# Language, Rationality, Science, Philosophy and Faith

In this essay we will try to answer a few major questions, such as if teaching people a language is about helping them to cultivate themselves or if all language does is condition them. Then we will talk about rationality and its role in language and our society. We will then briefly talk about art and music and how these things in a way are *beyond* language. We will also discuss the ‘feelings’ of intuition and love, and how we have stopped their growth. Then we shall go on to discuss about animals and how they do or do not use language, and why they might be more intelligent than us because of the very reason that we have a language. Finally we shall talk about meditation and how it can help us transcend all conditionings.

## Language, what is it ?

To me, the word *language*[1] very much represents a set of sounds that we call words, and the nature of words is to *communicate* a set of *ideas* or *emotions* to another entity. When we encounter something we have never come across before, we instantly give it a name (a *tag*), and then this *tag* is what we will refer to is by. In doing so, all we are really doing is *separating* it from the other things around it.

## Teaching people language

From the very first day the child is born, parents look forward to when the child will utter its first word. It is notable, that the child makes plenty of ‘sounds’ before it utters its first words but the ‘first word’ is apparently very important because it signifies the *start* of the *use* of *language*. Then when the child gets a little older (say about seven years of age) he is then expected to have completely stopped making ‘meaningless’ ‘goo-goo-ga-ga’ sounds. In fact he is now *expected* to use language to express his *desires* and his *emotions*. It is *very clear* at this stage that *language* is *assumed* to be ‘sufficient and complete’. By ‘sufficient and complete’ I mean, it is assumed that, (for example) the child does not have any feelings that he cannot express to others through language. This assumption that language is ‘sufficient and complete’ seems to be *completely silly* to me! Maybe my point will be best portrayed by a question. Why can’t a person remember their ‘baby’ days (when they were between the ages of say zero and six)? Is it because *now* they *verbalise* all their thoughts but in their young days they did not know a language and hence were open to and had feelings that they can’t even ‘think of now’ (due to the conditioning’s of language) and hence can’t recall them. It is possible that through learning a language a child learned to express some feelings but learned to *shut out* all feelings that he could not express in words that *others* could make sense of. Some people might claim that they cannot remember what they did or what their feelings were because its been a long time since they were a child and *time* can make you *forget* things. My main objection to this point would be, how come most people (even when at the age of sixty and above) can tell you *very detailed* stories of the events that occurred to them

from the age, say approximately fifteen, yet I have yet to meet a person who can *remember any* event in their life between the ages zero and five.
I feel people cannot remember their baby stage because they were truly *innocent* and *free* then, *free* to feel what came to them naturally. However after the ages of about fifteen people are so *strongly* conditioned by language that they now feel a need to verbalise everything and *stop feeling* what they can't *verbalise* in their *thoughts*, and even when they are older, they are under the same *conditioning's* of language and hence can remember (verbally) what might have happened to them when they were fifteen!

I have called this section 'Teaching people language' and *not* 'people learning language' because as shown above, when we *teach* people we *tell* (ie. impose on them; usually we *very very* subtly impose on them) what not to do as well as teaching them what to do. This is done by *judging* them by how they act. For example, we teach them not to say 'goo-goo-ga-ga', by judging them to be stupid or denying them of something when they say it, or by rewarding them with something when they say *only* something *we understand*. *Learning* is different in the sense that, if a child learnt from his environment (and was not *taught* by it), it would soon pick up language but probably would not stop doing the stuff that did not make sense to others (he would not stop doing it because he would not be being *judged* by what he did or did not do!). This would be a very good situation indeed, because a child would learn to communicate with others, while at the same time not shutting out particular feelings that he could not express to others. One might say, having a non-judgemental attitude is almost inconceivable by us, because surely we can only respond to words that we understand, and in only responding to such words we encourage the child to mainly try to use more of these 'words'. Later on, I will try to show how communication beyond language is possible, but for the time being let me just say that, we must at least not *over-emphasise* the few and far between benefits of *language* or *communication*.

## Language, Rationality, Science, Philosophy and Faith

Many people claim that humans are 'rational animals' and because we are rational, we have developed a system of logic and our *language* stems out of this desire to be rational. Firstly, I would like to say that we are *not* rational animals but rather *rationalising* ones. We believe in what we like and do what we like and rationalise it in order to make it look as if we are smart (due to social *conditioning's*). For example, if I wanted to, I could believe that this world is nothing but a fragment of my consciousness (very commonly knows as the solipsists view) or I could believe that this is *real* and not a *play* of my consciousness. Both views are just as valid as each other. According to our current model of rationality, both views are just as rational as each other. As a consequence, I can believe either one and then *rationalise* it. Hence, it seems so obvious to me that language could not have stemmed out of rationality but rather *rationalising* things has stemmed out of language. This point is so very very obvious to me when it comes to *science and philosophy*[2]. Science fails so badly by its own standards. This is because science is all about 'finding a reason' (through experimentation) for why things happen. Because science is not based on 'rationality' but on 'the best rationalisation' we can find, science contradicts itself and *proves* itself wrong every few decades. For example, Newton said that 'light' speeds up in water whereas it is now commonly believed that it actually slows down. Moreover, ask some scientists today if light is a 'wave' or a 'particle' and the answer they will give is 'we don't know', this is because sometimes we observe light as a wave and sometimes as a particle, but by sciences own *rational* standards it *can't be both*! Some scientists also go to the extent of claiming that there is no faith[3] in science. My question to them would be "then why are you a *scientist*"?, because science *bases* its models and theories on a quark (the smallest particle known to man!). But scientists do not know anything significant about a quark, eg. they do not have a clue of what it is made up of, or how 'it' 'works' etc... surely if science was rationalistic (be its own definitions), it wouldn't base all its theories on something it knew nothing about!

