



Intentionality and Its Impact on Language: A Frankian Approach In Comparison With Wittgenstein

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Abstract

Acceptance of mental phenomena in terms of thinking, perceiving, knowing and as a whole experiencing something, is necessary for reception of Intentionality theory, which articulates a unique feature of thought, consciousness or other many mental states, which makes a mental act intentional or directed towards some objects, things or states of affairs. There is confrontation between Physicalists and Psychologists pertaining acceptance of both ontological and epistemological status of mental phenomena, which was ingrained in the long gone problem of mind, namely mind-body problem. Ludwig Wittgenstein, an Austrian Linguistic Philosopher in his later phase has relinquished impact of intentionality on public language and even ontological status of mental phenomena as a psychologist although mostly preferred to consider himself a behaviorist rather than a physicalist. On contrary, Frank Jackson, a contemporary Australian Analytic philosopher against reductionist approach of both Physicalism and Psychologism, has coined a new theory of mind-body problem, in which he accepts mental phenomena as the effects rather than causes of physical phenomena instead of rejecting Physicalism as false. In this connection through my paper, I will try to discuss significance of intentionality on using a language from the perspective of Frankian anti-physicalism as a counter part of later Wittgenstein's materialistic view regarding impact of intentionality on language.

Key Words: *Intentionality, Language-use, Mental Phenomena, Frankian Approach, Later Wittgenstein.*

Introduction

Neural Correlates of Consciousness (NCC) is a study which profusely is being practiced now-a-days in the field of neuroscience and consciousness study, which deals with the long gone problem in the domain of philosophy of mind, is known as *mind-body problem*. Dr. Mark Solms, the Director of Neuropsychology, Neuroscience Institute, University of Cape town, South Africa, in his theory, arises a question on the relation between a conscious experience and its correlate specific activity of the brain and nervous system. According to the definition of another neurologist Chalmers, neural system has to be sufficient for consciousness. Modern scientific search of Neural Correlates of Consciousness is pertaining to conscious mental content or arbitrary phenomenal properties and the functions of consciousness can be explained through the illustrations of functions of brain. This is the view of functionalists, physicalists and sometimes behaviorists. Functionalists try to resolve the mind-body problem by explaining correlation of the functions of brain and consciousness, whereas physicalists try to reconcile the problem by reducing all phenomenal properties into physical activities. Likewise, behavior causes stimuli for consciousness according to behaviorism. On contrary, psychologism accepts mental phenomena as the cause of physical phenomena.

Frank Jackson, an Australian analytic philosopher and professor of Australian National University, against this reductionist approach of two theories, has coined a new theory of mind-body dualism through his paper '*Epiphenomenal Qualia*' (1982), in which he accepts mental phenomena as the effects of physical phenomena but not as causes. He has shown in his entire paper, how defense of mental phenomena is possible to propose despite of accepting importance of both physical and psychical information. Jackson is not like others who rejected physicalism as false. But he also admits that in such a way the physicalism place their arguments are good, but not strong enough. Despite being a functionalist, Chalmers also claims that although functions of consciousness are explained by functionalism, something still is left behind being unexplained – 'what it-is likeness' of consciousness. Let us consider two sentences of which epistemic values are not same : 'He is Charlie Chaplin' and 'He is like Charlie Chaplin'. The former is simply a fact-sentence, which can be true or false in terms of physical information which can be acquired through sense-data. But in the case of the later one, it will not be possible to determine truth value simply or it cannot be explicable by bringing out similarities between the figure 'Charlie Chaplin' and its correspondent object, rather epistemic value of this sentence depends on both referential use (objective

in nature) and mental state of the user (subjective in nature). Physical data merely can explain the fact as *it is*, but can explain neither 'why it is like this' nor 'why it is not like otherwise'. Physicalism can interpret 'this is such-and-such' as a physical information or data, but physicalism would not be able to interpret the expression of 'likewise statement', i.e. 'this seems like such-and-such'.

