DAVIDSON'S TRUTH CONDITIONS THEORY AND SCIENTIFIC REALISM

BY

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How does language refer to objective reality and relate to speakers?

Davidson's truth-conditions theory provides a method of interpretation and, notwithstanding difficulties in relating artificial languages to natural languages, articulates the true structure of all of natural language whilst simultaneously furnishing a theory of logical form.

But how does language refer to the world? Davidson's scientific realism abandons any assumed foundational basis in extra-linguistic reality; hence, reference to facts is otiose. Only via the truth-conditions structure of language can the true structure of reality be described.

From within language, reality is reconstructed as extensional reference to simultaneously-postulated entities. Yet reference to Davidson's abstracta and the internal causal structure of such events is problematic. Nevertheless, in languages of normal expressive-power, we must refer— even if it proves possible to eliminate an unwanted ontology. Convention (T), however, allows scope for alternative theories discriminating reality.

Reference to objective reality being a linguistic action, cognizance must be taken of background features of a speaker's psychological reality guiding and constraining such use. Any foundational basis is again rejected: Davidson's analysis of 'A believes that p' (etc.) abjures reference to Fregean propositions (or to sentences). Furthermore, extra-linguistic Gricean intentions are unacceptable. Only via true, structured, elements of language can the true, structured intensional and intentional elements be described.

Thus, beliefs (etc.) are analyzed within the extensional metalanguage. But Davidson's extensional reconstruction of postulated attitudes, and also reference to 'reasons' as causes, are contentious. Still, it is argued, we must refer to such independent 'reasons', despite shortcomings in Davidson's account.

Hence, reference to objective reality and the background attitudes of speakers are all reconstructed within the truth-conditions structure of language as theoretical postulations. Reality is immanent within language, but, crucially, the disclosures of its structured network of interpretants must refer to the structured, true being of a reality beyond itself.
NOTES .  4
PREFACE  5

PART ONE  LANGUAGE AND INTERPRETATION

1 INTRODUCTION  .  18
2 TRUTH CONDITIONS STRUCTURE AND LANGUAGE  :  28
3 LOGICAL FORM AND NATURAL LANGUAGE  54

PART TWO  LANGUAGE AND THE WORLD

4 REFERENCE AND OBJECTIVE REALITY  82
5 ONTOLOGY AND OBJECTIVE REALITY  118

PART THREE  LANGUAGE AND SPEAKERS

6 REFERENCE AND PSYCHOLOGICAL REALITY  158
7 ONTOLOGY AND PSYCHOLOGICAL REALITY  207

PART FOUR  LANGUAGE

8 CONCLUSIONS  254
REFERENCES  265
BIBLIOGRAPHY  305
For typographical reasons, notation of the existential quantifier follows Martin's example (Belief, Existence, and Meaning, New York 1969:32), and is printed as '(Ex)' rather than the more common inscription.
How does language, whatever its nature may be, relate to the world and to the speakers who use it? According to the myth of Orpheus, recounted in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, only through the foundational ground of language does the world take on a reality and become meaningful to man, a myth which indicates the intimate unity which was held to exist between word and object, and between word and thought, and of the power of language to extend beyond the formation of language itself to the 'creation' of a world, which was intrinsic to the earliest Greek thought. Greek philosophy, however, more or less begins with the insight that a word is only a name, and does not represent true being: the background to Plato's *Cratylus*, for instance, shows the movement away from words as representing true being, and from true knowledge as residing in human speech; the movement against ancient Greek ideas was under way, and the incommensurability of words with objects and thoughts began, with consequences for the philosophy of language down to recent times. Perhaps for the first time in almost three thousand years, there appears to have been a profound shift occurring in philosophy this century which has begun to return us to something like a linguo-centric perspective, taking us almost full-circle to seeing language once more as the foundational ground for a new-found intimacy between such a language whose nature or structure is the source of true being and a realm of physical and 'mental' reality beyond itself—this 'modern' view transformed, of course, by the newly available tools and concepts of a scientific methodology. Arguably it is in Davidson's philosophy of language that this is most clearly seen: a philosophy in which the true structure of language becomes the foundational basis and the immanent source of the true structure and being of an external physical reality and psychological reality.
If, like all the best radical positions, Davidson's philosophy of language is thoroughly traditionalist (in the real sense of this term), this thesis is specifically concerned with Davidson's truth conditions theory and scientific realism—since Davidson's aim is for a completely extensional account of language and, as with Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*, there is a close relationship between the methodology employed and the current ideas in science: in Davidson's case, with the 'Bootstrap' theory in contemporary physics. 4 Not surprisingly, therefore, Davidson's aim of achieving a totally unified theory of language according to the tenets of scientific realism makes the notion of structure central in his theory of meaning. As Quine has pointed out, 5 if we send a man into another room and have him come back and report on its contents, the selected traits of objects in that room which he is reporting upon encoded in language is a purely structural affair in the sense that there are no qualitative resemblances between the objects reported upon and the language used to report them; furthermore, the man's internal 'psychological reality' in which his knowledge of the objects consists, also bears none but structural relations to those objects. Similarly with the knowledge which an interpreter secures from the man's linguistic testimony. Hence, if the nature of external physical reality and the psychological knowledge about that reality is in terms of structure which is encoded in language and which is sharable in the manner described, investigating the structure of language must surely be our paramount concern. For this reason, this thesis makes Davidson's approach central rather than, say, the ideas of Dummett or Grice since, for reasons that will become clear, it is impossible to make the structure of language in terms of a truth conditions theory of foundational importance on the notions of these latter philosophers. Of course, in considering the relationship of the structure of language to the world and to language users, what must be in the foreground is the indicative sentence; since not all sentences are in the right mood to have truth conditions we must distinguish between imperatives and interrogatives and these indicatives, but the assumption here is that a theory of meaning comprehensive enough to take into account the various moods will nevertheless still be essentially truth-theoretical. Again, as Quine has noted, 6 Davidson's use of Tarski's truth theory should work as well for evaluative sentences
and for performatives as it does for statements of fact.

This general theme of the importance of structure, then, runs through the whole of the study, but the concentration by Davidson on this aspect leads to the specific thesis with respect to the actual relationship of the truth conditions structure of language, as Davidson construes it, to objective reality and to the psychological reality of the speakers who use that language to relate to the world. For the fundamental point which Davidson's truth conditions theory leads to is the abandonment of the notion central to 'traditional' realism of the need for a foundational basis in an extra-linguistic objective reality, and also of the notion central to many 'traditional' theories of meaning of the need for a foundational basis in an extra-linguistic psychological reality, notions which have in effect accorded to language a secondary status.

But this rejection of the concept of all dualisms between language and uninterpreted reality in many respects turns the traditional realist approaches inside out giving as it does primary importance to the structure of language in terms of the truth conditions theory, and construing objective reality and psychological reality now as a relation to language. In so doing, it is argued by some philosophers, Davidson turns away from any 'full-blooded' concept of realism, at best substituting for it an anaemic form of realism, and at worst a kind of instrumentalism which effectively ignores reality altogether. These, however, are not points of view which prove acceptable in the light of any serious study of Davidson's work.

Nevertheless, the fundamental change in perspective, with respect to 'traditional' realism and 'traditional' theories of meaning, which occurs in Davidson's move towards a unified truth conditions theory of meaning does give back to language a prominence which perhaps it has not enjoyed in our major Western tradition since before Plato.
In order to show how, despite the ensuing criticisms to be made, Davidson's ideas lead to the conclusion that for human beings language must once more be regarded as the foundational basis, the source, for the representation of true being in an extra-linguistic objective reality to which utterances refer, as well as representing the true being of those features of the psychological reality of speakers behind the use of utterances so to refer, this thesis is divided into four main parts: PART I deals with the basic evidence of linguistic behaviour confronting an interpreter, and the formulation of a suitable theory of truth for the delineation of its structure; PART II, the relationship of language to objective reality to which it is used to refer; PART III, the relationship of such a referential use of language—construed as a linguistic action—to those features of the psychological reality of language users deemed to be behind such an action; PART IV concludes with a resume of the preceding work, and a final assessment of Davidson's 'emergent' realism.

Within this broad outline, the specific chapters are concerned with the following topics:

CHAPTER ONE, following this brief PREFACE, continues with what must surely be accepted as the only suitably concrete and scientifically objective evidential basis for understanding human beings— that of uninterpreted linguistic behaviour, for what other evidence could possibly be relevant? Yet it is this exclusive concern with language itself as the sole admissible evidence which is later to have such a profound effect on Davidson's attitude towards realism, and which sets his approach apart from other philosophers, even Quine. Thus, intentional linguistic behaviour is taken to manifest what a complex organism such as the human creature is must be attempting to meaningfully communicate about the world, together with what that creature believes about the world, and as accompanied by other complex attitudes. In this, the isolation of the central core of 'sentences held true' plays a crucial role, and Davidson takes it as given that language is, as it were, 'immersed' in the realities of the world and of language users, and can be taken as manifesting relationships to both these aspects of reality. The centrality of the indicative sentence, with its strict and literal truth conditions, with respect to how people
control and manipulate reality is obvious, together with its syntactical and semantic completeness in the light of the other moods. Yet how are we to gain access to the structure of meaning and belief which is deemed to be 'keyed-into' such sentences, and which will show how such linguistic behaviour is related to the realities of the world and of the speakers who use such utterances? We must have a theory to interpret such language, and the only suitable theory for such a purpose—the one which satisfies all four desiderata Davidson lays down—is Tarski's truth conditions theory.

CHAPTER TWO describes how Davidson construes his use of Tarski's theory of truth as providing what is centrally required: the means of revealing and articulating the structure of the whole of natural language, commencing with a fragment and working outwards, together with the notion of satisfaction linking sentences and non-sentential expressions to sequences of objects in the world. Nevertheless, important difficulties lie in the way, since Tarski's Convention (T) was designed for an artificial language, and relating such ideas to natural language is problematic. Davidson's eschewal of any ultimate dualism between the two, however, enables him to maintain that the only possible 'entering-wedge' we have for exploring how the elements of a natural language are articulated is through his use of Tarski's truth conditions theory and the structure it describes. More than this, it provides us with a Theory of Logical Form.

CHAPTER THREE elaborates on the use of Davidson's truth conditions theory as the foundational basis for the articulation of structure within the whole of natural language whilst simultaneously providing the required postulated logical form. Davidson's proposal to reflect the whole of the structure of natural language in terms of first-order logical form as the real structure of language is discussed in the light of the views of philosophers who hold that we cannot refer to this as the real logical form of language, and indeed that natural language may not have any unique logical form at all. The extreme difficulty of finding the kind of predicate structure Davidson envisages within many kinds of recalcitrant discourse would seem to provide evidence for the
truth of this criticism. Yet surely, it is argued, we must refer to such a uniform structure as really existing across the whole of language as required by a systematic and general theory of meaning such as Davidson's for there to be any consistent intelligibility. Even so, Davidson's 'strong' notion of logical form in terms of ideal first-order logic though it may from certain methodological perspectives be the best means of capturing the minimum outline of communicative intelligibility needed, and building up the structure of all of natural language, is not the only option open to us; if Davidson's notion of logical form needs to be augmented, we can do so whilst still remaining within the constraints of Convention (T). Thus, whatever the outcome with respect to best kind of logical form, the fundamental point made in this chapter remains valid: that Davidson's use of Tarski's truth conditions theory provides at least one means of delineating the structure of the whole of natural language, and thus of enabling us to see natural language as a self-sustained, autonomous network of logical possibility. It also provides the foundational basis for how Davidson construes the relationship of the structure of language to objective reality and to the psychological reality of the speakers of language discussed in PART II and PART III.

CHAPTER FOUR thus opens with the question dealt with throughout PART TWO, that is, with the problem of how (from an interpreter's point of view) the sentences and sentential components of that part of the language we are concerned with, and with the kind of structure delineated in the previous chapter, can be said to relate to objective reality. It is here that Davidson's departure from the ideas of any kind of 'traditional' realism (by which is meant the philosophy, primarily, of the early Wittgenstein and Russell) or of any empiricism, (including as Davidson sees it, Quine's philosophy of language) is most evident. Contrary to such views, Davidson's truth conditions structure of language, where truth is defined in terms of satisfaction, does not require any foundational basis in an objective reality to which language (whether in terms of sentences, words and predicates or whole conceptual schemes) subserviently corresponds or which it organizes or fits, and hence all dualisms between language and uninterpreted objective reality is rejected. Although no total conceptual primacy
is given to language in the sense that its concepts need be taken as exhausting the concepts of physical reality— and indeed, on Davidson's thesis, some degree of structural reciprocity between the two is demanded— nevertheless, for us, any structured view of objective reality can only occur via the 'entering-wedge' of a structured view of language, as provided by something like Davidson's truth conditions theory. With certain reservations, it is argued that most of Davidson's ideas on these issues should be accepted; hence, in explaining how an interpreter construes how an (alien speaker's) utterances are used to refer to the world, since there is no access to any extra-linguistic objective reality, the truth conditions theory of the structure of language must provide the foundational basis for an intersubjective theory of reference, for capturing those invariant structural features within the 'over-lapping' reference schemes of speakers which are necessary to successful communication. The foundational basis in an objective reality as required by traditional realism is thus abandoned, and replaced by the intersubjectively shared truth conditions structure of language.

CHAPTER FIVE outlines how, from within the intersubjectively shared truth conditions structure of language, the direct description of a theoretically constructed objective reality is contemplated in terms of extensional reference and the simultaneous postulation of assumed entities such as events. From the point of view of the interpretative reconstruction of how a speaker's utterances meaningfully refer to objective reality, this aspect is best seen as dealing with the structural pattern and abstract entities which human beings project and impose upon objective reality—the 'operative' element and the fundamental category of language. Plainly, objective reality is immanent within language for Davidson, but is he right to hold that the structure he finds within language in terms of his abstract extensional events should also be taken to refer to the real structure of objective reality? This is discussed in the light of the negative views of many philosophers towards this. Certainly, reference to extensional events with the kind of internal structure Davidson requires is problematic, indicating perhaps that such an ontology
should be eliminated, if this is feasible. The use of substitutional quantification in this respect need not contravene Convention (T) as Davidson thought; even so, it is argued that though it may prove possible to avoid to the kind of abstract entities Davidson postulates, it seems certain that we must refer eventually. What is indicated by this discussion on ontology, however, is that, despite the many advantages of Davidson’s austere methodology, if we do need to augment his suggestions we can do so and still remain within the constraints of Convention (T): there appear, therefore, to be many more possibilities for other acceptable theories, and perhaps for other means of describing and discriminating objective reality form within a truth conditions theory. Since our first concern is with building the most unified theory of the structure of language, which must then be taken to refer to objective reality, (which of course can always refute our claims), the exact nature of the events internal to the theory is not the paramount concern. What still stands is that the truth conditions theory of the structure of language remains our intersubjectively shared foundational basis from within which we must construe reference to objective reality together with the assumed entities which may be needed. It is, however, human beings who use utterances to refer to the world, and this aspect is discussed in PART III.

CHAPTER SIX begins PART III, therefore, with the premise that the use of language to refer to objective reality is an action on the part of human speakers, an aspect of language emphasized in Anglo-Saxon philosophy by Austin, and in Continental philosophy by Merleau-Ponty. In the interpretation of intentional linguistic behaviour so used by speakers, essential reference must thus be made to certain intensional and intentional features of a speaker’s psychological reality behind such language, a complex background of attitudes deemed to guide and constrain the use of a linguistic action to refer to objective reality. Essentially, what an interpreter would like to understand is how a speaker understands the use of his words to refer to the world: what he (or she) believes his words mean, his desires, his intentions in using such words, and the decisions involved in the choice of actions. Not surprisingly, the construal of such intensional and intentional features turns out to be the
noire of scientific realism. This chapter asks the question of how, on Davidson's view, such propositional attitudes as ones expressed by the intensional 'A believes that p' are to be analysed. Davidson's truth conditions theory abjures the need for any reference to the kind of foundational, extra-linguistic intensional abstract entities such as propositions (required by Frege not only as the objects of attitudes but also to explain what it is a speaker 'grasps' in understanding a sentence, and the route to the reference of certain sentences) or of the reference to sentences. Furthermore, Davidson's theory rejects the possibility, from another angle, of any reference to extra-linguistic Gricean intentions in any foundational sense. The claim is, then, that the truth conditions theory does not need any foundational basis in psychological reality of the kind entertained by traditionally-orientated theories of meaning: hence all dualism between the truth conditions theory of language and an extra-linguistic psychological reality is eschewed. This does not, however, mean that total conceptual primacy is given to linguistic concepts in the sense that they exhaust the concepts of beliefs, intentions and the like; rather, there is some degree of reciprocity between the two. But it does mean that our understanding of any true, structured, elements in these features of psychological reality is entirely dependent upon the true, structured, elements of language as provided by something like Davidson's use of Tarski's theory of truth as an 'entering-wedge'. In this chapter, Davidson's claims about there being no access for a radical interpreter to extra-linguistic features of psychological reality seems largely vindicated. The truth conditions theory of language must therefore be considered as providing the foundational basis for capturing the invariant structural features of the over-lapping belief schemas (and other attitudes) which lie behind linguistic utterances, and which are necessary to successful communication. Any foundational basis in an extra-linguistic psychological reality as required by traditional theories of meaning is thus abandoned and replaced the intersubjectively shared truth conditions structure of language.

CHAPTER SEVEN thus goes on to consider how, from within the truth conditions theory of the structure of language, those features like beliefs, desires, intentions (and related decisions) which are part of the complex network of
The attribution of any propositional attitude to an agent must be within the framework of a theory of such an agent's beliefs, desires, intentions and decisions. Thus, for Davidson, the attribution of such intensional features as beliefs must receive an analysis from within the extensional truth conditions metalanguage, and thus becomes a matter of the analysis of the logical relations of language together with the determination of an ontology. From the point of view of an interpreter, it is necessary to credit speakers with a pattern or network of psychological attitudes behind their language in order to satisfactorily explicate such linguistic behaviour: variables to be solved for in constructing our overall theory. Clearly, the attribution of such features of psychological reality is from within language for Davidson. However, Davidson also requires that reference be made to real entities such as beliefs and desires, since such 'reasons' are deemed to be the causes of linguistic actions. Both Davidson's extensional reconstruction of beliefs and other attitudes, and also the notion of reference to reasons as causes receive a great deal of criticism from various philosophers. Whether Davidson's truth conditions theory can offer a satisfactory extensional account of sentences attributing propositional attitudes is so far unclear; the second issue of reference to reasons as causes is also problematic, though it does seem we must refer to independent antecedent reasons as causes. Nevertheless, shortcomings were revealed in Davidson's account of how agents arrive at their reasons for action, but there are also difficulties with the alternatives suggested. What remains the case is that the truth conditions theory of the structure of language seems to be the only suitable foundational basis from within which to reconstruct those features of the psychological reality of speakers behind their linguistic actions.

CHAPTER EIGHT, PART IV, summarizes the main issues of the previous chapters, and offers some conclusions. It also, in answering the original question— from the perspective of Davidson's truth conditions theory and the tenets of scientific realism— of what it is from an interpreter's point of view about the nature of the utterances of other speakers which allows them to be construed as
referring to an extra-linguistic objective reality, and how such utterances relate to the speakers who so use them, returns to the starting point of the enquiry. For, in CHAPTER ONE, linguistic behaviour was seen to be the only really scientifically objective and concrete evidence available to an interpreter and now the conclusion is that language itself is the very source from within which the objective reality being referred to by the utterances of a speaker, together with those features of the psychological reality of a speaker behind his linguistic action of referring, and which guide and constrain such an action, must be theoretically reconstructed. Since any foundational basis in an extra-linguistic objective reality or psychological reality as required by traditional realism or traditional theories of meaning is untenable, Davidson's truth conditions theory of language (or something like it) inevitably becomes the intersubjectively shared foundational basis from within which the invariant structural features of reference, belief, desire and intention (plus decision) must be reconstructed. An interpreter, in redescribing a speaker's utterances as meaningfully referring to objective reality has to construe such reference and simultaneous postulation of abstract entities from within the truth conditions theory of language; similarly, the attribution by an interpreter of the necessary background of the complex network of psychological reality must also be in terms of the truth conditions theory of language. Since the truth conditions structure of language determines both objective reality and psychological reality in this way, reality, for us, is linguistic reality. Nevertheless, though reality must be considered immanent within the structural network of language, it has also been shown that the disclosures of language also refer to a real external reality.

As mentioned at the beginning of this PREFACE, therefore, language once more becomes the foundational source of true being to be found in the realm of a physical and psychological reality beyond itself. Historically, perhaps it is not surprising that we have followed this cyclical path to once more accepting language as our foundational basis of reality: having rejected the Divine as the source of transcendant meaning, closely followed by Nature, Progress, and Marxism, being ousted for failing to provide the fundamental human need for
some kind of foundational basis, man seems to be returning to the source closest at hand for a solution to our cultural crises of meaninglessness. Let us hope that language, as the last bastion of meaning, will not fail us.
PART ONE

LANGUAGE AND INTERPRETATION
1.1 Language as Evidence and a Theory of Truth

The goal of semantics, the central task of a theory of meaning is, for Davidson, to show how it is possible for the speakers of a language to 'effectively determine the meaning or meanings of an arbitrary expression' \(^1\), as such an expression occurs within a given context and as uttered by a particular speaker. This immediately pinpoints the problem for the radical interpreter, since the basic evidence, the sole evidence, with which he or she is confronted and upon which a theory is to be formulated is that of hitherto uninterpreted intentional linguistic behaviour, \(^2\) (as a part of behaviour in general). It further reveals the eminently scientific and objective nature of Davidson's enterprise, following as it does Quine's dictum that the only acceptable evidence is to be utterances of words 'out where we can see and hear them' and which are thus 'accessible to human science'. \(^3\) - surely a correct observation, since what other evidence can there be which would be more relevant; as Davidson notes in another context, such a standpoint, as rooted in language, is 'as objective as can be.' \(^4\) And it is this exclusive concern with language itself which is to have such a profound effect on Davidson's attitude towards realism, an attitude which sets his approach apart from that of many other philosophers, including, ultimately, even that of Quine. \(^5\)

It is this intentional linguistic behaviour, then, which is taken to manifest simultaneously and- apart from the formal and empirical constraints which the interpreter places upon it- indissolubly, what a complex organism such as the human creature is must be attempting to meaningfully communicate about the world, together with what that creature believes about the world, and accompanied by other complex attitudes and feelings.
In more general terms, what the radical interpreter is doing is observing the production of sounds (or inscriptions) in a given context by a particular speaker, behaviour which is obviously playing a strikingly important role for such a creature, and, as part of the theory which we wish to develop in order to explain this expression of complex behaviour we must assume the observed sounds (or inscriptions) to meaningfully refer to the world, while as part of our attribution to such a speaker of a human mind we must also attribute to him or her a complicated structure of beliefs, desires, intentions and the like. In Davidson's terminology, a theory of interpretation allows us to re-describe the utterance of sounds as acts of saying. Without such basic concessions it is hard to see how any start towards intelligently interpreting linguistic behaviour can be made. How this is to be achieved by Davidson, and to what extent it can be considered successful is a matter for later consideration; here it is necessary only to establish that the sole ground for such theorizing according to Davidson's programme is the observed linguistic behaviour said to manifest a certain structure of meaning about the world, together with a complex structure of psychological attitudes towards the world.

However, it is not just language in general which can be taken to provide the specifically semantical evidential base which Davidson demands and which is taken to manifest such a meaning and attitudes: not only is the focus of Davidson's project exclusively on linguistic behaviour, but he earmarks as crucial in this respect the central core of sentences held true — although in very recent work, Davidson has altered his position somewhat on this issue. Thus, in most of his papers to date Davidson has maintained that 'In order to interpret verbal behaviour, we must be able to tell when a speaker holds a sentence he speaks to be true.' and that such sentences are 'held to be true partly because of what is believed, and partly because of what the speaker means by his words.' (other attitudes also being involved, as Davidson makes clear elsewhere). In Davidson's view, the basis for a theory of meaning would begin with plausible guesses about what sentences a speaker holds true: without any detailed knowledge about what such sentences mean, or about what the speaker believes about the world, we can nevertheless, says Davidson, find it plausible
that 'X holds S to be true'. The idea being, then, that the interpreter makes as many good guesses as he can about the conditions under which speakers hold sentences to be true, and proceed on this basis to construct a theory of meaning. It is the isolation of this group of sentences which is to enable us to get our translation manual under way, and it is plain that here, too, Davidson, in depending on the notion of 'sentences held true' is following Quine who, in developing his own theory of radical translation, also depended on the idea of simple assent. Certainly, it would seem that the most secure linguistic data upon which to build a theory of meaning - because it is the least theoretically loaded - is assent-dissent behaviour, the means by which we isolate the sentences held true; nevertheless, whether this particular group of sentences is in fact so readily isolatable as Davidson and Quine appear to assume is not clear, and has been questioned by some philosophers. (See also CHAPTER SIX).

1.2 Abstraction of Linguistic Behaviour From Context and Speaker

Assuming that the isolation of sentences held true is feasible, Davidson, like any good scientist has isolated the basic evidence in conjunction with which he is to develop his theory. Such objectivity is of course commendable since such a starting point seems to provide the most scientifically objective means of cutting through the plethora of detail from the jungle of data which confronts the would-be radical interpreter. For example, the sheer complexity of elements at work in the observed structure of sound itself: the various degrees of intonation, inflexion and tone; the battery of perceptual and physical detail emanating from the extra-linguistic context in which the utterance is produced; the immense richness of the psychological factors within individual speakers deemed to issue in the utterance. All these features are apparently variable in countless ways, and could be construed as interacting in various configurations to produce the linguistic behaviour with which the interpreter is concerned. Taking such extra-linguistic features as essential factors in a theory of meaning, as some traditionally-orientated approaches have done, and some contemporary philosophers still wish to do, leads, as will be seen, only to frustration. Apart from all the difficulties which Davidson perhaps skates over too
readily with respect to isolating the sentences held true, it will be assumed that this approach is indeed the most scientific and objective starting point possible. In fact, though Davidson's perspective may seem, in the process it adopts of abstracting from the extra-linguistic contextual and psychological factors and concentrating on the central core of language as the only admissible evidence, to be ignoring such features and placing an unwarranted conceptual primacy on language, this is not so. Of course, there is a radical change of perspective involved if one compares Davidson's approach with traditional theories of meaning: it is taken as given that the linguistic behaviour under consideration is the resultant of the interaction of all these various extra-linguistic contextual and psychological forces; certainly the mystery of how they interact to produce true sentences is left unexplained (perhaps because ultimately it is unexplicable, or at least not the concern of the semantic theorist). Rather, we go straight to the 'resultant' of these forces—the language produced—and, in particular, to that core of sentences held true, immersed, as it were, in the contextual and psychological features which surround and have produced it. (See CHAPTER TWO, section 2.2). And, in so doing, we are going immediately to the heart of the most concrete evidence available. Naturally, it also puts Davidson in conflict with the more traditional theories of meaning which take it for granted in many cases that the extra-semantic features have a much more basic foundational role to play, and that an explanation of how language ties up with such features must be forthcoming. Indeed, one of the major criticisms levelled against Davidson is that his concentration on the structure of the sentences of language fails to explicate adequately certain needed connections betweenlanguage and extra-linguistic reality; needless to say at this stage, Davidson holds that his approach which places sentences held true as the centre 'reality' need not fall prey to such criticisms.

1.3 The Centrality of the Indicative

The central core of sentences held true, which Davidson believes to be easily isolatable, is thus taken to be the central fragment for investigation by
our theory: even though of course 'most sentences are not true,' nevertheless 'the pattern of sentences held true is central.'¹⁷ For Davidson 'Communication by language is communication by way of literal meaning;'¹⁸ hence the importance of sentences with strict and literal truth conditions. But why should we take this category of sentences as basic? Although Davidson does not go into any detail about this, it is plainly because it seems difficult to comprehend a plausible account of a language—of the sounds and inscriptions produced—which does not see many of them, a central core, as having a truth value. Perhaps from the position of a radical interpreter, some kind of rationalization could proceed as follows. In certain cases it is the non-human reality which concerns speakers, and about which they wish to communicate to others.¹⁹ To do so, certain sentences are uttered by a speaker— and are treated by the hearer—as a guide to that reality; furthermore, the speaker is taken to have beliefs and other attitudes about reality behind the use of such sentences. The point about the utterances in this special case being that the speaker has information about the reality, and attitudes towards that reality, which he wishes to (literally) communicate. The (radical) interpreter seeks to explain the behaviour of the speaker with whom he is confronted, and does so by tentatively assigning truth values to these utterances, and beliefs about their truth-values; in other words, the radical interpreter starts by observing the production of sounds (for example), and semantic theorizing begins when some of these are taken as true or false, meaningfully referring to the world, as well as reflecting the thoughts, beliefs and other attitudes of the speaker.²⁰ We thus have a great practical interest in establishing which of our neighbours sentences are held true, not least perhaps because the more we are able to interpret and understand such sentences about the world, the better our chances of acting and surviving in the world: people have an interest in controlling and manipulating the reality outside themselves, and, insofar as this is feasible, and in order to satisfy their various beliefs, needs and aims, language—and especially the sentences held true—have a significant role to play. It seems a plausible assumption, therefore, that in attempting to render linguistic communication intelligible, a central and uneliminable role should be accorded to the notion of the strict and literal truth conditions.
meaning of sentences. Thus, if, with Davidson, we are to base our semantics on truth conditions, we are bound to accord a central position in such a semantics to the indicative mood. (Relativized to time and speaker—see CHAPTER TWO.)

