

The Condition for the Possibility of the Philosophical Enterprise: The Cognitive and Communicative Dimension

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Excerpts

The beauty, nobility and even splendor of man is that he is equipped with the capacity for posing questions about humanity, his destiny and mission in the world, and the basic meaningfulness of existence. This is why he is not an inanimate object or a beast but a sensitive-intellective being. This meaning-seeking and quest for knowledge for ultimate explanation is the philosophical project. Philosophy through her interrogative capacity, her hard thinking and critical evaluative ability has proved to be a great catalyst and stimulus in human knowing, his creative and disciplinary endeavours and accomplishments. The goal and motive of this article is to articulate the conditions for the possibility of philosophical enterprise for anyone anywhere and to show that it is within the reach of all cultures. Perhaps with the special wish that philosophy in its professional and rigorous level may flourish in Africa so that the rich resources of African cultures and peculiar existential challenges and experience may find response in a creative African philosophical originality.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Philosophy is both a form and way of knowing and mental attitude to issues, things, events and human experiences. It is not a revelation or an offshoot of some mystical power or a natural fact except metaphorically speaking and for the uninitiated. It is rather a product of man's activity and way of applying his cognitive and deliberative faculties in the attempt to understand the fundamental principles and explanation of the basic issues of human existence, and experience and other existents in the world. Of course this philosophical quest is rooted in the natural quest for asking questions, but in this unique scientific philosophical quest under consideration any type of questioning does not do.

However, the response of cultures or the ordinary people for meaning is not yet critical or organized enough to meet the demands and discipline of any genuine scientific philosophical activity which we are concerned here in the activity of professional philosophy.

Philosophy historically is the mother of the sciences and if the philosophical temper and mode of investigation were to cease, the sciences and other creative disciplines will no doubt suffer losses because, the bold speculative hypothesis or postulations, and the big questions which philosophy has always posed had always stimulated and challenged the scientific ambition and **motivated** her to explore other horizons of human knowledge and experience. It is not an exaggeration to say that the big questions of which philosophy always poses for every age are in many cases ahead of the scientific preoccupations of the age. Some Scientific exploits and break-throughs of today are motivated by the philosophical problematics of yesterdays, so are some philosophical puzzles of today a motivation for possible scientific break-throughs of tomorrow. It is then right to say that philosophy opens up wide vistas of reality or probable reality or scope of questioning immediately unavailable to the experimental sciences, a lead which they at times later explore, with at times amazing results for human progress.

Contrary therefore to the spirit of Scientism and Technologism of our time and her demeaning attitude to philosophy, philosophy has played a pioneer role in the progressive march of humanity. In fact, we dare to say that without the philosophical interrogative and critical attitude man himself will fall into a deadly routine, terribly impoverished intellectually, and will labour in the narrowness, hollowness and superficialities of human experience and perceptions, imprisoned in the blindness of ignorance and living in the margins of existential meaningfulness. From the above, we can see that the philosophical activity in its critical, analytic and contemplative mission remains a cognitive and existential necessity for all peoples and cultures in quest for comprehensive understanding of reality and life. Let us now see how man's knowing and communicative capacities help in the development of philosophical reflection.

II. MANS CAPACITY FOR KNOWLEGDE

It is man who philosophizes, who poses questions, who wants to understand and be understood. Philosophy arises in this process of questioning, with the intention to know. Hence, the philosopher Aristotle declared that man by nature desires to know, which is stating an obvious fact, that man is knowing being, in ceaseless quest for knowledge. This connected with his desire to master and domesticate his environment, to make the strange familiar. Knowledge is of course a complicated activity of man involving some specialized faculties, at various levels with levels of intentionality.

