciousness cannot be verified as it is not a thing in the empirical world but it cannot be denied because it serves as the veridical ground of denial also; it is known by the functions it performs. A sentence is 'ought' because it recommends a duty to be followed must for the good/right conduct and violation of it is violation of duty and hence morally bad/wrong. The dogma of verification or type Boolean meaning of sentence is not required for duty. The important point is the awareness of duty and for that awareness English terms ought, should, must or in

Sanskrit *loṭ* and *liṅ* sentences are popularly uttered. The awareness expressed by moral sentences is the cause of incentive to duty and since man is rational animal, the moral mode of sentences intensifies the follow up of the incentive. Morally good and bad or moral and immoral of the duty is decided on the basis of follow up of the incentive and deviation or imposition of the incentive proper on the agent's allegiances respectively.

Meaning is of the nature of awareness that causes incentives (*preraṇā*) to do, not to do or to do otherwise which in some cases are imposed on our physiological, psychological, cultural and other allegiance and as per the persuasion by allegiances (*pravṛttiyan*) that in some persons are *puṇyikā* (good or right) and in others are *pāpikā* (evil or bad), in some others are indifferent (*taṭasṭha*) and in still others are non-attached (*anāsakta*) at a time but may vary at other times. In fact the issue of the duty be understood by putting the language, and not the things, in the centre and the language is estimated properly as expressive; it is of awareness in nature. Awareness caused by the sentences serves as the cause of incentive to duty. If we take a referent i.e., empirical fact, fruit of the desire, dispositions and psychological allegiances as the cause of cognition and incentive to duties, our premises will be void of cognitive ground, our evaluation of them as good and bad will be unwarranted and conclusion will be confusing.

### **Indian view of Action Oriented Language:**

Very like expression used in 'was', 'is' and 'will' mode, injunctions –prescription and prohibitions and moral expressions used in tenses (*lakāra*), do, should or ought mood, are also expressive by nature; they express their meanings which are of awareness in character. Prescriptions, commands, prohibitions, instructions, advices, directions, directives, suggestion, requests, courteous inquiries, invitations, permit, addressing, etc., are known so because the language presents them so; in this theory, meaning is non-different from the language that expresses.

The concept of expressiveness of language and the centrality of action as the meaning of sentences have influenced Sanskrit grammarian to interpret the language in a way that each part of the sentence is cultivated with the suffices to make them fit for being attached with the verbs denoting action which is the central meaning of an expression. In a theory of meaning of moral sentences, a duty is not so because of it being categorical imperative but because of the cognition of duty and the cognition of the duty is the value by virtue of which incentive to perform that duty is caused. It is for that reason that moral duties are values for humans to follow without imposing it on the material needs and psychological factors. For the thesis presented herein, life is the constant process of action and the theorist give importance to duty to the extent that they provide subordinate importance to sentences lacking some or the other duty. They accept that all sorts of words are derived from verbs/ roots, recognize verbs as the central word and action as the central meaning of sentences. The purpose of sentence according to our view is to cause incentive to duty. This incentive contains three parts i. the duty to be performed (*sādhya*), ii. Means to that duty (*sādhana*) and iii. The sense of completeness of the duty (*itikartavyatā*) which together are called expression of duty (*bhāvanā*). Verbs of sentences with *liṅ* and *loṭ* tense cause *bhāvanā* to an action. This *bhāvanā* is always for a duty for welfare and not for otherwise and that is why it is called *dharma*. An action comprises of all the three parts of an action can not be meaningless.

Despite the general view of meaning as action to be denoted specifically by verbs there is a difference between the actions denoted by expressions other than moral. The actions are moral not because they are caused by desires. In Indian perspective desire, expectancy, aspiration can cause bhāvanā which makes an action a duty. The action may be to oneself only and to oneself and others also; the term duty is used for duty for all the times and for all the people because it is for cultivation of human moral sense. Here, social morality is not differentiable from the individual and likewise the moral sentences express the duty for all with equal force.

Here in, I want to point out the reasons briefly for accepting action as the central meaning of the sentences.