Clearly, of course, as Davidson recognizes, not all utterances are assertions and indeed, most sentences are not even in the indicative mood: yet there are, independent of the reasons given above, plenty of good motivations for treating the indicative as primary— an emphasis prevalent in the majority of theories of meaning. The indicative does seem to have a syntactic, semantic and communicative completeness which the other moods lack, and which therefore invites the thought that the common element in a semantic theory will be these indicatives. And, though by the usual standards, neither questions, nor optatives, nor imperatives have truth values, Davidson does offer an analysis of how the non-indicative utterances in the different moods can be accommodated by a theory of meaning which takes the literal, truth conditions meaning as central: such an accommodation being accomplished, for Davidson, by extending his proposals for tackling indirect quotation and other propositional attitudes. Whether this proposal is in itself adequate is open to question, and is considered in CHAPTER SEVEN.

Notwithstanding this latter problem, however, it nevertheless seems justifiable, for the reasons given above concerning matters of cutting through the plethora of detail awaiting the radical interpreter, and the importance to speakers of communicating literal meaning, that a primary importance should be given to the central core of sentences held true, and to indicative sentences. It will thus be assumed here that Davidson's starting point is the most scientifically objective and precise one possible, and that Davidson's project is in essence viable—though the use of truth conditions as a central concept for the theory of meaning will later be questioned. For the present, however, it is necessary only to establish that the focus of Davidson's programme is exclusively on linguistic behaviour, and crucial to this is his concentration on the central fragment of sentences held true and which are taken to manifest a structure of a speaker's meaning and belief (plus other attitudes) and which, with their strict and literal truth conditions is the basis for the truth conditions theory itself.
Davidson's procedure is thus to construct a theory of truth, according to certain constraints to be specified, solely on the basis of—or in conjunction with—the linguistic data, the sentences held true; a theory of truth which will enable us to simultaneously reconstruct the joint manifestation of meaning and belief (and other attitudes) within this central core of sentences. The problem of interpretation is therefore, given that we have isolated the sentences held true within a certain context and by a particular speaker, to work out what that speaker's words mean, together with what that speaker believes, together with other related attitudes. Furthermore, the interpretation of even a single arbitrary utterance with which we are assuming we are confronted (1.1) is deemed to require the ability to interpret the whole of a language: 'the evidence for the interpretation of a particular utterance will have to be evidence for the interpretation of all the utterances of a speaker or community.' The construction of such a theory will thereby provide a rational and coherent explanation of the pattern of the linguistic behaviour with which we are confronted, since 'We interpret a creature as rational insofar as we are able to view his actions as part of this overall rational pattern comprizing his meaning and belief.' (and other attitudes.) Thus, our problem may be summarized as concerned with constructing a suitable theory of truth which will enable us simultaneously to abstract form the total evidence of linguistic behaviour available, a theory of meaning, plus a theory of belief and other relevant attitudes.

But what kind of a theory of truth would be suitable for such a task? One of the chief merits of Davidson's approach, and one which again indicates his adherence to the tenets of objectivity and scientific realism, is the precision with which he lays down **FOUR DESIDERATA** as methodological criteria for a truth conditions theory of meaning. Before constructing a semantic theory, we must say what it is we want it to do; the criteria which Davidson lays down lead him eventually to equate his own requirements with a Tarski-style truth theory—though, as will be seen, Davidson's approach is not tied directly to
the Tarskian model. Davidson's desiderata should be considered in the light of the aim of his overall programme, the task of a theory of meaning being, as he sees it, not to reform, but to describe and to understand natural language. 28

The four desiderata which Davidson lays down are:

1. **Recursion**: The primary demand on a theory of meaning is that it be recursive. 29 It must show how the sentences of a language L are semantically compounded from the finite stock of L's words by means of L's rules for combining these words.

2. **Holism**: A theory of meaning must enable us to 'give the meaning' of each and every sentence of the natural language L we are studying. 30

3. **Same Concepts**: It must ensure that the statements of how the sentences of L mean is based on the same stock of concepts as L's sentences themselves. 31

4. **Empirical Testability**: The theory of meaning must be empirically testable. 32

The most important of these desiderata is that of recursion; next in importance is that of holism. The remaining two are explicated in a somewhat more vague manner by Davidson, (at least in his early papers). All four are dealt with, as they relate to Tarski's theory of truth, in the next chapter, which shows how these requirements lead Davidson to accept such a truth conditions theory. For the present it will be noted that none of these criteria is particularly controversial; what is more open to dispute, as will be seen, is whether Tarki's theory of truth will satisfy them with respect to natural language. But perhaps it is pertinent at this stage to mention the kind of truth theory which is required for his descriptive enterprise. Plainly, the specific interest is not in any metaphysical definition of truth; 33 Davidson's starting point is the claim that our basic data is the uninterpreted (intentional) linguistic behaviour in the form of sentences held true. The interpretation of these
is to proceed by stating their truth conditions; what is required, therefore, of a theory of truth is a descriptive account of the notion of truth: what it means to say that the various conditions are jointly necessary and sufficient for the truth of sentences. 34

Plausible candidates for this role include—initially, at least—Ramsay’s Redundancy Theory. 35 Many variants of Ramsay’s theory have also been proposed, such as Grover’s Prosentential Theory. 36 Kripke, too, has sketched an Outline of a Theory of Truth. 37 All, however, appear to encounter crucial difficulties. Ramsay’s theory itself comes down to saying that ‘true’ and ‘false’ are in fact predicates which can be dropped without semantic loss, since they have only a stylistic or pragmatic role to play. Beneath this, on the surface, simple notion, however, lay profound difficulties. Specifically, Ramsay’s account demands a suitable handling of second-order quantification for cases where propositions are described: in cases where what is asserted is not explicitly given but is introduced obliquely. 38 Ramsay’s proposal here was that, for example, ‘What he says is always true’ is to be explained as ‘For all p, if he asserts p, then p’—which contains no use of ‘true’. However, now the question arises as to whether the universal quantifier ‘for all...’ is to be understood objectually or substitutionally. (See CHAPTER FIVE.) If it is understood objectually, then it looks as though propositions may have to be retained as the objects quantified over— and this is explicitly rejected by Davidson. (See CHAPTER SEVEN) And also, if the bound variables, the ‘p’s’, are syntactically like singular terms (See CHAPTER FOUR), then the final ‘p’ in ‘for all p, if he asserts p, then p’ will have to be regarded as an ellipsis of ‘p is true’, as implicitly containing a predicate, in order for it to be sufficiently like a sentence to stand on the right-hand-side of ‘then’: for all propositions p, if he asserts p, then p is true’. Yet if this analysis contains the predicate ‘is true’ after all, then truth has not in fact been eliminated, and thus is not redundant. Furthermore, if the quantifier is interpreted substitutionally, then ‘for all p, if he asserts p, then p’ turns into ‘all substitution instances of ‘if he asserts p, then p’ are true’ Again, ‘true’ remains in the analysis, and thus has not been eliminated.

The Ramsay Redundancy Theory of truth therefore seems less than plausible,
with its suggestion that truth is eliminable; neither, however, do the various alternatives mentioned earlier seem to suffice. Grover, for example, readily admits that there is also a residue of truth in his analysis. As for Kripke, Katz criticizes his theory of truth on the grounds that though it offers an account of groundedness for an artificial language, there seems to be no obvious way in which the account can be applied to natural languages.

If this is so, and if truth refuses to be redundant, Ramsay's theory and the variants of this theory only pointing the way to a more satisfactory theory of truth, then we must look elsewhere for a solution. The one which turns out to satisfactorily meet Davidson's requirements is in fact Tarski's Convention (T). And it is to such a truth conditions theory, one meeting the four desiderata Davidson laid down as the methodological criteria for a suitable theory of meaning, to which we now turn in the next chapter.
2.1 The Role of the Truth Conditions Theory

For Davidson, a truth conditions theory along the lines advocated by Tarski, suffices to delineate the structure of natural language. ¹

CHAPTER ONE showed, in fact, that such a truth conditions theory, one meeting the four desiderata Davidson laid down as the methodological criteria for a suitable theory of meaning, was the best and possibly the only viable theory of the truth structure of sentences. But Tarski's theory of truth was designed for a formalized language, and, as will be seen, though there are similarities between an artificial language and natural language, plainly, there are also important differences. Such differences make the idea of any simple notion of correspondence between an artificial language and natural language problematic; for some philosophers, there is a kind of dualism between any artificial language and natural language, an unbridgeable gulf between the two which, because of the recalcitrance of natural language, makes them seek to replace it entirely by its formal counterpart. Such a conceptual predominance cannot be accorded to artificial languages on Davidson's approach, for whom the task is to understand natural language itself and the reality of its impervious features, and even though ultimately Davidson rejects the notion of any dualism between the two. There is, indeed, a kind of reciprocity between the demands of a formal and a natural language on Davidson's thesis, but what is insisted upon is that for us the only possible 'entering-wedge' that we have for exploring how the elements of natural language are articulated is via something like Tarski's truth conditions structure. In this way, the truth conditions theory becomes Davidson's foundational basis for delineating the structure of the whole of natural language, and provides an intersubjectively available theory of logical form. ²
The archetype for Davidson's theory of meaning is Tarski's theory of truth, though, as will be seen, Davidson does not, and cannot, follow Tarski in everything. Ultimately, the value of Tarski's theory lies, for Davidson, in the fact that it enables him to reveal and articulate structure within the whole of natural language, beginning with a fragment of that language and working outwards. Tarski provides Davidson with a paradigm in terms of an analysis of the formal semantical treatment of quantificational language which, Davidson hopes, with amendments, will be applicable to ordinary language. The initial task in this chapter is therefore to examine the means by which Tarski delineates structure in a formal language, and then to see how this links up with the requirements given by Davidson's four desiderata considered in the last chapter.

Tarski's purpose is to provide a satisfactory theory of truth for a formalized language. He begins his account with the objective of finding a definition of truth which is both materially adequate and formally correct, and which would do justice to the 'classical Aristotelian conception of truth.' In order to prohibit self-reference of sentences which can occur in semantically closed languages, and which can lead to paradox, Tarski drew an object language-meta language distinction. Ascriptions of truth to sentences is metalinguistic: truth is construed as a predicate of a metalinguage applicable to sentences of its object language. Furthermore, sentences can only be true or false as they are part of a certain language, for there could be a language in which, say, 'snow is black' means the same as 'snow is white' does in English.

Thus Tarski wishes to give a definition of 'true sentence' for a certain language $L$, in a metalinguage $M$ of $L$. It will entail all sentences of $M$ of the form 'S is a true sentence of $L$ if and only if $p$' -- where 'S' is a structural description of a sentence of $L$, and '$p$' is the translation of that sentence into $M$. And, since $M$ can include $L$ as a part of itself, sentences of $L$ are their own translation into $M$. Tarski's definition entailing sentences of this form is his criterion of material adequacy for any satisfactory definition of truth, and is called 'Convention (T). Hence, any acceptable definition of truth should have as its consequence according to Tarski all instances of the schema
an example being 'Snow is white'is true in English if and only if snow is white.

But, in order to give such a definition of truth, something more needs to be added to the material adequacy condition: proof of formal correctness, both in respect to the structure of the language in which truth is defined, and also the concepts employed in the definition. Definitions of truth, as noted, are given in L's metalanguage M, thus L must be included in or translated into M; but not only must M contain translations into itself of all L-sentences, but also the machinery to refer to L-sentences. Finally, and very importantly for our later discussion, Tarski required that both M and L should be 'formally specifiable': the well-formed-formulae ('wffs') of L must be so specified in order to define truth-in-L, since these are the very items which the predicate 'true-in-L' qualifies. However, since no natural language is formally specifiable, Tarski concluded that a formally correct definition of truth should be expressed in a language which is not semantically closed— that is, for an artificial language only, and that the possibility of defining 'true' for a natural language was virtually impossible: 'The problem of the definition of truth obtains a precise meaning and can be solved in a rigorous way only for those languages whose structure has been exactly specified.' In his original paper, Tarski's 'object' language was the calculus of classes and he used a version of the axioms of Principia Mathematica; Quine's account, which follows Tarski in all essentials, has been more generally followed by various philosophers, with a definition of truth for an object language with first-order calculus. Furthermore, Tarski's actual defining of truth is by means of the recursive characterization of the infinity of sentences by means of satisfaction; thus he must first define 'satisfies':

The possibility suggests itself, however, of introducing a more general concept which is applicable to any sentential function, can be recursively defined, and, when applied to sentences, leads us directly to the concept of truth. These requirements are met by the notion of the satisfaction of a given sentential function by given objects.
The procedure is therefore that we axiomatically define satisfaction, which stands to open sentences (sentential functions, or predicates) as truth stands to closed sentences, and then use that axiomatization to define the truth-predicate itself.

Specifying the syntax of the object language \( L \), and then that of the meta language \( M \) is thus the first step:

**Syntax**

The syntactic structure of the language \( L \), for which truth is to be defined includes the expressions:

variables: \( x_1, x_2, x_3 \ldots \)

predicate letters: \( F, G \ldots \)

sentence connectives: \( -; & \)

quantifier: \( (E...) \)

brackets: \( ( ) \)

In terms of this primitive vocabulary, the other truth-functions and the universal quantifier can be defined. The atomic sentences are strings consisting of \( n \)-place predicates followed by \( n \) variables:

(1) All atomic sentences are well-formed formulae (wffs)

(11) If \( A \) is a wff, \( \neg A \) is a wff

(111) If \( A, B \) are wffs, \( A \& B \) is a wff

(1V) If \( A \) is a wff, \( (\exists x)A \) is a wff

(V) Nothing else is a wff

The syntactic structure of the meta language \( M \) is similarly defined.

The recursive characterization of sentences by means of **satisfaction**, on which basis truth is defined,

**Satisfaction and Truth**

A full discussion of this will prove vital when Davidson's position on realism
and the relationship of language to the world is considered (Part II) at present, an outline of Tarski's formulation is given. The definition of satisfaction is recursive: definitions being given first for the simplest open sentences, and then the conditions are stated in which compound open sentences are satisfied; this procedure will then provide the necessary definition of truth applicable to all sentences of L.

**Satisfaction**

Let A and B range over sentences of our first-order language, and let the expressions X and Y range over sequences of objects, letting the expression $X_i$ denote the i th member of any sequence X. Satisfaction is then defined for atomic sentences thus:

1. For 1-place predicates,
   
   for all i and X: X satisfies $F_{X_i}$ iff $X_i$ is F

2. For 2-place predicates,
   
   for all i and X: X satisfies $G_{X_iX_j}$ iff $X_i$ and $X_j$ stand in the relation G

And so on for all predicates. Negation, conjunction, and quantification are dealt with similarly:

3. For all X and A: X satisfies $\neg A$ iff X does not satisfy A

4. For all X, A, and B: X satisfies $A \land B$ iff X satisfies A and X satisfies B

5. For all X, A, and i: X satisfies $\exists x_i A$ iff there is a sequence Y such that $X_i$ is Y for all i except i, and Y satisfies A.

Each clause in the definition of satisfaction thus corresponds to a clause in the definition of a wff. A closed sentence (a wff with no free variables) will be satisfied by all sequences or by none. Hence, 'true' can now be defined thus: a closed sentence of the first-order object language is true if and only if it is satisfied by all sequences. Tarski has therefore shown that his definition of 'true' is both materially adequate and formally correct. Some care has been taken in elaborating the details since they are central to all the ideas in Davidson with which this thesis will be concerned.
Earlier in Chapter One it was stated that Davidson's two primary desiderata for a theory of meaning were those of recursion and holism. It is now possible to see how Tarski's Convention (T) as a criteria for suitable theories of truth meets Davidson's requirements in this direction. ^

The primary demand on a theory of meaning, one which Davidson emphasizes continually, is to give a recursive characterization of sentence-hood: 'Above all, I would say, such an account must lead us to see the semantic character of the sentence—its truth or falsity—as owed to how it is composed, by a finite number of applications of some of a finite number of devices that suffice for the language as a whole, out of elements drawn from a finite stock (the vocabulary) that suffices for the language as a whole.' 12 And, Davidson makes clear, 'A way to provide such a theory is by recursively characterizing a truth predicate along the lines suggested by Tarski' 13—a way which we have just seen demonstrated. One of the crucial reasons Davidson says, for this requirement that the meaning of each sentence of \( L \) depends on a finite number of constitutive features of the sentence, is that a language which lacks such a feature would be unlearnable. 14 Also, the claim that, as shown by Tarski's theory of truth, that the meaning of each sentence depends on the meaning of the constitutive words, is deemed to be an essential element in explicating the ability to construct and to understand sentences never before encountered: from \( L \)'s finite stock of words, (and the rules governing their combination) an infinite number of sentences can be generated and understood by \( L \)'s speakers. (See PART III, CHAPTER SIX, section 2.) Thus, it can be seen that the desideratum of recursion is important from a number of angles for Davidson's thesis. The question of the finiteness of a theory is important since, if the number of non-logical axioms were not finite—if we took as axioms of the theory every instance of 'S is true iff \( p \)'—then desideratum 1 would be violated. A finite, basic, vocabulary must be discoverable in the verbal phenomena to be interpreted for a theory to be useful to a human being with finite powers. And the finite, recursive characterization of sentence-hood is crucial from the perspectives of learnability and understanding. Though these aspects receive detailed discussion in PART III, it is pertinent to mention here that this is not a point of view which is shared by all philosophers: for example, it has been questioned whether the learning
process does in fact require a recursive theory of the kind demanded by Davidson and his theory of truth. 15

Closely related to these issues are the criticisms of Davidson's (and Quine's) contention that though Tarski's recursive, compositional account relies heavily on the fact that words contribute in a systematic way to the truth conditions of sentences, in terms of meaning and semantic structure, it is sentences which take priority in communication. Quine, for example, has said:

The unit of communication is the sentence and not the word. This point of semantical theory was long obscured by the undeniable primacy, in one respect, of words. Sentences being limitless in number and words limited, we necessarily understand most sentences by construction from antecedently familiar words. Actually there is no conflict here. We can allow the sentences a full monopoly of 'meaning' in some sense, without denying that the meaning must be worked out. Then we can say that knowing words is knowing how to work out the meanings of sentences containing them. Dictionary definitions are mere clauses in a recursive definition of the meanings of sentences. 16

Similarly, Davidson regards it as the task of a theory of meaning to analyse the structure of sentences, and not to supply an account of the meaning of individual words:

...we have recognized that a theory of the kind proposed leaves the whole matter of what individual words mean exactly where it was. Even when the metalanguage is different from the object language, the theory exerts no pressure for improvement, clarification, or analysis of individual words. 17

In fact, as will be seen in Part II, words become for Davidson, controversially, mere posits of the truth conditions theory.

Yet again, the matter has been disputed by other philosophers. For instance Putnam has argued that naming is the most fundamental function of natural language, and that Davidson's and Quine's method runs counter both to
Intuition and to the actual practice of anthropologists: 'It is noteworthy that
the procedure that Quine and Davidson claim is the only possible one...going from
whole sentences to individual words is the opposite of the procedure upon which
every success ever attained in the study of natural language has been based.'

Active learning, Putnam also stresses, starts from the meanings of individual
words. (See PART II).

Dummett, too, has disputed the primacy of sentences over words, though he
seems more recently to have qualified his earlier position. Initially he says
'Though it is certainly true of some words that (1) we can learn their sense only
by learning the use of representative sentences containing them, conversely (11)
there are some sentences ...which we understand only by already knowing the
meanings of the constituent words.' Yet more recently he admits 'in a
certain sense...sentences have a primacy within language over other linguistic
expressions.' and Dummett alludes to Frege's 'insight that sentences play a
unique role and that the role of almost every other linguistic expression...
consists in its part in forming sentences.'

Another area where much has been made of the primacy of words over sentences
is in psychology: for many psychologists, the fundamental linguistic act seems
to be that of naming, rather than the communication of meaning. And, as for
Putnam, mentioned above, learning itself is linked in a basic way to this
fundamental linguistic act of naming. This, of course, brings into focus the
whole issue of traditional views on language learning. Although it is not neces­s­
ary nor possible to go into all the issues here, it is clear that both Quine
and Davidson, with their claims that sentences are primary in semantics, stand
opposed to such traditional views on how language is learned. (Even though there
are remnants of empiricism, on which traditional theories of language learning
are based, still present in Quine's own philosophy of language, and which prove
unacceptable to Davidson—see CHAPTER FOUR.)

As far as these traditional theories of language learning are concerned,
and which focus on the primacy of words and how they are linked to the world as
the basis of the first stages of language learning, building up bit by bit from
such a position, this approach is castigated by Davidson as the 'building-block
theory of language learning' which echoes empiricist epistemology.
Empiricism has no place in Davidson's philosophy of language. Learning a few names and predicates applying to physical objects through a process involving ostension, followed by the learning of complex predicates and singular terms for objects not necessarily observed, followed in turn by the learning of theoretical terms, together with the enormous jump from individual terms to sentences, is rejected by Davidson.

On these matters, there are both similarities and differences between Davidson and Quine. Certainly, the recognition that sentences are primary in language learning rather than words, is central to Quine's thesis. In publications such as *Word and Object* and *The Roots of Reference*, Quine adumbrates his position. Simply, language, for Quine, is learned by conditioning: the teacher conditions the child to respond in appropriate observable situations. First, the learning of short sentences takes place, and then access to various words is gained through their use in those sentences. On such a basis, comes the grasp of longer sentences in which those same words recur. The development which leads from sensory stimulation to objective reference is thus seen as beginning with the conditioning of simple 'occasion' sentences to stimulatory events, and then advancing through various stages to objective reference itself, the attainment of the latter Quine regards as having occurred when the learner has mastered predication by way of quantification.

It is not the purpose here to consider the opposition to Quine's views - for instance, Strawson's criticism of Quine's dictum that the whole category of singular terms is theoretically superfluous, or Davidson's disagreement with what he sees as Quine's misplaced empiricism, since these aspects receive substantial attention later: the only point to be made at present is that, despite some contrary opinions, the requirement that in matters of communication and learning sentences are, semantically, of prior importance to words, is endorsed by a great many philosophers. Not only as might be expected by Quine as indicated above, but also by those of very diverse persuasions. Vygotsky, for example, echoes Quine: 'Semantically, a child starts from wholes, from a meaningful complex, and only later begins to master the separate semantic units, the meanings of words...'; Austin also mounted a lively attack on the idea that word meaning is basic, regarding the
The concept 'the meaning of a word' as 'in general...a dangerous nonsense-phrase!'
Grice, too, hardly Davidson's bedfellow, gives predominance to sentences over words. Enough has been said, therefore to indicate that over the matter of the primacy of sentences over words and the associated issue of the need for a recursive theory, there is a substantial body of philosophical opinion in support of Davidson; just how these two ideas stand up to testing will be revealed in PARTS 11 and 111.

Davidson's second desideratum requires that a theory of meaning should be holistic, a requirement again met by Tarski's Convention (T). A theory of meaning for a natural language should, for Davidson, yield all sentences of the form 's means m', where 's' is a description of a sentence which specifies its structure, and 'm' is an expression which denotes that sentence's meaning. However, an appeal to the notion of 'meaning' is, Davidson contends, problematic, and so Davidson comes to reformulate his original equation, and its amended substitution 's means that p' by replacing 'means that' by an arbitrary predicate 'T', giving 's is T iff p': 'The theory will have done its work if it provides, for every sentence s in the language under study, a matching sentence (to replace"p") that, in some way yet to be made clear, "gives the meaning" of s.' If the object language is contained in the metalanguage, then one candidate for a matching sentence is obviously 's' itself; if not, a translation of 's' in the metalanguage. But it is Davidson's 'final bold step' which is the most radical: 'let us try treating the position occupied by "p" extensionally: to implement this, sweep away the obscure "means that", provide the sentence that replaces "p" with a proper sentential connective, and supply the description that replaces "s" with its own predicate.' If this is done, maintains Davidson, 'the plausible result is

\[ (T) \ s \text{ is } T \text{ if and only if } p \]

Thus, what is needed for a theory of meaning for a natural language L is that it places restrictions on the predicate 'is T' sufficient to entail that all the sentences of the above form (T) can be derived. But we have now, thinks Davidson, reached 'the point of discovery' since 'the condition we have placed
on satisfactory theories of meaning is in essence Tarski's Convention T that tests the adequacy of a formal semantical definition of truth. Thus, the predicate 'is T' mentioned by Davidson in the constraint on a theory of meaning will be co-extensive with the truth predicate proposed by Tarski; it will apply to all and only, the true sentences of the language L. As Davidson indicates elsewhere, 'since there is a T-sentence corresponding to each sentence of the language for which truth is in question, the totality of T-sentences exactly fixes the extension, among the sentences, of any predicate that plays the role of the words "is true".' Of course, Davidson thesis comes down to saying what is not exactly new: namely that the meaning of a sentence is to be given by stating its truth conditions. But the major difference is the one indicated above, that is, with the added muscle of Tarski-style constraints, the truth conditions of all sentences are given. We would then know not only the T-sentence for any particular sentence to be interpreted, but the T-sentences for all other sentences; such a theory is non-trivial, and would enable us to see the place of any particular sentence in the language as a whole. The consequences which this holistic standpoint has for delineating the whole of the structure of a natural language is discussed in CHAPTER THREE: for the present, it is enough to see that Tarski's theory of truth enables Davidson to fulfill the requirement laid down by his second desideratum. And certainly, it does not seem controversial that whatever else a suitable theory of meaning needs to delineate, it must include an account of the truth conditions of all the sentences of the language under consideration.

The task of the semantic analysis of natural language is therefore seen by Davidson as involving the reconstruction of its structure of truth according to the primary desiderata of recursion and holism outlined above, both of which seem to be essential features of a suitable theory of meaning, and which have substantial philosophical support from various directions.

However, it will be recalled that there were also two less determinate desiderata laid down by Davidson. (CHAPTER ONE) The third desideratum for an adequate theory of meaning states that the statements of the truth conditions for individual sentences entailed by the theory should draw upon the same
concepts as the sentences whose truth conditions they state; the fourth desideratum states that the theory must be empirically testable.

Again, with respect to the third criteria, Davidson maintains that theories conforming to Tarski's Convention (T) indeed have this desirable characteristic. In a theory couched in a metalanguage which contains its object language, for example, this condition is apparently fully satisfied since, for in the schemas 's is true iff p' the truth conditions of 's' are given by the sentence replacing 'P'—and this is 's' itself—and so no use of any concepts not directly called upon in understanding 's' are invoked. However, as already hinted at, there are other difficulties which seem to make the possibility of making desideratum three a precise condition. For one thing, if the metalanguage does not contain the object language, it is not obvious when this criterion is satisfied. Furthermore, as Davidson notes 'It seems natural to interpret the third condition as prohibiting the appearance of a semantic term in the statement of the truth conditions of a sentence unless that sentence already contains the semantic term (or a translation of it).'

Davidson, however holds (at least when such desiderata were formulated he did) that it is unclear whether this constraint would rule out explicit appeal to semantic concepts in the statement of truth conditions for modal sentences, even though it seems to threaten theories which make truth in a model the fundamental notion. Such issues have proved contentious, with some recantation on Davidson's part, as will be seen in PART II, CHAPTER FIVE.

Finally, in this brief outline of how Davidson sees theories meeting the constraints of Tarski's Convention (T) as satisfying his own desiderata for suitable theories of meaning for natural language, there is the requirement of empirical testability. The issues here are even more fraught with difficulty, as will be seen in PART III (CHAPTERS SIX and SEVEN). What about the more limited purpose at present: how does Davidson see Tarski's (adapted) theory as providing what Davidson sees as crucial to a theory of meaning—that it must be testable? Since we are seeking an empirical theory, we must know what empirical data might constitute evidence for or against such a theory; we want some specification of what evidence will indicate when a theory is correct. For, 'like any theory, it may be tested by comparing some of its consequences with
And, even though, as we shall see, we must use relativized surrogates, the verification of instances of T-sentences will remain respectably empirical. Thus, to test the theory, "...we only need to ask, in sample cases whether what the theory avers to be the truth conditions for a sentence really are." The proposal is thus starkly simple: a truth theory is to be viewed as the formalized empirical theory whose testable consequences are the infinite collection of T-sentences which the theory entails; and, all that is needed to test any given consequent is an ability to recognize that the biconditional is true. When the metalanguage contains the object language, the test is trivial: "it is no harder to test the empirical adequacy of a theory of truth than it is for a competent speaker of English to decide whether sentences like "Snow is white" is true if and only if snow is white" are true."; and Davidson draws an analogy between the testing of a truth theory and the testing of a theory of generative grammar against the linguistic intuitions of speakers.

