Chapter I

Introduction

A literary work is a linguistic construct with a special use of language. This theoretical position is central to all the Indian schools of poetics and some Western critical thoughts as well. Literature takes a diametrically opposite position to that of a scientific discourse and this opposition springs mainly from the language of literary discourse. The chief concern of the literary theories of ancient India has been, therefore, to explain the difference between ordinary language and poetic language. In the Western critical tradition too, especially the New Critical tradition and Russian Formalism, the primary aim was to study the "text" as a verbal construct and to analyze its unique use of language.

In this dissertation I am concerned with the concept of poetic language, its nature and definition as interpreted by two major theories of Sanskrit criticism: the Dhvani and the Vakrokti theory, and the Western School of New Criticism and Russian Formalism. I'm especially interested in these literary theories because of their unified ontological way of looking at a literary work and the greater affinities between their theoretical standpoint. I do not intend to discuss any mutual influence of the Indian and the Western theories, although there are similarities in approach between the two traditions. The antiquity of the Indian theories do not tempt me to highlight the impact and influence of Indian poetics on Western theories. My purpose is to study the Indian theories and the Western theories

independently and see, wherever possible, the points of convergence between them.

The Indian school of poetics developed as an independent and indigenous system of thought in Bharata, and was subsequently enriched by Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta, and codified by Mammaṭa, Viśwanâtha and Jagannâtha. Similarly the Western tradition from Aristotle to the present time offers a continuity of concerns by constantly redefining the intricacies of a sustainable literary theory. Together the Indian and Western theories can work towards developing a consistent general theory of literature.

Russian Formalism and the New Criticism made the earliest attempt at giving literary theory an autonomous and distinct status. Putting literary studies on a firm and independent footing they paved the way for other theoretical movements. With these two systematic approaches to literature, the chaos of critical studies of the earlier time gave way to a more systematic and scientific approach to literary studies. The study of literature was based on the genetic approach, i.e., the sources and genesis of a particular work. Literary studies was reduced to a secondary discipline as it was always seen in relation to history, sociology, philosophy and psychology. The Russian Formalists' attempt to create literary studies as an independent science of literature and define the nature of the object to be studied allowed for the specificity of literary studies.

In directing literary studies toward development as an independent science of literature, the Formalists refused to take literature as a vehicle or an instrument of psychological or social studies; instead they looked upon it as pure literature, which cannot be reduced to history or philosophy. To

them, to study literature is not to look for a reflection of society or ideas in it but to analyze its "literariness" which is the most distinguishing feature of literature. For them what constitutes and defines literature is its differential principle, i.e., literature is different from all other fields of study. According to them literature is not sociology, or history or moral studies; it is a unique mode of discourse and has to be seen in its relation to language.

Literature, thus, operates as a unique genre making use of language in a special way which is different from the way the ordinary people use it in their everyday communication. The way in which the literary or poetic language works is through a technique called "defamiliarization," a term which is valorized by the Formalists. The poetic language defamiliarizes our usual modes of communication, thus refreshing our everyday experience. Victor Shklovsky, the leader of the Formalist school, has given an example of how dance defamiliarizes our habitual activity of walking. He says, "A dance is a walk which is felt, even more accurately, it is a walk which is constructed to be felt."[1] Similarly, art revives our perception of simple things in life that we fail to notice, even the poeticity of the language that we have been constantly using. Poetry makes ordinary language "strange," "difficult" and "oblique." It breaks the "habitualization" of the things by making them strange.

So the aim of literary studies, the Formalists claimed, was to analyze the difference between poetic and ordinary language. The technique of defamiliarization helps bring out the distinction much more sharply and

vividly. In this sense, then, the form rather than content should be the subject of analysis.

However, the technique of defamiliarization was not adequate enough in explaining the ineffectiveness of certain conventional forms and hence later developments in Formalism introduced the term "foregrounding" for the sake of greater effectiveness. Tynyanov's "foregrounding" is a concept which is especially responsible for understanding the dominance of a particular element or structure in a text as against the other structures. It works with an assumption that some elements in a text form the background, where a particular element is foregrounded and is responsible for the defamiliarizing effect.