In general, we describe knowledge as a conscious act of man, who by using his cognitive faculties or other relevant endowments seeks to penetrate reality or appropriate some features or aspects of other things, as they become a part of his conscious experience. For Kenneth T. Gallagher, "Knowledge is the event by which human consciousness emerges into the light of being." (Gallagher K.T, {1982} 1994, p.18)

Through knowledge other realities seen or unseen open and reveal themselves to man with regard what they are, what they are able, their connections, linkages and interconnectivity between other existents and problems that require solution. Today we talk of many types or forms of knowledge depending how we come by them, and their objects. The philosophical activity as we have pointed out is a form of knowing or understanding with its own distinct characteristics and objective. Traditionally, our knowledge is traced to two main sources, the senses and the intellect. In recent times, some philosophers speak of knowledge being the activity of the whole man as an integrated whole, that even may include our affections. Gallagher thus observed "the proper task of the philosopher is not to begin by denying cognitive value to any dimension of experience, but to seek to discern what modulation occurs in the term knowledge as it applied in various realms. Knowledge may mean one thing in science, and another in history, metaphysics, moral science, art, interpersonal knowledge." (Gallagher K.T, {1982} 1994, p.19)

These liberal visions of knowledge notwithstanding, most of our recognized knowledge and knowing activities can be reduced to sense knowledge and intellectual knowledge and most of what we attribute as the object and mission of philosophy places it squarely as a product of our intellectual and rational faculties which could have a basis in experience. Thus Sullivan observed: "man's knowing is a complex of sense awareness and intellectual insight against a background of feeling and emotions {Sullivan Daniel, {1957} 1992, p.83-84}. So the first fact on the possibility of the philosophical activity or enterprise is man's sensitive and intellectual capacity, which are generally involved in most of other types of knowledge. The senses give man access to external concrete material individual or particular aspects of our world. In short, our observable or even empirical world is given to us through our sensitive faculties {Internal and External}. They help to open to us the spatio-temporal and measurable dimensions of existence. {Nathaniel Brendan, 1971, p.39}

In fact, some philosophers called the Empiricists propose that philosophy should not go beyond this limit, a thesis which appears to be influenced by the Empirical Sciences, but most philosophers think otherwise. Thus beyond the capacity of the senses, man has the faculty or the power of the intellect with which he is capable of grasping things or having the power to think beyond the potency of matter, beyond the empirical and observable world, to the realm of the abstract, meta-empirical reality, and capable of generating universal ideas and concepts. The intellect is regarded as the faculty of abstraction, conceptualization, reflection, contemplation, speculation, judgment and reasoning. If as we have already observed that philosophy involves thinking and concerns herself with probing into fundamental causes and principles of things in her mission for the truth, knowing things as **they are** then, this mission can only be possible through the instrumentality of the human intellect, whatever other contributions that could come from other sources.

This becomes clearer if we consider what the intellect does, her various processes especially in the processes of abstraction and conceptualization; in her judgment and reasoning.

In abstraction, the intellect dematerializes the sense data or object removes what belongs to the materiality of the object and grasps the intelligible object or form from where we get the abstract ideas or concepts. So in conceptualization, the concepts or ideas or mental representations of things are formed. Here we grasp the meaning of things, **which** are universal and general. In judgment, the truth is located. Truth is known by the intellect in as much as it reflects upon **its act**, as having grasp the real being conformed to things as given in the concept {Aquinas, De Veritate, Q.1 A.9} In judgment, man evaluates with regard to the truth values of ideas and propositions. This is portrayed in the idea of intentionality. Hence, **Beards** observed; "In judgment we have such intentional mental activities, marshalling the evidence, weighing the evidence, judging whether something is so, not so, probably so and not so, or that we do not have sufficient evidence or information, we need further inquiries." {Andrew Beards, 1989, p.20}. The truth of knowing depends on the accurate correspondence of my judgments to the way things are independently of my thoughts.

Reasoning which is the third level of the intellect refers to our intellects ability to draw inferences and consequences from our statements and judgments. For example from two or group of propositions, one can arrive at another. In reasoning, the intellect engages in the process of argumentation which is the subject matter of logic which deals with correct reasoning. We have two more widely recognized forms of reasoning or

inference namely, the deductive and inductive. Thus the activity of the intellect does not stop in judgment for by means of truths previously possessed, the intellect can progress to the knowledge of new truths {Sullivan, (1957) 1992 p.80}

In general then we can say that with the intellect man engages in mental activities beyond the physical area to the metaphysical. We can universalize, generalize, rationalize, abstract, judge, conceptualize, symbolize, speculate, evaluate, criticize, analyze, reflect, interpret, synthesize, deduce and make inference. No philosophical activity or pursuit is possible without these intellectual capacities. And so the first condition for the possibility of philosophy, is the possession of an intellectual capacity in its multi-functionality, of course with the aid of other knowing faculties in the human being, who is this potential philosopher who will attempt to probe and understand the fundamental, meaning and principle of things and reality in its beingness. So man and his intellectual capacity and with the aid of other knowing faculties is the basic ontological condition for philosophy.