However, when the object language and the metalanguage do not overlap, the testing of the truth theory is more complex. In such cases, the relation between the sentence named on the left of the T-sentence and the one occurring on the right is not one of identity. Indeed, these are, with respect to empirical testability, "the cases that count." Davidson's proposed method here is that of radical interpretation, the theorist determining, in order to test the theory, when the object language sentence named is identical in truth value with the metalanguage sentence with which it is paired:

We will notice conditions under which the alien speaker assents to or dissents from, a variety of his sentences. The relevant conditions will be what we take to be the truth conditions of his sentences. We will have to assume that in simple or obvious cases most of his assents are to true, and his dissents from false, sentences—a inevitable assumption since the alternative is unintelligible.

It would indeed, initially at any rate, seem plausible to think that an empirically testable theory of meaning is best grounded on an appeal to assent and dissent patterns, since these appear to carry relatively little theoretical
To close this aspect of how Davidson sees a Tarski-style truth theory as meeting his condition of empirical testability, it should be mentioned that there is another strategy Davidson mentions for testing truth theories, involving the fact that truth theories provide an account of logical truth and entailment for their object language (See Chapter Three). A truth theory will entail, for every logical truth in the object language, a sentence in the metalanguage which asserts that it is true; Tarski-style truth theories can be taken as providing a theory of logical form, and it is this consequence which Davidson would exploit to give an additional empirical check on the theory. The test consists in comparing the truth theory's pronouncements about logical truths (plus entailment and logical equivalence) with the intuitions which speaker's offer:

...the theory that entails not only that these sentences are true but that they will remain true under all significant rewritings of their logical parts...It is hard to imagine how a theory of meaning could fail to read into its object language to this degree; and to the extent that it does, our intuitions of logical truth, equivalence, and entailment may be called upon in constructing and testing the theory.

But there are difficulties even here, for in the end it would seem from the above passage that the speaker's intuitions turn out to be the only empirical test on the theory. Is Davidson's theory then a theory about speaker's intuitions? Certainly, it is clear that Davidson's theory could not offer itself as a satisfactory theory in this respect: its form is too idiosyncratic and restricted for such purposes.

The suggestion already is, then, and without yet having encountered the arguments which will be placed in its way in future chapters, that Davidson's hopes of construing a Tarski-style truth theory as satisfactorily accommodating his fourth desideratum of an empirical theory of meaning, is not without difficulty. The same applies, too, with respect to the other desiderata.
So far, the technical details of Tarski’s truth conditions theory have been considered, and how Davidson sees Tarski’s Convention (T) as a criteria for suitable theories of truth— as meeting his four desiderata for a theory of meaning of natural language. But Tarski’s theory of truth was designed specifically for a formal, artificial language; whether this theory can have any application to the problem of truth for a natural language is something which Davidson in his enthusiasm seems already to have assumed, and which must now be considered more seriously.

Tarski himself was in fact deeply pessimistic about the relevance of his truth theory to natural language. In his view, natural language is semantically open and formally unspecifiable which, Tarski thought, virtually ruled out the possibility of defining 'true' for a natural language:

...The very possibility of a consistent use of the expression "true sentence" which is in harmony with the laws of logic and the spirit of everyday language seems to be very questionable, and consequently the same doubt attaches to the possibility of constructing a correct definition of this expression. 52

Furthermore, Tarski also maintained that

...the concept of truth (as well as other semantical concepts) when applied to colloquial language in conjunction with the normal laws of logic leads inevitably to confusions and contradictions. 53

Taking these points in reverse order, Davidson never fully answers Tarski’s criticism that since natural languages contain their own metalanguage, their truth cannot be defined without the problem of paradox arising (the issue of self-reference mentioned at the beginning of 2.1). Davidson’s only published comment on this indicates a rather cavalier attitude to the matter: the point 'deserves a serious answer', he maintains, and 'I wish I had one. ' 54 But he
does not have any proposals to make in mitigation of Tarski's contention that the semantic closedness of natural language leads to paradoxes. Though the issue of semantic paradoxes has since received more attention from other philosophers, Davidson's early attitude is dismissive: 'I think we are justified in carrying on without having disinfecting this particular source of conceptual anxiety,' the reason being that such paradoxes arise because of the over-generous scope of the quantifiers in natural language. More importantly perhaps, and closely related to the next part of our discussion, is Davidson's contention that this problem need not exclude our being able to give an explicit definition of true-in-L for any natural language since work can proceed on the semantically open fragment of natural language where the danger of paradox is minimal.

The first point mentioned above with respect to the seemingly impossible task of the formal specifiability of the whole of natural language is the more crucial to Davidson's project, since if it were true, as Tarski thought, that it would necessitate refining natural language out of all recognition, this would be fatal to Davidson's proposals. Again, Davidson, it will be seen, approaches the problem of formally specifying all of a natural language in a way which is orthogonal to more 'traditional' perspectives on the relationship between artificial and natural languages and the direct application of formal methods to a supposedly amorphous natural language - an approach which envisages entry to natural language as a whole by first considering a fragment of such languages, and by regarding the notion of any 'dualism' between an artificial language and such a fragment as unacceptable.

The difficulty as Tarski saw it, which prevented any direct application of or 'correspondence' between an artificial language and natural language was that

Whoever wishes, in spite of all difficulties, to pursue the semantics of colloquial language with the help of exact methods will be driven first to undertake the thankless task of a reform of this language. He will find it necessary to define its structure, to overcome the ambiguity of the terms which occur in it, and finally to split the language into a series of languages of greater and greater extent, each of which stands in the same
The issue of the formal specifiability of natural language seems, then, to raise a whole range of problems. Natural language is indeed a living, growing, organic thing, and is, furthermore, riddled with such features as indexicality, ambiguity, and vagueness. Such features have led not only Tarski, but also many other philosophers to despair over the possibility of formalizing natural language, and indeed, on this account, to advocate the replacement of natural language altogether. (See the following section, 2.3). Frege, for example, complained that ordinary language is inherently vague and imprecise, features he saw as rendering it impossible to devise a coherent semantics for natural language as it stands. More recently, the later Wittgenstein and also Dummett would deem natural language as a whole to be impervious to the application of any overall systematic theory. (See CHAPTER THREE, section 3.1). Then, again, there are a wide variety of problems which arise when we try to equate in any direct correspondence, the operations and sentence patterns of a formal calculus with the propositions and arguments of ordinary language, as Strawson has shown in various papers. Finally, there is the fact of alternative philosophical traditions to take into account for whom the resources of natural language are wholly beyond the capacities of scientific methodology or formalized languages: one thinks immediately in this respect of philosophers such as Heidegger, Gadamer, or the Deconstructionalism of Jacques Derrida, which holds that the ultimate truth about language is to be found in its infinite instability and fragility, and thus in the very play of its deconstructed differences and displacements.

At least some of these views, as evidenced by the above quotation, seem based on the notion that there is an enormous and, perhaps, an ultimately unbridgeable gap between an artificial formalized language and natural language—a kind of 'dualism' between the two which can never be breached. The raison
d'être behind Davidson's project is the dismissal of this very idea that there is, ultimately, any kind of 'dualism' between an artificial and a natural language, any difference of quality which ultimately separates the two. The absolutely fundamental element of this aspect of Davidson's work, and one on which the success or otherwise of his ideas to be discussed in PARTS II and III depends, is that for Davidson

It would be misleading, however, to conclude that there are two kinds of language, natural and artificial. The contrast is better drawn in terms of guiding interests.

It is on this fact, as Davidson sees it, that we can ask for a description of the structure of a natural language. In other papers, too, Davidson makes it clear that a natural language—or at least the 'core' of a natural language—can be seen as a formal system, that we can treat natural language as a more complex formal language: '...standard formal languages are intermediate devices to assist us in treating natural languages as more complex formal languages.' And the basis for this is the fact that, at least for a fragment of a natural language, it can be considered the case that such a portion of a natural language is indistinguishable from a formal language. If an artificial language is picked which can be considered rich enough to 'correspond' to a part of natural language, then the canonical truth structure can be considered to be reflected within this natural language. An analogous role for the artificial language truth schema formulated by Tarski can then be seen to exist within a natural language such as English. We thus pick an artificial language as much like English as possible, and, by virtue of being able to consider this as co-extensive with a fragment of natural language, we can proceed to extend outwards, bit-by-bit, from this tractable fragment:

Tarski has shown the way to giving a theory for interpreted formal languages of various kinds; pick one as much like English as possible. Since this new language has been explained in English and contains much English we not only may, but I think must, view it as part of English for those
It is in this sense, as described above, that Davidson rejects the notion of there being any inherent 'dualism' between an artificial and a natural language. Of course, this is not to equate Tarski's truth schema as it stands as a suitable theory for natural language; nor is it obvious evidence, as will be seen in the following section, for supposing that natural language is a well-defined system in the sense demanded by Tarski (see 2.1).

As Davidson makes clear in many papers, Tarski's schema 's is true (in' L) if and only if p cannot be applied as it stands to natural language because of the presence in the latter of such elements as indexical features like tense. Tarski was interested in formalized languages containing no such indexical or demonstrative aspects, and could thus treat sentences as vehicles of truth; however, in natural language, sentences may vary in truth value according to time and speaker: 'I am tired', for example, may be true uttered by one speaker on a particular occasion, say, time $t_1$, and false when uttered by another speaker on a different occasion, say, time $t_2$. Thus, when indexical or demonstrative elements are present, it cannot be sentences which are true or false, but only such sentences as they are relativized to a time and a speaker. Thus, the extended T-schema will require the theory to entail such sentences as ' "I am tired" (s, t) is true iff s is tired at t'; for demonstratives like 'this' or 'that', the extended account is given as ' "this is X is true iff the object picked out by the speaker's use of "this" satisfies "...is X" at the time of utterance' and so on, for like cases. (See CHAPTER THREE). The notion of 'absolute' truth is thus relativized to time and speaker when applied to a natural language. This relativization by Davidson is of great importance since what it means in effect is, by making explicit appeal to circumstances and speakers in giving a Tarski-style formal theory of truth for natural language Davidson is— as mentioned in CHAPTER ONE, looking at language as already 'immersed', as it were, in a context of objective reality and a speaker's psychological reality. Such a relativized theory remains, for Davidson, strictly empirical.
That a truth conditions theory for natural language has to be so relativized does not in any way effect what has been said regarding the relationship, as Davidson construes it, between an artificial language and ordinary discourse, and of the rejection of the idea that there is any ultimate dualism between the two. But is Davidson right in maintaining that we can treat natural language as a more complex artificial language? Certainly, Davidson is at one with such philosophers as Montague, who has also argued that there is no important difference between formal and natural languages. Rather, Montague holds that there is sufficient of a formal structure to the whole of a natural language like English to make it possible to apply formal theories of semantics to them. As with Davidson, formalized languages are seen as having much in common with ordinary languages—enough to ensure that they can be made to successively approximate to ordinary language in expressive power. It is as if the structure of an artificial language can be construed as already being 'embedded' within, or 'keyed into' natural language. As mentioned with Davidson, the notion of there being any ultimate 'dualism' between the two kinds of languages is destroyed to the extent that an artificial language can be envisaged as a kind of 'outgrowth' of natural language.

There is much indirect evidence on this score from many different philosophers. Tyler, for instance, maintains that the very source of all logics lies in natural language itself. Hocket shows that mathematics—the paradigm of an artificial language—developed by and through the same mechanisms responsible for the openness of natural language itself: even though natural language is an ill-defined system, it nevertheless is still characterized, according to Hocket, by various levels of stability by means of which the well-defined systems of mathematics and logic emerged. Benacerraf stresses that 'the semantical apparatus of mathematics (must) be seen as part and parcel of that of the natural language in which it is done.' Popper, in opposition to Brouwer's sharp distinction between mathematics and its linguistic expression, espouses Lakato's notion that the growth of mathematics and natural science presupposes their linguistic formulation, and indeed holds that scientific knowledge itself is a branch of literature. There is thus a very good pedigree for Davidson's view that it is misleading to think of an artificial and a natural language as fundamentally different.
Even though the absolutely crucial point has been made that for Davidson there is no essential difference in kind between at least part of a natural language and an artificial language which would preclude discussion of the former in terms of the latter, this is not necessarily to identify the two—even for a limited fragment of a natural language. Davidson is undoubtably aware of equating the well-defined system of an artificial language with the ill-defined system which is a natural language or a part of such a language. Davidson specifically says, notwithstanding what has already been said, that it would be foolish not to recognize the differences which undoubtably do exist between an artificial and a natural language. And, as will be seen, it is not open to Davidson to sidestep the difficulties involved in delineating the recalcitrant features of natural language as it is for some other philosophers, since Davidson's purpose is different from theirs.

It is not Davidson's intention, for example, to give the kind of conceptual priority to a regimented language over a natural language that is behind the views expressed by say Frege or Quine. For instance, even though Frege suggested ways in which an account of his kind could be applied to regions of natural language, he did not think in terms of general truth theory for natural language; indeed, he took natural languages to be defective and recalcitrant and accordingly better replaced by the construction of an improved formal language, a language he believed had the same expressive power as important tracts of natural language. But as Davidson makes clear, Frege did not have a theory of truth such as Tarski's in mind, and his work cannot be applied directly to the matter of investigating meaning in natural language in the manner Davidson requires. Neither is Davidson's concern with an artificial language notationally superior to ordinary language as it was for Frege.

Similarly with Quine. Though there are essential ingredients in Davidson's theory provided by Quine— for example Quine's holistic approach— as with Frege, Quine views a satisfactorily regimented language as an improvement of natural language, rather than, as with Davidson, part of a truth conditions theory about natural language. Quine's aim is not in any way to attempt to capture the
complexities of natural language, but rather to construct an alternative artificial or regimented language which will supplant natural language. Again, this kind of conceptual primacy which is accorded to artificial language at the expense of natural language, and which leads to the replacement or elimination of the latter by the former, is unacceptable to Davidson. The reality of the undoubted recalcitrance and complexity of natural language, rather than being reasons for its elimination, are seen by Davidson as features to be described and understood: 'for the task of a theory of meaning as I conceive it is not to change, improve, or reform a language, but to describe and understand it.' Consequently, Davidson eschews the aim of a programme such as Quine's and takes it that the task of his use of Tarski's truth conditions theory is to investigate all the recalcitrant features behind the reality of natural language discourse. Thus, Davidson requires 'a canonical notation rich enough to capture, in its dull and explicit way, every difference and connection legitimately considered the business of a theory of meaning' and, as indicated above, 'The point of canonical notation so conceived is not to improve on something left vague and defective in natural language, but to help elicit in a perspicuous and general form the understanding of logical grammar we all have that constitutes (part of) our grasp of our native tongue.'

On Davidson's thesis, then, there is a kind of 'reciprocity' between the concept of an artificial formal language and the concept of a natural language for which the former is a tool of investigation. For, as seen in the last section (2.2), there is no holding, on Davidson's view, that natural language is completely different in at least some crucial aspects from an artificial language: the fact that there is some kind of structure present in natural language which can be directly described by a theory of truth (even if such a theory of the structure is not, in the terms Davidson construes it, the best or even the only solution available to us—see CHAPTER THREE) indicates this fact that natural language should not be given the final word, as some philosophers thought. On the other hand, neither is it appropriate, in view of the nature of Davidson's programme, to jettison or eliminate natural language and give conceptual dominance to the idea of an artificial language simply because of its amorphous and recalcitrant nature. The only point of view from which a formalized language can
be regarded as of primary importance is that it is the means whereby we gain access to the analogous structure in natural language: The point is not that canonical notation is better than the rough original idiom, but rather that if we know what idiom the canonical notation is canonical for, we have as good a theory for the idiom as for its kept companion. In other words, the only access, for us to any structured view of a natural language can only be via the entering wedge of something like the kind of truth conditions structure provided by Davidson's use of Tarski's theory of truth:

What a theory of truth does for a natural language is reveal structure.

In treating each sentence as composed in accountable ways out of a finite number of truth-relevant words, it articulates this structure.

In this way, an artificial language is considered by Davidson as a device for exploring the structure of the whole of a natural language. The fact that a theory of truth reveals such structure by describing each sentence as composed, out of a finite number of truth-relevant words takes us back to the beginning of this chapter, and the way that Davidson saw Tarski's constraints on suitable theories of truth as satisfying his required desiderata such as recursion and holism. (2.1)

Yet there are, in the outline given above, and again as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, indications that Davidson's approach is in some ways very different from Tarski's; in fact, it is no exaggeration to say that in his use of a truth conditions theory to delineate structure or meaning in language, Davidson is in effect actually reversing Tarski's proposals: whereas Tarski with Convention (T) wanted to define truth by an appeal to meaning (or synonymy, or translation), Davidson aims for the opposite—by delineating the structure of truth, his aim is to try to define meaning. Thus, since Tarski was interested in defining truth, and furthermore, was only working with an artificial language, he could take the concept of translation or meaning for granted. This comes out clearly when we begin to compare Tarski's aims with Davidson's. 'Meaning' for Tarski is, in the formal context of his theory, taken for granted: 'Instead of "meaningful sentence", we could say "well-formed-sentence."' In other words,
a sentence with meaning is, for Tarski, a well-formed-formula in a formal system: 'The function and meaning of an expression should depend exclusively on its form. ' Tarski assumes the concept of meaning in order to examine truth. Davidson, however, wishes to illuminate meaning by assuming at least a partial understanding of the concept of truth, as the following shows.

For Davidson, it will be recalled, the point of the T-schema is that it fixes not the intension or meaning of sentences, but the extension of the predicate 'true': any predicate satisfying Convention (T) was, Davidson thought, just what was required since if the predicate 'is true' replaces 'means that' in the formulation 's means that p' for each sentence of the language we would be left with 's is true(in L)iff p' and an explicit truth-conditional form. A theory of meaning should supply pairings between sentences of the object language with sentences of the metalanguage in a way which will 'give the meaning' of the object language sentences. Davidson argues that it is more fruitful to 'sweep-away' the intensional 'means that' and make the context completely truth-functional and that this comes down to seeing 'means that' as co-extensive with the Tarski truth predicate, and that this was apparently just what was needed for a theory of meaning. Tarski's proposed criteria of adequacy for a formal truth definition could take over from the 'means that' of natural language: Davidson argues for the abandonment or elimination of the traditional and obscure idiom of meaning and its replacement by the formally more tractable idiom of truth-structure - a kind of 'semantic ascent' from ordinary discourse to the more exact idiom of logic of the kind proposed by Quine. Davidson is saying that leaving 'means that' behind and looking to truth for a solution to semantical problems constitutes an ascent of sorts also:

Making a systematic account of truth central in empirical semantics is in a way merely a matter of stating old goals more sharply. Still, the line between clarification an innovation in science is blurred, and it seems likely that the change would shift priorities in linguistic research. Some problems that have dominated recent work on semantics would face in importance: the attempt to give "the meaning" of sentences, and to account for synonymy, analyticity, and ambiguity. For the first of these, the theory of
However, Davidson's early claims that truth could replace meaning were mistaken. Whereas translation is a notion which Tarski could justifiably employ in defining the truth predicate (it being a condition on 's is true iff p' that p be a translation of s, with homophonic translation as the simplest case), it cannot do for a theory of meaning, since, if we are setting out to construct a theory of meaning, translation must be the result of, and not an integral part of, the theory of meaning itself. Thus, it is a mistake to think that the use of the Tarski truth predicate can do the work required of a theory of meaning as Davidson originally thought. In fact, this is what leads Davidson to formulate additional empirical constraints on a theory of truth—these additional criteria being fully discussed in Part III.

Nevertheless, though Davidson must now accept that 'the notion of translation, which can be made precise for artificial languages on which interpretations are imposed by fiat, has no precise or even clear application to natural languages', the change in perspective which Davidson's aims entail does not, in his view, mean that we must give up Convention (T)—only that we must read it in a new way. Thus, if Davidson is right, we can still use a Tarski-style theory of truth to reveal structure in natural language in the manner described previously. It still remains the case that our only suitable means at present for use as a kind of 'entering wedge' into the structure of the sentences of natural language must be via the structure which is provided by something like Davidson's use of Tarski's theory of truth; indeed, Davidson would say that we have no choice in the matter. Even if it is not a theory of meaning for natural language, as later discussion will show (Part III), there are still substantial inclining, if not fully compelling, reasons for Davidson's use of Tarski's theory of truth as satisfying scientific and objective criteria for the primary objective of revealing the structure for the whole of natural language.
As seen in the last section, Davidson still holds that his use of Tarski's theory of truth gives what is centrally required: a means to reveal and to articulate the structure of the whole of natural language. Tarski's theory, consisting as it does in an enumeration of the semantical properties of the items in a finite vocabulary together with a recursive definition of the infinity of sentences shows precisely how the truth-conditions of complex sentences are determined by the truth import of their components, and thus makes for an exact delineation of the structure of a language—plus the subtle and powerful concept of satisfaction linking sentences and non-sentential expressions to sequences of objects in the world (see PART 11). It thus provides a paradigm of analysis for the quantificational structure Davidson takes to be embedded within natural language itself. By invoking Tarski's programme in the manner Davidson suggests, we thus gain scientific precision into delineating the structure of a natural language containing an infinity of sentences, if not its meaning. We have a systematic, structured account of the natural language as a whole.

But—and this aspect is what is going to lead us into the subject matter of CHAPTER THREE—the direct description by a theory of truth of the structure of the sentences of a natural language is not all that is provided. For, as Davidson explains in another context, the formation of the skeleton of what we call a language is the pattern of inference and structure which is created by the logical constants (sentential connective, quantifiers, and devices for cross-reference). And, if we can apply a theory of truth as a method of interpretation to a speaker at all by assuming his language is like ours, it can only be because we as interpreters can treat that speaker's structure-forming devices very much as we treat those of our language, this fixing 'the logical form of his sentences', and determining the parts of speech. In effect, this is to suggest that a theory of truth, based on an account of the sentential elements and structures, also provides us with a kind of 'intersubjectively shared' theory of logic, as well as directly describing structure and giving us a basis for an 'entering wedge' into the structure of natural language. This aspect of a Theory of Logical Form is, however, is a matter for CHAPTER THREE.
3.1 Direct Description of Structure of Language and Postulation of Logical Form

As seen in the last chapter, Davidson takes his use of Tarski's theory of truth as the only suitable means we have for directly describing the structure of natural language whilst at the same time providing the required postulated logical form. Davidson's truth conditions theory becomes the foundational basis for such attributions since he would not accept any ultimate 'dualism' between a fragment of natural language and an artificial language, nor was it open to him to replace a recalcitrant natural language by any formal counterpart; but, though a degree of reciprocity between the demands of a formal and a natural language were recognized, the only means we could have, according to Davidson, for exploring how the elements of a natural language are articulated is by means of an 'entering-wedge' of something like that provided by his truth conditions structure, such an account of the structured sentential elements also providing us with a theory of logical form. For, by being able to determine the conditions under which any two sentences are true, we are able to determine if the one sentence entails the other sentence. Thus, from within his Tarski-style truth conditions theory, Davidson proposes to reflect the whole of the structure of natural language in terms of first-order logical and quantification form, such predicate structure being taken by Davidson to be really there within the various forms of discourse of natural language. Davidson's holism and the demand for semantic monism which leads to this standpoint that first-order logical form is the real form of all of natural language is, however, rejected by many philosophers. Indeed, for some, it is mythical to suppose that, as Davidson suggests, his existentially quantified structures give the real structure of natural language at all, since natural language has no real logical
form at all. Yet, as will be seen, though there are indeed difficulties in finding the kind of logical structure Davidson demands in certain kinds of ordinary language, a fact which might seem to suggest the previously mentioned philosophers are correct, it nevertheless transpires that we must refer to a real structure existing behind language if any intelligible interpretation is to be forthcoming. Even so, Davidson's delineation of structure in terms of 'ideal' first-order logical form, though it may suffice as the best approach in some respects, is certainly not the only option open to us in describing the structure of natural language; it is possible to accept some augmentation of Davidson's proposals in this area and still remain within the constraints of Convention (T). Still, this does not prejudice Davidson's basic contention that his truth conditions theory is the foundational basis for the reconstruction of the structure of the whole of natural language in terms of an autonomous network of logical possibility, and that this in turn is the foundational basis for the theoretical reconstruction of how speakers refer to the world, and of how the speaker's psychological attitudes constrain such a reference to the world.

The essential point made in CHAPTER TWO was that Tarski's truth conditions theory enabled Davidson to achieve the aim central to his project: to reveal and articulate the true structure embedded within the whole of natural language, beginning with that fragment of language Davidson took to be co-extensive with an artificial language and working outwards. As was also suggested, such a theory of truth, being based on an account of the sentential elements and structures, provides, Davidson would hold, a theory of logical form as well. The merit of Tarskiian truth theories being that they entail generalizations, based on the notion of sentence structure about true sentences, and that it is this which enables them to be considered as plausible candidates for theories of logical form: the true structure revealed within sentences by a truth theory for that language, and which is directly described by such a theory, is synonymous with its postulated logical form. A theory of truth will, according to Davidson, give us an account of entailment and logical truth in the object language, thus sufficing as a theory of logical form.
Thus it is that from within the 'umbrella' of a Tarski-style truth conditions theory that Davidson proposes to reflect the whole of the structure of natural language in terms of first-order logic and quantificational form. Firstly, and most importantly, it must be emphasized that—for reasons given in the last chapter—Davidson takes it as a possibility that we can directly describe the one true structure (relative to a theory of logical form) of natural language in terms of first-order predicate logic or quantificational form because for him it really is there within natural language. Sentences in the predicate calculus or quantificational logic are, as shown in the section on Tarski, (2.1), built-up from predicate structures and sentential components, and these are taken to be genuine parts of the sentences of natural language by Davidson. The discernment of predicate structure within English, for example, is thus not regarded as an arbitrary matter: there really is such a genuine predicate structure within English; the delineation of such structures, on Davidson's view, cannot, therefore, be regarded as just a convenient tool—even though, of course, one of the functions of logical form is as an instrument to probe the logical structure already taken to be within natural language.  

To state this may appear to be stating the obvious; yet it is far from an obvious fact for many philosophers (and from differing philosophical traditions). The seriousness with which Davidson takes this structure to be really present in natural language, and his idea that we are able to directly describe this structure from within a theory of logical form—a theory which will reveal not only the one perspicuous form across the whole of natural language in terms of first order logic, but in the process will enhance the delineation, in terms of the same quantificational structure, of a unified network of entailments—must now receive consideration.

The attribution of logical form within a Tarski-style truth conditions theory by Davidson has an importance which is hard to overemphasize in relation to the standpoint taken by traditional realism and many contemporary voices for whom such attributions have often been undertaken on a very piecemeal basis. However, for Davidson, 'To give the logical form of a sentence is, then, for me, to describe it in terms that bring it within the scope of a semantic theory that
It is to know, from within a Tarski-style theory of truth, its significant features, its semantically relevant features. Hence, only as much- or as little- logical form is attributed to sentences as is necessary to enable Davidson to make the formulation of an adequate truth theory possible, and it is in this sense that there is something of the spirit of instrumentalism in Davidson's notion of logical form. Selection is made of all, and only, those iterative devices necessary for the construction of the needed truth definition, and assignment made to them of all, and only, those truth-bearing properties required for such a definition:

To say a second sentence is a logical consequence of a first is to say, roughly, that the second is true if the first is, no matter how the non-logical constants are interpreted. Since what we count as a logical constant can vary independently of the set of truths, it is clear that the two versions of logical form, though related, need not be identical. The relation, in brief, seems this. Any theory of truth that satisfies Tarski's criteria must take account of all truth-affecting iterative devices in the language. In the familiar languages for which we know how to define truth the basic iterative devices are reducible to the sentential connectives, the apparatus of quantification, and the description operator if it is primitive. Where one sentence is a logical consequence of another on the basis of quantificational structure alone, a theory of truth will therefore entail that if the first sentence is true, the second is. There is no point, then, in not including the expressions that determine quantificational structure among the logical constants, for when we have characterised truth, on which any account of logical consequence depends, we have already committed ourselves to all that calling such expressions logical constants could commit us. Adding to this list of logical constants will increase the inventory of logical truths and consequence-relations beyond anything a truth definition demands, and will therefore yield richer versions of logical form.