Roman Jakobson, the founder-member of the Prague Linguistic Circle, highlights the term "dominant": "The dominant may be defined as the focusing component of a work of art: it rules, determines and transforms the remaining components. It is the dominant which guarantees the integrity of the structure.... The dominant specifies the work."[2] A literary work, for Jakobson, is a verbal construction which has other non-literary functions. But what makes it "literary" is the aesthetic function which is dominant to the extent of transforming other linguistic functions to literary ones.

The terms "defamiliarization" and "dominant" are theoretically wide apart from one another. Where "defamiliarization" seeks to make strange the habitual factors thus making a difference, "dominant" inherently involves power relations, i.e. the aesthetic factor is automatically granted the power to rule over other linguistic factors. Jakobson's aesthetic factor as an

imperialistic power to dominate everything non-literary was severely opposed by the Bakhtinian concept of literary dynamics. It seems viable to bring in Bakhtin here because of the relationship he shared with the Formalists. One can say that Bakhtin and the Formalists shared a complementary relationship. Nevertheless, they had something in common. For Bakhtin, the Formalist distinction between the practical and poetic language is only part of the distinction between hundreds of discourses within a language system, which he termed "heteroglossia" or dialogism of social discourses. But both believed that in the literary discourse the focus is on the message itself: to instruct about the nature of language it uses.

Though the New Criticism and Russian Formalism shared a similar concern with what literary studies should aim at, they differed in their theoretical frameworks. While the New Critics agreed with the Formalists on developing literary study as an independent discipline, making it more scientific, the New Critics, however, could not bring in the objectivity and rigour of Russian Formalists. The Formalists did not accept T. S. Eliot's views regarding the relation of art to life nor would they have shared I. A. Richards' views on experience or value and certainly they would never have subscribed to his preference for neuro-physiology or psychology as a means of making literary studies more scientific. The Formalists were far more radical than the New Critics in issues concerning the definition and objective of literary studies. Where the Formalists exclude the non-literary, the New Critics explore the different relation between life and art, which the Formalits see as mutual opposities.

The Formalists fundamentally differ from the New Critics on the issues of meaning and form. For the New Critics, art conveys a meaning and form is the means through which the meaning of literature is conveyed. But for the Formalists meaning or idea is part of the available material which enters into literature to be put to literary use by the functional devices of literature.

In spite of these disagreements, my desire for clubbing them together here is because of their common interest in working towards a definition of poetic language through making a distinction between practical and poetic language. Both look at literature not as a means to an end but as an end in itself.

The New Criticism started with the works of I. A. Richards and T. S. Eliot and went on to include critics like John Crowe Ransom, Cleanth Brooks, Yvor Winters, Allen Tate, R. P. Warren, W. K. Wimsatt. This critical movement began in the thirties in England and continued in the forties and fifties in the United States to become one of the most influential critical schools in the academic circle. New Critical approaches may seem old-fashioned today, but its relevance could be felt in the contemporary critical practices dominated by deconstruction and other post-structuralist methods of reading based on the premise that a work is an autonomous object.

Richards' distinction between two functions of language – the symbolic/referential function and the emotive function – echoes the Formalistic distinction between practical and poetic language. The symbolic function is the language of science which talks about the factual and

verifiable objective world. But the emotive function of language evokes feelings. Richards goes on to say that a statement used for "the sake of the *reference*, true or false... is the *scientific* use of language." But the language used for the "sake of the effects in emotion and attitude produced by the reference it occasions... is the *emotive* use of language."[3] Unlike the symbolic function, here the words do not refer to an object of the external world, rather they convey a desirable mental state or emotions. In this sense, he calls poetry a "pseudo statement," where factual verification does not occur but it brings about the reconciliation of our impulses. And herein lies the beauty of poetry. The difference between ordinary emotive experience and literary experience is that the latter has a greater level and higher degree of harmonizing diverse and often conflicting impulses. This function of poetry, which Richards terms as synaesthesis, organizes our impulses into total harmony.

Richards does not go on to define the nature of the poetic form in a Formalistic sense; his interest lies in the experience produced by reading a poem. By relating art to life, he insists on the empiricist and humanistic value of literature. The seventeenth and eighteenth century empricist philosophy created a base for Richards' recourse to human experience and critical response to a poem in terms of psychological concepts. He explains the process of reading a poem and the experiences and effects produced by it through psychology. But he does not accept Kant's notion of a special aesthetic realm in the mind for aesthetic activity. He says that reading a poem is a heightened experience and does not need a separate mental space as such.