III. THE PHILOSOPHICAL WONDER

Having identified man's knowing faculties, especially his intellectual capacity as the first condition for the emergence of philosophy, his urge to know is however provoked by the intellectual sense of wonder. So it is the philosophical wonder or curiosity which fascinates man's intellect to pursue philosophy. The sense of wonder or astonishment has been recognized as a basic stimulus to philosophizing. Plato saw wonder as the PATHOS of philosophy. {Theatetus 155 D} THAUMAZIN is the pathos of the philosopher and the arche of all philosophizing. This is man's wonderment or his surprising fascination on things and phenomenon. According to Plato, "Our eyes gave us the sight of the stars, the sun and the moon this impels us to examine the universe whence grew philosophy, the greatest good conferred on mortals by the gods." Plato tried to explain the philosophical talents, or genius of his fellow Greeks by saying that his fellow Greeks were as curious as children. This analogy is surely due to the fascination and curiosity which children pose which impels them to ask ceaseless questions.

As we have observed, Aristotle is known for his great statement that "all men by nature desire to know" and this desire to know which is the love of wisdom is the child of wonder. He claims that metaphysics and myth are not unlike, in one way, both are linked to a kind of marveling. {Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 982 b.II}

Thus for Aristotle, this wonder or admiration is not some rarified experience but is common to the poets or myth makers as well. For the myths with which the poets deal are composed of wonders and the philosophers themselves were moved to philosophize as a result of wonders. {Rowan John P., 1995: 19}. The intellectual events of wonder which gives rise to questioning, is in some sense common to all persons endowed with imagination and intelligence. Aristotle would observe in his metaphysics {1, 2, 982b} that, "It was owing to wonder that man first began to philosophize and what intrigued or fascinated him most was the phenomenon of change". This is the fact that things move from one state to another or one state of being to another. He identified four such basic changes.

- 1) Local motion
- 2) Qualitative motion
- 3) Quantitative motion/change
- 4) Substantial motion/change

Local Motion: This indicates movement from one place or position to another or changes in time.

Qualitative motion: this indicates change in the quality of something. For example, from ignorance to knowledge, from bad to good, from ugliness to handsomeness etc.

Quantitative motion/change: This indicates change (movement) in the quantity of something. For example: change in size, height.

Substantial Motion/change: this indicates the change in the beingness of a thing. A substance is that which underlines a thing or that which holds every other property; that which is in itself and not in another (accident) (KAT' AUTO as contrasted to kata sumbebikos). Substantial change brings about something completely new. When something changes substantially it ceases to be what it is. There are two types of substantial change: generation and corruption. The fundamental question is, Is being is or is not? Substantial change (generation or corruption) is the type of change that intrigued and excited the Greeks most. They wondered on how something that "is" (being) can be "is not"

This type of change is also called "Real change"

In the early medieval period, St. Augustine in his *Confession* reiterates this sense of wonder as a source of philosophy. While reflecting on what is time and eternity, he said "what then is time? I know well enough what it is, provided nobody asks me, but when I am asked what time is and try to explain it, I am baffled". {St. Augustine 1961:264}

Thomas Aquinas in his commentary on Aristotle's metaphysics stated that the desire to know follows from everyday experience, for men begin to philosophize when they are struck by the things around them:

“perplexity and wonder arise from ignorance, for when we see certain obvious effects whose cause we do not know, we wonder about their causes.” The ignorance which Aristotle and Aquinas speak about is not a dumb opacity before the phenomena, but the human potency for knowing, that is identical with a questioning spirit.