Davidson's view therefore seems to be that logical form is truth which is
ueoej.-mj.xxeu uy one aema.iioxus iur one primitive operators, ui course, there may
be other iterative devices which carry inferential consequences—there could
be an adequate truth theory which does not reveal as valid all the inferences
held to be valid, but such an additional structure may be unnecessary from the
standpoint of Davidson's truth conditions theory. It certainly seems to be the
case that a complete semantics for a language L—that is, a complete assignment
of the truth conditions of all its sentences as described in CHAPTER TWO—will
contain enough information to determine the logical form for that language
in the manner indicated by Davidson. 7

However, there are other crucial aspects to Davidson's notion of logical
form which are more controversial. As was also seen in CHAPTER TWO, a primary
desideratum for Davidson's theory of meaning was that of holism: that we can
give the meaning of any sentence or word only by giving the meaning of every
sentence and word in the language L. Closely connected with this requirement is
Davidson's condition of semantic monism— that the rules that determine the
meaning of each and every sentence in the language L should all be of the same
general kind. The close connection of semantic monism with holism is indicated
in many places in Davidson's papers. Hence, he says that above all, the logical
form of a sentence must be seen in the light of a theory that gives the logical
form of every sentence in the language—such a theory being, of course, one
like Tarski's truth conditions theory: 'to give the logical form of a sentence
is to give its logical location in the totality of sentences, to describe it in
a way that explicitly determines what sentences it entails and what sentences
it is entailed by.' 8 and such a location 'must be given relative to a
specific deductive theory.' 9 Davidson can thus conclude: 'By my lights, we
have given the logical form of a sentence when we have given the truth-
conditions of the sentence in the context of a theory of truth that applies
to the language as a whole.' 10 (emphasis added). This makes it clear that
Davidson's holism demands that the attribution of logical form must be
accomplished 'all-of-a-piece', the reason for this being that, for example,

We cannot decide how to interpret a speaker's "There's a whale" independ-
ently of how we interpret his "There's a mammal", and words connected with
Clearly, the requirement of semantic monism must then follow from the logical connection of the totality of sentences; there must be some key concept in the theory of meaning, a central notion figuring in the explanation of the meaning of every sentence whatever the surface characterization of the type of discourse. Without such a key concept, running through all the different kinds of sentence in the language, and which figures in the explanation of the meaning of any sentence, whether that sentence be an indicative sentence, or a sentence of oratio obliqua, or what have you, there could be no unification of meanings across these sentences or the words they contain. \(^\text{12}\)

Suffice it to say at this present stage that Davidson's condition of semantic monism is extremely controversial; if such a constraint were adopted, it would run counter to the views of many philosophers, from various traditions, as to the nature of language: particularly pertinent in this respect are, of course, the ideas of the later Wittgenstein, in the *Philosophical Investigations*, \(^\text{13}\) for whom there could be no unique logic applicable to natural language as a whole. In fact, Davidson's project is much more reminiscent of the early Wittgenstein of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* or of Russell's logical atomism. \(^\text{14}\)

Such philosophers then aspired to devise a unique, ideally perspicuous language in which logical form would be perfectly exhibited, and in which each informal argument has a unique logical form which is perhaps not immediately recognizable, though naturally there was nothing like Davidson's truth conditions theory involved. Wittgenstein, for example, saw all complex significant propositions in a language as so-called truth-functions of simpler propositions from which they could be constructed by various logical operations; the 'ultimate' propositional elements - the 'atoms' of language - being the elementary propositions which were not further analyzable because they themselves consist of simple signs. (See also PART II, CHAPTER FOUR.)

And, in both the early Wittgenstein and Russell there is the fundamental notion of ordinary language as concealing its real logical structure, and that it is possible to represent this real structure in its purer form as a kind of ideal language - Russell, for instance, holding that the grammatical or surface
form of a sentence is misleading as to its real logical form. 15

Similarly, Davidson- at least until very recently, when there is perhaps a hint of second thoughts about the matter 16 accepts ideas made apparent in some of Chomsky's earlier work where Chomsky says:

The meaning of a sentence is based on the meaning of its elementary parts and the manner of their combination...the manner of combination provided by the surface structure is in general almost totally irrelevant to semantic interpretation, whereas the grammatical relations expressed in the abstract deep structure are, in many cases, just those that determine the meaning of the sentence. 17

Thus, too, Davidson, in his early papers accepts that the deep structures of syntax were the vehicle for semantic interpretation, and that the deep structure of a sentence should correspond to the logical form of a sentence as given by his truth conditions theory. 18 However, Chomsky's earlier views have not always found full acceptance amongst philosophers, and the source of Davidson's present (1985) caution on the issue may lie in an alternative view which Chomsky himself has defended, in which deep structure trees are not full-semantic representations of a sentence. 19 Hence, we have the expression of such opinions as 'It is a matter of controversy whether the deep structure of a sentence completely determines its logical form' 20 and McCawley indicating that deep structures need not stand in any systematic relation to the meanings of sentences, and that 'Chomsky briefly held, but has repudiated, a conception of deep structure which determines meaning' 21 Similarly, Sampson declares 'Chomsky has outlined what seems to be the true situation: semantic representations of actual sentences are identical neither to deep structures nor to surface structures, but are some simpler function of the two.' 22 On the other hand, Harman, for example, recognizing that Chomsky defends a view in which deep structure trees are not full-semantic representations, nevertheless defends a position in which 'It will be assumed here that the deep structure tree is a full-semantic representation of the sentences' 23 and cites many philosophers still holding to this position. And Bennett states 'the fundamental
structural facts about a language are those which constitute its semantic
structured, and syntactic structure is an abstraction, a selection of certain
aspects from this larger whole.24 Thus, though some caution over the matter
seems in order, as Davidson now recognizes, there seems no concrete reason at
present why we should not accept the earlier view of the distinction between
surface structure and deep structure in our language, and that the deep
structure trees are a full semantic representation of the sentence meaning in
line with Davidson's comments to the effect that 'The true coin, the deep
structure' is opposed to the 'deceit of the conventions of the market place
engendered by the surface forms of natural language.'25 If we still can accept
such a position, then, it will mean that in utterances like the following:

1 Jill is certain that Mary will leave
2 Jill is certain to leave

sentences (1) and (2) can be shown to be similar in surface structure, but
very different in deep structure which is said to underlie them:

**Surface Structures:**

1' (S(NP Jill) (VP is(\_\_ certain(S that(NP Mary)VP will leave))))
2' (S(NP 'Jill) (VP is(\_\_ certain) (VP to leave )))

both of which are similar in surface structure.

**Deep Structures:**

1'' (S(NP Jill) (VP is(\_\_ certain(S that(NP Mary)VP will leave))))

-and which has the same structure as (1') but where
and which shows that both are very different in deep structure.

Analogous arguments hold for sentences which are very different in surface structure and yet similar in deep structure.

Hence it seems reasonable to accept, if the philosophers mentioned are right, that transformations applied in sequence to deep structures in accordance with certain principles will ultimately generate the surface structures of the sentences in a language, and that furthermore, any sentence's meaning can be expressed in something like the language of quantification theory and that, as some transformational grammarians claim, that the deepest structure is its semantic interpretation or meaning. Despite the controversy mentioned over whether the deep structure of a sentence completely determines its logical form or meaning, there does still seem substantial agreement that an ideal transformational grammar would in one way or another specify the logical form of every interpretation of every sentence.

To bring together the threads of this section, what we have seen is that for Davidson, his truth conditions theory is taken as the foundation for directly describing the real structure of natural language whilst simultaneously providing the required postulated logical form: the account of the structured sentential elements gives us a theory of logical form since being able to determine the conditions under which any two sentences are true, we are able to determine if one sentence entails the other sentence. Hence a theory of truth will, according to Davidson, give us an account of entailment and logical truth in the object language, thus sufficing for a theory of logical form. Such a theory of logical form from within a theory of truth is of course holistic, and closely linked to the condition of semantic monism, Davidson holding that the postulated first order logical form is the real logical form behind the whole of natural language (together with the notion that such a logical form as given by the truth conditions theory is to be identified with the deep structures of the language.) But is this latter thesis of Davidson's correct? We must now attempt to find out.
For many philosophers, Davidson's proposal to describe the whole of the structure of natural language in terms of first-order logic, and to delineate a unified network of entailment in terms of such a quantified structure, is little more than a myth. Certainly for Davidson, such a structure behind all of our language must exist for his programme to be feasible, but in that case how are we to account for the scepticism hinted at earlier amongst many philosophers who would deny that natural language can be so described?

For example, the ideas of the later Wittgenstein, in the *Philosophical Investigations* have already been mentioned, and which suggest that there can be no unique logic applicable to natural language as a whole. Rejecting his own earlier 'ideal' philosophy, Wittgenstein now saw natural language as providing us with the resources for playing a variety of language games with divergent structures—so that different formal languages may be required to represent these different formal roles, and different logical systems may specify the valid rules of inferences within the different language games; if this were so there would be no unique, correct logic—or even any logic at all—which is applicable to natural language as a whole.

For Dummett, too, we have no grounds 'to assume in advance that our language is in every way perfectly in order': and he calls Davidson's project into doubt, indicating that the attempt to delineate the whole of natural language in terms of one logical structure is misplaced, language not conforming to any one systematic theory, being rather a 'mult-storied' phenomenon. Many other philosophers in the western tradition have expressed similar reservations concerning the description of the logical structure of language in the terms Davidson does envisage it.

Not only that, but philosophers from alternative philosophical traditions would regard the project as untenable. Heidegger, for instance, for whom 'onestiness' is 'the distinctive property of language' conceived of as a web of relations, nevertheless would see it as exhibiting a 'great diversity of elements and relations' which would undoubtedly for him place language beyond the kind of analysis Davidson would undertake. For Gadamer, also, it is questionable
whether the idea of natural language in terms of symbolic form is appropriate.

More recently, we have the ideas of Jacques Derrida, for whom there is something in writing—or in any process of language—which finally evades all systems and logics, all language displaying a 'surplus' over exact meaning; hence for Derrida the infinite instability and fragility of language which can only be 'deconstructed.'

There is thus considerable opposition from many diverse directions, as this brief survey indicates, to anything like Davidson's programme of adopting his criteria of semantic monism and his attempt at describing significant structure in terms of first-order logic across the whole of natural language, for if the above philosophers are correct, such a predicate structure is either just not there, or is wholly inadequate to deal with the complexities of language. And, if it is merely a 'myth' that extensional first-order logic can be applied across the board as Davidson envisages, is it desirable, or even possible to augment Davidson's proposed logical form by invoking the use of other logics? Presumably Davidson's response to the issue would be to say that the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and certainly many philosophers who have been attempting to apply Davidson's programme to the differing types of language have so far claimed some success. Certainly, however the appearance of a sometimes facile calm that seems to surround the Davidsonian notion of logical form is somewhat removed by seeing the complications that arise in handling apparently straightforward constructions, let alone the more recalcitrant forms of discourse such as action sentences, oratio obliqua, and the like; perhaps Davidson may be too quick to ignore the recalcitrant data in order to squeeze everything into his one favoured theory.

Davidson's logical form proposal, it will be recalled, is relative to Tarski's theory of truth, and is designed to be applied first to the central core of indicative sentences, from where it is proposed to work outward to all other forms of more recalcitrant discourse. For this central fragment, the indicatives, the backbone of Davidson's theory, (see Chapter One), there seems no great obstacle in the way of equating the structure of such sentences with the kind of predicate structure advocated by Davidson. Thus, an atomic sentence such as
'there is a cat' can be easily symbolized according to the normal existentially quantified form \((\exists x)(x \text{ is a cat})\); or the molecular sentence 'There is a black cat' as \((\exists x)(x \text{ is a cat} \& x \text{ is black})\). Similarly, a simple declarative sentence like 'The girl ran home' can be adequately expressed by the logical form \((\exists x)(G \& (\forall y)(Gy \rightarrow x = y) \& Rx)\). So, relative to one theory of logical form, such sentences seem unproblematic, though as Davidson notes, many people, including Tarski, think it impossible to give a truth definition even for the indicative sentences of a natural language.

Ambiguous sentences, too, can probably be accommodated on Davidson's terms, though there are a few dissenting voices as to the efficacy of his proposals in this area, where Davidson's point of view is given by 'as long as ambiguity does not affect grammatical form, and can be translated, ambiguity for ambiguity, into the metalanguage, a truth definition will not tell us any lies.'

We have also seen that indexicals can be dealt with, in Davidson's view, by taking truth to be a property, not of sentences, but of sentences relativized to a time and to a speaker. The concern with indexicals being extended to the problems involving demonstratives ('This/That'), the account to be given is that 'This is x' is true iff the object picked out by the speaker's use of 'This' (or 'That') satisfies '...is x' at the time of utterance'. Davidson early endorsed the work on the logical form of such utterances by Weinstein, and thought that 'the fact that demonstratives are amenable to formal treatment ought greatly to improve hopes for a serious semantics of natural language' and saw such an analysis as also being directed towards problems of quotation and verbs of propositional attitude; however, very recently, Davidson has admitted that such a hope has 'turned out to be naively optimistic' — as indeed is indicated by some of the criticisms of this kind of discourse which are dealt with in PART III of this thesis.

Much more serious challenges also await Davidson's attempt to attribute the kind of predicate structure he envisages to other types of natural language as well. One of the most serious of these is the case of action sentences, and the related problem of adverbial modification. (Some of the consequences of Davidson's analysis in this area are discussed in PART II, CHAPTER FIVE.) As a way into examining what Davidson's theory of logical form is up against.
here, consider the following simple sentence: 'Something moves slowly'. As a first attempt at delineating the structure of this sentence, we could try representing such a sentence as having the logical form of \((Ex)(Sx)\) - where \((Sx)\) takes the place of 'x moves slowly'. Clearly, however, this would be wrong: it would fail completely to assign structure to 'moves slowly', and in consequence would block any further attempts to account for the truth structure of related sentences such as 'If a man moves slowly and another man moves quickly then at least two men move.' Another attempt might be to represent the sentence as \((Ex)(Sx. (z) (Sz = Mz))\), where 'Sx' stands in place of 'x moves slowly', and 'Mz' stands in place of 'z moves'. But again, this would mean that the sentence 'Something moves slowly' would be assigned the same structure as 'Something moves slowly AND if anything moves slowly then it moves.' - and surely it is hardly credible that the semantic structure of these two very different English sentences is identical. So long as 'Sx' stands for 'x moves slowly', the logical structure of the sentence appears to be simply \((Ex)(Sx)\); any supplementary clauses would then have to serve to express an inference based on the analysis of the predicate 'Sx'.

The problem posed by the sentence 'Something moves slowly' is a general problem occasioned by the fact that quantificational logic or predicate structure does not seem equipped to cope with adverbs in any simple way. The basic form of quantificational logic being that of predication, if one is to cope with the problem posed by adverbs, the only device available is to construe adverbial modification as an instance of such predication: one must somehow recast 'slowly' in the guise of 'slow'; but in so doing, one is forced, as Davidson is, to conjure up special entities to fill the bill of 'x is slow'. (See CHAPTER FIVE).

Something like the problem just considered, then, is what Davidson faces in trying to delineate the predicate structure of action sentences, including the issue raised by the necessity of postulating entities such as events in order to enhance the explanation of entailment in terms of quantificational logic. And, as will be seen, the ensuing difficulties have led some philosophers to deny that the structure of such sentences is explicable in terms of the predicate structure Davidson conceives, and either giving up reference to it altogether as the real structure of language, or urging augmentation of Davidson's proposal.
In *The Logical Form of Action Sentences*, Davidson suggests that the logical form of 'Shem kicked Shaun' is the existentially quantified form of 
\[(\exists x) \text{Kicked}(\text{Shem, Shaun, } x)\] and that the traditional Subject-Predicate analysis which would normally have been given for this sentence, and where the structure of 'Shem kicked Shaun' is seen as consisting of two names and a two-place predicate, goes by the board. 43 It is crucial to note, in view of what has been said previously, (3.1), that relative to a theory of logical form given by a Tarski-style truth conditions theory, there is no way for Davidson that this sentence could have a different logical form. 44 The existentially quantified structure directly describes or refers to the real logical form of 'Shem kicked Shaun' as given by the truth theory: it is not just that this is a more perspicuous or more convenient rephrasal. This, despite the fact that this existentially quantified form (à propos the recent discussion) also reads, as the closest English sentence directly reflecting this given form, 'There is an event x such that x is a kicking of Shem by Shaun'. However, this requires the postulation of events as entities, and Davidson's proposed logical form is in fact nothing like 'Shem kicked Shaun.' Nevertheless, even though the original sentence of 'Shem kicked Shaun' and the English equivalent of the existentially quantified form have such very different surface structures, it is their basic (deep structure) logical form which is, for Davidson the same. 45 Hence, for Davidson, it is possible to hold that this existentially quantified structure directly refers to the real structure of the English original, since this real structure is equivalent to its deep structure or logical form—which ties in exactly with what was said previously (3.1) about Davidson's views on the nature of predicate structure in English. But how can we be really sure that the original sentence does have such a structure as Davidson maintains, in view of the discrepancy noted above? Davidson states that part of the justification— but it is the only justification he does offer—is that seeing the real structure of English in these terms which he suggests enhances our prospects of delineating the entailment between sentences on the holistic basis which his theory of truth requires. 46

All three points mentioned above, and which spring from Davidson's major
thesis that predicate structure directly describes the real structure of the English sentences concerned, have been denied by Cargile. For Cargile, the Davidsonian notion of quantified structure should not be confused with the real structure of English at all. Indeed, he regards it as nothing less than a 'myth', a pretence on Davidson's part that he should so regard the existentially quantified structure as giving the logical form of the relevant English sentence. Cargile maintains that 'there is no reason for denying that Davidson's rephrasals are just that- rephrasals with very different forms from the originals' and suggests that to say, as Davidson does, that such rephrasals reveal the logical form of the originals, is instead to 'say something very obscure.' For Cargile, Davidson's existentially quantified structure does not refer to real structure in the English sentences at all, and suggests adding extra rules to quantification logic or else giving it up altogether.

As an ally to his cause, Cargile cites Reichenbach. Certainly, Davidson's attitude to logical form is very clearly seen in Davidson's own discussion of Reichenbach's that, for example, the logical form of an action sentence like

\[(4) \text{Amundsen flew to the North Pole}\]

is not given by

\[(5) \forall x (x \text{ consists in the fact that Amundsen flew to the North Pole}).\]

but that the two forms, though equivalent, are different. Davidson puts it this way: 'Reichenbach does not think of (5) as showing or revealing the logical form of (4), for he thinks (4) is unproblematic.' Similarly, for Reichenbach, the real logical form of other such sentences is not given by their quantified form, as it is for Davidson.

Thus, for Reichenbach, as for Cargile, Davidson's quantified structure does not reveal the real logical form of English sentences, whereas for Davidson, it plainly does refer to the real structure of the sentences concerned. And the basic reason for this appears to be the differing attitudes of these philosophers to deep and surface structures- whether there is such a distinction to be
Dade, and whether deep structure in terms of a quantified structure, refers to the 'real' structure behind the surface of the original English. This comes out clearly when Cargile, like Davidson, mentions that Reichenbach thinks of the original English sentences as 'unproblematic', whereas for Davidson, it is the other way around: it is because such English sentences are regarded as problematic that we should repress our natural assumptions about their Subject-Predicate structure and give them the kind of Predicate structure which Davidson wishes to accord them. We seem to be back to the original question of whether we should conceptual primacy to original English (see 2.3) or whether a formal structure, in terms of the predicate structure Davidson advocates better reveals the true logical form of an original English sentence. (see also 3.1) For Cargile, even if a sentence like 'Shem kicked Shaun' is derivable form a 'deeper' structure, it does not show that they necessarily have the same form, whereas for Davidson, the fact that two 'very different 'surface' forms are involved, does not mean that he should not resist Cargile's and Reichenbach's point of view, and maintain that they do share, at the level of deep structure, a real existentially quantified form. Cargile and Davidson at first seem to be locked in mutually incompatible sets of ideas; yet there is in fact a hint of a way to resolve the issue, and it is a theme which will be taken up later (3.3). For Cargile indicates that though for him Davidson's proposal on predicate structure does not show that this is the (only real) logical form that the original English sentence must have, he is willing to concede that it can perhaps at best be considered the 'ideal' form it should have. And Davidson seems willing to accept that this is so. The notion of quantificational form may indeed by an arbitrary ideal, but it is a laudable ideal: for Davidson, presumably, we must refer to first-order logic or predicate structure as the real logical form behind the whole of natural language, such a logical form being identified with the deep structure of the language, because as Davidson's arguments for holism and semantic monism show, his aim is to maximize the notion of structure across the whole of natural language from within his truth conditions theory. The justification for Davidson's claims about his notion of first-order logical form as the logical form must be seen in this light—that for him it provided the best way of fitting the sentences.
concerned into an overall theory. But although the ultimate need to find an overall intelligibility in this area undoubtedly justifies Davidson's attempt to a certain degree, his notion of logical form is still, as Cargile notes, an arbitrary ideal: Davidson has not shown that his required logical form is the only one which the sentences concerned can have, or that his austere constraints in this respect are the only ones we can accept. As will be seen later (3.3), it now seems that there are other options available to us, within the constraints of Convention(T) for suitable theories of truth which would allow richer proposals in this direction.

Similarly with the other issues which Cargile criticizes: if, as Davidson maintains, it is the idea of his truth theory which gives a point to his ideal notion of logical form, the same can be said of his 'strong' notion of entailment. It is only from within such a truth conditions theory as he envisages that entailment can be suitably delineated. Cargile again takes Davidson to task, stating that his version of entailment in terms of quantificational form does no better than Reichenbach's. For Davidson, if a sentence like 'Jones buttered the toast' were analysed according to the traditional manner advocated by Reichenbach and Cargile as containing a two-place predicate it would, says Davidson, obliterate the logical relations or entailments within other related sentences. Whereas for Cargile 'the standard symbolism of quantification theory is not good at keeping track of entailments between relations forms in English,' for Davidson quantificational form is the best means of explicating such entailments: as mentioned above, it is the 'best' theory in the sense that for Davidson 'It explains more in the obvious sense of bringing more data under fewer rules.' Cargile's idea seems to be that we should just accept that English naturally 'works that way'; this places a primacy on natural language, but no unifying theory is forthcoming from Cargile. What is primary from Davidson's point of view, however, is to place the account within the scope of an overall truth conditions theory. Davidson's reasons, for instance, for maintaining that 'Jones buttered the toast in the bathroom' entails 'Jones buttered the toast' is that 'it follows from the rules of quantificational theory' and these rules endorse such an inference by capturing the common
conceptual role in the two sentences represented by the repeated syntactic
feature of the word 'buttered': 'In the analysis I have proposed, the word
'buttered' is discovered to have a common role in the two sentences: in both
cases it is a predicate satisfied by a certain ordered triples of agents, things
buttered, and events.' 64 Thus, by describing what this role is (and the role
of the other significant features of the sentences) Davidson hopes for 'a
deep explanation of why one sentence entails the other' 65— and such an explana-
tion being from within a theory of truth which satisfies Tarski's criteria.
Exhibiting entailment as quantificational form from within such a theory
means that we do not have to take such rules of quantificational logic on trust,
since, from within the theory of truth it can be seen that if some sentences
are true, then others must also be true. Cargile, however, thinks Davidson, has
no such theory of logical form, and hence his notion of adding extra rules to
quantificational theory in order to systematize the inferences. But, as David-
son notes 'rules not backed by a theory of logical form are irrelevant.' 66
And, although Davidson does not say so, presumably the same kind of criticism
would apply to Reichenbach, since, although this latter philosopher was greatly
concerned with the formal analysis of sentences of ordinary language, again,
none of it appears to be incorporated within a theory of logical form. 67
Plainly, as mentioned, this key factor of having a unified theory at hand is
obviously of crucial importance, and largely justifies Davidson's ideas, as
against those of Cargile and Reichenbach. And certainly, too, the perspicuous
semantics for first-order quantificational languages at our disposal means
that if we can paraphrase the sentences of natural language which have been
mentioned into such quantificational form, we can extend the theory of truth to
cover these sentences. Then, as stated earlier, the proof of the pudding is
in the eating for

Since the entailments that depend on quantification form can be completely
formalized, it is an easy test of our success in capturing logical form
within a theory of truth to see whether our paraphrases articulate the
entailments we independently recognize as due to form. 68
But yet again, though Davidson's use of first-order quantificational structure in this respect may indeed by regarded by Davidson as the 'best' or ideal way of delineating the needed entailments, he is nevertheless forced to admit that 'this does not show that a theory based on first-order quantificational structure is all we need or can have.' It may be, for example, that there are difficulties here which Davidson's austere constraints cannot deal with: but, as will be seen in the following section (3.3), there are options available to us which will enable us to augment Davidson's constraints as he initially envisaged them, and still remain within the decided advantages of a truth conditions theory.

3.3 Degrees of Discriminability

The suggestion already, then, is that perhaps the austere constraints as Davidson initially construes them may have to be augmented, or possibly even abandoned if it transpires that, as some philosophers think, they are not able to cope with such problems involving modal sentences, sentences about propositional attitudes, and so on. For, in view of Davidson's stated aim of understanding all of natural language (CHAPTER TWO), it is not open to him to bypass describing the structure of such locutions. In any case, it now seems certain that the severe constraints which Davidson assumed in his early work were necessary to satisfy Convention (T) are in fact not needed, and that therefore if a richer semantics is required, it can be provided. (See also 5.3). Within the constraints of Convention (T), therefore, we are not compelled to go along with Davidson's original contention that we must refer to first-order structure as the real logical form of natural language, even if, for various other reasons, it is the 'best' solution to adopt. Cargile was right to the extent that the predicate structure or first-order quantificational form required by Davidson, even considered from within a theory of truth, must be construed at best as an 'ideal', a fact which Davidson now seems to admit: 'to call the paraphrase of a sentence into some standard first-order quantificational form the logical form of the sentence seems arbitrary indeed.'
Certainly, if as Davidson maintains, 'the only way to justify particular claims about logical form is by showing that they fit sentences into a good theory, at least a theory better than known alternatives,' then quantificational logic has some claims to be our best bet at present: it is our best understood of logical languages, and has the merits of simplicity, consistency, and completeness. Another point is this. Though the application of fuzzy-logics and many-valued or modal logics may seem to offer some hope of being able to solve some of the difficulties arising from the more recalcitrant types of natural language, would altering logic to suit natural language be a good thing, even accepting that Tarski's Convention (T) allows this? Davidson is surely correct in holding fast if he can do so to the virtues of quantificational logic, as against those like Cargile who would urge altering quantificational form in order to automatically suit natural language. If it were supposed, as it sometimes has been, that ordinary discourse is of primary importance, and that the only object of constructing formal systems is to systematize the valid inferences of informal argument, the discrepancy between the language of the propositional calculus and the vagueness of ordinary language would be a good reason to resort to a non-bivalent logic; but surely ordinary language would not always be considered the final arbiter in such matters. To take a simple example, the ordinary English expressions 'and' / 'not' are generally agreed not to - at least not in all cases - conform to their truth functional equivalents. To the extent that this is the case, the propositional calculus fails to coincide exactly with the ordinary language expressions. Yet this does not, by itself, show that the truth functional connectives do not capture a central use of 'and' / 'not', or that the propositional calculus should therefore be replaced by a non-truth-functional system. If formal logic faithfully followed ordinary language in all its complexity and vagueness in a kind of one-to-one correlation, there would be little point in formalization in the first place. One's aim in formalizing is to generalize, simplify and to increase precision and rigour: in other words to maximize structure. This means that one should not expect nor desire to capture in direct formal representations all the complexity and amorphousness of informal discourse; indeed, considerations of simplicity, precision and rigour - the virtues of quantificational logic as Davidson sees it-
may be expected to lead to discrepancies between the constructed formal language and informal discourse— even, perhaps, in some cases, to suggest a reassessment of our intuitive judgements in favour of the quantified form. So it seems that the best approach is not always to require that we modify our logic to cope with the difficulties in natural language, but rather to regard predicate structure as an ideal to which the arguments of our ordinary discourse inevitably fall short, but towards which they can be approximated. In a sense, it is a case of 'swings and roundabouts': some failure on the part of a formal system to represent all the 'knobs and bumps' of ordinary language is not necessarily objectionable; on the other hand, we must be wary of assuming that all such adjustments of natural language to theoretical demands are acceptable, especially since in Davidson's case it may be important to understand some of these 'knobs and bumps' Davidson indicates, though, that the attempt is not to capture all of the richness of natural language, but rather to give a minimum schematic outline in terms of first-order form. The price of sticking to an austere symbolism in terms of a theory of first-order logic is bound, then, to result in some loss of the naturalness of ordinary language, the crucial point being at what stage this becomes unacceptable: if one attaches greater significance to austerity—as in Davidson's wholly extensional programme— one will inevitably have to accept a divergence from natural language; if one wishes to attach greater significance to conforming with natural language (perhaps as in Cargile's or Reichenbach's account), one will have to adopt a richer formulism. In a Theory of Logic, as with science, it seems a case of competing desiderata.

Clearly, then, the precision of first-order theory is too central and important to be lightly surrendered unless we are forced to do so, and Davidson is right at least to begin theory of the logical form of natural language from this perspective. On this score, at least, Davidson is at one with Grice, who also would defined his semantics according to first-order logical form, and then, by means of his Gricean maxims of 'Conversational Implicatures' accounts for the 'excrescences' of natural language— that is, what is conveyed by a speaker in addition to the semantic or logical core of language. (See PART III) There are also further reasons why Davidson should stay with first-order logical form if it is possible, reasons which are, as will be seen in PART II, crucial
in his attitude towards realism, and the way language is seen as relating to the world. By remaining within the sphere of extensional first-order logic, Davidson hopes to keep, for example, ontological commitments to a minimum. So there are substantial inclining reasons for Davidson wanting to achieve his aim of delineating the whole of the structure of natural language in terms of first-order extensional logic if he can. But it must be admitted here and now that in view of some of the difficulties which will be seen to arise later in the account given in this thesis, not only with respect to how Davidson construes the relationship of language to the world, but more particularly with regard to how speakers use language in this way, the difficulties facing such a completely extensional account make the prospect of its success, in the terms Davidson originally envisaged it, very uncertain. Nevertheless, Davidson still seems optimistic about the chances of an extensional account in terms of first-order logical form not only for indicative sentences, but for propositional attitudes and other such areas of discourse—despite the fact that, for instance, some philosophers have given up the attempt to find predicate structure in such kinds of language: it is not possible on Quine’s proposal to characterize a truth predicate that applies to all the sentences of indirect discourse; similarly, for both Quine and Tarski, the result of quantifying into quotation marks is meaningless. For Davidson, however, even metaphorical discourse has a meaning which can be characterized in terms of a truth conditions structure, with its attendant first order logic.