The later critics like Cleanth Brooks and others accepted Richards' concept of an equilibrium of contradictory forces but rejected his ideas on neurology and experience. Richards believed that human beings are a system of conscious or unconscious desires which are in conflict with each other. It is important, therefore, to organize these conflicting impulses in such a way that will reduce frustration and bring in a kind of harmony; the degree to which art or poetic experience harmonizes the conflicting impulses is exceptionally high. Moreover, he believed that the text is a vehicle for conveying the experience of the author to the reader. The reader must recreate within himself the mental condition of the author while reading the text. The emotive use of language of poetry is a vehicle for communicating the author's experience to the reader.

For Brooks, the language of poetry itself contains the reconciling factor, which should not be looked for elsewhere [reader's experience]. He was concerned with the "words on the page" or the "close-reading" of the text. So the text was read as an autonomous object governed by its formal features and structure. By "structure" Brooks meant that the meaning of a poem which is "coherence" largely consists in its capability of harmonizing opposite impulses. In his *The Well Wrought Urn* he says, "A poem is to be judged, not by the truth or falsity as such, of the idea which it incorporates, but rather by its character as drama – by its coherence, sensitivity, depth, richness and thought mindedness."[4] This coherence or balance can be achieved through "paradox" and "irony," the two terms he highlighted. "Paradox" is a technique used to bring about harmony in diversity, and "irony" designates the connotative meaning to a word in a poem. The words

function in a context, and this contextual basis renders an altogether different meaning to a word. The multiple layers of meaning fail to reduce a poem into a paraphrase. "Irony" is a significant concept in this sense because it brings home an important message that any attempt to paraphrase a literary work is a heresy.

Brooks' concept of irony finds an elaboration in William Empson's *Seven Types of Ambiguity*. Ambiguity, like Brooks' paradox, should not be taken in its literal sense or conventional meaning we generally associate with the term. Ambiguity, for Empson, is "any verbal nuance, however slight, which gives room for alternative reactions to the same piece of language."[5] Empson, however, does not subscribe to any sort of a verbal play giving way to more than one meaning, like puns, to be considered as poetic. He goes on to say, "In so far as an ambiguity sustains intricacy, delicacy, or compression of thought..., it is to be respected.... It is not be respected in so far as it is due to weakness or thinness of thought...."[6]

Like Brooks, W. K. Wimsatt defines the characteristic feature of a poem through a term, "icon," derived from the American behaviorist psychologist C.W. Morris. In his *The Verbal Icon*, he argues that the language of poetry is different from the ordinary language not because it uses a different diction, but it involves a lot other things like metrical schemes, rhythm, figures of speech and the syntactic pattern etc. The "icon" is an all-encompassing term which takes into account the poem as a whole, from its phonetics to the syntactic and semantic level. Any verbal structure

of the poem is thus an iconic representation of the meaning; for example, a broken sequence of words is iconic of a disturbed mental state.

Ransom's distinction between "texture" and "structure," Blackmur's concept of "gesture" and Tate's analysis of "tension" together with Wimsatt's "icon" and Brooks' "paradox" and "irony" are attempts to define the distinguishing properties of poetry. Through these attempts, the New Critics formulated devices and techniques for the analysis of poetic language. While the Formalists' approach was on a purely linguistic level, the New Critics urged for a special cognitive role for poetry on an empiricist line. The New Critical notion of structure included only meaning and not all the different levels of the text. The New Critics were interested in the convergence within the text rather than the deviation from an external norm. So they were less attached to the ideas of difference and defamiliarization and other linguistic techniques to study literature. Literary criticism should be concerned with meaning or "cognitive structure." By "cognitive structure," Cleanth Brooks means the organisation of meaning in the text, i.e., reconciling the conflicting impulses.

II

A similar ontological tradition started long back in India. The Indian theorists, unlike their Western counterparts, never argued about the object of critical enquiry which they unanimously accepted as the literary work. They considered the literary work as a finished product ready to be analyzed without taking the trouble to find out what the author went through while writing the text. In analyzing the literary work, they maintained the

distinction between ordinary and poetic language and went on to examine what makes the latter so special and distinct.