Intentionality, an unique feature of thought, consciousness or other many mental states, which makes a mental act intentional; intentional in this sense that, those acts are directed towards some objects, things or states of affairs. Acceptance of mental phenomena in terms of thinking, perceiving, knowing and as a whole experiencing something, is necessary for reception of *intentionality theory*. *Physicalism* and *Psychologism*, two contrasting theory set their ground on the basis of agreement and disagreement of mental phenomena. As a psychologist, Franz Brentano, who is mostly renowned for his revivalist theory of intentionality, gave example of mental phenomena in this manner : "every idea or presentation which we acquire either through sense perception or imagination, which is an example of mental phenomenon" and "physical phenomena which appear in the imagination are sometimes taken for mental phenomena". Since Jackson considers mental phenomena as the effect of physical phenomena instead of considering mental phenomena as the cause; it would be appropriate to give Jackson the epithet of anti-physicalist instead of giving the recognition of psychologist. There are controversies among linguistic philosophers : *whether use of language is an intentional act or not ?* Some linguistic philosophers opine that our thoughts are intentional as thoughts are expressible or expressed through language. Whereas, some other linguistic philosophers do not accept intentionality of thought and its impact on language. Later Wittgenstein opined that, intentionality is not the defining feature of all mental states, even he refused the acceptance of mental phenomena. To Jackson, communicable common features of public language depend on common sense in terms of 'descriptivist conventions' and he accepted semantic theory of meaning (the theory which assigns semantic contents to expressions of a language). Jackson gave emphasize on grammar as Husserl and later Wittgenstein did, although I have observed that the main conflict between the theories of language of Husserl-Jackson and later Wittgenstein might be regarding impact of intentionality on language. This kind of stringent materialistic view can be refuted through the Frankian approach of mental phenomena and it's significance in using and knowing a language. Intentionality is the power of minds and mental states to be about or to represent things, properties and states of affairs; and without knowing these, about which we use a language, it remains incomplete. In this connection, through this paper I will try to give reflection on importance of intentionality and it's impact on language in the spotlight of Frank Jackson's approach on mental phenomena. Here, it should be kept in mind that, although in the later phase of his philosophical career, he proceeded on the path of physicalism, in this paper, I will discuss the significance of intentionality on using a language from the perspective of Frankian anti-physicalism.

Jackson on Mental Phenomena – A Defense.

The concept of intentionality emphasizes on the fundamental thesis regarding phenomenal consciousness – 'every consciousness is of something'. The psychological phenomena, also identifiable as phenomenal consciousness, is distinguishable from bodily sensations as per the unique feature of being intentional. From 1870 Franz Brentano started reintroducing this age-old concept through a series of lectures on history of Western Philosophy; and this concept came forward and became widely cultivated amongst his successors when his magnum opus "Psychology from Empirical Standpoint" (1874) has been published. His influential work helps in developing Husserl's monumental works on phenomenology, redefining Meinong's theory of objects, R.M Chisholm's precise justifications against behaviorism, Gestalt Psychology and so on; most of the invariable significance of this thesis has been emerging with it's impact on language, as this concept left impact on linguistic approaches also from Daniel C. Dennett, John Searle's to the recent work of Tim Crane, Robert Brandom, Shaun Gallagher and Dan Zahavi, among many others. To Brentano, Intentionality as a demarcation of consciousness intends to mean an immanent relation of an object with the act by maintaining distinction between an object of the realm of subjective thought and an object of the realm of actual world which is not subjective. Inner objectivity of mental phenomenon rises another problem that is over-inclusive nature of intentionality for importing the term 'inexistence'. 'Inexistence', an ontological term which denotes to mental-in-existence, articulates the main tenet of Idealism which evokes a dependent reality in contrast with Realism, i.e. if something is considered to be real either has to subsist within our mind or exist in accordance with our mind, i.e. ontological status of the Reality proclaims either subjective idealism or objective idealism. For illustration, "George believes that God exists", in this sentence, God's existence is within George's mind as a belief, not as 'it is the case that God exists'. It rises problem in terms of intentional relation between the act and the object: if intentional object (God exists) is not transcendental to our consciousness (believe in God's existence), then how can an intentional object ('God exists' as it is given to our consciousness) justify its corresponding object in actual ('God exists' as it is in itself) or more precisely, how does intentionality rely on the reality? To reconcile these problems, a revisit of Wittgenstein's paradigmatic sift to anti-Psychologism in the spotlight of Frankian dualism is required.