But the important point to bear in mind is, as suggested at the beginning of this section, that if Davidson’s constraints prove too severe, and his fully extensional account cannot be carried through, there are other options open to us for discriminating structures of natural language from within a truth condition theory. On some readings of Davidson’s early papers, Davidson seems to be adamant that a theory of truth that satisfies Convention(T) cannot allow an intensional semantics. However, in slightly later publications, Davidson becomes less sure about this; and, in very recent work, he appears to acknowledge what recent research indicates is surely the correct standpoint: that if the ‘ideal’ of a first-order logic does prove insufficient for our purposes, then a richer semantics, aided, for example, by a modal logic, would
be advantageous, and would not violate either Davidson's original desiderata or
Tarski's Convention (T). Davidson originally rejects modal logic (as does Quine) as
apparently being unacceptable within Tarski's Convention (T): there seemed to be a question of whether a Model Theoretic definition satisfied the constraints
given by Tarski in his 1931 paper, and this seemed to Davidson an important
reason to prefer an absolute definition. Davidson's use of a theory of truth thus
remained stubbornly bivalent. Yet other philosophers have since shown that this
is not the inevitable consequence of a truth conditions theory satisfying
Convention (T). Another reason Davidson gives is that intensional, modal
logics (Heterophonic truth theories) make for a large gap in the expressive
resources of the object-language and the metalanguage: the metalanguage in
heterophonic truth theories is substantially richer than the object-language,
and this violates one of the four desiderata Davidson laid down for semantics: that since Tarski's work show it is not possible to give a semantic theory for
a natural language within itself, the next best thing is to keep the difference
between the object and metalanguage to a minimum, and this extensional first-
order logics do best (nomophonic theories; see CHAPTER TWO). Though Davidson's
criticisms in this respect seem accurate, it does not seem a decisive reason
for many philosophers for rejecting, other things being considered, the needed
benefits of a non-extensional logic. Finally, another reason for rejecting
Modal logic is given by Davidson as being that heterophonic theories show
intensionality to be a feature of the lack of expressive power:

The real contribution of extensional possible world semantics to the
understanding of natural language may be to encourage us to see talk
of necessity and the rest as intensional only when placed in a restricted
setting; in the context of a fuller scheme intensionality is revealed as a
surface phenomenon. The underlying structure is extensional.

Intensionality is thus taken by Davidson to be a mark of expressive incompleteness, and natural languages are expressively complete; it follows, therefore, for Davidson, that modal logics do not reveal the logical forms of natural language. However, this, too, has been disputed by at least one philosopher:
U Gupta, for example, maintains that in Bressanian modal logics we can define analogues of worlds, and that, consequently, these are expressively complete, and this shows that Davidson's arguments here fail. 90

Summing up what has been said on this issue, it seems that though Davidson was right to begin his theorizing with the most scientifically precise and austere first-order extensional logic, the consensus amongst philosophers now seems to be that there is no fundamental reason why we should be forced to accept that such constraints are mandatory, as Davidson originally assumed, in order to remain within a satisfactory truth conditions theory as defined by Convention (T). It is not a matter for despair, therefore, if the undoubted merits of a theory of truth in terms of an 'ideal' first-order logic as a means of revealing predicate structure -across the whole of natural language may have to be augmented or abandoned, though it is too early at present to be decisive about the fate of such a project. Nevertheless, as Davidson now seems to recognize, even though it may be the 'best' theory of logical form from certain points of view, it is untenable to hold that first-order quantificational form is the one real structure of natural language, even if it can be taken as adequately reflecting in some respects the true structure of natural language. 91

And surely this is consistent with acknowledging what is accepted as the case by many philosophers, that natural language is itself the source, not only of first-order logical structures, but also of all known categories of logic which can also be found reflected there. 92 Certainly the goal of the semantic theorist is for a theory of logical form which will discern maximum structure in natural language, but whether Davidson's criteria are the best means of achieving such a unified theory at present remains unclear. 93
The last section ended with the suggestion that the goal of the semantic theorist is for a theory of logical form which will maximize structure in natural language; whatever the eventual outcome of the issue over suitable logics, the central virtues of Davidson's truth conditions theory as an enterprise remain untouched. Though there are substantial arguments over whether Davidson's original constraints are needed, the attempt to reflect, from within a Tarski-style theory of truth, the whole of the structure of natural language in terms of a network of logical possibility has not been vitiated by any substantial philosophical argument so far considered. (But, as will be seen later, there are other arguments against Davidson's project.)

Accepting for the present that Davidson's extensional programme is not yet discredited, it can be seen that such a theory of logical form within the 'umbrella' of a Tarski-style truth conditions theory would enable Davidson to delineate in holistic terms the web or network of logical possibility across the whole of natural language in terms of first-order logic, this network of quantificational structure said to lie behind language being the unifying element in what Davidson takes to be the crucial feature in natural language: the autonomy of meaning. Natural language, insofar as it reflects this quantificational structure, can also be seen as a self-sustained, autonomous network of logical possibility. The theoretical reconstruction of this total network of the 'meaning' of natural language, beginning with the fragment of indicative sentences and working outwards, being of course the burden of Davidson's project. Such an autonomous structure of 'meaning' is an essential—perhaps the essential—feature of natural language for Davidson, since it is the foundational basis in enabling us not only to put to use the sentences of language within any context whatsoever, but it is also, as will be seen in PARTS II and III, the foundational basis for how Davidson construes the relationship of the structure of language to objective reality, and how he envisages such a use of language as being constrained by features of the psychological reality of the speakers concerned.
If, however, there are great difficulties in the way of accepting, within the constraint of semantic monism, that the logical form of all of natural language is given only by the kind of structure Davidson envisages— even granted that such a predicate structure is really 'keyed-into' natural language as Davidson construes it— it may mean that such an 'ideal' outline of the structure inherent within natural language is no more than one of the many possible structures inherent within such language, structures which for various reasons may often be better delineated by, say, modal logic. It may be, as indicated, that from a certain methodological perspective a theory of 'meaning' (structure) in the terms Davidson describes it is the 'best' solution, but this does not mean that language itself is limited to such definitions. Perhaps, for example, as a philosopher such as Eco would maintain, the network of language as a whole is best construed as a kind of rhizomatic maze, a system of infinite possibility, in which case Davidson's truth conditions theory of its structure is but the first step on a very long journey.

Davidson makes it clear, of course, that his is just a theory of the structure of language, and plainly it is a theory concerned with discriminating only the fine differences within language, and whereby, as will shortly be seen in PARTS II and III, reality itself is thus discriminated. But, if the suggestions in the last section are correct, language may not only be the foundational basis for such an objectively precise and scientifically valid mode of discrimination, but the source, too, of perhaps a multiplicity of ways of differentiating reality amenable to very different means of formalization. However, the degree to which Davidson's truth conditions theory succeeds in describing reality from within language must now be considered.

To summarize this chapter, we began by seeing that Davidson construed his use of Tarski's theory of truth as the only suitable means of directly describing the structure of natural language, whilst simultaneously providing us with a theory of logical form. Davidson's proposal was then to reflect the whole of the structure of natural language in terms of first-order logic—the requirements of holism and semantic monism leading to this standpoint that the
real structure of all of natural language must be in terms of first-order logic. For some philosophers this is nothing less than a myth, since natural language does not have one real logical form. Certainly, there are substantial difficulties in describing many kinds of discourse as having the kind of structure Davidson holds that it should have. Intelligibility demands that we have some theory of logical form by which we can refer to an overall structure in language; even so, Davidson's 'ideal' delineation of this structure in terms of first-order logic, though it may from certain perspectives be considered the 'best' theory we have is not the only option at our disposal for describing the structure of natural language and yet still remaining within the constraints demanded by Convention (T). It may be that there is no final answer to what we should take to be the structure of natural language. Though Davidson's basic contention that his truth conditions theory is the foundational basis for the reconstruction of the structure of natural language in terms of an autonomous network of logical possibility is not rejected, it does suggest that the theory he chooses for finely discriminating such a structure (and thus reality itself) is only one option open to us, and that natural language may indeed by the source which can support many other means of differentiating and describing reality.
PART TWO

LANGUAGE AND THE WORLD
4.1 The Role of the Truth Conditions Theory

For Davidson, the theory of truth suffices for a theory of reference. 1

Behind the simplicity of this statement lie ideas crucial in establishing the radical change in outlook from traditional realism which Davidson's truth conditions theory involves.

PART 1 of this thesis closed with the injunction that Davidson's use of Tarski's truth conditions structure was (amongst other things) to provide the basis of how language relates to objective reality; it was also mentioned that truth was defined via satisfaction, which, though it provided an immediate link with the world, involved the idea of a relation between well-formed-formulae and sequences of objects, a notion that will be shown to enable Davidson to break away from any foundational basis of objective reality - a notion central to traditional realism and even recent philosophy. The truth conditions structure does not need to be seen as being tied to any empirical basis in the world to which it is subservient and to which it corresponds, fits, or organizes. Indeed, the very concept of extra-linguistic archimedean points in the world to which reference can be made in interpreting the meaning of a speaker's utterance is unintelligible: mythical constructs anthropomorphically imposed in an attempt to confer some kind of order on the flux of experience. Davidson's rejection of any dualism between the truth conditions structure of language and the world has the profound consequence that many of the notions central to traditional realism have to be abandoned, leading to criticisms that his brand of realism is at best anaemic, at worst wholly instrumentalist. Nevertheless, it is argued that the concept of objective reality does remain central for Davidson; what remains important is the idea of a reciprocity
between language and the world - a reciprecality, however, in which any structured access to objective reality must be from within the truth conditions structure of language. In effect, Davidson abandons traditional realism's foundational basis in an objective world to which language is subservient, and replaces it with the idea of an intersubjectively shared language from within which, as will be seen in CHAPTER FIVE, the foundational basis of our real relationship to objective reality occurs.

The role of the truth conditions theory in how Davidson sees the relationship of language to reality is thus of fundamental importance. It will be recalled (PART I) that the objective Tarski set himself was to find a satisfactory definition of truth, one which was both materially adequate and formally correct; a theory which would do justice to what he calls the Classical Aristotelian conception of truth, namely, 'to say what is that it is not, or of what is not that it is, is false, while to say of what is that it is, or of what is not that it is not, is true'. Plainly, something along the lines of correspondence to reality was envisaged, yet it is precisely Tarski's definition of truth via satisfaction, as a relation between well-formed-formulae and sequences of objects, which raises the question of just how 'correspondence' is to be interpreted - indeed, whether it is correspondence in terms of traditional realism at all. Pepper, for example, claims that Tarski has 'rehabilitated the correspondence theory of absolute or objective truth' and 'vindicated the free use of the intuitive idea of truth as correspondence to the facts'. However, it is argued here that there is in Tarski's ideas a profound difference from the idea of correspondence to the facts as envisaged by traditional realism, and that there is a philosophically 'neutral' component to Tarski's theory which enables Davidson to circumvent the difficulties in the issue of the correspondence of language to reality. One of Tarski's central ideas comes in the following passage:

The possibility suggests itself, however, of introducing a more general concept which is applicable to any sentential function, can be
directly to the concept of truth. These requirements are met by the notion of the satisfaction of a given sentential function by given objects.

The axiomatically defined notion of satisfaction thus stands to open sentences sentential functions, or predicates, as truth stands to closed sentences, that axiomatisation then being used to define the truth predicate. Open sentences like 'Fx' do not have truth values, but are satisfied (or not satisfied) by infinite sequences of objects—in general, by any ordered n-tuple of objects. Accordingly, Tarski defined a sentence as true in those cases where it is satisfied by all sequences, and false when it is satisfied by none.

It is already plain that such a definition, which is going to form the basis of how Davidson sees the relationship of language to objective reality, is going to involve some very different ideas from those in traditional realism which see language as involved in some kind of correspondence to a world which provides a foundational basis for that language. In a sense, Davidson's use of Tarski's truth conditions theory will be seen to reverse these ideas, though there will still be interesting similarities.

4.21 Davidson's Rejection of Any Foundational Basis in Objective Reality

The operative idea in Davidson's reversal of traditional realism is his rejection of the notion of any dualism between language and uninterpreted reality. In particular, the rejection of the views espoused by the early Wittgenstein and Russell regarding the idea of a structural isomorphism between individual propositions and facts in the world. Wittgenstein's ideas are the more relevant for present discussion, involving as they do reference to abstract entities, whereas Russell also sees an empirical component as crucially involved.

In the Tractatus, then, Wittgenstein says that propositions are complexes truth functionally compounded out of elementary propositions, these in turn being constituted by arrangements of names. Such a structure
Names directly refer to objects; since elementary propositions are constituted out of names arranged in the way that objects are arranged in states-of-affairs, Wittgenstein says that elementary propositions picture those states-of-affairs. Hence propositions compounded out of elementary propositions correspond to the facts built out of the states-of-affairs. Wittgenstein thus aims in the Tractatus to elucidate the structure of language and its function of describing the world on the level of correspondence to abstract facts: the fundamental doctrine is that propositions are pictures, the elements of which correspond to the scene they picture. The world, if it is to be capable of being represented in language must be an arrangement of an array of objects which have various possibilities of being combined with one another. What actually is the case is the way these objects in the world are arranged. This, of course, has the consequence that the meaningful content of discourse is its picturing the facts that constitute the world. Language was literally pictorial: sentences picture facts. And, for a sentence to mirror the world, not only is there this one-to-one correlation between names in the sentence and objects in the world, but the very structure internal to the sentence and which relates the names in the sentence to each other corresponds to the way in which objects in the world are related to each other by a structure internal to the states-of-affairs in the world. In some ways, as will be seen, the notion of the structure or logical form of propositions mirroring the structure of reality is close to ideas of Davidson's; however, one of the major differences lies in Davidson's rejection of individual sentences as corresponding to any foundational basis of abstract facts in the world. Though Davidson sees Tarski's theory as being in some respects like a correspondence theory, the kind of correspondence involved will occur only via the whole structure of language.

Two further points are worth mentioning here which also distinguish Davidson's theory from Wittgenstein's. The notion of names as denoting will be rejected and the failure in Wittgenstein to see—at this stage of his writing anyway—of reference only being conceivable from within an overall theory.
Wittgenstein's notion that the world must, independently of any theory of language, consist ultimately of simple objects related to each other in certain ways, implies a dualism between language and reality; and it is the unargued assertion that the world consists of such facts as arrangements of objects to which language passively corresponds which will be Davidson's prime target. For Davison, only through the autonomous structure of language as a whole can we approach the structure of the world whose independent existence must remain unknowable. Interestingly, there are already hints in the *Tractatus* towards this end. Although language and the world have to share a certain structure in order that language corresponds to the world, Wittgenstein does say that the actual correspondence of propositions to facts cannot itself be meaningfully represented in language or discussed in language.\(^8\) And, by his work which followed, Wittgenstein conceives of language in terms of a structural autonomy which is very close to Davidson's ideas. In *Grammatik*, for instance, he points out that 'the connection between language and reality is made by means of verbal explanation'\(^9\), and concludes that 'language remains closed in upon itself, autonomous.'\(^10\) Similarly in *Zettel* 'the use of language is in a certain sense autonomous'.\(^11\) And finally, in the *Philosophical Investigations*, 'what has to be accepted, the given, is-so one could say-forms of life.'\(^12\) The irreducible basis of language within its context is what is important, and by now Wittgenstein saw clearly that it was a mistake to talk of justifying language by his early notion of correspondence to an independent reality, rejecting the picture theory of language as an illusion.

Before examining Davidson's precise criticisms of the idea of the correspondence of individual sentences to facts in the world, it is instructive to look at Russell's position. Epistemological concerns did not enter Wittgenstein's views sketched above; he is untroubled by being unable to give examples of names and objects, or of elementary propositions and states of affairs. But for Russell, empirical foundations are important: sense-experience is regarded as privileged in that it is somehow immediate; we are
in touch with the world, and can check our reports on it by seeing whether they fit what we sense. The logical atoms or simples (the correlates of the objects in the Tractatus) are sense data: for example, colour patches in the visual field. These are the objects of direct acquaintance, and the names out of which propositions are built refer to the simple objects of acquaintance. Descriptive knowledge is inferred from, or can be referred back to, such episodes of acquaintance. In The Philosophy of Logical Atomism Russell says 'these ultimate simples, out of which the world is built...have a kind of reality not belonging to anything else.' Of more importance to us here is that for Russell, as for Wittgenstein, the central notion is of correspondence, of structural isomorphism between propositions and facts. In the same essay, Russell insists that the world does contain non-linguistic things that are akin to sentences and asserted by them; these things he calls facts. They are allowed a full-fledged existence: 'Facts belong to the objective world.' Facts are, for Russell, as much part of the real world as, say, a chair. Moreover, they are things one can both assert and deny: both exist.

In the above essay, (1918), Russell acknowledges Wittgenstein's influence, but as early as 1904 Russell equates facts with true judgements, and by 1912 he was urging a correspondence between propositions and facts. Undoubtedly, Russell was receptive to facts as extra-linguistic entities because of his tendency to conflate meaning with reference: sentences, being meaningful, had to correspond to something; hence, for each true or false sentence, there is a fact, which the sentence asserts or denies according to whether the sentence is true or false. Even as late as 1948, Russell says 'Everything that there is in the world I call a "fact".' Notwithstanding these comments, however, it also seems apparent that in Russell, as in Wittgenstein, there is an increasing tendency towards naturalism which brings him close to some ideas in Davidson, and which at times go beyond what Davidson would accept. (See CHAPTER FIVE). Even in The Philosophy of Logical Atomism, the analysis of facts in the world rests on an analysis of language itself, despite the misplaced concern with the structural isomorphism between propositions and facts. The latter notion may indeed be an influence carried over from the scientific thought of the day, as some critics have noted.
It is not surprising, then, that Davidson comes to refute, from a philosophical point of view, what is outmoded from the scientific point of view, or that his own standpoint reflects ideas in current 'Bootstrap' Physics. 19

Crucial difficulties with any structural isomorphism between individual propositions and facts soon become evident, and Davidson goes into great detail over the issue, predominantly his Reply to Martin 20 and True to the Facts 21.

In the former paper, Davidson seems at first to be saying that the entities in the world to which sentences correspond are nothing other than the facts espoused by Wittgenstein and Russell: 'The entity to which "The cat has mange" corresponds is the cat's having of mange; equivalently, it is the fact that the cat has mange.' 22 A little later, Davidson asks what it is in the world that makes such sentences true, and answers '...in two words, the facts.' 23 And then comes the comment which really appears to suggest Davidson is in the Wittgenstinean camp: 'It seems that a fact contains, in appropriate array, just the objects any sentence it verifies is about.' 24; he even concludes there may be something to be said for the notion of 'pictures.' 25 Yet Davidson's final ideas are, we will see, very different.

Again, such sentiments initially appear to find an echo in the early stages of True to the Facts, Davidson proposing to 'defend a version of the correspondence theory.' 26 and later indicating that 'The semantic concept of truth as developed by Tarski deserves to be called a correspondence theory because of the part played by the concept of satisfaction;' 27, truth having been explained 'in terms of a relation between language and something else.' 28

But, as with the earlier paper, the ensuing argument shows that both the notion correspondence and facts undergo a radical change. For, the correspondence theories of traditional realism 'have not done well under examination,' 29, and 'The chief difficulty is in finding a notion of fact that explains anything, that does not lapse, when spelled out, into the trivial or the empty.' 30 Thus a sentence like

(5) The statement that Thika is in Kenya corresponds to the facts. 31

for Davidson says no more than '"The statement that Thika is in Kenya is true".' 32
...unless we find another way to pick out facts, we cannot hope to explain truth by appeal to them. Unless, that is, we can provide clear criteria of identity and individuation for facts, they should not be taken as an independent basis for judging the truth of sentences. Davidson's conclusion, in this paper, is that 'Talk about facts reduces to predication of truth'; a similar conclusion is reached in the earlier paper mentioned: 'We may then with easy conscience side with Martin in viewing "corresponds to a fact" when said of a sentence, as conveying no more than "is true"'.

Thus, Davidson's truth conditions theory does not accept any structural isomorphism between individual propositions and facts, and the relation of satisfaction is not what was traditionally accepted as 'correspondence'. As seen on the discussion on Tarski, the satisfaction of sentences by infinite sequences is very different from correspondence to facts, and whether a particular function satisfies a sentence is dependent upon what entities are assigned to the free variables of the sentence. Hence, for Davidson, '...the failure of correspondence theories of truth based on the notion of fact traces back to a common source: the desire to include in the entity to which a true sentence corresponds not only the objects the sentence is "about"...but also whatever it is the sentence says about them.' However, a truth conditions theory based on satisfaction is not so ambitious, its entities being 'no more than arbitrary pairings of the objects over which the variables of the language range with those variables'. The variables, that is, refer to no particular individual. Though a theory of truth may be called a 'correspondence' theory, it offers no means of comparing sentences with what they are about—since it provides no entities such as facts with which to compare sentences. Davidson's final position is aptly summed up in a series of quotations from the original edition of the paper with which we began:

'We do not want facts', 'we do not need facts' and 'facts do not exist'.

Are Davidson's conclusions justified? Some interesting support comes from Strawson's criticisms of Austin's attempt to rehabilitate the traditional
Strawson's criticisms are pertinent since they help to make the point, crucial to Davidson's rejection of facts, that, unless we can find a way to identify and individuate facts in the world, we cannot explain truth by appeal to them. Austin, of course, stresses the conventional character of the correlation of words and the world; accordingly, it in no way depends on the notion of structural isomorphism, or for a true statement to mirror any state-of-affairs. Rather, there are descriptive and demonstrative conventions involved. Thus, a statement such as 'I am hurrying' uttered by s at t would require descriptive conventions correlating the words with the situation in which someone is hurrying, and demonstrative conventions correlating the words with the state of s at t. The statement is true if the specific situation given by the demonstrative conventions as it correlates with words is of the type of situation correlated with the words as given by the descriptive conventions. Any arbitrary words could be correlated with any situation whatever, so long as the correlations are sufficiently consistent for communication to take place successfully. Strawson, indeed, seems to accept two features of this 'purified' version, in that he acknowledges the affixing of the predicate 'true' to statements, rather than to sentences, as with the semantic theory; further he accepts the purely conventional nature of the relation of correspondence. But the pertinent feature here is Strawson's contention that 'The only plausible candidate for the position of what makes the statement true is the fact it states; but the fact it states is not "something" in the world.' That statements can fit the facts is not evidence that facts are features of the world. Strawson does not think that facts are the sort of entities that can be described or referred to: 'Facts are what statements (when true) state; they are not what statements are about.' Statements are indeed about properties and relations in the world; but the actual fact that a statement states is not itself something in the world. A fact makes a claim to an objectivity and independence from human judgement which cannot be justified. If we grant that there is no semantic relation between a statement and a fact.
then there can be no question of considering a statement as logically corresponding to a fact in the traditional sense: they are simply on the wrong side of the semantic fence to be considered as candidates for correspondence. It begins to look as though these so-called 'facts' of the material world are better construed as concepts embodied within our semantic conceptual scheme, rather than things we can know about in the objective world. Indeed, the conceptual map of the world, as it is drawn in the semantic structure of language, may not reflect or correspond to — in the passive yet rigid sense required by traditional realism— the actual objective structure of the world at all, though, as will be seen in CHAPTER FIVE, there may be a sense in which it tends towards it. Facts, then, more a matter of the cognitive content of an indicative statement than objectively real, in a sense 'fictitious' entities, introduced into language by traditional realists (although they appear not to have recognized this) in order to anthropomorphically impose structure on the flux of experience. But this now transfers facts across the semantic border into the realm of language itself, which Strawson seems to have recognized: 'If you prize the statements off the world, you would prize the facts off too; but the world would be none the poorer.' Yet if facts are just 'what statements (when true) state,' as Strawson says, or if 'Talk about facts reduces to predication of truth,' as according to Davidson, then surely facts are no longer of any interest in the search for a realist theory of truth. Such a conclusion is in agreement with Quine's observation that we can abjure facts, '... having satisfied ourselves that to admit them would serve no good purpose.' Abjuration for Quine, and Davidson, consists in not recognizing facts as values for the variables; what is to replace them is another matter, to be discussed in CHAPTER FIVE.

The essential point remains that 'correspondence' with objective reality can only be under linguistic descriptions, facts being on the wrong side of the semantic divide to serve in any explanation of the concept of truth. Naive correspondence theories tried to go too far in assuming that individual sentences are in isomorphic correspondence with reality: such a view fails to take account of the probable complexity of the unconceptualized flux of things, which our language neither can nor needs to capture. Nor is it possible, or even
necessary, if Strawson's argument in *Individuals* is valid, to establish traditional realism's need to show objects as really real— as existing wholly or absolutely independently of our conceptual schemes. As Nelson Goodman has cemented, 'Truth is not a copy of the real world. One of the damn things is enough.' Facts, then, are not to be viewed with the awe accorded them by traditional realism, and Popper's dictum that Tarski 'vindicated the free use of the intuitive idea of truth as correspondence to the facts' has to be viewed with caution. Popper often views the T-schema as having a left-hand-side that refers to a linguistic item, a sentence, and the right-hand-side as referring to an extra-linguistic item, a fact. But this will not do; although Tarski's T-schema can indeed be construed as a 'correspondence' theory in the special sense indicated above, it is no more than a proposed criteria of the adequacy for a truth theory (see PART 1), and does not specify the correspondence theory as uniquely correct, let alone specifying correspondence to facts. Both Goodman and Sellars have pointed out that Tarski's criteria leaves us free to adopt a correspondence, a coherence, or a redundancy theory, and this agrees with Tarski's own estimate:

'...we may remain naive realists or idealists, empiricists, or metaphysicians ....The semantic conception is completely neutral toward all these issues.'

Tarski's truth conditions theory carries with it an underlying philosophical neutrality such that 's is satisfied by all functions' does not need to mean what 'corresponds to the facts' was taken to mean, though in the sense described they are equivalent. Facts do not exist in that they cannot be intelligibly construed as extra-linguistic entities in objective reality to which our sentences correspond; rather, they are better viewed as theoretical postulations within our conceptual scheme of language—myths employed by traditional realism, but only one of the many such theoretical entities which the structure of our language allows us to reconstruct.

Davidson's use of Tarski's truth conditions theory can thus successfully circumvent any problems incurred by traditional realism's need for a foundational basis in objective reality to which sentences correspond.
There is no place in Davidson's truth conditions theory for the realist reference of words. Proper names, for example, conceived of as they are in certain traditional accounts and more recently by the causal theory of reference in terms of 'labels' has no role within the semantic concept of truth. Rather, the holistic structure of language, on Davidson's account, requires that the function of words be subsumed within predicate structure. It is also intrinsically linked to the rejection of any dualism between the elements of language and objective reality and of any empirical basis in the world as a foundation for language. Unlike the rejection by Davidson of sentences as corresponding to facts, this issue is more contentious.

In his earliest papers, it perhaps appears that Davidson is not so opposed to the notion of words being directly linked to the world as he later becomes:

Statements are true or false because of the words used in making them, and it is words that have interesting, detailed, conventional connections with the world. Any serious theory of truth must therefore deal with these connections, and it is here if anywhere that the notion of correspondence can find some purchase.  

This is not an opinion Davidson espouses in later works. In one way it is surprising that Davidson, in general, becomes so antithetical to the causal theory of reference, since it has been held by philosophers such as Putnam or Kripke to be the *sine qua non* of scientific realism, principally through its explanation of how natural kind terms refer. Such a theory, taking its impetus from its repudiation of traditional descriptive theories, and with its thesis that names do not have their extensions determined by Fregean senses, may at first seem to offer good reasons why Davidson should acknowledge the merits of its objective and scientific stance; yet one can reject the notion of Fregean senses and still remain a descriptionalist, as will be seen.  

The heart of the descriptionalist point of view which the causal theory attempts to refute is given by Kripke, who cites Russell and Frege as examples
of adherents to the traditional conjunction theory whereby the intended referent of a name is determined by a precise set of descriptions associated with that name: 'Frege and Russell certainly seem to have the full-blown theory according to which a proper name is...synonymous with the description which replaces it.'

Kripke also adverts to Wittgenstein and Searle as contemporary philosophers for whom a cluster theory of proper names has seemed more plausible, but denies that this is anything more than a refinement of the older, stricter view, and maintains it changes nothing:

There is a popular substitute for the theory of Frege and Russell...The substitute that, although a name is not a disguised description, it either abbreviates or anyway its reference is determined by, some cluster of descriptions. The question is whether this is true...