In our own time, Pope John Paul II recaptures this sense of wonder as the basis of philosophical reflection in his encyclical “*Fides et ratio*”. He said:

“This fundamental element of knowledge spring from the wonder awakened in them by the contemplation of creation, Human beings are astonished to discover themselves as part of the world in a relationship with others like them, all sharing a common destiny. There begins then, the journey which will lead them to discover ever new forms of knowledge. Without wonder men and women would lapse into deadening routine and little by little become, incapable of a life which is genuinely personal.” **{Pope John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio* no.4}**

From the above, one can see that at the birth of philosophy (metaphysics), there is a wonder, an astonishment that is prior to both perplexity and curiosity. William Desmond explains “Astonishment opens a mindfulness that we do not self produce.” It is a precipitation of mindfulness before something admirable, or lovable or marvelous; It come to us, come over us, and we open up in response. We do not first go towards something. We are struck into astonishment... later, too we find that thoughts strike us. We do not think, we are started into thinking, as an access of light of understanding or fresh astonishment or perplexity comes to flare up in us ... The thinking in perplexity is something troubled by its own inability to be the measure of what gives itself as worthy for thought ... In perplexity we move away from the primal astonishment and the beginning of our own determining thinking emerges. We try to put the question now more and more, and the more we seem to find an answer to our perplexity, the less the “two muchness” seems to exceed the measure of our thinking ... (William Desmond 1995)

We can thus say that the basic difference between a philosopher and a non philosopher is that those things which an unreflective mind sees as normal, the philosopher sees as a puzzle. He senses a riddle behind the apparently ordinary phenomenon. He is fascinated, begins to wonder and begins to ask questions. He does not accept what appears as sufficient knowledge. Kenneth Gallagher thus observed that man possesses an inquisitive analytical interest in things and seeks to know the why? So this sense of wonder leads men to introversion and reflection because whoever finds satisfaction in his environment and activity does not philosophize. The philosopher is an adventure in a world of sedate and secure men, the odd dissenter when everyone else agrees. In his wonderment, he begins to be aware of his lack of knowledge and therefore provoked to reflection. It must be emphasized that we do not become philosophers by mere wondering.

Wonder is not yet philosophy, philosophy is the child of wonder is a *conditio sine qua non* for philosophy and for philosophizing. Admiration and wonder are not givens in the sense of experience. They are rather the effects of intelligence's inter play with such experience.

The philosophical quest begins in wonder at existence; it sets the dynamism of the intellect on its way to convert *admiratio et ignorantia* into *scientia et sapientia*, which are the ends of the intellect. Now the way to achieve a desired end is not through some haphazard succession of activity but through a determinate series of mediate operation in the case of the intellectual desire ignited by *admiratio*, there is an ordered series of questioning that inquire into the grounds for the phenomena of experience. “Man has a natural desire to know the causes of whatever he sees: wherefore through wondering at what they saw and being ignorant of its cause men first began to philosophize, and when they had discovered the cause, they were at rest. Nor do they cease inquiring until they come to the first cause. Therefore man naturally desires as his last end to know the first cause” **{Aquinas *Contra Gentiles* III, C.25; Vernon J. Bourke, 1975, p.101}**. Thus man is the only animal that has the capacity for abstract thoughts, self-consciousness and for freedom.

IV. DOCTA IGNORANTIA (LEARNED IGNORANCE)

We have already seen that philosophy is the child of wonder but wonder is naturally provoked by the awareness of our lack of knowledge, an awareness that man lives in the foreground of ignorance, which then becomes a stimulus to know in order to escape this cloud of ignorance. This quest to know, cannot rest until we reach the depth of the unconditioned being which clears all ignorance, the being which conditions every being as the basic principle of being, the ultimate cause of all in which the knowing of everything about everything is possible. This cannot be possible by man's finite mind but only to a Being like God. For as Bernard J. F. Lonergan holds, such an act of intelligence and the knowledge of everything about everything, the absolutely unconditioned knowledge can only be that of God. **(Frederich .E. Crowe and Doran R.M, 1992, 676)**

This simply means that man's knowledge is forever mired in the sea of non-understanding, or the basic foreground of ignorance. The philosopher and philosophy specialize in probing into this ocean of ignorance in order to extract whatever understanding is possible. This is why for the Greeks, while wisdom or truth belong to God, the philosopher is only a seeker or enquirer into wisdom and engages in ceaseless search into the truth which though can conquer some levels of this ignorance, while the totally unconditioned and absolute

knowledge will continue to elude him. This consciousness of man, of his great limitations and of living in this cloud or under the veil ignorance becomes a great impetus or stimulus to the philosophical enterprise or search for the basic principles of things. Man's immersion into cloud of ignorance is what in philosophical and even theological history been called *Docta Ignorantia* or learned ignorance.