Physicalism means that every informations are physical informations. But there are certain features of the bodily sensations, especially, perceptual experiences, which no amount of purely physical information includes, according to Jackson. For example, if we ever had a sensation of a *bad odor*; that's the smell we get in everything whenever we have a high fever. At the time of fever, when we sense something, most of the sensation we have, are phenomenal, sometimes also epiphenomenal, due to aberration of mental states. If we have to agree with physicalism, then we have to accept that the foods we are given for healing of our fever, are really rotten, because we can smell rot or 'like rot' from it during our fever. The smell we sense at the time of fever, is not in actual bad, but bad 'like' something rotten.

Jackson in his paper gave four arguments for the defense of mental phenomena, among those the first one, also known as 'The Knowledge Argument', with which he set ground against physicalists' weak argument, shows that 'physicalism leaves something out', i.e. psychological or mental. The rest arguments also conclude that there is something more than a physical; such as, the second argument concludes that despite of having all physical informations about something, someone's knowledge is still incomplete, if he does not know about the mental aspects of this, because various mental states have phenomenal features, which help to complete someone's knowledge. One more argument he gave by following Thomas Nagel, "no amount of physical information can tell us what it is like to be a bat, and indeed that we, human beings, cannot imagine what it is like to be a bat".

A resurrection of Nagel's view on physicalism is observed in Jackson's first argument : although colour-sensation can be explained through physicalism, but the 'ability' to discriminate colour cannot. He gave an example for make it clear, Fred is the able man who can discriminate ripe tomatoes from apparently less ripe tomatoes by sensing red colour like Red¹ and Red², he can understand which tomato is more ripe by using his ability. This is not the case of two shades of red or any other new colour, rather it is the ability to recognise the distinction between 'it is the such-and-such colour' and 'it is like such-and-such colour', i.e. to recognise the colour of more ripe tomato is exactly red and the colour less ripe tomato as 'like-red'.

The ability cannot be explained on the amount of Fred's brain or optical system. How this ability Fred possess, we cannot know even we have all the physical informations about him. Therefore, knowing all (which is only physical) is not knowing everything about Fred. It follows that physicalism leaves something out, which is mental. For illustration, Puja and Rani are two painters, Puja is one who is expert to fill colours from different aspects of the picture by recognizing discrimination between scarlet red (red¹) and vermilion red (red²), on the other hand, Rani cannot be able to point as well as Puja cannot utilize difference between red¹ and red², as she cannot be able to discriminate between them. For this, inability Rani's knowledge of colours is incomplete, it can be easily said. Ability and inability of Puja and Rani depend upon their ability to both sensing and knowing about colour. There may be three conditions, for discrimination of knowledge and sensation between Rani and Puja ,

- i. The expressions 'Puja knows' and 'Rani does not know' both follow from differentiated ability of colour-sensing and knowing which belong to the domain of mental phenomena,
- ii. Rani cannot utilize the use of red¹ and red² differently as an expert because physical informations which a picture bear, are sensed incorrectly or less correctly than Puja and consequently she cannot be able to know the 'use of colour' properly,
- iii. By both practicing and uses of colours more than Rani and utilizing the colours from various perspectives, Puja are having ability to discriminate scarlet red from vermilion red.

Respectively psychological (i) and physical (ii) assumptions are behind the first two Conditions. In the third alternation, dualism is established as practice belongs to the domain of physicalism and the matter of utilizing a colour from different perspective is psychological.