Kripke, Putnam, and Donnellan all oppose such descriptive theories as theories of reference, arguing that proper names refer independently of such descriptions. One of Donnellan’s major insights, for instance, has been to show that reference can take place not only in the absence of identifying descriptions, but even when the identifying descriptions associated with a name do not correctly apply to the individual to whom the name refers. Donnellan distinguishes between two kinds of use for definite descriptions— the attributive and the referential. In using the former, a speaker intends to be saying something about whomever fits a certain description without necessarily having any idea who it is that fits that description. In the referential case, a speaker has a definite idea whom he means to be speaking about, and uses the description to refer to that specific individual. An example given is the use of the sentence 'The man who murdered Smith is insane'— which, attributively, conveys that any person who murdered Smith must be insane; referentially, it conveys that, for example, Jones— whom both speaker and audience know to have been convicted of the murder, even though perhaps wrongly—is insane. Furthermore, one can use a definite description referentially referentially, even if it is not true of the person referred to, the criterion of successful referential use being that the speaker does bring to the audience's attention the person he has in mind.
Insofar as it is pertinent to what will be seen to be Davidson's attitude to names and the causal theory of reference, Donnellan's point is important in showing that reference does not always or only occur via descriptions, and that it can and does occur independently of them. Yet it does not show that in every case the causal account is successful: as indicated below, there are some instances where the descriptive theory seems to be needed. Furthermore, there are other difficulties in the way of accepting the causal account which the descriptive theory does not encounter.

The possibility of reference independent of descriptions is also made by Kripke, who claims that names are rigid designators: 'Let's call something a rigid designator if, in every possible world it designates the same object!' and adds 'I will hold that names are always rigid designators.' For Kripke, a name (or later, as he claims, a description) that is a rigid designator refers to the same individual in every possible world in which that individual exists. Individuals will have different properties in different possible worlds and it cannot be the case that the name of an individual is synonymous with some set of descriptions. So, for example, the name 'Aristotle' always refers to that individual independently of satisfying any of the descriptions commonly associated with Aristotle who will only possess in all possible worlds such properties as are essential to his being Aristotle. Certainly this allows what is surely true— that we can discover of individuals that certain descriptions fail to fit them; yet, as with Donnellan, there are difficulties in maintaining the notion of rigid designation across the board, and problems involving essentialism will be seen to make it unacceptable to Davidson.

Indeed, it is in this second major aspect of the causal theory— its extension of the insights claimed for proper names to nouns standing for natural kinds such as 'gold', 'water', or 'tiger' that the issue becomes clear. Both Kripke and Putnam in particular take the causal theory to support scientific realism through this explanation of how natural kind terms refer. For Kripke, they too are rigid designators: 'gold' always refers to the same stuff whatever its phenomenal characteristics might be. Furthermore, what it is to be 'gold' cannot be specified by any list of properties, as on the traditional view; whether or not it is yellow and malleable, for instance,
what determines whether something is gold is its atomic structure. This reinforces what was said about descriptions not being the crucial factor in deciding whether a term applies to it or not; they may be a guide to identification, but do not settle what it is for something to be of that kind. Putnam makes the same point with regard to water: something is water only if it has the right kind of chemical structure. Though Kripke acknowledges that we can use descriptions in initially fixing the reference of natural kind terms, both philosophers hold that reference is otherwise divorced from the descriptive aspect. Rather—and this is the third major aspect of the causal theory of reference—reference is said to be determined by causal chains, historically linking present uses of the term to the occasion on which the referent of the term was fixed; objects so 'baptised' having their names handed on from speaker to speaker, the causal chain being maintained so long as later speakers intend to refer to what it was originally intended so to refer.

Yet there are grave difficulties in the face of accepting the causal theory of reference, difficulties which manifest themselves when we ask what exactly it is that is to constitute the reference of a rigid designator, and what also of other referring terms such as those which pick out non-natural kinds. Rigid designators were defined as terms which designate the same items in every possible world. Yet how are these 'items' to be construed? They cannot be the extensions of the terms, since extensions can vary across worlds. One solution proposed is to say a rigid designator designates the kind or species itself. This in turn raises problems with respect to non-natural kind terms, where we don't normally have a kind of thing in mind at all: rather, we employ general specifications such that if anything fits some of them, we apply the label. So here, non-natural kinds lack biological or atomic essences, as a ground for designation, and, indeed, it seems that in such cases at least, the descriptive theory applies.

But the very notion that a rigid designator designates the kind or species itself is fraught with difficulties involving problems of essentialism. As seen, on the causal account, properties associated with a term at any given time have no inherent bearing upon what the term refers to; only on the condition that the properties truly belong to the things in a natural kind, that they
are essential properties of things in that natural kind can they indicate what
the term really refers to. For, unless these properties were essential, they
would inevitably direct us to false conclusions and we would end up including in
a natural kind term's extension things which do not really belong there. But
how are we to determine the properties essential to a natural kind? Even if we
knew many of the properties of things in a natural kind, there are apparently,
no grounds by which to distinguish the essential from the inessential properties.

Essential properties—assuming that there are such things de re—do not carry
identifying marks. Since an appeal to the obvious basis for determining
which properties are essential—our beliefs about them—is explicitly ruled out,
both Kripke and Putnam make the tacit assumption that the properties essential
to an item as a member of a natural kind are the properties of its micro-
structure. The notion of internal structures of things is invoked by Kripke, for
example, because it is a scientifically precise and unequivocal way to give the
essence. But the idea of the essence of a kind consisting in the internal
structure of the individuals of that kind such that membership of that
kind essentially depends upon having the appropriate internal structure
has been questioned by some philosophers. Does the notion of internal
structure make sense? Kripke says that it is necessary that a tiger, for
instance, has a certain internal structure. But if such internal structures
were nested, if tigers were composed of an arrangement of physiological struc-
tures which in turn have internal structures of cells, which in turn have
internal structures of molecules...atoms...subatomic particles...What level
then is to constitute its essence: The causalist could reply that any level
would suffice; but this would apply equally to its external structure, and
Kripke has specifically denied that external structure is enough to settle
that something is a thing of a certain kind. Essentialists cannot invoke this
idea of whatever the internal structure something may have constitutes its
essence; Kripke, indeed, does however rely on this strategy. It would
seem, then, that the causal theory of reference, and, more generally,
possible worlds semantics, is, by virtue of its essentialism, strongly
realist in character. It requires that reference be possible to essences of
terms not determined by our descriptive or theoretical characterizations at all; thus it remains unclear what essences are or how they are to be recognized. This requirement that the reference of terms is not determined by theoretical considerations, that terms refer invariantly regardless of the descriptions and the scientific theory in which they are embedded makes, as Putnam says, the notions of truth and reference available extra-theoretically. It thereby removes semantic concern with the reference of words from any overall theory: realist intuitions are invoked by assigning the workings of reference to a reality independent of human conceptual or theoretical schemes.

Curiously enough, there is in Putnam a hint that though $x$ bears the relation \(\text{same}_{1}\) to $y$ just in case $x$ and $y$ agree in important physical properties, the added qualification needed is that \(\text{importance is an interest-relative notion}\)." Earlier, Putnam also says that \(\text{the relation same}_{1}\) is a theoretical relation." Yet if Putnam means here that the essential nature of the things in a natural kind is stipulated by a scientific theory, though there would be no difficulty in deciding which properties to employ in order to judge the extension of natural kind terms, it would destroy the premisses on which the causal theory is based. For, if the relation \(\text{same}_{1}\) is theoretical, what a natural kind term refers to is then characterized by a scientific theory, and a term's reference could no longer be said to be de-limited solely by the real as construed by essentialists. Rather, it would be de-limited by what we happen to find important in the world by virtue of our scientific theory; natural kind term's extensions would then have to be regarded at least partly dependent upon how we (theoretically) regard the world, and the natural kinds could not be thought of as entities wholly independent of our scientific theories.

This, of course, is precisely what Quine has pointed out 78 and which is also to be a central feature of Davidson's rejection of the causal theory of reference: the unintelligibility of regarding our classifications of things as being governed by anything other than our conceptual scheme: essence is always relative to interest, and does not and cannot lie out there in an extra-theoretical world, there are no de re necessities as required by essentialism.
Davidson has in fact pointed out that his view of reference is naturally associated with a description theory of names, and that he favours such a standpoint. 79 This is no longer surprising in the light of what has been said about the causal theory requiring that a direct relationship be envisaged between words and the world. Neither should it be surprising to find Davidson accepting Quine's thesis of the 'inscrutability of reference: that there is no way to tell what the singular terms of a language refer to, or what its predicates are true of. 80 ; presumably, too, Davidson would approve of Quine's use of Russell's theory of descriptions to this end. His object is plainly to subsume the function of words to the predicate structure of sentences, and thence to the holistic truth conditions structure of language. The realist reference of words thus is not, in Davidson's view, a necessary part of semantic structure; yet, since there is a tendency to think of names as the means by which language gets its most direct grip on the world, this is an unacceptable consequence for some philosophers espousing 'full-blooded' realism of the traditional kind.

Quine's proposal for the elimination of singular terms involves, first, the replacement of singular terms by definite descriptions, and is clearly in the spirit of Russell's approach to proper names. On Russell's view, as elaborated by Quine, the role of proper names in semantic theory is taken over by the role of predicates, and it is this notion - though in a slightly different form, which is endorsed by Davidson. Russell held that what was important about his Theory of Descriptions was 'the discovery that, in analysing a significant sentence, one must not assume that each separate word or phrase has significance on its own account. ' 81 Hence, for Russell, most common nouns and proper names are concealed descriptions; only logically proper names directly refer to something in the world (though it even seems doubtful whether there are any logically proper names in ordinary language.) Such a theory enabled Russell to conserve the denotative theory of meaning, whilst enabling him to avoid Meinong's notion of subsistence, 82 since propositions like 'the present King of France is wise' were palpably meaningful despite having nothing, apparently, to denote. The correct analysis for such sentences
containing definite descriptions Russell held to be:

1. The present King of France is wise
2. There is a King of France
3. There is not more than one King of France
4. Anything which is King of France is wise; or, more perspicuously,
   \[(E)(Fx \land (y)(Fx \land \neg Fy = x)) \land Gx)\]

Because (2) is false, (1) is also false; whereas in (1), the descriptive phrase appears to have a denoting role, it can be seen that in the paraphrase of the entire sentence there occur no singular terms, but only variables bound by quantifiers, predicates and identity. This eliminates the difficulty created by vacuous descriptions by showing that they are not in fact logically proper names.

Quine's proposal for eliminating singular terms makes extensive use of Russell's Theory of Descriptions. Singular terms are replaced by definite descriptions, and then definite descriptions themselves are eliminated in favour of quantifiers and variables; sentences containing names (such as 'Socrates took poison') can be replaced by sentences containing descriptions ('The x which socrates took poison'), and then by sentences containing only quantifiers and variables ('There is just one x which socrates and whatever socrates took poison'). Quine concludes that since whatever can be said with the help of names can be said in a language without names, it cannot be names which refer, but that rather it must be the quantified variables. Quine's thesis has come under some criticism, however, for example, the fact that Quine can supply an appropriate definite description to replace a name only by the use of predicates which are explained with the help of names.

As it stands, therefore, Quine's proposal seems inadequate, but a recent modification of Russell's and Quine's predicate view has been put forward by Tyler Burge, and it is this which is specifically endorsed by Davidson.

On Burge's view, instead of a name being regarded as abbreviating a definite description, it is held to be, itself, a predicate, and that predicates
In a limited context, proper names may be- and often are- assumed to apply to a unique object. But a semantical theory (like ours) that is applicable to a language without restrictions on the context in which sentences of the language may be used, cannot commit itself to such an assumption. 87

Hence, on Burge's account, 'Jones is tall', for instance, is best regarded as an open sentence, with 'Jones' as a predicate governed by a demonstrative - 'that Jones is tall' - the reference of which is fixed by the context. Regarded thus, as a predicate, 'Jones' is for Burge, true of an object just in case the object is a Jones, that is, that the object has been given that name in an appropriate way. Criticisms of Burge's view have, of course, been lodged. 88

But what is important for this part of the discussion is that Burge's conclusion that 'Proper names are predicates. One need not distinguish truth-theoretically the objects of which they are true' is accepted by Davidson, with the consequence that names are not allowed, as on the causal view, any direct contact with the world, their reference rather being explicated in terms of the reference of their descriptions.

For Davidson, then, there can be no rigid reference between words and objects along the lines required by the causal theory of reference. We have seen two of the reasons why Davidson would reject the causal thesis: first, that it would seem to rely on a basis of extra-theoretical internal structures and second, the role of words themselves is subsumed to that of predicate structure within the truth conditions theory as a whole, omitting any independent connection between words and the world. Davidson emphasises these points over and over again in various papers. For example:

...it is the semantic features of sentences (for example truth) that should be viewed as most directly connected with the evidence while the
To make good his case, Davidson seems to rely on Wallace's notion that it is only in the context of sentences that words have meaning; thus, the reference of words is dependent upon the function of sentences. The *sine qua non* of scientific realism, the causal theory of reference, goes out of the window, for even if it were true, Davidson holds, it would simply not affect his project. Such an independent explication of the relationship of words to the world is simply not a consideration of the truth conditions theory, which does not explain reference. Davidson likens the causal theory of Kripke and Putnam with the "Building-Block" theories of the traditional empirical realists:
on such a view, says Davidson, reference must be given an empirical interpretation which is clearly not amenable to Davidson's analysis since it is one that is independent of how sentences containing these names work. A truth conditions theory, on the other hand, is not open to 'direct confrontation with the evidence' and 'it assigns no empirical content directly to relations between names or predicates and objects.' Even if the causal theory were shown to be correct (and elsewhere, Davidson maintains that in some cases this could be an accident) — though it would mean his concept of naming would need to be revised—nevertheless, it would not mean Davidson's project would have to be abandoned, since the question of whether the former theory is true is independent of the issue of whether the truth conditions theory is true: 'even if words do have, say, causal connections with what they refer to, this does not mean that the adequacy of a theory of truth is not to be tested at the sentential level.' The reason for this independence is plainly that a translation manual is only a method for going from the sentences of one speaker to another, and we can infer from it nothing about the relations between words and objects. Questions of what object a word refers to, or what objects a predicate is true of, have no answer from this particular perspective.

On this view, how a truth conditions theory maps the non-sentential expressions
onto objects is unimportant so long as the truth conditions themselves are not affected. Indeed, on Davidson's view, 'nothing can reveal how a speaker's words have been mapped on to objects...'

Thus, 'we know, or think we know, what the words in our language refer to, but this is information no translation manual contains.'

There is, then, no place in Davidson's truth conditions theory for realist reference. It is this rejection which has led many philosophers to see this as an abjuration of any full-blooded realism and even as more than an espousal of an anaemic form of realism, but rather as a move in the direction of complete instrumentalism. A typical criticism would be that 'The realist has to insist that the relationship of word to object is more fundamental than any relationship of word to word.'

As Davidson recognises, the argument against giving up the referential function of words to the world is that they are needed to complete the account of a truth conditions theory. The argument of such philosophers seems to be that a theory of truth explains the truth conditions of sentences in terms of the referential properties of the words they contain; if we are to complete the task of explaining truth, therefore, they would see it as necessary to explicate the reference of the actual words contained within these sentences. So, for example, one philosopher maintains:

We must say something in non-semantic terms about the nature of these links between words and the world. ...In the absence of this, we do not seem to have explained how the whole structure of language is related to the world.

This same philosopher, in common with many, would see this task as being accomplished by means of the causal theory of reference. He would hold that there is literally no question of explaining the truth of sentences without explaining the reference of words since a sentence is true because of the reference of the words it contains; now does he understand Davidson's claim that truth is, but reference is not, a place of direct contact with the non-linguistic world.

Finally, he mentions that we need an argument to talk us out of a 'full-blooded' realism in which 'the truth values of our sentences...
depend on the objective referential relations their parts have to an independently existing reality.

Adding that Davidson's argument to this effect seems to him to have failed. A causal theory of reference is needed in order to answer the question of how language hooks onto the world.

We have already seen that Davidson would not accept that a causal explanation of the reference of words could operate independently of an overall scientific or semantic theory and that it is the semantic features of sentences (that is, there truth) which is most directly connected with the evidence, with words doing their work in explaining the features of sentences. Thus, those philosophers who think that what makes sentences true— and Davidson cites Hartry Field as an example— most involve an independent explanation of the role of words as they refer to the world— make the mistake, in Davidson's view, of assuming that the truth conditions theory, since it explains what makes a sentence true by assigning semantic roles to their parts (see PART 1), must therefore be able to give an independent account of the semantic properties of these parts with respect to their reference. Yet, for Davidson, 'It is perfectly consistent to hold that a theory is testable only at the level of sentences while explaining the features of sentences on the basis of an inner structure.'

The issue, then, is again concerned with (as it was in deciding on the relationship of facts to the world) those who hold that, in this case, there must be a 'correspondence' between individual words and an independent reality as against those like Davidson who hold that in interpreting an (alien) speaker's linguistic scheme, the truth conditions theory neither requires nor allows such a relationship to be considered. In such a way, Davidson avoids any 'dualism' between individual words and extra-semantic reality. Reference cannot be given any independent analysis in terms of a relationship between words and extra-linguistic reality, and the need for a theory of realist reference in 'traditional' terms falls through. 'In order for that to be possible,' says Davidson, 'reference must be a place where direct contact between linguistic theory and actions and objects is described in non-linguistic terms'; yet, since it is inconceivable, for Davidson that one could explain the
relation between a word and the world 'without first explaining the role of the word in sentences', reference cannot and does not involve such direct contact:

...the essential question is whether it is the, or at least one, place where there is direct contact between linguistic theory and events, actions, or objects described in non-linguistic terms.

The answer received, from Davidson's work, is a resounding 'no': 'We don't need the concept of reference; neither do we need reference itself, whatever that may be.' Davidson finally wraps matters up with the injunction that '...we must give up the concept of reference as basis...' and that reference plays no essential role in explaining the relation between language and reality.

The Building-block theories of traditional realism, and theories such as the causal theory of reference which try to give reference an independent interpretation in terms of non-linguistic concepts are unacceptable as far as semantics is concerned, and those like Field who hold that a realist account needs reference are making untenable claims about a pre-existing relation between words and things.

It would seem that on Davidson's thesis, to ask for something like a causal theory to nail language to reality would be to fail to recognise that we are adrift in Neurath's boat, and can only work from within a truth conditions theory of the structure of the whole of language, and that we have no alternative but to reinterpret reference instrumentally as a theoretical construct: 'Words and one or another way of connecting them with objects are constructs we need to implement the theory.' Since reference is 'a posit for implementing a theory of truth', the only evidence for reference is evidence for that theory of truth, without needing any independent confirmation from a foundational basis in objective reality. Once again, as with 'facts', the autonomy of Davidson's truth conditions theory is preserved: it is only from within such a theory of the structure of the whole of language that we can relate to the world.
So far in considering Davidson's rejection of the need for any foundational basis in objective reality, the correspondence of individual sentences to facts and the reference of words to objects has been examined. In this final section of this part of the chapter consideration is given to Davidson's equally adamant rejection of the notion of their being any 'correspondence' or 'fitting' of the whole of a language to objective reality. This is epitomized for Davidson by Quine's thesis of language as a 'Web of belief' whose edges impinge on experience, and which is rejected as 'the third, and perhaps the last,' 'dogma of empiricism.' Such a disavowal is a refusal to admit the dualism Davidson finds implicit in Quine's relative conceptual schemes, and finally puts paid to the idea that language requires any foundational basis in objective reality. Rather, we are left with language as the 'real intersubjectively shared basis from within which we must approach any structured view of the world.

Quine's theory of language has been dubbed by Dummett as an organic version of the verificational theory implied by the Logical Positivists, who wanted to maintain that statements reporting immediate perceptual experience (the 'protocol' statements) are certain because they correspond to the 'facts' of sensory experience; the truth of the other (non-protocol) statements being determined by their logical relations to these basic statements. Thus, Carnap held that 'scientific knowledge rested upon such protocol sentences consisting in incorrigible reports of sensory observations, which, because of their foundational certainty, required no further verification.' Likewise, Schlick argued that protocol sentences constitute 'the unshakeable point of contact between knowledge and reality' and that they are 'the only synthetic statements that are not hypotheses.' This is the very thing Neurath denied: 'There is no way of taking conclusively established pure protocol sentences as the starting point of the sciences. No tabula rasa exists.' Neurath was concerned with showing that we cannot investigate reality by beginning with a clean slate, but that we already have an apparatus of theories which constitute the very
conditions of our inquiry; we cannot hope to get outside this theoretical structure to a reality which is not conditioned by theory. There is no protocol language: all observation is itself theoretical.

It is not hard to see Quine as the inheritor of such a tradition. Though all discourse is theoretical for Quine, and he follows Duhem in stressing that it is not individual sentences, but the corporate body of the theoretical network as a whole which confronts empirical experience, nevertheless, the role of sensory stimulation still plays a crucial part in Quine's analysis. Hence, stimulus meaning is 'the entering wedge not only for the field linguist but also for the child who's learning the language, and even for observational evidence for scientific theory.' 117 'Two cardinal tenets of empiricism remain unassailable...namely, that"whatever evidence there is for science is sensory evidence" and "all inculcation of meanings or words must rest ultimately on sensory evidence"'. 118 Within this outline, observation sentences have a privileged status, being the basis for translation between different languages, the point of contact between observation and theory in language learning, and as the check points for 'Science as a linguistic structure that is keyed to observation here and there.' 119 Nevertheless, though sensory stimulation is the bedrock of scientific theory, and thus of language, it is inconclusive for Quine and always will be; since his espousal of holism means that even the observation sentences themselves must be 'associated as wholes with the stimulatory situations that warrant assent to them' with 'no hint of what aspects of the stimulatory situations to single out somehow as objects.' 120 There is always an inherent indeterminacy, an under-determination by the evidence, so that any appeal to sensory experience will not be sufficient to pin down the relevant terms of a theory.

This theory-ladenness of all discourse--even the privileged 'observation sentences'--leads to the indeterminacy of translation, there being no Archimedean point in reality to which subscribers to one language, conceived of as a scheme of reference, can refer in order to neutrally compare an alien scheme of reference. Though, according to Quine, reasonable translations may be possible for observational sentences (and truth functions), to go beyond this, we make assumptions in equating an alien's words with ours, which Quine
terms 'analytical hypotheses' and 'There can be no doubt that rival systems of analytical hypotheses can fit the totality of speech behaviour to perfection, and still specify mutually incompatible translations of countless sentences insusceptible of independent control.' 121 Hence, 'The point is not that we cannot be sure whether the analytical hypothesis is right, but that there is not even, as there was in the case of "Gavagai" an objective matter to be right or wrong about.' 122 Since an analytical hypothesis cannot be objectively right or wrong, Quine concludes that no manual of translation can be objectively right or wrong either: we may consider the translation of a given expression right or wrong only relative to a certain translation manual; absolutely speaking, translation is 'indeterminate'.

As Davidson notes, 123 it is from the inscrutability of reference that the indeterminacy of translation follows: both of which Davidson accepts; but the further step to which this leads Quine— the relativity of reference schemes—is rejected by Davidson. For Quine, as we have seen, it is pointless to try and say what the objects of a theory are, beyond saying how to interpret one theory in terms of another theory or reference scheme; but Quine also adds that 'What makes sense is to say not what the objects of a theory are, absolutely speaking, but how one theory of objects is interpretable or reinterpretable in another.' 124— and it is this use by Quine of the term 'absolutely' which bothers Davidson since to him it suggests that 'there is a way of relatively speaking that will decide, perhaps arbitrarily, what the objects are', and this I have strongly denied.' 125 Quine, it seems, though he holds that there can be no such thing as absolute reference, as on the 'myth' of traditional realism, does think that there is no need to give up the notion of reference entirely, and that relativity of reference is feasible.

However, is not such a view paradoxical? Field, for instance, maintains that Quine's views on the relativity of reference are untenable, and it seems Davidson agrees with Field's reasons for this. 126 For instance, Field criticizes Quine's view that 'To say that a term T used in one language signifies the set of rabbits, relative to a translation manual M, is in effect just to say that M translates T as "rabbit "' as unsatisfactory since the notion
of relative reference still needs the notion of some link between the word 'rabbit' of our own language and the actual rabbits. But this is the kind of connection which Quine's indeterminacy thesis denies. It seems, says Field, that we have to understand an unrelativized notion of reference before we can understand Quine's relativized version. Quine himself appears to have become a victim of the 'myth of the museum', and Field concludes; 'It is clear, then, that Quine's indeterminacy thesis forces us to give up not only the absolute notions of denotation and signification, but even the relativized notions which Quine has proposed as surrogates for them.'

Davidson agrees with Field:

The fixing of reference and ontology for the object language has been done on the basis of an arbitrary choice; but the arbitrary choice succeeds in doing this only if the relativized "refers" of the metalanguage has somehow been nailed down. And this is what we argued cannot be done for any language.

Davidson's rejection of Quine's relativity of reference, like his rejection of correspondence to 'facts' or or the realist reference of words, hinges on the idea that for Davidson—as for Field, and also Putnam—it requires an essential dualism between language as a conceptual or reference scheme and uninterpreted reality: 'Quine settles, at the end, for a "frank dualism" ...' and leaves the problem of the relative of reference unresolved, whereas for Davidson 'at no point has anyone been able to specify the objects of which a predicate is true, no matter how arbitrarily or relatively.'

Elsewhere, too, conceptual relativism comes under fierce attack from Davidson, and for the very reason that it implies a dualism between language and uninterpreted reality, and 'this dualism of scheme and content, of organizing system and something waiting to be organized, cannot be made intelligible and defensible.' And for Davidson, its rejection is the final rejection of the idea that language needs any foundational basis in objective reality: 'It is itself a dogma of empiricism, the third dogma. The third, and perhaps the last, for if we give it up it is not clear that there is anything distinctive left to call empiricism.'
If Davidson's and Field's criticisms that Quine's conceptual relativity is otiose is correct, what is the consequence? There is a hint in Davidson's comment that 'Different points of view make sense, but only if there is a common co-ordinate system on which to plot them.' And, elsewhere, Davidson mentions that Quine was aware of 'the paradox in cultural relativism' — that we 'cannot rise above it without giving it up' — and that now Davidson would like to say the same about Quine's relativity of reference, together with the more extreme variants such as Feyerabend's. Such ideas Davidson holds to depend upon the notion of 'something neutral and common that lies outside all schemes' and to which relativized conceptual schemes correlate. Davidson cites Feyerabend's suggestion that we can compare contrasting schemes by "choosing a point of view outside the system or the language," and equates this with the idea expressed by Quine with which we began this section: that "The totality of our so-called knowledge or beliefs...is a man-made fabric which impinges on experience only along the edges..." Yet 'Given the dogma of a dualism of scheme and reality, we get conceptual relativity, ...Without the dogma, this kind of relativity goes by the board.' In other words, there can be no place in Davidson's philosophy for the notion of relative conceptual schemes, since if we reject the idea of uninterpreted evidence as a foundational basis for our conceptual schemes so relativized, there is no longer any room left for the dualism of scheme and content; there is nothing any longer to relativize to.

This does not, in Davidson's view, mean giving up the idea of objective truth, or that giving up the dualism of conceptual scheme and objective reality means the notion of world is otiose; the idea of total evidence is valid, but: 'Nothing, however, no thing, makes sentences and theories true: not experience, not surface irritations, not the world, can make a sentence true.' For 'the notion of fitting the totality of experience, like the notion of fitting the facts, or of being true to the facts, adds nothing intelligible to the simple concept of being true...'

Our attempt to characterize languages or conceptual schemes in terms of the notion of fitting some entity has come down, then, to the simple
Whether or not Quine would agree is another matter, since he has very recently still urged the notion of his empiricist concept of sensory stimulation—apparently to avoid the danger of seeing the pursuit of scientific method as becoming solely a quest for internal coherence. Davidson's earlier point that for a theory to fit the totality of possible sensory evidence is merely for that theory to be true certainly suggests the idea of a coherence theory. (And we must recall that Tarski's constraints countenance a coherence theory—as seem in section 4.21.) Certainly we have now reached the stage where it is clear that it is only through the truth conditions theory of language as a whole that we can confront objective reality and 're-establish unmediated contact with the familiar objects whose antics make our sentences and opinions true or false'. But does this mean Davidson's construal of his truth conditions theory is in terms of just a coherence theory? This is the issue to be taken up in the next section.

4.3 Truth Conditions Structure as 'Entering Wedge' to Objective Reality

So far, Section 4.2 has made it abundantly clear that Davidson's truth conditions theory rejects entirely the idea that language—whether in terms of sentences, words and predicates, or whole conceptual schemes—requires any foundational basis in objective reality to which it passively corresponds in the sense required by traditional realism, and to which language is subservient. The arguments in favour of such a position are substantial, even though some philosophers still have not accepted that Davidson's use of Tarski's truth theory does not need the world in this sense; they see Davidson's refutation of all dualisms between language and uninterpreted reality as resulting in, at best, anaemic form of realism, and at worst, a total concentration on on language as a formal system which ignores the needed connection with 'real' reality; thus, even Quine hints at the danger, as he sees it, of Davidson's thesis leading only towards a coherence theory. Certainly, of course, there are strong
similarities between Davidson's views and those, who, like Rescher, adhere to a pure coherence theory; yet there are also important differences. Though we must work from within a (truth conditions) theory of language, the idea of objective reality is not jettisoned by Davidson, but rather has a reciprocal role to play with language. All that is required is the notion that for any structured view of objective reality, the thrust must come from the 'entering wedge' of the truth conditions theory. Only in this sense is language dominant, becoming the basis for our intersubjective reference to the world.