- i. Verb in Grammar is called ākhyāta that expresses action without which communication cannot be accomplished by language. Use of mere nominal words/substantives cannot satiate the expectancy for a complete sense. For example if I say 'dog' it denotes universal and the expectancy for a complete sense is accomplished by it only if some verb-exists, is there, is black, is barking, etc., is added but if I say 'barking' the expectancy for a complete sense 'dog is barking' is accomplished.
- ii. An agent is called so because of being agent of an action.
- iii. Application of suffices for meaning - person, number, means, time, case-terminations follows action.
- iv. Translation of active into passive where nominals are emphasized, and vice versa is made possible only by taking action into consideration.
- v. Indian Grammarians derive all sorts of words from verbal roots. Nominal words can be derived from verbal roots and vice versa as per primacy of action.
- vi. Substantives/nominal words are in use because of some form and potency that is action which fit them for their naming and designating so.

I am presenting some of the points here below from Sanskrit language that shows that action is the central spirit of sentences.

The expressions for duty in Sanskrit are used in ten lakāras. It is clear that laṭ (present tense) lañ (past tense), luṅ (Aorist), liṭ (past perfect tense), lṛṭ and luṭ (future tense) these six out of the ten lakāras are used in sense of tenses (time) and loṭ (imperative mood), vidhiliṅ (should/would-be mood), āśīrliṅ (benedictory), lṛṭ (conditional) are used in sense of vṛtti (moods) i.e. in ought, to, ought - not, should and should- not respectively are relevant equally for all the times and persons. All sentences whether used in sense of tense or in sense of moods stand for action. Duty can be expressed by any tense but specifically the sentences having application of loṭ and liṅ tenses are taken popularly fit to express duty because of the impetus caused by the incentive.

Apart from lakāras as the mode of expression of duty, we find the use of kṛtya suffices (kṛdantas). Kṛtya in the derivation 'kṛtyate anena ityartho kṛtyaḥ' means that ought to be done, for example, it ought to be done (kāryaḥ), it ought to be known (jñeyam), one should not kill (himsā mā karṇiyam), man should be protected (manuṣam rakṣaṇiyam), poor should be given money (dīnebhyaḥ dhanam



deyam), trees should not be cut (vr̥kṣyāḥ na chetavyam), it is edible (bhojyam) and likewise. The application of these suffices in respective sentences make us aware of the duty.

All sorts of sentences in Sanskrit are classified into four of its kinds.

- **Based on form-** they are further classified as **simple** having an agent and a verb (John reads), **complex** having one principle sentence with several sub-sentences (Yato dharmāḥ tato jayaḥ = where there is dhama, there is victory), and **combined** sentences having two simple or complex sentences joined with a **conjunction** (nipāta-ca, api, etc. = and, also, if, etc.) for example Johnaḥ paṭhati ahama'pi paṭhāmi = John reads, I do also read),
- **Based on meaning-** they are classified as **command** (satyam vada = speak the truth), **prohibition** (Anṛtam mā vada = don't speak lie), **giving order** (tvam paṭha = read), **asking question** (kiṁ tava nāma = what is your name), **Exclamation** (hā, manavatābhaktam naram = Oh! Curse to the person who abuse humanity), **showing desire** (tava maṅgalam bhūyāt = wishing good to you), **showing doubt** (saḥ paṭhan bhaviṣyati = he might be reading) **indication** (cetatvam pariśramam kariṣyasi tarhi safalaḥ bhaviṣyasi = if you do labour you will get success).
- **Based on action** classified as agent mode, object mode and action mode.
- **Centering verb** (the sentence having a verb (John reads) and the sentence having no verb (vīra bhogyā vasundharā = the brave can only rule the earth, śaraṇāgatarakṣādharmāḥ = person taking refuge be protected).

We find that the sentences either having verb or without verbs are so constructed in Sanskrit that they express action. Words are also taken to be formed from roots and even the nominal words are also taken with case-termination suffices (sup = in different seven cases namely nominative, accusative, instrumental, dative, ablative, genitive, locative, vocative cases) to have association with action. This shows that words, sentences are interpreted as framed and formed keeping primacy of action or duty in view and this is one of the reasons, I think, Sanskrit is called a cultivated language.

The primacy of action is such that Sanskrit Grammarians accept that there is no sentence isolated from verbs; it is not only that a 'verb' is sentence because the complete sense is expressed by it but also the use of a nominal word alone, if verb is implied with it, is a sentence. Not only that but the nominal words except verbs are constructed also in such a way that they have some meaning with suffices/ seven case -termination (śvānaḥ = dog when spoken singly for communication means agent 'dog exists or there is dog'. There is no word without suffices. Suffices are added there which enable a root fit to be attached with some verb denoting action; they cannot denote a meaning independently of the action which is the meaning of a sentence. Added with suffices/case terminations, they stand for an agent, the object, etc. of a duty/ an action. Such suffices can be applied only because the words abstracted from indivisible sentence not fit to be added with verbs standing for action.