The analogy of the literary work to a human being consisting of a body and a soul was something fundamental to all the critical schools. And everyone accepted that the literal words on the page were the body; where they consistently differed was when they tried to define what constituted the "soul" of a poetic body. There were five major Indian schools of poetics, each proposing a particular doctrine of the "soul" of poetry. Of the five schools – alaṁkāra (figuration), guna-rīti (style), rasa-dhvani (suggestion), vakrokti (obliquity), aucitya (propriety) – I will deal with only two of them – the *rasa-dhvani* and *vakrokti*. *Rasa-dhvani* is the first successful attempt at satisfactorily incorporating the theory of *rasa* or the emotive element into the concept of *dhvani* (suggestion), thus bringing in semantics and emotive element into the sphere of criticism; *vakrokti* strikes a balance between arid formalism and evocatory aspects of literary studies, synthesizing them into one comprehensive theory. Both theories, moreover, have affinities with the two Western theories we have discussed, bringing them into a common aesthetic context to evolve a distinctive trend in critical theory.

The *Dhvani* school, founded by Ānandavardhana, is one of the most influential schools in terms of the development of Sanskrit poetics, placing literary theory in an entirely new perspective. The formalistic schools before Ānandavardhana were much worried about the embellishment of the external aspect of literature and considered the texts which do not possess figurative speech non-literary. Ānandavardhana's *Dhvanyāloka* was a

breakthrough in the sphere of literary criticism; it introduced the function of semantics and infused *rasa* (emotive element) into literary studies, the two areas which were neglected and overlooked in the past. Ānandavardhana introduced a third function of the word, "suggestion" (vyañjana) alongside the two well-known ones, i.e., "denotation" (abhidhā) and "connotation" (lakṣaṇā) and claimed that the suggestive function delineates a poetic discourse. Defining dhvani, he says, it is "that kind of poetry, wherein either the (conventional) meaning, or the (conventional) word, render themselves secondary and suggest the implied meaning, [this] is designated by the learned as dhvani or "suggestive poetry."[7] But not all suggestive language is poetry, says Ānandavardhana; only the ones suggesting *rasa* (aesthetic emotion) are poetry. Again, he says, aesthetic emotion can never be stated because it fails to arouse any emotion. By simply uttering the words "love" or "compassion" we cannot feel "love," and so it has always to be suggested.

In India, poetics was never dissociated from philosophy, logic and grammar. While some prominent schools of philosophy like the Nyāya and Mīmāṃsa denied the existence of suggestion because it could not be objectively studied, suggestion nevertheless had an enormous significance for poeticians and linguists. The suggestive function of language defines and shapes large areas of our cognitive and emotive understandings as well as the socio-cultural aspects of our speech-act.

Ānandavardhana's dhvani theory was influenced by Bhartṛhari, the ancient Indian grammarian. The name "dhvani" is also taken from the terminology of grammar which means "sound." Bhartṛhari's *sphota* theory was a precursor to the dhvani theory.

Apart from *Dhvanyāloka*, Abhinavagupta's commentary on it is an equally significant work on the dhvani theory. Abhinavagupta's insightful analysis, careful observations and keen sense of going beyond the mere literal text converts his commentary into almost another treatise on dhvani.

Unlike the dhvani theory, Kuntaka's theory of "vakrokti" did not postulate an altogether new concept. Kuntaka tried to synthesize all the existing theories and came forward with his own called "vakrokti." The characteristic feature of all poetic language is "vakrokti" or imaginative expression, according to Kuntaka, and there are numerous forms of creating vakrokti. But again not all kinds of vakrokti are poetic; only those which have poetic charm or delight and are enjoyable can be categorized as vakrokti.

Though Kuntaka accommodates the theory of figuration and style into his poetics, his theory is different from that of Bhāmaha's "figuration" or Daṇḍin's "style." While Bhāmaha's theory does not take into account any other aspect of the poetic discourse like the semantic or the evocative except figuration, Kuntaka's is concerned with form, sense and the evocative element. Kuntaka is not very keen on semantics alone like Ānandavardhana but he accepts the principle of *rasa*. Although his focus is on imaginative expression he could not deny the existence of aesthetic emotion because by then the notion of aesthetic emotion was put into a firm footing in literary studies. He felt that its exclusion from poetic theory would make the position of the critics weak.