Initially, it must be admitted that Davidson's truth theory has many marked resemblances to a coherence theory (which Tarski's philosophical neutrality sanctions)—but is it merely that? As seen earlier, Neurath's views led directly to the idea that all discourse is theoretical; in some respects Neurath's is an undisguisedly coherence-style theory: 'because the object is to construct a consistent system of observational and theoretical—that is, protocol and non-protocol sentences—the only test available for new sentences offered as candidates for membership of the system is to compare it with the system...' For Neurath, the primary motive for adopting a coherence theory is the apparent impossibility of getting outside theory or language to reality. Since no word-word relation can serve as the foundation for truth, truth itself must consist in a relation of coherence between propositions, viewed as constituting a system satisfying criteria of consistency and completeness. These notions of systematization are undoubtedly fundamental to Davidson's project and also to Rescher's recent effort to make sense of the idea of a pure coherence theory. It is not necessary to look at the various criticisms that have been levelled at Rescher's attempt to 'reinstate' the coherence theory; what is important here is now and why Davidson's views differ from Rescher's, and thus from holding to a pure coherence theory.

Rescher's notion of truth as coherence unconnected with external criteria has consequences for his view of the nature of the relationship of language and 'reality unacceptable to Davidson. In a very different way from the ideas considered so far, it too depends upon a dichotomy between language and reality—this time, in terms of any correspondence between the two; but in terms of language as an organized scheme operating on an otherwise wholly unknowable...
reality, a formless reality: 'A conceptual scheme is an instrument for organizing our experience into a systematized view of reality.' Furthermore, the ultimate justification for the coherence theory rests not on an appeal to truth, but to pragmatics—its basis of legitimacy, says Rescher, is solely pragmatic: 'Does it work?... Is it successful in practice?'. It replaces the isomorphic correspondence of traditional realism (which Rescher is also adamant in rejecting) with a coherent system whose marks of adequacy of representation are 'Purely internal to the propositional realm'. Accordingly, there is a fundamental divide, a 'dualism' between the theorizing system and external reality, whose ultimate forms remain unknowable and beyond reach: 'Conceptual Idealism...is not a theory as to the structural nature of reality...but addresses itself solely to the nature of the framework of concepts in terms of which this conception of the real is articulated.'

It is this last quotation which illustrates the fundamental and irreconcilable difference with Davidson's thesis, and which take Davidson's claims far beyond what Rescher would want to say. For Rescher, his coherence theory is not a theory about the actual structural nature of reality: in a manner almost exactly opposite to the ideas of traditional realism, objective reality is now seen as completely subservient to the coherent system which is language, and can only answer 'yes or no' in response. We are in a way necessarily giving a direct description of the structural nature of reality; rather, language 'carves-up' an otherwise formless and unknowable 'chaos' of reality. Almost nothing can be said about reality itself, and individual things cannot be thought of as having any existence as particulars apart from the categories of our conceptual scheme: a chair, for instance, can only be specified relative to a framework of identification; but there can be no sense in asking what the chair is objectively. This is not just to maintain the view about what has been said about all discourse being theoretical: the 'chair', for Rescher, does not seem to exist independently of the various perspectives of our conceptual schemes. He says: 'It's identity, and so it itself as the specific individual it is, is perspective-restricted.'

The result is that everything of importance is included on the side of the conceptual scheme—which is reasonable in light of what has been said, and
which Davidson would accept, but the actual structural reality of the independently existing thing itself becomes totally irrelevant to Rescher in a way which would not be acceptable to Davidson. Reality for Rescher is totally out of reach, and language is a kind of screen or barrier against the unknowable chaos of reality beyond. Rescher gives the example of the moon. The moon would exist independently of language, but in the form of some undifferentiated chaos. In asking what it would be that exists, Rescher answers 'Certainly it wouldn't be the moon as we conceive it.'

That language as our conceptual scheme is 'at bottom not a constitutive conception descriptive of reality per se' is antithetical to Davidson's thesis. Unlike for Rescher for whom our conceptual scheme need tell us nothing about nature as it really is, but is merely an instrument for organizing our experience and to which the world just answers, for Davidson, the structure of our language as defined by the truth conditions theory is also directly describing the structure of the real world. (See CHAPTER FIVE). Hence, Davidson does wish, as noted, to speak of his use of Łarski's truth conditions theory as 'something like a correspondence theory' - even if it is a different kind of correspondence from what we expected. From our perspective, certainly, language is primary: we, as human beings must work from within our conceptual system; yet, for Davidson there are many indications of the reciprocity of language with a world which is still, in a sense, existentially prior in importance: '...it is the whiteness of snow that makes "Schnee ist weiss" true'. Language alone does not produce truth for Davidson: truth is still a relation between language and the world. This may appear to conflict with Davidson's earlier dictum that 'Nothing...makes sentences and theories true...' until it is recalled that it was the traditional, realist, notion of language as fitting a pre-existing reality which Davidson was inveighing against, not the idea that there is some kind of isomorphism involved. Though Davidson often regards truth as a property of sentences for simplicity, we must remember that the truth conditions structure which is being investigated is the structure of a language already taken to be 'immersed', as it were, in the relativized context of the realities of a time and speaker; already, the truth structure is seen as the resultant of the interaction of the world and speakers, and in this sense,
language is in a reciprocal relation with reality.

What has disappeared, then, is the idea of the objective world as the ultimate foundational basis to which language must correspond in a subservient fashion; for Davidson, we must speak from within a theory, and so what does evaporate is the transcendental question of the reality of the external world—the question whether, or in how far, our language measures up to Kant's *Ding an sich*. Reality is not transcendent, but immanent within language; yet, in abandoning straightforward realism and the notion of objective reality as a foundational basis for language, we do not in the process need to abandon the notion of objective reality, a reality whose real structure is describable from within language. Rescher's insistence on how things are seen from an internal perspective of scientific theory certainly points to what is important: but a scientist surely has to think he is investigating something independent of his theoretical schemes and not just playing with theory. Once we make reality an unknowable something, always blocked off from the true descriptions of our conceptual scheme, it begins to look as if the total concern is only with the positing of entities. For Davidson, (See CHAPTER FIVE), such theoretical posits are certainly an important feature of our conceptual scheme, but, in addition, the conceptual scheme is taken to directly describe reality; in this sense, both the notion of Davidson's truth conditions theory as a correspondence theory, and as a coherence theory are preserved, both of which were seen to be implicit in Tarski's original idea. The crucial factor—that, if we want to describe the structure of objective reality, we must and can only do so from within the 'entering wedge' of the (truth conditions) structure of language, thus making us reject a theory-neutral reality as the ground for our conceptual schemes (reality immanent within language)—need not drive us to the opposite extreme where the 'coherence theory "is true"' is all we can know. Rather, through our truth conditions structure of language, we can 're-establish unmediated touch with the familiar objects whose antics make our sentences and opinions true or false.'
The argument in the last section suggests that, on Davidson's thesis, language cannot be thought of as requiring any foundational basis in objective reality to which it subserviently refers, nor can it be considered wholly 'dominant' in the sense that reality is otherwise unknowably formless and chaotic, even though for us any structured view of that reality must, and can only, come via the 'entering wedge' of a structured view of language. Reality is immanent within language by virtue of the truth conditions theory, but the structure provided by such a theory actually, on Davidson's view, also describes the real structure of extra-linguistic reality. Whether such a thesis is adequate will be examined in CHAPTER FIVE; for the present, what is important to stress is that with the rejection of the kind of foundational basis in the world required by traditional realism, and the rejection of relative reference as promoted by Quine, reference for Davidson becomes entirely a matter of theoretical postulation.

Since now we have no access to extra-linguistic reality, intertranslatability becomes the real criteria of languagehood, and the truth conditions theory must provide the basis for an intersubjective theory of reference. For, if intertranslatability is to be successful, it must mean that the language of an interpreter must share certain features in common with the language which is being translated, and amongst these features will be the means by which reference is achieved. Nothing could count for us as a language if it were not recognizable as so; thus, just as intertranslatable schemes must be seen against a background of shared beliefs and attitudes (see PART III), so part of the criteria of shared languagehood will also show itself at the level of reference. There will be devices for identity and individuation within the alien's conceptual scheme which must be recognizable in ways parallel to our own understanding of the same linguistic features in our own language. Davidson's comments do not take us very far in this direction, but it is plain from what he does say his truth conditions theory provides the need, elements of which suffice as an objective and intersubjective theory of reference.
The concept of intertranslatability as presupposing the ability of linguistic schemes to share common means of identifying and individuating aspects of the world is a matter for the following chapter, since reference in the traditional sense has now become otiose for Davidson, and is tied directly to ontology, which is now taken as being basic. But it is important to make it clear how this requirement for languages to possess over-lapping reference schemes is seen as being provided by means of Davidson's truth conditions theory. Since the semantic features of language must be public - the notion of private, idiosyncratic, reference is as untenable for Davidson as is the idea of reference being tied to any foundational basis in the world, the objective, shared features of reference, the invariant aspects preserved by intertranslation, must be the responsibility of a truth conditions theory. It is in this sense that Davidson sees the truth conditions theory as 'sufficing for a theory of reference.'

To briefly rehearse the considerations of this chapter, the fundamental problem to be answered was how the truth conditions theory accounted for the relationship of language to objective reality. Davidson's use of Tarski's notion of satisfaction lends itself to a philosophical 'neutrality' which enables Davidson to reject the requirement central to traditional realism of language as corresponding isomorphically to a foundational basis in objective reality; thus all dualisms between sentences, words, or conceptual schemes and uninterpreted reality are abjured: the truth conditions theory does not need a foundational basis in objective reality. Nevertheless, if language is no longer subservient to a world to which it must rigidly correspond, and if reality is immanent within language, there is still a reciprocality between the two in the sense that the structure of language is taken to actually describe the real nature of reality, which is not some kind of neutral, formless chaos 'organized' by language. What is crucial is that, for us, if we wish to describe a structured view of objective reality, we must and can only do so from within the 'entering wedge' of the truth conditions structure of language. Such an entering wedge also provides, for Davidson, the means of securing an objective, intersubjectively sharable theory of reference.
5.1 The Truth Conditions Theory, Direct Description, and Assumed Objects

Reference— in the sense required by traditional realism— is abandoned, and, for Davidson, ontology is basic. Language, being the new foundational basis, directly describes reality, but also (in the special manner to be made clear) 'invents' the reality it describes: reference becoming tied to what is assumed to exist. Having rejected any foundational basis in extra-linguistic reality, and equally, the retreat into a pure coherence theory, the inter-subjectively shared truth conditions structure of language is envisaged as directly describing the real structure of the world whilst simultaneously postulating the hypothetical entities required as the variables satisfying the relevant quantificational structure. One aspect of Davidson's move away from, for instance, any correspondence of sentences to the 'museum myth' of abstract facts, is the distinct tendency towards (but not a total acceptance of) nominalism and away from Platonic realism. The main reason for the rejection of facts was, as seen, the impossibility of giving suitable criteria for their identity and individuation; Davidson wishes to maintain that his postulated events are completely extensional, and thus completely identifiable and capable of complete individuation. This is open to dispute, some philosophers holding that events, as abstract entities, are every bit as mythical as the empirical facts they replace, calling for their elimination on the grounds that reference to abstract entities is not possible. However, on the truth conditions theory what seems certain is that reference to something in the world cannot be entirely eliminated, even if Davidson's 'events' is an ideal which, though it may suffice in some respects, requires augmentation. Nevertheless, for us, objective reality is linguistic reality.
How do we arrive at such a conclusion? How, that is, form within the perspective of an intersubjectively shared language can the truth conditions theory by said to directly describe and 'invent' the objects it refers to and which are assumed to exist in the world? To understand this, it is first necessary to see that Davidson espouses Quine's notion of objectual quantification.

Since all discourse is theoretical, it is of the greatest importance that we possess some criterion by means of which we can determine just what entities a given sentence or theory is committing us to when we assume that sentence or theory to be true. Quine has proposed such criteria for determining the ontological commitments of any given body of discourse. Quine first argues that the mere using of a name or a descriptive phrase does not commit us to accepting there is some entity that is designated by that name or description— as was seen in Chapter Four, with the elimination of singular terms and descriptive phrases. Where, then, are we to look in order to determine what entities we are committed to when we assert a given sentence or theory? Firstly, for Quine, it is emphasize that the 'criterion of ontological commitment applies in the first instance to discourse and not to men'—indicating linguistic reference is to be our only channel for commitment. The vehicle of this reference is the bound variable, when ordinary language has been rendered into the context of quantification: 'A theory is committed to those and only those entities to which the bound variables of the theory must be capable of referring in order that the affirmations made in the theory be true.' Thus, on Quine's view, one tells what a true theory says there is by putting it in predicate calculus and asking what kinds of entity are required as values of its variables if theorems of the form '(Ex)...' are to be true. The foregoing statement also encapsulates the two key ideas in Quine's views on ontology—both of which are taken up and used by Davidson: 'to be is to be the value of a variable' and 'no entity without identity.' We need a test of what kinds of thing a theory says there are, and only entities are tolerated for which adequate criteria of identity can be supplied. Equally crucial to both Quine and Davidson is the great importance attached to an objectual interpretation of the quantifiers. On such a proposal, '}(Ex)Fx'
means that there is an object $x$, in the domain $D$, which is $F$. If one says that there are $F$'s, one is obviously committed on this reading to there being real, existent, objects which are $F$'s, and ontological commitment is indeed located in the bound variables of a theory.

A great deal of criticism has been leveled at Quine's criteria. If Quine's elimination of singular terms is correct, variables are the only remaining devices of reference, and the only ones necessary: they are the means by which language gets its grip on objective reality, since anything to which we are ontologically committed must be a referent— even though they do not tell us specifically what thing is referred to. But what if it is responsibly argued that there are entities to which reference cannot significantly be made, entities to which we may be ir-referrentially committed? Some philosophers, for example, question whether Quine's presupposition that linguistic reference does always carry existential import, urging that we often refer to what does not exist, making reference to entities which are no more or which are not yet; in short, that we have no reticence about referring to what does not exist. Linguistic reference, on their view, is no sure guide to ontological commitment. Other philosophers are skeptical about whether Quine is correct in saying his criterion is extensional, and throw doubt over whether it belongs to the theory of reference at all. Again, questions have been levelled at the fact that Quine's criterion is framed within the context of quantification, and perhaps the commitments of ordinary language are different. Finally, and ironically, Quine has himself shown how we can do without the language of quantification and bound variables by using combinators. Since the quantifiers and variables disappear in this system, this suggests that reference and ontological commitment has its source elsewhere.

Notwithstanding these criticisms—and each point comes up more explicitly with respect to Davidson's ideas—the above notions are central to how Davidson understands how the structure of natural language describes the structure of the world, and also what objects are assumed to exist in that world. Also of relevance is that for Quine, it is only from within the holism of the network of language that objective reality is to be identified and described: all entities are conceived of as theoretically postulated constructions,
whether the abstract objects of mathematics (numbers) or of material bodies (space-time regions) which, with numbers in terms of sets, and space-time in terms of quadruples of numbers, leaves Quine with an ontology of pure set theory. All such entities are thus internal to the overall scientific theory of the world—theory being a body of sentences. And, what is important to a theory is, for Quine, not the choice of its objects, but 'only that it be so structured as to assure the sequences of stimulation that our theory gives us to expect. More concrete demands are empty.' With this background in mind, it is easier to appreciate Davidson's similar but distinct ideas.

Davidson's starting point, in accordance with what was said in 4.4 regarding an intersubjective theory of reference, is that 'In sharing a language...we share a picture of the world that must, in its large features, be true.' and that therefore '...in making manifest the large features of our language, we make manifest the large features of reality.' The raison d'être for such a point of view being that since there can be no foundational basis in objective reality, which is immanent within language 'it is plausible to hold that by studying the most general aspects of language we will be studying the most general aspects of reality.' And, elsewhere, Davidson makes it clear that 'when we study what our language—any language—requires in the way of overall ontology, we are not just making a tour of our own picture of things; what we take there to be is pretty much what there is.' — a statement which also indicates his difference in perspective from Rescher, mentioned in the last chapter. Again, Davidson goes on to elaborate upon what these general features of language are which are to reveal the general features of reality:

What we must attend to in language, if we want to bring into relief general features of the world, is what it is in general for a sentence in the language to be true. The suggestion is that if the truth conditions of sentences are placed in the context of a comprehensive theory, the linguistic structure that emerges will reflect large features of reality. On Davidson's account of language given in PART 1, the truth conditions
structure, and thus the 'large' features, is given in terms of first-order logic: a set of expressions generated recursively from a finite list of primitive predicates and singular terms via quantifiers and truth-functions. The need to construe the structure of language within first-order logic puts certain global constraints on the primitive vocabulary which has direct ontological consequences: we adopt a particular logical form with its particular predicates and singular terms, and in its wake we will have certain ontological commitments, as with the method proposed by Quine. Hence 'semantically relevant structure is apt to demand ontology' and 'The issue of ontology is forced into the open only where the theory finds quantification structure, and that is where the theory best accounts for the pattern of truth dependencies by systematically relating expressions to objects.' In other words, it is the postulating of the needed truth conditions theory of the structure of language, in terms of first-order logic, which brings ontology in its wake, 'the logical relations between sentences providing the only real test of when our language commits us to the existence of entities.' Yet­ and this issue will be taken up in 5.2 – not only must it be shown that a certain first order logical form is indispensable, but also that the quantifiers themselves must be interpreted objectually, if the ontological conclusions Davidson reaches are to prevail. And such issues are open to doubt. However, let us elaborate a little on Davidson's concept of the needed ontology of events.

In various papers Davidsen gives examples of different types of sentence which apparently require the postulation of events in order that they can be considered true; only one or two are cited, but they are pertinent since they illustrate Davidsen's ostensible certainty over the issue. Consider, for example, '...if any of those sentences is true, there must exist such things as events...' or again 'I argue that a very large number of our ordinary claims about the world cannot be true unless there are events.' together with the more specific claim that "Jack fell down, which caused a breaking of his crown" is true if and only if there exist events $e$ and $f$ such that $e$ is a fall Jack took, $f$ is a breaking his crown suffered, and $e$ caused $f$. In general, then, Davidsen's position is summed up by the statement that there is 'no interpreting language without supposing there are events.'
The postulation of events is plainly central to Davidson's project, and one of crucial reasons for this refers us back to what was mentioned in PART 1, where events were seen to be indispensable part of explaining entailment. In the attempt to attribute predicate structure to action sentences, we were involved in the process of adverbial modification—recasting, for example, 'slowly' in the guise of 'slow', with the consequent need to conjure up entities to fill the bill of 'x is slow'. Such entities, are, of course, events, and are envisaged by Davidson as providing a viable semantics of adverbs and adverbial modification which satisfactorily avoids the problem of variable numbers of relations required on the traditional analysis. The traditional means of explaining such sentences requires relations with varying numbers of places according to the number of adverbial modifications, leading to the need for an infinite basic vocabulary, as well as failing to explain the inferences satisfactorily. But, by interpreting these sentences as being about events, thinks Davidson, we can solve the problem; indeed, for him, there is no other solution. With events such a central pivot for Davidson's philosophy of language, one wonders what will be the consequences if, as will be the case, the precise nature of these events is called into question.

What, exactly, then is their nature? Davidson gives us many indications that he construes them as dated, unrepeatable, particulars. As yet this does not take us very far; but if sentences such as 'Sebastian strolled through the streets of Bologna at 2 a.m.' includes not only objects like persons and cities, but also events as dated, unrepeatable, particulars, then this particularizing must be taken seriously. One of the fundamental reasons why Davidson rejected the idea of abstract entities such as facts, for instance, was that they lacked adequate criteria for identity and individuation, and thus failed to offer any basis for one of the central linguistic devices, that of reference. If Davidson and Quine are correct in regarding facts as merely myths conjured up as devices for working a manageable structure into the flux of experience, then it is not surprising that they fail to provide a means of making sense of the required notion of when any two referential devices have the same reference or not. If events are to provide a satisfactory solution
to the gaps left in semantics by Davidson's rejection of facts and realist reference, then we must have a proposal for determining when two designating expressions refer to the same event, and this will necessitate providing identity and individuation conditions for events as particulars. 26

What, then, is the exact nature of events? Right from the start there is perhaps a fundamental uncertainty about the matter of reference to events in Davidson and how such entities should be characterized which, as will be seen in 5.2 of this chapter, some philosophers regard as accounting for the difficulties which such postulations encounter. Central to this is the possible confusion of the nature of events with the nature of physical objects. Of course, Davidson does not in any way confuse the issue of the criteria needed for the identity of events with those needed for the identity of the spatio-temporal location of physical objects, or assume that the former are in any way parasitic upon the latter; just the opposite. For, in considering Lemmon's criteria for the identity conditions for events, Davidson agrees that 'Lemmon is surely right that a necessary condition for the identity of events is that they take place over exactly the same period of time' 27 but he is reluctant to admit that sufficient conditions are provided by criteria for the spatial location of events. Doubts arise, for instance, over the fact that it seems that identical events can occupy the same space-time zone; or perhaps we can have two different events in the same space-time zone.

Yet elsewhere, in discussing the necessary and sufficient conditions for the identity of events, Davidson announces that 'we very often describe and identify events in terms of the objects to which they are in one way or another related.' 28 even though he refuses to countenance Strawson's dictum that the identity of events is parasitic upon an ability to refer to objects. — events themselves being unable, Strawson contends, to provide a single, comprehensive and continuously usable framework of reference of the kind which can be provided by physical objects. 29 Strawson holds that there is a conceptual dependence of events upon objects, and that we can eliminate quantification over events, but that we cannot eliminate reference to objects. Plainly, for Davidson, events do not have the secondary status to which Strawson relegates them: 'It would be a mistake to suppose that, even for events that are naturally
described as changes in an object, we must describe them...by referring to
the object. 30 and 'if some categories of sentence resist transformation
into an eventless idiom, then the fact that we can apparently banish events
from other areas cannot suffice to relegate events to a secondary status;
indeed it does not even serve to show that the sentences we know how to parse
in superficially event-free terms are not about events. 31 Even so, Davidson
still wishes to agree with Strawson that 'most events are understood as changes
in a more or less permanent object or substance' 32. What this seems to
indicate is that, although for Davidson events cannot be regarded as parasitic
upon the notion of objects, or secondary to them, they do appear to be
complimentary to them, at least with respect to the temporal features which
their identification involves. More importantly at this stage, it shows a
fundamental uncertainty among philosophers, Davidson included, as to the
precise nature of events, and how they are to be identified—an uncertainty
which will be a crucial issue in the following section (5.2). For Davidson, they
may involve spatial, and certainly involve temporal, features, for 'No principle
for the individuation of events is clearer or more certain than this: that if
events are identical, they consume identical stretches of time.' 33—a
matter which is itself disputed.

Even accepting that events are 'dated' individuals, Davidson goes on to
admit 'We have not yet found a clearly acceptable criterion for the identity
of events. 34 The corollary to the notion of 'dated' particulars of events
for Davidson is that they are also 'unrepeatable': again something open to
dispute. It is clear, maintains Davidson, that the events which sentences
such as 'The boiler exploded in the cellar' are about are 'ephemeral' events.
Unlike for Chisholm, for instance, who cannot accept that the notion of
ephemeral events can satisfactorily account for the fact that there are some
things that recur more than once, and who holds that his notion of timeless
states of affairs better serve the purpose, Davidson contends that Chisholm's
states of affairs are too much like universals and are thus unacceptable to
him. 35 Chisholm's 'mythical' timeless constructs are not needed, on David-
son's analysis: unrepeatable, ephemeral events being all that are required.
This issue too, is obviously fraught with uncertainty.
Davidson's third proposal is even more contentious with respect to the criteria for identifying and individuating events; again, it will be an issue facing the criticisms of many philosophers as described later in 5.2; here, we must first see what the proposal is. What more is required in order that to distinguish events as the particulars which objectual quantification demands they are? Davidson proposes to legitimize the intuition that events are true particulars by recognizing explicit reference to them or quantification over them, and the proposal favoured by Davidson is that two expressions refer to the same event if, and only if, the event referred to by the one expression has the same causal ancestry and the same causal consequences as that referred to by the other expression. In other words, 'events are identical if and only if they have exactly the same causes and effects.'

Though it is arguable for Davidson whether spatio-temporal are essential elements in identifying events, yet 'perhaps sameness of causal relations is the only condition always sufficient to establish sameness of events...' Events as particulars, in their most primitive form, are causes; not only do we often identify or describe events in terms of their causes and effects, according to Davidson, but these features are guaranteed to individuate them in the sense not only of telling them apart, but also of telling them together.

An example Davidson gives is the instance of someone's having a pain on a specific occasion, where, if it is identical with a complex physiological event, then the best evidence for the identity is to treat the evidence we have that the pain had the same causes and the same effects as the physiological change: 'Sameness of cause and effect seems, in cases like this one, a far more useful criterion than sameness of place and time.'

Davidson's characterization of events as 'dated, unrepeatable, particulars' thus seem to have the following aspects, as far as our ability to identify and individuate them is concerned. They are to be regarded as having an independent fundamental ontological status in as much as they are not to be considered as secondary in status to physical objects; even so, they do appear, on Davidson's analysis, to be complimentary to them in certain respects. Also,
to establish whether an event referred to by one designator is identical to that referred to by another, we have to establish whether there is identity of causal ancestry and causal consequences. Furthermore, (unlike for Chisholm and many other philosophers) for Davidson, events are considered purely extensional. Thus, in the original version of his Reply to Martin, but not in the abridged, later version, Davidson agrees with Martin that event-talk is thoroughly extensional, and that most sentences about events do not show referential opacity.

However, also in the original version, there is an interesting rider which sets the scene for the question to be posed in the next section of this chapter. We have already seen that for Davidson the truth conditions structure of language is taken to directly describe the world, reference being tied to the assumed objects. Plainly, for Davidson, his postulated events are real entities; in the paper cited, Davidson states that the central issue is whether or not events exist in the world. And on this, apparently, he is at odds with Martin, for whom the internal structure of events is not part of the real structure of the world: 'We cannot say that events are real things in the world.'

Whereas for Martin events are not regarded as real things in the world, for Davidson, they most certainly are, reinforcing Davidson's position as discussed in the last chapter. Indications of this with respect to the internal structure of events is given by Davidson's assertion that events are entities about which an indefinite number of things can be said, and that ordinary talk about events entails that there are different descriptions of the same event. In talking about descriptions and true causal laws, he notes: 'All this talk of descriptions and redescriptions makes sense, it would seem, only on the assumption that there are bona fide entities to be described and redescribed.' Elsewhere he says: 'Once we accept the idea that there are events and actions, there is no difficulty in understanding the claim that two descriptions refer to the same one.' Quite so; but this is surely first making the assumption that events really exist, and then saying since they do really exist then we can feel justified in referring to them. The suggestion is, therefore, that, as Martin and others have said, events are perhaps not the explicitly perspicuous entities which Davidson supposes.
The assumption by Davidson that his postulated events are real existing particulars is, at this stage of our discussion, just that—an assumption which may or may not prove to be every bit as 'fictitious' as the facts they have replaced; Davidson's assertion that events, with their particular causal structure is one 'without which we cannot make sense of much of our common talk' or that he does 'not know any better, or further, way of showing what there is' must be examined more closely. That events are particulars picked out by descriptions—and not referred to by sentences, since for Davidson sentences such as 'Doris capsized the canoe yesterday', for example, by virtue of its general, quantified structure, can be true of any number of events like the capsizing of the canoe—depends ultimately on whether the events deemed to exist as a fundamental ontological category are as open to identification and individuation as readily as Davidson suggests, since unless sense can be made of such criteria, such assumptions are unintelligible. On the other hand, perhaps we should be beware of expecting too much certainty in such linguistic and ontological considerations. As Davidson points out, we have just as difficult problems with material objects themselves.

Similarly with nomological considerations. Laws, too, for Davidson, do not deal directly with events, but rather with events as described in one way or another. Davidson is concerned not with the analysis of causation itself as on the traditional analysis—for example in terms of constant conjunctio—but rather with the logical form of singular causal statements reporting a relation between particular events. If one event causes another event, for example, the important thing for Davidson is that there must be descriptions of these events figuring in a true causal law. A causal statement can be true even if it refers to causes and effects by means of descriptions which cannot be generalized over—such that no causal law covers all events which answer to just those descriptions. This is important, since it indicates we can hold a Humean view about causation while admitting that no singular causal statement entails any particular causal law: all that a singular causal statement does entail is that there is some causal law covering the events in question. Mill was wrong, in Davidson's eyes, for thinking that if we have
not specified the whole cause of an event when we have not wholly specified it by description, and he was confused in thinking that every deletion from the description of an event represented something deleted from the (actual) event described. In other words, there is a distinction, unacknowledged on traditional accounts, between explanations of the logical form of causal statements and the analysis of causality itself.