Every one even the devils know about what is good to be done and what is bad not to be done or to be avoided. The moral issue arises about the true import of the expressions concerning moral action because that gives incentive to duty. Let me clarify the point with an example. 'Speak the

truth, speak the endearing, don't speak the non-endearing truth'. The true import of the expression lies not in speaking the truth, not in speaking the endearing and not even in speaking non-endearing truth but in 'speaking the endearing truth'. Likewise, when we make an ethical judgment 'don't kill' we find that this judgment is not the premise but the conclusion decided well and spoken to follow up without any option and one's rationality is decided in his promptness to its follow up. Let me put its premises- i. killing is bad, ii. 'should not kill' and lastly iii. don't kill'. The sentence 'killing is bad' is in present tense (laṭ lakāra) used for expressing a fact or idea which is moral for all the three times –present, past and future. The sentence 'should not kill' is in approaching mood (liṅ lakāra) where one finds freedom to kill or not to kill and eventually he chooses his moral responsibility not to kill and therefore, the sentence 'don't kill' in prohibitive mood (loṭ lakāra) includes the whole process where the concluding activity about the import of the sentences that is duty is followed up. If it is otherwise that is, if one kills ignoring the incentive caused by the sentence, it is immoral act of the agent.

### **Types of Vedic Sentences:**

Vedic sentences are classified into five categories: vidhi (injunction), mantra (invocation), nāmadheya (name of a rite), niṣedha (prohibitive injunction) and arthavāda(explanatory). Action, prohibition to an action, inspiration and praise of duty are the meaning of the Vedic sentences. Injunctive sentences which prescribe different acts to be taken up or prohibitions which refrain the human being from taking up a particular duty are treated as central and primary of the five types of sentences. Injunctive sentences primarily prescribe an act as a means of obtaining desired result or refrain a human being from doing an act which may lead to some undesired result. Explanatory or praise sentences are narratives or the praise of a duty. The premise cannot serve the cause of the conclusion which is the real import of a moral sentence and which is the cause of incentive to duty. Even if any of the premises are spoken, the incentive is caused by the complete sense figured in the mind that is, injunction of non-killing or prohibition of killing. The important thing is not that how many subordinate sentences (syntactical sense) or words are spoken or written but that a complete sense figure in by them because unless a complete sense figures the incentive to the duty proper will not be caused. It may figure even by a single word or a single sentence and may not figure even after speaking a series of subordinate sentences. Thus awareness is the central to an incentive to a duty and the incentive by the moral expressions is caused because of their figuring distinctly so.

If we concentrate on and analyze the knowledge figured in by the language, we find that all sorts of expression express their own meanings and we know their differences as presented by language itself. Language expresses emotive, prescriptive and different meanings and on that basis it performs several functions. With these differences it is not philosophical to concentrate on any one out of its different sorts of functions as the only meaningful function of language and this will be an overlooking of the cognition that is expressed. All expressions express their meanings and this is so with the moral languages also.

### **Expressive Meaning of Moral Language and the problem of validity:**

Contemporary ethical theorists partaking the discussion on 'is'- 'ought' dichotomy limit meaningful language only to it as reference. They missed to view that language is for conduct and the language

we use for conducting and communicating is not reference having a referent in the empirical world but expressions serving as the incentive for all sorts of conducts. This missing has caused great harm to understanding and analyzing the value of sentences. Natural urge for the use of language is to express action. The cognition figured in or expressed directly by the sentences whose factuality is to be verified serves as the cognitive ground for verification of the factual. The logic of factuality gets importance in theories which accept word as the original unit of language and give central importance to nominatives, substantives, proper names having referent in the empirical world. Is it reasonable to relegate the fact of dynamism or action from the world of totality of facts or to say that that are facts but meaningless? The holists who accept the sentence as indivisible unit and the meaning non-different from it give secondary importance to words whose meanings are not decided independently of sentence. The sentence is indivisible flash which is revealed through different garbs like sentences we write, subordinate sentences, words, gestures, perceptual data and several instrumentalities and artificially analyzed into different kind of words and again the words are also analyzed into roots/suffices/prefixes, etc., and their meanings are decided accordingly in the analytical scheme and thus all the rich and wide scope of syntactical and semantic study of language becomes possible. My point is that it is not proper to limit our endeavor to the outcome of these devices and to concentrate on analyzing the indivisible knowledge flashed directly by the sentences. The whole device will be meaningful only if attached to the analysis of cognition expressed by the expressions.