In a literary work anything from a phoneme to a paragraph or even the whole text can be charming because of vakrokti, and this leads to poetic delight which ultimately evokes *rasa* (aesthetic emotion). Kuntaka treats in detail how letters, words, and sentences can achieve poetic charm in the light of other literary work. In his formalistic approach he is closer to the Russian Formalists.

Russian Formalism and the New Criticism are the two most widely debated theories. Many Western critics have used and abused these theories. Contemporary critical theories like structuralism and post-structuralism have challenged New Criticism's premises and assumptions by using some of New Criticism's own strategies. But some recent critics like Murray Krieger, Hazard Adams and M. H. Abrams have revived interest in it.

Similarly, a lot of pioneering work has been done on Indian aesthetics by both Indian and Western Sanskrit scholars. K. Krishnamoorthy, P.V. Kane, Krishna Rayan, Sushil Kumar De, K.C. Pandey, V. Raghavan, M. Hiriyanna, A. B. Keith, Daniel Ingalls, R. Knoli and J.L. Masson, to name a few, have contributed substantially to the debates about Indian aesthetics. V.K.Chari's *Sanskrit Criticism* is an excellent exposition of the major critical concepts of Sanskrit criticism from the standpoint of *rasa.* Critics like C.D.Narasimhaiah have constantly pursued a comparative study of Indian and Western poetics. Narasimhaiah's edited work *East West Poetics at Work*, a collection of seminar papers, is an endeavour towards initiating a dialogue with the West. K.Kunjunni Raja's *Indian Theories of Meaning* provides a groundwork for defining the concept of "meaning" in different Indian

aesthetic and philosophical traditions having parallel with those in the West. Rama Nair's doctoral thesis on "Theory of Language in Indian Aesthetics: A Comparative Approach" examines the Indian aesthetic theories in their totality, while discussing some Western concepts. But comparative study of the two Indian theories I have studied here with the two in the West has not yet been done. So I take off from where others have left and propose to study the Indian schools of dhvani and vakrokti in a comparative light by taking into account the Formalist and New Critical Schools. I also intend to make a close study of each of the four schools to point out how each has evolved its own theoretical positions and interpretive strategies.

III

In exploring the different dimensions of language, philosophers, literary critics and linguists in India and the West have addressed the problem of meaning. Interpretation was something rudimentary to all of them, and the literary theorists largely depended on philosophical exegesis for the problems of semantics.

The study of semantics has had a long ancestry in India with most of the schools of philosophy working out different theories of meaning. Studying the function of language was important for most of these schools because they were involved in interpreting the Vedic texts. The function of language is to convey meaning; different types of meaning conveyed by speech are denotation (*abhidhā*), indication (*lakṣaṇā*), suggestion (*vyañjanā*), and implied meaning *(tātparya)* as highlighted by various schools.

The Mīmāṃsa and Nyāya are two important schools which have made significant contributions towards linguistic study. Though both philosophical thoughts took the word to be the minimum meaningful unit of language they differed regarding the nature of the relation of the meaning with the word. The Mīmāṃsakas believed that the relationship is a natural one whereas the Naiyayikas believed it as conventional. The Mīmāṃsakas argued that the denotative power is natural and inherent in words and the relationship between the word and meaning is impersonal, i.e., it cannot be traced to any human being. The Naiyāyikas, however, differ from the Mīmāṃsakas by calling the relationship as conventional.

The Buddhists also accept a causal relation between a word and our mental construct of the image. Where they tend to disagree with the Mīmāṃsakas is that there can be no real connection between a word and the object as we acquire the meaning with the construction of a mental image of the real object through a process of negation. For instance, the word "tree" does not actually define something with huge trunks and branches and leaves; it brings in the image of a tree by excluding all that is not a tree. This Buddhist theory called *apoha* comes quite close to Saussure's theory that the meanings of words are "relational." The differences and binary oppositions to other words define the meaning of a word. That meaning is always attributed to the human mind and the relation between the word and its meaning is arbitrary are aspects common to both Saussure and *apoha* theory of the Buddhists.