Jackson and Wittgenstein on Intentionality and Language

In twentieth century in the field of philosophy of mind, intentionality became the chief issue in connection with the relation between language and mind. Wilfrid Sellars in his essay "Empiricism and Philosophy of Mind" (1956) holds his position that 'the categories of intentionality are semantical categories pertaining to overt verbal performances' since linguistic items are taken in consideration to mean or represent something or to be about. Searle, Chisholm, Russell et al admit the necessity of explication of intentional characteristics of language by reference to believing and to other psychological attitudes. In this context, one problem can arise concerning the relation between intentionality and language. Austrian Linguistic Philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein who got acquainted with Brentano's Theory of Intentionality through his teacher Alexius Meinong, later on, in case of depiction of reciprocal relation between World and Language in terms of picture theory in *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus (TLP)*, he was very much influenced by this unique mental property. But in *Philosophical Investigations (PI)* turns away to accept impact of intentionality and even the significance of psychology on language. In connection with the impact of intentionality on language, question arises, *must both use and knowing of a language have intentional stance?* This must be in consideration in accordance with the reasons behind his paradigmatic shift from mentalist or intentional linguist to behaviorist. In his early phase of linguistic philosophy and specially in *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein comprehends necessity of the impact of mental phenomenon in using language although he advocated an artificial language which was merely logical and even no proposition of TLP was empirical; whereas his new adoption of empiricism in PI as use theory of meaning instead of machinery language fails to explain how mental aboutness is correlated with aboutness of a sentence, how psychological attitudes of a user instigates use of a language, how does intentionality give impact on language, and as a result he abandoned in later phase of his philosophy both the existence of mental phenomenon and the concept of intentionality.

Despite being the son of Allan Cameron Jackson, one of the direct student of Wittgenstein (having gone to Cambridge in 1946 for Ph.D. studies), another interesting connection between Wittgenstein and Frank Jackson was that being influenced by Wittgenstein's school (reported in the interview with Graham Oppy) Jackson accepted semantic theory of meaning as later Wittgenstein did though his approach was different from Jackson. In the early phase, Wittgenstein had accepted the existence of mental phenomena although in TLP he had proposed picture theory of meaning (which is a kind of syntactic theory of meaning) instead of semantic theory. But in the transactional period, when his linguistic philosophy began to turn over towards a new reformative theory of meaning, his view on mental phenomena seems to be very confusing. For example, In some lectures of Cambridge (deliberated between 1930-1932), it is referred that expressions like 'pretending', 'intending', 'fulfilling' are caused by possession of *mental phenomena*. Again In another

lecture, he had compared language as controlled as machinery language which can be conditioned by nothing mental. Again, he said that meanings are static and fixed in the language. As a result, when we use the phrase '*meaning of*' misleads us and also it is not correct to say that each and every word which has meaning, must stand for something or represent a thing. So, it is to say that meaning cannot be intentional always. But, there is no mental process which can take place in the mind or on the blackboard without any symbol, therefore mental processes cannot subsist without any object, at least one cannot think contentless or objectless. In the later phase, it is clearly mentioned that Wittgenstein moved to behaviorism. According to him, behaviorism must be able to distinguish between real toothache and stimulated toothache, between a man who is pretending to have toothache and a man who really has it. In *Investigations*, his stand was totally anti-mentalist.

Helary Putnam's reference theory elucidated in "*The Meaning of 'Meaning'*" is refuted by Jackson and he has observed that it would be mistaken to hold that the denoting word refers to any chemical body of a substance, rather actually it refers to the kind, the properties, what he often calls '*qualia*'. We have noticed that grammar plays the central role of Wittgenstein's philosophy of language, significance of intentionality while using a language, was replaced by grammar. The class of things named in the product or sum is defined in the grammar, not by properties or qualities; whereas Jackson said that qualities or *qualia* which are essential to know something completely, i.e. knowledge of something which depicts that there is more to have than physicalism and also various mental states are said to have raw feels, phenomenal features or qualia. When we know about a word like 'blue' and refer to any blue object, then we know the property *blueness* and other qualities (known or unknown) underlying within the object along with the physical informations of that object. It might be misleading in use of a language if we attempt to cut off relation of mental states or consciousness or thought of the user. In a lecture on reference theory of proper names, Jackson has shown how attempt to bracket out Fred's mind from the event or the story about what he refers to use a name, while using a proper name 'Cicero' fails. Use of a name must be intentional act since user's psychological assumptions are behind the use.