The idea of *Docta Ignorantia* permeated into medieval and theological thinking and received a particular elaboration in the Renaissance Scholar Nicholas Cusa, in his Major work *Docta Ignorantia (1440)* which emphasizes the limitation of human knowledge and the real *Docta Ignorantia* is the knowledge of God, whom we only know what we cannot know of him or what he is not. Man through his limited intelligence cannot have a complete understanding of everything, and the exactness of the truth cannot be attained. He postulated an attitude of *Docta Ignorantia* which means the acknowledgement of the circumstances that all human knowledge emerge out ignorance and after due time may vanish or be replaced by new types of knowledge.

In fact the acknowledgement of ignorance as a philosophical methodology, is the basic to the Socratic method. According to Plato's Apology, Socrates friend **Chaerephon** consulted the oracle of Apollo at Delphi to find out whether there was anyone wiser than Socrates in Greece. The oracle confirmed that there was no one. So Socrates went around to question people about the issues they claim to know to prove the oracle wrong but discovered that he was the wisest in the sense that he alone was prepared to admit his ignorance rather than to pretend to know something he did not know like the sophists. He knows that he knows not. Thus the awareness that he does not know fires him or activates his desire to know, an impetus to philosophical investigation (**Plato, 1972**)

For the modern philosopher Kant (1795-1805), we cannot know things in themselves but only phenomena. Hence the region of possible knowledge is .only phenomenon. It is like an island surrounded by a wide and stormy ocean which is the actual site of semblance and illusion. Hence, he posited his three fundamental questions, "what can I know? what shall I do? What can I hope for? (**Kant, 1956: 295; 677 B 833**).

The contemporary Austrian philosopher/economist Friedrich Von Hayek posited what he called Man's Fundamental anthropological Ignorance. This is the recognition that Mans knowledge is terribly deficient and inadequate to be able to reform or reconstruct society as a whole. This is the recognition of the inevitable ignorance concerning a great many of the factors on which the achievement of our ends and welfare depend. Scarcity of knowledge is one of the basic human and social problems. It is not that knowledge does not exist but because it is fragmented and scattered in little bits over the whole society, so that the amount in various individuals is always limited. Hence the need to find a process of knowledge maximization which lies in mobilizing the available social knowledge in society scattered in little bits in individuals so that each can benefit from the knowledge in others to secure individual goals and ensure progressive adaptation and turn change to progress. Hence he chose evolutionary natural process in his methodology of explaining the workings of the market economy and the emergence of the capitalist order. (**Hayek F.A, 1960, p.29**) So from Hayek, we know that the limitation of knowledge is both experienced both in the intellectual, metaphysical, epistemological realm as in the socioeconomic realm.

The basic morale of the *Docta Ignorantia* is not to create in us a knowledge despair or lack of faith in research but rather the recognition that faith in human thinking and action spring from a dimension which is greater than human knowledge and which can be experienced only in humble acknowledgement of our ignorance. (**Faber and Proops 1998:134**). Hence the need to be open and confident towards all matters which lie in the area of ignorance. Ignorance highlights all limitations of human knowledge and as a result provides the focus and the incentive for the pursuit of knowledge. Informed ignorance was for Socrates the beginning of wisdom. Appreciating the limits of human knowledge across all spheres of human knowledge was necessary for creative dialogue. This is tonic to philosophical engagement and the ceaseless effort to remove the veil of ignorance and push back the frontiers of ignorance.