The arbitrariness of the sign that Saussure proclaimed suggests a functional relationship between the signifier and the signified rather than a

direct one which, in turn, resolves to identify how we make sense of reality and not what reality is. In that sense, language no longer communicates experiences and is not a reflection of the world and reality but a system enclosed in itself. Like Saussure, Roland Barthes and Levi-Strauss have developed the notion that language is the only reality given to humans constituting their world. Literature, therefore, also does not express or imitate "reality" and works as a system with the same underlying principle as does other human discourses like myths, tribal rituals or fashions. Unlike the older literary criticism, structuralism's job was not to provide another interpretation of the text but to demonstrate the underlying structured set of signs or codes which governs the meanings of the literary text. So the structuralist critics' aim, as Jonathan Culler puts it, is "to construct a poetics which stands to literature as linguistics stands to language."[8]

Instead of the traditional practice of interpretation involving the author or context, structuralism allows a complete focus on language. In this attention to language we can see some similarities between the New Criticism and Structuralism, but their methodologies of studying this language is quite different. For the New Criticism studying language is a means to getting into the meaning; for structuralism language itself becomes its sole justification. As Barthes remarks, "The rules of literary language do not concern the confirmity of this language to reality (whatever the claims of the realistic schools), but only its submission to the system of signs the author has established...."[9] He goes on to say, "The author and the work are only a point of departure for an analysis whose horizon is language," and continues, "we cannot have a science of Dante, of Shakespeare or of Racine, but only a science of discourse."[10]

Barthes' and Foucault's attack on the notion of the author, especially Barthes' aggressive announcement of the death of the author, is a reverberation of Nietzsche's skeptical statement that God is dead. By decentering the author, Barthes and Foucault do not completely dispose off the author. But unlike Gadamer they would not like to believe the author to be the source of meaning. Gadamer tries to bring in a "fusion" between the author and the reader in these words:

> If we examine the situation more clearly, however, we find that meanings cannot be understood in an arbitrary way. Just as we cannot continually misunderstand the use of a word without its affecting the meaning of the whole, so we cannot hold blindly to our own foremeaning of the thing if we would understand the meaning of another. ...All that is asked is that we remain open to the meaning of the other person or of the text. But this openness always includes our placing the other meaning in relation with whole of our own meanings or ourselves in relation to it ... And if a person fails to hear what the other person is really saying, he will not be able to place correctly what he has misunderstood within the range of his own various expectations of meaning.[11]

In negating meaning the structuralists and post-structuralists denied the mimetic function of literature. Structuralism's assertion that language has no relationship to reality is taken forward by deconstructionists' assertion of the uncertainties within the system of language. Derrida situates the text in the absence of the author, in the endless free play of meanings. We are sent to a gravity-free universe where the centre and the margins are "deconstructed" and there is no intellectual reference point. Geoffrey

Hartman, in his introduction to the anthology, *Deconstruction and Criticism* writes, "Deconstruction refuses to identify the force of literature with any concept of embodied meaning and shows how deeply such logocentric and incarnationist perspectives have influenced the way we think about art."[12]

Language, for the post-structuralist, is considered fluid. Words are constantly floating and hence their meanings cannot be captured as fixed and permanent. Meanings, therefore, cannot be "planted," they can only be "disseminated." The stable meaning of the text gives way to a radical freeplay of meanings. The deconstructionist reading is, in this way, opposite to the New Critical reading– the New Critics see a kind of harmony or unity beneath the apparent disunity while the deconstructionists find the internal disunity, fissures and conflict in an apparently "safe-looking" text. So we have texuality instead of the text.

Derrida's attack on the whole of Western metaphysics from Plato to Rousseau is precisely based on his contention that the Western metaphysics makes the mistake of identifying language with *logos* or spoken word where writing is considered only secondary to speech. The Indian philosophers are also guilty of making the same point – speech is more important than writing. And like Derrida, Bhartṛhari, the Indian philosopher and propounder of the *sphota* theory, critiques the Indian metaphysical position of logocentrism.