The sentences expressive of duty do not require formal or artificial intelligence of the verification for their verity. Validity and invalidity on the basis of availability or unavailability of referential facts is a second rate or logical device of validating the veridical cognition expressed by 'is' sentences and as i think the device for academic discourse is applicable to 'ought' sentences as well.

If language is taken as reference or representation, sentences expressing non-accomplished or non-finished character having no referents or represented facts and the accomplished character of past and future and many of the present cannot be verified because of absence of referents outside the language. Verbs or all those expressive of non-finished character will not fall under referent category. Then their verifiability will be put in question and without verification all sentences concerning them will be meaningless. The great difficulty in the reference/representation theory of language is that it may involve all our endeavor in searching the referents for verification and meaningfulness and that will cause a great harm to the creativity of reflecting on the knowledge by language. Education is life, respect the parents and elderly people, obey your teacher, treat others in the manner you want to be treated by others, sentences that donot need verification but count much for making the life meaningful. Almost all sentences except some concerning artificial skill lack referents outside the sentence and that is why in a talk to me Professor R.C.Pradhan, an old Wittgenstenian pointedly made me aware that we should not talk about a referent outside the language.

If language is taken naturally fit to expresses some or other action then translation of sentences into finished facts will not be a problem. An action can be presented as substantive and a substantive as an action only though language. The active mode (John reads) may be translated into passive (Reading is being made by John) and vice versa. For example 'he is batting' and 'he is on batting 'or

'his batting is on'. It is true to accept that language is used in referential mode also but how can we deny that it is so because that mode is expressed by the sentence first and then we put into that category of modes. Verity of 'ought' sentences is also verified on the basis of the functions the agent performs.

Pāṇini has written aphorism to define form of the words of finished character from the verbal roots and for the formation of verbs from words of finished characters (nāma) as well. 'Is' sentences expressing finished character 'he is a man' and 'ought' sentences expressing non-finished character 'he ought to be a man' cannot be translated from the view of language as reference. In case of it as reference, how can the finished be translated into non-finished character and vice versa? Referents are exterior and reference in no way can change in different capacities of finished and non-finished characters. Only language can present something as finished and as non-finished which are known thus as they figure so by language.

Meaning is always a sense or a signified not a referent outside and independently of language. The meaning criterion in any language is not dependent on finding referent in the empirical world. It is true that referents are also included into the purview of meaning but it is only by proxy or through the device of imposition of meaning on referents. Therefore, it is a great mistake to identify meaning of a proposition with the method of its verification. Meaning is directly revealed by language; it is the flashing of mind, knowledge is the cognition of meaning and the cognition of that cognition also. There are several types of knowledge and it as justified belief is only one among them. The definition of 'knowledge as justified belief' is too narrow to justify the knowledge expressed even by this definition of knowledge.

Although verity and validity both are concerned with the cognition by language, the two differs a lot in their signification. All cognition by expressions is veridical; they are directly expressed. Knowledge is value. Moral expressions expressive of duty are value-concerned ;it causes incentive for duty and the virtuous functions performed on that ground are evidential in their verity; they cause incentive to do, not to do or otherwise. It is a mistaken approach to evaluate the verity in terms of validity based on verification through the availability of corresponding things in empirical world and to claim that moral judgments are meaningless or non-sensical. While doing so the verification theorists overlook the cognitive ground that is the veridical knowledge expressed directly by the judgment which serves even in case of verification also as the basis of proving or disproving the veridical cognition through a logical device as valid or invalid.

### **Conclusion:**

The cognition expressed by moral expressions is veridical and their specific function lies in causing incentive to a duty and fastening the impetus to do that duty. Moral goodness and badness are decided on the basis of performing and willfully or ignorantly denying the performance as per the incentive caused by the cognition by the judgments respectively.