V. LANGUAGE AT THE SERVICE OF PHILOSOPHY

As we discuss the favourable conditions and stimuli for philosophical reflection, it will be a grave omission to neglect man's capacity for language. Man's capacity for thought {his intellectuality and capacity for reflection} and knowledge are inextricably bound up with his capacity for language (human communication). For as Tielhard de Chardin claimed, with language and speech man reached the stage of "co-reflection", the power of intellectuality, communicating to and sharing the others mental content and intentions. (Telhard the Chardin; 1958).

Aristotle and Paul Ricoeur talked of an independence dependence between thought and language. (Aristotle., Politics bk 1 ch.,2; Ricoeur P, 1959)There is no thought liberated from the material of language. {**Cf. D. Davidson, - (S. Guttenplan [ed])1975**}. There is a reciprocal relationship in which thought produces the language in producing object through language. Language is called the instrument of thought and the **product**

perfects the instrument; language incarnates the spirit and thought. In language man express his thought and is given as a means for thought. Some express this relationship by saying that the structure of language influences the manner of thinking and the manner of perceiving reality and thinking influences the structure of language. This **eventually is** where language is implicated in philosophical thinking both as a vehicle, a facilitator and even an object or subject of philosophical reflection, which **is addressed** in philosophy of language.

That language is a great source of philosophical inspiration and stimulus can clearly be seen at the origins of philosophical reflection especially in Greece. Philosophy is said to have arisen and developed early in Greece partly because of the capacity and structure of the Greek language, which helped to conceptualize almost everything and bring it to the thinkable and analysis. The existence of the definite article in Greek enables us to conceptualize every linguistic **word**, to make abstraction out of them, to develop concepts out of them, to **substantiate** verbs and adjectives and make them stable objects for our thinking.

Scientific and philosophical thought could not have gone on without such phrase as **To ὕδωρ** {the water}, **To νοῦν** {the thought}, such philosophical concepts as the **good** {**To ἀγαθόν**}. The Latin language for example has no direct concept like “the good” except by circumlocution **id quod bonum est** – that which is good {which is a phrase not a concept} So the quality and structure of Greek Language helped to structure and shape Greek thought and its possibilities like developing a metaphysics and science.

Thus Bruno Snell observed that in Greece, speech harbours the seed of the structure of the human intellect; the effort of philosophical thinking is necessary to allow the structure to unfold itself fully. The Greek tongue is probably the only medium in which it can be shown how philosophical/scientific concepts grew from the soil of the speech. {**Bruno Snell, p.227 – 245**}

Heidegger in his *Lettre Sur L’humanisme* also believed that language is what make it possible for man to pose questions about himself and his existence which of course is the philosophical project. For him “Language is the house of being.” Man in questioning existence raises the question of the being of the beings he meets, but he raises this question in language and thus Being dwells in language. Man dwells in the intelligibility of being dwelling in language; while thought starts with the question, but the question finds voice in language. (Heidegger **M., 1971, p.51**)

As most language experts have made clear, language is a symbolic instrument. Language is a means of communication, by which ideas, knowledge, emotion, desires are transferred through speech that is an intermediary of a system of symbols, words deliberately created with accepted rules of association and grammar by a human community. {**Mondin B., 1985, p.133**}

A symbol is that which is created to stand in the place of some objects or events, or feeling which can be used in their absence. In speech words are symbols, or verbal symbol, which take an independent existence and help to signify or evoke, or represent things, events, etc in their absence at any time or place. What is evoked is the meaning of those things represented. {**Ricoeur, 1974, p.22**}. So language includes sounds that are emitted vocally, the way sounds are grouped into words, and the generally accepted rules of association and grammar. So meaning emerges from the way sounds are combined into words and words are arranged into sentences in accordance with **complex** set rules created by the particular linguistic community.

Every time I name something, this name or word which is verbal symbol expresses a meaning or content which I grasped as being fulfilled, grasped in that which I experienced. This is not the direct particular thing that I may have perceived, but what is given in the concept of it. This is where the words give birth to concept in which the meaning is grasped by thought, which now generalized meaning manifested in and through particular thing symbolized. The meaning conveyed in the concept, symbolized in the word, and apprehended transcends the sensory particular instances and applicable to all the other sensory instances of the particular thing. {**Kenneth T. Gallagher, 1964 p.154-155**}. This shows that language is referential **and has a reasoning and intellectual dimension, and also a material and spiritual component. Language is thus the principal agent in the growth of concepts.**

This shows the unity between language and thought and how language is the vehicle of thought and the way they shape each other. Language in its various levels and units make reflective and conceptual thinking possible. We have no concept of rationality which is not the concept of something expressible. What cannot be expressed is unthinkable. **John Stuart Mill called language the light of the mind.** Our thinking is shaped or even limited by the quality and scope of the language.