No!, rationalism just won't do, we have to accept 'things' like 'faith'! Moving on to the area of philosophy, 'faith' seems to be implicitly rejected by philosophers. All they seem interested in trying is finding logic problems with arguments! This clearly explains why philosophy does not 'progress' anywhere. Again and again people have come up with *arguments* for their beliefs, and as said previously, a *philosopher* will tell you that solipsists view of life is just as valid as anyone else's, because for all we know he could be right! Philosophers seem to want to give 'arguments and *reasons*' for their beliefs, and as stated above, we are not rational animals but rationalising ones, furthermore philosophy will not find 'answers' because it is trying to put absolute things (things *beyond* words) into words and hence it fails so badly. In fact, recently I spoke to a student doing philosophy and I said to him "I do not thing language or reasons can express the absolute reality" and his answer was "what is your *reason* for saying that". This just showed me just how implicitly and explicitly philosophy is based on rationalism! I *made* up a few reasons (eg. tried to *rationalise*), just like I am making up reasons for this essay, because this essay must be written in a *language*, and if I don't give *reasons* for saying why I think language and rationality just don't have the 'answers' *then* I shall be marked down; quite paradoxical really, isn't it? I am *not claiming* that we should hold *inconsistent/irrational* beliefs, but rather that we should *transcend* the limitations of rationality and language and see the 'bigger picture'!

We can also see that since philosophy refuses (or cannot due to the *conditioned* people discussing it) to transcend language and rationality, it only succeeds in asking questions like "is yellow circular or squarish?". When you try to *argue* about such questions in *language* you get nowhere because such questions do not make sense in language. However there is a song called "Colors of the Wind" in the Walt Disney movie (and soundtrack) Pocahontas, and even though it's title is *colors* of the *wind* it still makes sense. It can be *inspirational* (due to the *music and the words*) if we do not try to rationalise it all the time. We can 'see' it and 'feel' it at a much deeper level than just language. This is something that philosophers *miss* out on because they are too preoccupied trying to rationally argue about questions, be they 'a priori' or 'empirical' types of questions!

## Language, Art, Music, Intuition and Love

Art and music I feel *transcend* some of the limitations of language. You can describe music (or art) all you like, but you miss the *essence* of it, this essence that *makes* it

*music* is *only* capable of truly expressing itself when the music is played. The whole 'feel' about the music is different when we hear it played rather than when we hear it talked about.
Intuition is one of those feelings that we have learned to *kill* because we could not express in language the reasons for our intuition. It is a pity really because intuition when 'developed' can be a very 'good' feeling! For example animals are said to be at a very high intuitive level and hence can 'smell' love, danger, etc. Pure love and joy is something that is everywhere and all around us, yet we have been taught (and learned) how to *shut it out*.

## Animals and Language

One of our most common beliefs is that animals (other than ourselves) are not as smart as us because they do not have a language and hence cannot communicate. Firstly, if animals do not abuse language (by *over-use*, like humans do) they have possibly qualities such as intuition and that (at least in my eyes) makes them at least as 'smart' if not smarter than human beings. Unfortunately when we usually measure intelligence, we firstly measure IQ etc, something *humans* made up through language anyway, secondly we tend to measure intelligence by the ability to *destroy, conquer* and *control*. We have the attitude that if we have a 'bigger gun' we must be more intelligent because we could build it, little do we realise that others might actually be smarter because not only could they build a gun, but they chose *not* to, because they could see where it would lead them! The above is a very rough analogy between humans and animals but it works okay if we think in terms of the environment.

Explaining a communication without language is very hard to do in this essay, because this essay itself is restricted to language. However, all I can say is, it seems to me that animals can communicate not only with their own species but in many cases, with the natural environment around them too.

## Meditation

The mystics discovered to method of being liberated from not just the conditioning's stated above but all conditioning's. One of the techniques used in meditation is chanting. When we chant the same word over and over again it tends to 'deconstruct' itself and then we are aware of 'the word' (the sound) rather than its *meaning* or where it *originated* from. This is only the first step however, but it will help you stop *verbalising* your thoughts all the time and then it will lead you to see the *unity* in all things rather than divide them up by giving then labels and tags. A rationalistic person might say it shows you the objective reality, however a mystic would probably never claim that. A mystic would probably give the analogy of a house. If you take away the walls (analogous to the conditioning's, such as those of language) then where is the inside and where is the outside! The distinction between inside and outside disappear, the conditioning's of subjectivity and objectivity disappear. This example shows very clearly how *transcending* rationality does not mean we hold irrational beliefs but rather we rise above them both. Language is similar to rationality in this sense, transcending language does not mean we *stop* using language, but rather it means that we *use* not *abuse* it recognising its 'limitations'.

As can be seen from the above what we need to realise is the limitation of language. Realising this is the first stop to transcending it. Once we are able to transcend at least language, we can hopefully alter our state of consciousness and being so that we can transcend 'verbal' thoughts and eventually transcend that too. If anything, I hope this essay has at least shown that our judging the intelligence of animals because of their linguistic or communicational skills is not very appropriate. Furthermore, we must not abuse language, because it is clear that we condition ourselves and limit ourselves if we do so.

Notes

[1] In this essay we will use the word language to mean 'a set of words that are used to communicate', we will *not* be referring to *body language* or *gestures* when we refer to *language*, unless specifically stated.

[2] When referring to science or philosophy I refer to them as I perceive them today, *not* as what they are as ideals. In fact in what I would perceive of as 'good' science or 'good' philosophy they would never *limit* themselves to rationality or anything!

[3] Even though faith is one of those 'feelings' that is very ineffable, I will speak about it a little bit in *hope* that maybe the reader can at least *partially* get a picture of what I mean!