I think consequentialists can never understand the value of morality. Even they do not follow their own voice that is the proper incentive to duty caused by knowledge by the moral language .They, like companies advertising very high of their products, always ignore the proper incentive caused

by knowledge and translate that according to utility thesis. They care only one aspect of the moral duties that is our duty for others and justifying all the fair and foul or arbitrary actions as having utility and hence moral. They do something different from what they know and talk some other thing in utilitarian terms to justify their behavior; this is all a disguised behavior. I may be charged of favoring virtue ethics but if you love a life-affirming philosophy and desire that all should live in the same way because that is the way to life affirmation, there is no harm in favoring virtue ethics because it does not ignore the utility as well.

Translation is a cognitive activity and the objects of knowledge that is intelligible beings can be only translated. Knowledge expressed by moral judgments having *loṭ* and *liṅ* tense or with different wordings for the same sense does not change, for example, 'to follow morality is human' and 'morality ought to be followed by humans,' 'killing is bad' and 'one should not kill,' 'poor need your help' and 'you should help the poor' and vice versa. Conclusively, we find that 'should/ought' sentences are eternally (in the sense of beginninglessness) expressions of moral duties and are accepted universally for moral sense where there is a conscious responsibility understood by the mode of their use to follow them as one's own duty as a human being. Where there is a case of deviation, the moral sense expressed by the moral expressions are imposed on a different sense of one's own allegiance and thus the proper incentive caused by the knowledge of the moral expression is ignored and a deviated action is performed by the agents. If once the cognition by the expression is properly expressed, there is no problem of translating 'should - ought' sentences into 'is' sentences; they can be translated on the basis of the knowledge expressed by the judgment. The knowledge, strictly speaking the objects of knowledge that is intelligible beings are only translatable. Moral sentences are well distinguished by the 'should/ought' applications; it expresses its meaning non-differently. The knowledge expressed by them causes incentive to a duty and a conduct following them is evidential in valuation of their meaningfulness. If the conduct follows the incentive caused by the knowledge expressed by the moral sentence, it is good, if there is deviation of the consequent performance of duty from the knowledge and proper incentive, it is bad. Referents if exterior to or transcendental to language cannot be translated because in that case the translation of language will not be the translation of the transcended signified.

### **References-**

- 1.A.J.Ayer, Language, Truth and Logic, London, Dover Publication, NY, 1935.
- 2.A.C.Ewing, 'The definition of Good', Macmillan, NY, 1947
- 3.Black M., The gap between 'is' and 'should' edited in W.Hudson 'The 'is' and 'ought' Question, Macmillan, London, 1969.
- 4.David Hume, A treatise of Human Nature, Vol.III,edited by Selby-Biggie, Oxford University Press,NY,1988.
- 5.G.E.Moore, Principia Ethica, Cambridge, 1903.
- 6.G.E.Moore', Ethics, Oxford University Press, London, 1912.

7. Immanuel Kant, Groundwork of Metaphysics of Morals, tr. & analyzed by H.J. Paton, Harper & Row, 1964,
8. L. J. Binkley, Contemporary Ethical Theories, Franklin & Marshall College, Lancaster.
9. Mackie, J.L. Ethics, Penguin book, 1977.
10. Mīmāṃsā Śloka-vārttika, Tr. Hindi by Durgadhara Jha, published by Kameshwar Singh Sanskrit University, Darbhanga, 1979.
11. Nyāyamañjarī, Jayanta Bhaṭṭa, with commentary 'Granthibhanga, Vol. I & II, edited by Gaurinath Sastri, Sampurnanand Sanskrit University, Varanasi, 1983.
12. Putnam, H. The Collapse of the fact/value Dichotomy, Cambridge, Harvard University press, 2002.
13. R.M. Hare, The Language of Morals, Oxford 1952.
14. R.M. Hare, Freedom and Reason, Clarendon press, Oxford, 1963
15. Ross W.D., The Right and the Good, Clarendon press, 1930.
16. Searle J.R. The Construction of social Reality, Penguin Book, 1993.
17. Stevenson, C.L., Ethics & Language, New Haven, Yale University press, 1944.
18. Stevenson, C.L., Facts & Values, New Haven, 1963.
19. Tiwari, D.N., The Central Problems of Bhartṛhari's philosophy, ICPR, New Delhi, 2008.
20. Vākyapadīyam, Part I, II & III, with Ambākartrī by Raghunath Sharma, Sampurnanand Sanskrit University, Varanasi,
21. Vyākaraṇa -Māhābhāṣya, first nine āhnikas, Tr. in Hindi by Cārudeva Śāṣṭrī, Motilal Banarasi Dass, Varanasi, 1968.