Some languages may **offer latitude** for thought than others, and even embodies more referents than others.

Real thinking is only possible only in the light of genuine language no matter how limited and how primitive. {**Cf. Sussan K. Langer, 1974, p.31**}. If Philosophy is an attempt to penetrate the causes or fundamental principle and meaningfulness of things, and if language plays a big role in the conceptualization and expression of the meaning of things, then language plays an indispensable role in any philosophical project or any philosophical articulation. In the search for truth its communication is as important as its articulation. If as some scholars like Benjamin Whorf claimed that our world is mapped out and our perceptions shaped by our

language and our conceptual scheme, our thoughts, determined by our language, if as it is believed that our language houses our cultures, beliefs, then language must be very important in determining the problems and objects of our philosophical activity and may even be the problems itself as the philosophers of language claim. Thus Dr. Ifechukwu J. Nianaefoo said “The rigorous dynamism that bonds philosophy, concepts, culture and language constituted and delineates for people their range of consciousness of truth, their ontology, what there is. {Ifechukwu J. Nianaefoo 2011 Vol. 12 No.2}

Verbal symbolization in words, and its formulation in concepts represent a system of mental feeling and cross filling which serves as the context, frame of reference by which man grasps and classifies every existent he encounters and every aspect of reality; and provide man with a system of cognitive classification and organization which enables him to acquire knowledge on an unlimited scale, keep order in man’s mind and enable him to think.

There is a quality of verbal symbols {words} which make language fascinating for philosophy, its reflexivity, versatility and openness. This means that people can continually create with the word symbols, entirely new messages, sentences that have never been spoken of which enables man virtually speaks of everything even if we encounter new things. Hence hundreds of new words are introduced in our languages every year, of course with the attendant consequences, of new ideas, concepts, perspectives, meaning and even mental classification of reality. Hence **Prof. R. C Kwant** would observe in his *Phenomenology of Language* that speech does not simply communicate meanings but produce meanings. Even when language seems to be entirely bound by the living experience it still attains its freedom, for a lived experience can be interpreted in a number of ways. Man’s linguistic creativity consists precisely in discovering new possibilities within a given field of signification. The remarkable ability to produce new words and meanings and the ability to talk on everything and shows the freedom flexibility and versatility in human language always within a shared system of linguistic activities. Our capacity to make infinite use of finite resources (words, concepts) which is characteristic of human intelligence and intellectuality is our capacity to imitate and respond to new types of enquiry and to handle new situations in thought. This is possible due to the open-endedness and flexibility of words, the leeway between words and sentences, and the character of knowing the meaning of words, {**Braine, D. 1992, p. 352**}

These qualities of language have also implication for philosophy, and provoke many questions about reality itself, and the object of philosophical investigations, namely; How much of what we call the problems of philosophy are real problems or pseudo problems created by our own languages? Is there a real world outside language or is reality a creation of language? How much is knowable outside language? Do our concepts capture reality? Are the metaphysical problems real? How much of our world is accessible or hidden to our linguistic expression? Do we speak about reality or are we merely engaged in language games?

All these questions become the preoccupation of much of contemporary philosophy which makes language itself a fascination of philosophical wonder, and language itself today becomes the main problem of philosophy and strong stimulus for philosophical reflection.

Most of these questions is making philosophy among some schools more a philosophy of language leading to what is called the linguistic turn in philosophy which involved such philosophers like Bertrand Russell, Early and later Ludwig Wittgenstein, the logical positivists, Rudolf Carnap, the Ordinary language philosophers like John Austin (1960), Strawson, Ryle (1976), John Wisdom (1993) **Cf. Andrew Beard 2101 (Ludwig Wittgenstein, 2001).**

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