Human ability to represent, conceptualize and reason about mind and behavior is one of the greatest achievements of human evolution and is made possible by the *folk theory of mind*. His aim was to explicate a theory of meaning which is a kind of folk theory, addressed in philosopher's terminology, according to which uses of words and sentences which we generally use in our daily life are acquired through and provided by informations about the world. According to Hanjo Glock, Jackson was close to *Wittgenstein's picture theory of meaning* by proposing his own theory of meaning. The folk comes across the object of which we seek to get the meaning by using language and also goes beyond the general informations to know the object wholly by knowing its various properties and understanding various relations to each other, that is 'the folk agree on the value of understanding a language'. He believed that language is not about providing information or representation of those data or informations only, rather representation, providing information and understanding are the necessary components of a language as a whole. Conceptualization, reasoning, understanding all are modes of thought. Thought cannot be unconscious and unintentional as thought is never directed to itself or to the process of thinking, is always pointed to some objects and its relevant content. If thought is an intentional act then understanding, knowledge, use and overall the meaning of a language (begotten from thought) also must be intentional.

Now we should examine, *whether use of language might be considered as an intentional act* to understand the significance of intentionality on language. It is said that intentionality means a special feature of consciousness, i.e. 'intending', which every mental states or acts essentially or rather peculiarly possesses to point or intend to some object. If we analyze one's own consciousness, we can find two kinds of data which our consciousness have, physical and psychological. Brentano distinguished mental acts from non-mental acts in terms of intentionality as the mental acts invariably refer to something other than themselves and Brentano called these acts intentional. Hence, use of language must be mental act, if it is to be regarded as intentional. Again, if use of a language is mental act, then the object that is referred with the use of language also must be mental. But, by using language in general we refer those objects, which are real and external to our mind. The wholeness of language lies in its use and the relationship between its components and its meaning. Since meaning lies in its use, both meaning and use of a language might be intentional, but the components (the signs, words etc.) cannot. Although we can learn or teach a language by its use, knowledge of a language is partially intentional since as followed by Meinong's condition for knowledge, which is a relation between the mind, object and content. By following Meinong, it also may be said that 'content' is the meaning, 'object' is its reference and what is mental is its use in the process of knowledge of a language.

It is previously mentioned that epistemic values of 'He is Charlie Chaplin' and 'He is like Charlie Chaplin' are different in terms of their uses. According to Husserl, intentionality is essentially an act which gives correspondents meanings and he used the word 'transcendence' to understand a beginning with the meaning of the given objects. Whereas, according to Wittgenstein, words without putting on a proposition are meaningless and meaning of a proposition is the mode of its verification. If we have to verify the above propositions, it is not possible to drop out user's mind since modes of verification of the two propositions is not same in nature. Even whether the second sentence 'He is like Charlie Chaplin' counts as an proposition and verifiable at all, depends on use of the sentence. At least it can be said that the second sentence is a proposition, but its expression is different from the former one and even much more complex. 'He is Charlie Chaplin' is verifiable by resembling with the fact 'Charlie Chaplin'. But in the case of 'He is like Charlie Chaplin', this sentence would be verifiable if we can acquire all the physical and psychological informations about 'Charlie Chaplin' and also if we have the knowledge about mental state of the speaker during use of the sentence. The speaker may use the sentence 'He is like Charlie Chaplin' in the sense of either the reference 'He' looks like 'Charlie Chaplin' who is referred in the first sentence, or all the mental qualities Charlie Chaplin had, he also has. Hence, use of a language is not mechanical, rather mental. In his intentionality theory, Donald Davidson identified beliefs, desires and intentions as conditions of language and also recognized language as a condition of them.

Conclusion

The main aim of this paper was to defend intentionality as a significant condition in use of a language, in opposed to the linguistic philosophers (specially keeping in mind objections of Wittgenstein) who show intentionality as problematic and reject this as an unique feature of thought. Physicalists reject the theory of intentionality on the basis of psychological presuppositions and in contrast psychologists accept every mental act is intentional since every mental acts are conscious. To psychologism, being intentional is an essential character of the consciousness. Idealists refute the intentionality theory of consciousness on the charge of subjugation : if consciousness is intentional then it cannot be objectless anytime, which ceases possibility of free movement of our consciousness and tries to establish that consciousness is not free. But if we admit with dualism of Frank Jackson which can argue to instate that as language is having both intentional and non-intentional aspects, our consciousness also has both intentional and non-intentional components, instead of accepting only physicalism or only psychologism, we can get out from the difficulties and objections.

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