Reversing the hierarchical opposition of speech versus writing, Derrida follows Nāgārjuna, the Indian philosopher, Nietzsche and Heidegger to expose the weakness of the Western position by applying its own strategies against itself. Writing, for Derrida, is not the mere inscription of

words; it is the neuronal traces of the brain which is the creative force of all languages which Freud terms as "memory."[13] He, thus, states: "language is not merely a sort of writing 'but' a possibility founded on the general possibility of writing."[14]

Bhartṛhari's *śabdatattva* or the word-principle is similar to Derrida's "trace" or arche-writing. The word-principle is responsible for all the speech and writing; there is nothing beyond it, says Bhartṛhari, which is echoed in Derrida's arche writing. Language does not depend on God, logos or Brahman; rather it creates all these — the word-principle creates the universe. Bhartrhari and Derrida both believe that the intrinsic différance in the *śabdatattva* or arche-writing is responsible for the articulation of language as speech and writing. This can be distinguished as three forms: sign/*sphoṭa* – the whole, signified/artha – the concept or meaning, and the signifier/*dhvani* – the uttered or heard sound.[15]

It is the *sphoṭa* which makes understanding possible. According to Bhartṛhari's *sphoṭa* theory as discussed in his work *Vākyapadiya*, the parts are subordinate to the whole. We do not make sense of a sentence by joining its parts, i.e., the individual sounds and words; rather the sentence is grasped together as a whole. The two principles of the *sphoṭa* theory are: a sentence is taken as a single, undivided utterance; its meaning is evoked as a flash of illumination (*pratibhā* or *sphoṭa*). The sentence is considered as the fundamental linguistic and semantic unit and cannot be divided into phonemes or morphemes. Unlike Mīmāṃsakas and Naiyāyikas, the *sphoṭa* theory does not study language from a part-whole approach, it argues for a

whole-part approach like the Gestalt theory. We first make sense of the sentence and then go on to analyze its components.

But Gadamer and Wittgenstein together take different views. To them language is a "living" thing and one has to return to speech to know its authentic condition. Speaking a language, according to them, highlights the "doing" aspect of it and speaking involves participating in a "form of life." That is why both insisted that language is full of games.

The later Wittgenstein of *Philosophical Investigations* replaces his concept of language as a logical system with the concept of language-games. Like games, languages are informal, plural and diverse and cannot be reduced to an underlying logical form. Language, moreover, cannot be confined to a boundary and lacks a foundation. The rules and meanings are agreed on the arbitrations of conventions and consensus. Language, like game, is learned partly through imitating and partly through rules and one can never control language.

The notion of "play" and "game" resurfaces in Gadamer's *Truth and Method.* Gadamer is more interested in the distinction of the poetic and everyday language unlike Wittgenstein whose silence on poetic language reveals his positivistic philosophical allegiance. In poetic language, the words take on a life of their own, their "corporeality" is highlighted while in the ordinary language the words lose their autonomy and vanish after the message is made. Ordinary language is, in the Heideggerian term, the language of the "homeland" and comes to life in the poetic utterance.

Language is originally poetic, according to Heidegger, and we make a categorical mistake when we say that the opposite of poetry is prose. Prose can be equally poetic. Poeticity of language is lost through its constant use for everyday communicative purpose. Heidegger's metaphysical views on language has some parallels with some Indian concepts. However, I will limit my study to the parallels between Dhvani and Vakrokti theories and the Russian Formalism and New Criticism involving the nature of poetic language and as far as possible connect them to some contemporary theoretical perceptions.

Notes:

[1] Viktor Shklovsky, "On the connection between the devices of *syuzhet* construction and general stylistic devices," in *Russian Formalism*, ed. Stephen Bann and John E. Bolt (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1973) 48.

[2] Roman Jakobson, *Language and Literature* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1987) 41.

[3] I. A .Richards, *Principles of Literary Criticism* (London: Kegan Paul, 1924) 267.

[4] Cleanth Brooks, *The Well-Wrought Urn* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1947) 256.

[5] William Empson, *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (London: Penguin Books, 1947) 1.

[6] Empson 160.

[7] Ānandavardhana, *Dhvanyāloka*, trans. K. Krishnamoorthy (Dharwar: Karnataka University, 1974) 9.

[8] Jonathan Culler, *Structuralist Poetics* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975) 257.

[9] Roland Barthes, "What is Criticism ?" in *Critical Essays*, trans. Richard Howard (Evanston: Northwestern UP, 1972) 258.

[10] Roland Barthes, "Science of Literature," in *Structuralism and Literary Criticism*, ed. H.S.Gill (Delhi: Bahri Publications, 1979) 15.

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