As regards the evidence for singular causal statements, Davidson says: '...very often, I think, our justification for accepting a singular causal statement is that we have reason to believe an appropriate causal law exists, though we do not know what it is.' The causal law covering the case itself is probably quantitative, and might employ completely different concepts to the generalization which provides evidence for its existence. Davidson seems to agree with what Popper has said about the peculiar ontological character and structural nature of laws: that the idea of laws in nature is ontologically of great importance in our attempts to understand reality, but that it is of course impossible to establish such metaphysical ideas on empirical grounds.

The fact that events as particulars, and the notion of laws must be considered purely ontological notions emphasizes the point that for Davidson, like Quine, with whom we began this part of the discussion, all there is is language and the world. From within the existentially quantified structure of our intersubjectively shared language, objective reality is identified and described, for Davidson, in terms of the theoretically postulated framework of events as dated, unrepeatable, particulars with causal relations, and which are complementary to spatio-temporal material objects. Such ideas are concurrent with the special relativity theory in contemporary science, where the basic reality is in terms of a manifold of events (and possible things) which bear (perhaps) causal relations to one another. But in view of what has been said, Davidson's notion of events is an assumption: events are the assumed entities to which we (ostensibly) extensionally refer, and whether they should be regarded as entities in objective reality is, it has been suggested, questionable, and a matter which must be further investigated.
Do events as construed by Davidson as purely extensional dated, unrepeatable, particulars, really exist? Certainly Davidson's earlier comments to the effect that events must exist, and that there is no better way of showing what there is, suggest great confidence in his criteria for their identity and individuation. Why then the scepticism hinted at in Martin's comment that we cannot say that events are real things in the world? Could it be that the ostensible precision of reference to events is as much a myth as the vagueness of reference to facts they were designed to replace? Or maybe events exist, but it is just Davidson's proposed criteria which are faulty. Perhaps, again, the truth conditions theory can do without such constructions altogether, and that Davidson, as he portrays traditional realist philosophers and Quine, has himself become a victim of the museum myths. To try to solve this puzzle, we will go back to first principles and ask the following questions: firstly, is Davidson's initial presumption that logical form should decide what is said to exist correct; secondly, are his postulated entities and the criteria on which they are based intelligible; thirdly, if Davidson's assumptions are not satisfactory, what alternatives have we at our disposal; fourthly, are any of the possible alternatives satisfactory, and, whether they are or not, where does this leave us with respect to Davidson's truth conditions theory and the question of realism?

From a nominalist point of view, Davidson's demand for an ontology of events is embarrassing. For some philosophers, it ought not to be a matter of logical structure that anything is said to exist in the world. Such a means of representing the world within language may reflect and create constraints on how we refer to objective reality, and upon how we understand such reference to the world, but that the one thing we cannot do is to adjust the contents of that reality to fit the descriptive resources of language. On such a view, it will not do to posit or 'invent' entities for the sole reason that, in talking about the world, these invented objects seem to be mentioned as well; it is not sufficient, for example, that we argue for infinitesimals on the grounds that
we mention them in the calculus of motion. Likewise, it is not a sufficient argument for the existence of any kind of entity that in order to display the logical form of our sentences, we have to portray them as referring to that kind of entity. In other words, analysis of logical form contributes to seeing what our language commits us to, but does not determine what there is in the world, as it does for Davidson. This is not yet to go as far as saying that in implementing a referential programme theoretical posits to which we refer can be avoided entirely, as will become clear.

Certainly there is a tradition that holds to the doctrine that the structure of logic should not decide what is to exist in the world. As seen, for Quine and Davidson, objectual quantification involving first-order variables commits us to an ontology with individual objects (quantification involving higher order variables, unless we can get rid of it, committing us to an ontology of higher categories of being). Similarly, for the early Russell, 'The primitive propositions in Principia Mathematica are such as to allow the inference that at least one individual exists.' However, his considered opinion by the time he wrote Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy appears to have been that no logical principle should assert or imply the existence of anything. Seemingly innocuous statements formulated in the language of quantification and carrying with it ontological commitment to individual objects now offended Russell, who now demanded a new purity of logic, and a corresponding ontological neutrality—entities such as events now being regarded as logical fictions. Already, then, if this tradition is to be believed, there is a hint that Davidson's edict that events must exist, at least in the form he delineates them, may be exaggerated, even, perhaps, false. And, if this is the case, we should find evidence that we cannot identify and individuate them, or refer to them, in the manner Davidson anticipates. This being so, it may well be that reality need not, after all, have the kind of structure which Davidson requires it to have.

It has already been noted that Davidson's criteria for the identity and individuation of events requires that they be temporally-dated, unrepeatable particulars with the same causal ancestry and consequences, and that they are
referred to directly, being ostensibly purely extensional. Yet there seem to be many kinds of events which fail to be individuated on Davidson's criteria, some of which are explicable by property theorists, propositional theorists, and those who say that there are events which do not have causes and effects. These will be considered in order, as given above.

For Davidson, events may have multi-descriptions (see 5:1); for instance, the following alternative descriptions of the same event would have the same reference:

(1) The movement by Peter that caused the spilling of the tea,
(II) The movement by Peter that caused the knocking over of the cup,
(Ill) The movement by Peter that caused the vicar to be shocked.

On the assumption that just one movement (or action) is involved in all three cases, we may infer that the events denoted by the three sentences are identical, that is, the same event.

Such reasoning appears to be behind Davidson's analysis of the following. The entity whose existence is asserted by the given sentence is, according to Davidson, an event, namely, a 'strolling':

(1) Sebastian strolled through the streets of Bologna at 2 a.m.

This becomes

(II) (Ex) strolled(Sebastian, x) & through (the streets of Bologna, x) & at (2 a.m. x)

which entails

(Ill) (Ex) strolled(Sebastian, x) & through (the streets of Bologna, x)

And, assuming that Sebastian strolled through the streets of Bologna but once,

(IV) (x)(y) ((strolled(Sebastian, x) & through (the streets of Bologna, x) & strolled (Sebastian, y) & through (the streets of Bologna, y)) \(\Rightarrow x = y)\).

Following Russell's use of definite descriptions (see 4:22), then the strolling of Sebastian through the streets of Bologna at 2 a.m. must be identical with his strolling through the streets of Bologna:
(V) $(\forall x)(\text{strolled}(\text{Sebastian}, x) \& \text{through}(\text{the streets of Bologna}, x) \& \text{at}(2 \text{a.m.}, x))$

$\equiv (\forall x)(\text{strolled}(\text{Sebastian}, x) \& \text{through}(\text{the streets of Bologna}, x))$. 

On Davidson's account, therefore, the strolling of Sebastian through the streets of Bologna and the strolling of Sebastian through the streets of Bologna at 2 a.m. are identical.

Yet this, and many other examples of Davidson's sentences, are construed by Property theorists as referring to distinct events. Such arguments against Davidson's notion of events are given by those like Goldman and Kim. According to Kim, for instance, the theory of events, or 'structured complexes', requires viewing an event as 'a structure consisting of a substance (an n-tuple of substances), a property (an n-adic relational attribute), and a time.' events being identical if they have the same constitutive property, object, and time. In view of Davidson's thesis that events, though complimentary to, are not parasitic upon, objects (5.1), his rejection of essentialism (4.2), and his requirements for a minimum ontology (3.4), it is not surprising he repudiates Kim's version of events. Taking these points in reverse order, Kim presents a variation on the Sebastian theme indicated above and is forced to admit that, on his thesis, the outcome is not only distinct events being required, but a proliferation of events: indeed, in the version Kim describes, 'there were indefinitely many strolls strolled by Sebastian that night!' Kim sees such a consequence as harmless, but there is no doubt that to philosophers of Davidson's persuasion, such a multiplication of events beyond necessity cannot be countenanced. Another example in a similar spirit is whether Brutus's stabbing Caesar is the same event as Brutus's killing Caesar? Kim expresses approval of the arguments in favour of seeing them as distinct events as given by Goldman and also Martin. On Martin's argument, an event of Brutus stabbing Caesar at a time $t$ is a distinct, but simultaneous, event from the event of Brutus killing Caesar at that time $t$. Hence, for Martin, identity does not hold, whereas for Davidson, it does: 'Davidson apparently thinks they are the same event. I should prefer to think that they are distinct...'
The same proliferation of events transpires, and again is unacceptable to Davidson's austere ontology. Furthermore, though such theorists as Martin wish, for various reasons, to hold to their more finely individuated notion of events, Davidson's response appears to be that events as construed by such philosophers are not the kind of entities which our ordinary language demands: that we do not require such fine discriminations. Yet such a point of view is surely curious when one considers Davidson's other reflections on the value of the use of the ideal precision of first-order logic in delineating fine differences in linguistic behaviour, and his very espousal of events.

However, to turn to Kim's other criteria for events as property exemplifications, Kim's second point is equally an anathema to Davidson. It seems that Kim's theory requires countenancing views which have implausible consequences (for Davidson) concerning the essential properties of events: '... find it plausible', says Kim, 'to think of the constitutive substance of an event as essential to the identity of that event.' But, to return to the example of Sebastian's stroll, is it essential to think that, for example, Sebastian took that stroll. Davidson points out, in another context, that 'had the cards fallen out differently, - assuming the stroll was a result of some kind of lottery- 'another person would have taken that stroll.' Again, whereas Kim is willing to accept essentialist consequences for his theory, Davidson is not.

On the third point of Kim's criteria, the existence of events depend upon physical objects- since events for him are physical objects having a property during a time. On Davidson's view, however, though events are complimentary to physical objects, they do not depend on there being physical objects - as they do for Strawson, as we saw- but appear to be ontologically independent in at least some ways. Even so, as will be seen, some philosophers would maintain that any analogy, even such as Davidson's, which link in any way the concept of reference to events with that of reference to physical objects is mistaken.

There are also features which are claimed to be needed characteristics of events by those who hold to the Propositional theory of events, and on which account they maintain Davidson's criteria for identity and individuation fail.
Since this version of events - held most notably by Chisholm* - assimilates events to propositional-like objects, its rejection by Davidson goes hand-in-hand with his rejection of propositions in general, and is fully discussed in PART III of this thesis. Suffice it to say here that Chisholm, for instance, as one of the most modern proponents of the view, sees quantification over propositional objects as necessary to account for events, as he sees it, being repeatable - in the sense that they can occur on more than one occasion. As Davidson comments: 'What looms in the foreground in Chisholm's theory is "the fact of recurrence..."' And indeed, according to Chisholm, it is one single thing, a timeless state of affairs, that is happening more than once. For various reasons made clear in PART III, together with his abnegation of universals and a demand for a minimum extensionalist ontology, Davidson will not accept the Propositionalist account. Moreover, as a particularist, events cannot be literally repeatable for Davidson; his response to the problem of recurrence is that 'recurrence may be no more than similar, but distinct, events following one after another.' Some things are seen as happening more than once when parts of a summational event occur at different times: 'events have parts that are events, and the parts may be discontinuous temporally or spatially...' and hence the sum of all such summational events retain their unity even if scattered. However, as some philosophers have pointed out, Davidson's proposal loses its plausibility when the events in question are themselves spatio-temporally disparate: the alleged summational event of electing a prime minister every five years does not seem to be a single event with many parts. It seems difficult, if not impossible to specify conditions under which several events are constituents of a single, covering event, and it is argued that it is not sufficient for events to be considered constituents of a single covering event that they share some things in common, as Davidson's proposal requires. Davidson himself acknowledges that his explanation 'seems strained', and that 'we do not normally require a single entity as reference to back every use of "the same thing"'. Furthermore, they may be other, independent reasons, as later work in this chapter and also in chapter seven make clear, that propositions, even if not needed for cases like that above, may be required for, for example, an adequate account of opaque contexts.
Perhaps it is Davidson's adumbration of a third feature of events which is held to be most contentious: that events, for him, are held to be identical if they have the same causes and effects. That is, letting \( e, f, \ldots \) range over events and with \( C \) as the relation 'causes':

\[
(1) \quad e = f \text{ iff } (g) (gCe \equiv gCf) \& (h) (eCh \equiv fCh).
\]

However, many philosophers hold that though such a criterion has an initial plausibility, and may be the one we employ in many instances, it cannot be applied across the board as Davidson assumes: it may be that there are what has been termed 'ineffectual events' \(^81\) which Davidson's criterion fails to identify and individuate. One example taken from science would be where there is a causal chain in which an object first undergoes fission and afterwards is reunited by fusion. Assuming there is no other causal interaction with another object, then there are apparently two events that are occurring from the time slightly prior to the fission to the time slightly later than the fusion—since each event itself involves distinct spatio-temporal objects—two distinct events which nevertheless have the same causes and effects. Davidson's criterion, however, sees these events as identical, with their causal ancestry and causal consequences being identical.

For Davidson, for whom 'Cause is the cement of the universe...,' \(^82\) there could be no such 'ineffectual events'; yet this defence depends upon a prior assumption by Davidson of the correctness of the philosophical thesis of universal causal determinism. But, as the above example indicates, the thesis is highly controversial, particularly in current science, where the kind of causal determinism promulgated by Davidson is seen as inadequate to all but the most naive explanation of events in the world. \(^83\) Of course, it would be hasty to jump to the opposite extreme and claim, as some have done, the notion of causality is otiose. Russell, for instance, argued that, from the standpoint of contemporary science, causation was outdated, and that it should be replaced by the notion of functional relations: we should replace 'same cause, same effect' with 'sameness of differential equations.' Science should no longer be concerned with regular sequences of distinct events, the idea of events and causal relations being nothing more than a linguistic
Similarly for Schlick, for whom the scientist 'invents a kind of glue and assures us that in reality it is only his glue that holds events together at all. But we can never find the glue...'. It is easy to see why such views were shared by physicists like Mach, and is still finding wide acceptance among science today. For Kneale, too, influence by Russell's scepticism of causality, the hypotheses of particle physics being concerned with things which are not observable even in principle, deal only with structures expressed within the language of mathematics, with no prospect of ever being able to derive laws of nature about material objects from such truths.

So that though the connections in the world of transcendent entities posited by a theory may all be self-evident, the relations between this structure and the world of perceptual objects remains opaque to the intellect, and it is only by assuming these relations that we can explain our laws about observables.

Such views, whereby causality is nothing more than a linguistic or mathematical convenience harkens back to the discussion on conceptual idealism and was shown to be unacceptable to Davidson, for whom the notions of the structure of events, causality and laws, though ontological conceptions, also directly describe the real structure of the world. Yet is it possible to overcome the kind of criticism levelled at the idea of causation really existing?

Mackie, for one, has argued against the views of those like Russell, to the idea of causal laws as merely 'conceptual reconstructions'. Of course, Mackie accepts that the use of causal language is only a rough guide as to what we are to take as causal relationships themselves: it is always possible that our causal statements carry meanings and implications which the actual situations do not fully bear out— that our ways of describing and reasoning about the sequences which we recognise as causal should thus be nothing more than a guide, the 'authority' of causal language being far from absolute; our linguistic resources set limits as to what we have any right to assume to be there. Even so, for Mackie, as for Davidson, for whom the analysis of the logical structure of causal language is one thing, actual causation being another, it is 'undeniable that we ordinarily suppose both that there are some regularities underlying many of the sequences that we take to be causal, and that scientific enquiries make progress towards fuller and fuller
formulations of these. Mackie acknowledges that the balance of scientific opinion is against the notion of strict determinism, yet, if causal determinism of any kind goes, all we can have left is statistical laws, telling us what happens in some definite proportion of cases. Again, like Davidson, Mackie will not accept this as an option for physics, generating as it does only approximations to regularities assumed by causal explanations. The crucial question is complex regularities constitute causation as it is in objects themselves. What is needed, in Mackie's view, over and above our notions of complex regularity, is some notion of causal priority together with the postulation of some underlying process: 'If we attend rather to what is there in the objects, it is the common pattern that impresses us, and it is this which justifies the extension of causal terms and causal concepts to cover not only all event and state inus conditions...but also functional causes' (of the kind espoused by Russell). Mackie thus makes all explanation causal by definition, characterising a cause by means of what he calls an INUS condition, so that a cause is 'an insufficient but necessary part of a condition which is itself unnecessary but sufficient for the result.' Thus, for example, pressing the button on the television set is the cause of the picture appearing—since pressing the button, while not on its own sufficient, is necessary if a picture is to be obtained and pressing the button together with the other necessary factors is sufficient to obtain a picture, but not the only possible way. Furthermore, basic laws, for Mackie, seem to instantiate underlying 'deep' processes of 'forms of persistence.' At the 'surface', perceptual level, we have cases of 'unrelieved change, of a cause being followed by an entirely different effect', whilst at a 'deeper level of consideration we would have 'the persistence of self-maintaining processes.' Thus, Mackie indicates that if a match is struck and a flame appears, (on the face of it, the effect has nothing in common with its cause. But if one were to replace that macroscopic picture with a detailed description of the molecular and atomic movements with which the perceived processes are identified by an adequate physico-chimical theory, we should find far more continuity and persistence. The heterogeneity of cause and effect at the surface level of explanation dissapears at the deep level, though not wholly so. Mackie thus offers this
notion or the persistence of structural continuity 'as a kind of necessity that may belong objectively to basic laws of working' 94. Such structural forms of continuity are, for Mackie, something in the objects over and above complex regularity, and which provides some backing for the analysis of our ordinary causal concepts. 95 It is for this wider and richer concept of causation for which Mackie argues and which 'holds the universe together': when we get things right by means of our linguistic laws and descriptions, our causal inferences 'retrace or anticipate the sequences by which the universe creates itself'. 96

Unless we are willing to accept that the idea of causation has no part to play in our scientific explanation of objective reality, as those like Russell and Schlick maintain, it is hard not to be sympathetic to Mackie's view, though it is open to criticism too, according to some philosophers. 97 Davidson, as seen earlier, takes the notion of cause to be central to his criteria for events; yet, even if something like Mackie's explanation is useful in dispelling any wholesale scepticism towards causation, it is unclear that it would aid Davidson in his thesis, since Mackie's suggestions were not developed within the framework of a truth conditions theory. 98 It is therefore an open question if it would apply to Davidson's analysis, and whether his universal causal determinism is defensible. The notion of an indeterministic, causally irregular world is still a logical possibility - and this could be such a world. On this score, Davidson's criterion in this respect for event identity is inadequate, since it should not depend for its truth on the unsustained substantive philosophical thesis of universal causal determinism. 99

From all three angles, then, Davidson's criteria for the identity and individuation of events as dated, unrepeatable, particulars with the same causal ancestry and consequences is open to attack, and - at least in the terms Davidson delineates them - we cannot merely assume that events 'must exist'. This is not yet to say that events do not exist, or that Davidson's criteria (or those of the Property or Propositional theorists) are wholly misplaced. Obviously not; but it is to say that the concept of reference to events is very far from the foregone conclusion that Davidson's comments sometimes suggest.
As seen in the last section, even though we cannot in any way as yet say that events do not 'really exist' (to use Martin's phrase) the fact that there do appear to be characteristics about these proposed entities which makes reference to them, in the terms Davidson construes them, extremely problematic. And, unless it can be shown that events are not merely 'logical fictions', as Russell called them, and that terms referring to them are not mere facons de parler, then it could still be argued that philosophers are in an extremely poor position maintaining that questions about their identity and individuation make any sense at all, and that the virtue they were deemed to possess — their ostensible perspicuity of reference is but a myth. Cebik, for instance, regards it as a confusion to consider events as entities which can be described or referred to as if they were objects: 'The desired constancy of reference, which theorists desire for events in order to account for the many possible descriptive assertions, is often imported via objects' and that 'the feature of language called description only furthers the illusion that event concepts have referents.' Similarly, for Jubien, reference to abstract entities such as events cannot be used in explanatory semantics: 'Whatever the needs of logical theory', he maintains, 'we cannot use objectual quantification with respect to abstracta such as events, since reference to abstracta is simply unintelligible.' Similar points are made by Dummett (see CHAPTER SIX.) Others, such as Benaceraff, hold that semantics, and particularly mathematics, cannot do without such abstracta. We have reached the third of the four points which it was noted at the beginning of 5.21 would be forthcoming: if reference to Davidson's assumed events is not satisfactory— as it clearly is not for many philosophers— have we any alternatives? Namely, is it possible to avoid reference to such problematic entities altogether— the answer to which will take us into the final assessment of Davidson's truth conditions theory with respect to realism.

In 5.1, the considerable importance which Davidson attached to Quine's objectual interpretation of the quantifiers was stressed. To recap, Quine's
explication of ontological commitment is:

(1) \( T \) is ontologically committed to a/F's iff \( T \) logically implies \\
\( '(\exists x) (x = a)/(\exists x) Fx' \).

And, since for Quine we cannot do physics without mathematics, or mathematics 
without set theory, sets are indispensable.

Davidson follows suit with his argument for events: since his logic for 
adverbial modification has it that a sentence such as 'Steve ran at midnight' 
has the form \((\exists x) (x \text{ is a running})\)' following from it, such a logical form 
only being correct if we assume objectual quantification:

(2) \( T \) is ontologically committed to a/F's iff \( T \) logically implies \\
\( '(\exists x) (x = a)/(\exists x) Fx' \).

If, however, we could find a way to convince ourselves that our ultimate theory 
of the world will not logically imply \((\exists x) (x = a)\) or \((\exists x) Fx\), then we could 
conclude that there is no reason necessarily to suppose that we must assume 
that a and F's exist.

Similarly for Davidson's proposal that, in order to have a finite-based 
semantics and to capture adverbial entailments in first-order form, we introduce 
a quantifier whose substituends are singular terms that refer to events (whose 
'internal structure' is in terms of causes and effects), and where a sentence 
like 'Steve ran at noon' might be regimented as

(3) \( (\exists x) '(\text{Running} (x) \& By(x, \text{Steve}) \& \text{At}(x, \text{noon}))' \), where \( x \) is an event.

and where, if we regiment 'Steve ran' as

(4) \( (\exists x) (\text{Running} (x) \& \text{By} (x, \text{Steve})) \)

then first-order logic will properly count the latter as a logical entailment of 
the former; but, as seen, with the proviso that if the quantifiers are interpre-
objectually, then we are committed to the existence of events, prompting all 
the problems about how we refer to them. Again, it would be much simpler if we 
could find a way to avoid commitment to such entities altogether.
The problem is whether such a project is feasible. The issue may be put like this. There are those, such as Quine, Davidson (and other like Benacerraf or Field) who hold that at bottom, truth conditions semantics must be based on reference; that we can never avoid commitment to abstract objects; and there are those, such as Jubien and others for whom such realism can be renounced in favour of wholly nominalistic point of view. Quine holds that, though we can go a considerable distance towards complete nominalism, we cannot go all the way: the expression of all scientific language requiring, ultimately, that we use a realistic language, hence his readiness to admit the propriety in semantics of classes. Davidson concurs, and Putnam, too, states that 'the restrictions of nominalism are devastating for ...science...'. Yet Putnam's endorsement of realism is elsewhere tempered. For though, in one part of his discussion, he says the case for realism is a qualified one, 'at least sets of things, real number and functions from various kinds of things to real numbers should be accepted as part of the presently indispensable (or nearly indispensable) framework of both physical science and logic, and is part of that whose existence we are presently committed to.' He goes on later 'one question which may be raised, for example, concerns the very intelligibility of such sentences as "numbers exist", "sets exist"...'. If these are not genuine assertions at all, but only, so to speak, pseudo-assertions, then no argument can be a good argument for believing them...'. We are back, it would seem, with the question which Russell's criticism provoked: are we to regard events, for example, as merely logical fictions, and if so, is there any feasible way, notwithstanding Quine's views, to avoid reference to them? Putnam's position is especially pertinent, since, in the work cited, he confronts the problem of a nominalistic theory of measurement, which poses directly the issue of the existence of the only abstract entities admitted by Quine those of numbers; and, if numbers can be shown not to be needed, who could doubt that abstract entities such as Davidson's events cannot also be shown to be eliminable from our language? Putnam's own conclusion, however, in line with his (qualified) realism is that we cannot account for the numericalization of distance without quantifying over functions.
This is not a conclusion which is accepted by one philosopher. Gottlieb argues that, given all the machinery that Putnam presupposes, such as space-time points, line-segments, and congruence relations, then it is easy to formulate a nominalist definition, and he in fact does so. Furthermore, for Gottlieb, the total nominalization of language is a feasible project: by the use of substitutional quantification, it is apparently possible to avoid unwanted commitment to abstract entities—first with relation to numbers, then, by extension, to events as construed by Davidson. Since the issue of the use of substitutional quantification in truth conditions semantics is so controversial, it must now be examined.

If, on the objectual interpretation of quantification, *Fa* is true only if 'a' is a singular term which denotes an existent object, and there will have to be an object which is 'F' if *(Ex) Fx* is to come out true, this is not so on the substitutional interpretation. Marcus, for example, and others, have advocated such an interpretation which deprives such a sentence of ontological import. *(Ex) Fx* is interpreted as saying 'some substitution instance of Fx is true', and nothing restricts substitution classes relevant to quantification to the category of singular terms; no dubious ontological implications lurk in such constructions, since the interpretation of bound variables does not commit us to taking them as ranging over things. Whereas the objectual approach favoured by Quine and Davidson forges an intimated link between reference and quantification, the substitutional method severs this bond, since its quantifiers do not have ranges or values at all: what Marcus calls values of a variable are simply members of the appropriate substitution class, and the substitutional interpretation is blind to the distinction between values and substituends of a variable—a distinction central to the objectual view. It thus leaves no way of distinguishing referring expressions from others; the only objects for the substitutionalist are bits of language. Can it therefore be used to avoid completely reference to troublesome abstract entities such as events?

Davidson disparages the use of substitutional quantification— or at least he did initially, though there is recent evidence he is more amenable now to
accepting its virtues — such depreciation undeniably being largely due to
Wallace’s influence, who maintains: ‘Naive substitutional truth theories,
which preserve aspects for the substitutional approach that have excited
philosophers, are not adequate in Convention T’s sense.’ 113 Wallace is
obviously concerned with the question of what limits are set for acceptable
theories of truth by Convention T — a matter which will be seen to be of crucial
significance to whether we should accept the constraints Davidson suggests.
Wallace argues it is impossible to satisfy Convention T without introducing a
relation like that of satisfaction, which holds between objects in the world
and linguistic expressions. For Wallace, the heart of the referential approach
is ‘a recursive definition of satisfaction, a relation which connects sent-
ences open and closed with nonlinguistic things, whose characterization
makes essential appeal to a range of quantification, and in terms of which
truth can be explicitly defined.’ whereas the substitutional approach
‘attempts a direct recursive characterization of truth.’ 114 The heart of
the problem is that Wallace fears that a definition of truth for a language
using substitutional quantification will not be able to imply the instances of
Tarski’s schema unless it is embedded in a theory in which denotation is
definable, and which makes possible a referential semantics for that language.
Furthermore, there will have to be axioms in the metalanguage to the effect
that everything in the range of the quantifiers has a name, and that every
name names something in the range of the quantifiers. If this were so, there-
fore, there could be no ontological significance to the ‘retreat’ to substitu-
tional quantification, for we will eventually want a truth definition for our
object language, and that will reinstate in the metalanguage all the onto-
logical commitments we wished to avoid in the first place. For Wallace, if he
were correct, a satisfactory truth theory cannot fail to connect quantification
with the existence of objects. His challenge come to this: in order to know
that a substitutional definition of truth is materially correct, we need a
metalanguage that makes the very ontological commitments we were trying to
avoid by the appeal to substitutional semantics. In other words, the criticism
here is that the substitutional interpretation, though it does not give a
negative answer to ontological questions, simply postpones them, and, since we
have to refer eventually, why not straightaway via objectual quantification?

This appears to be the view shared by Davidson and Quine, who holds that to use substitutional quantification is not to avoid ontological commitment, but rather to fail to disclose it. Quine rightly observes that the motive for adopting the substitutional approach is to avoid reference to abstract entities; however, he also seems to make the tacit assumption that the metalinguage in which the truth conditions are given must be interpreted objectually and this has been questioned by Dunn and Belnap, who maintain that we can interpret the metalanguage substitutionally as well, and also by Parsons, who introduces what are linguistic abstract entities into his theory. In turn, Parsons’ commitment to abstract linguistic entities has been criticised by Tharp:

In substitutional quantification, one appears to be defining truth in terms of linguistic entities alone, with no appeal to objects over which the quantifiers range. However, there is an oversight here which Wallace has noted...If one could define truth in some way directly, appealing only to linguistic objects, or at least not appealing to all individuals, then this would be demonstrably deficient from the usual definition if one could show that no definition of satisfaction emerges. Unfortunately, there appear to be difficult technical problems in constructing such definitions, and even if one finds examples, it may not be possible to get a satisfactory general picture.  

Even Kripke, who argues, as against Wallace and Tharp, that Tarski’s Convention T is not violated by substitutional interpretations, accepts that some of the quantifiers at least must be provided with the kind of semantics for which Tarski satisfaction is designed. Kripke argues that it is fact, not opinion, that determinate truth conditions can be given for substitutional quantification; nevertheless, he observes, 'some particular formal systems may be incapable of a substitutional interpretation, even though they have a referential one.' and gives the example 'if (Ex) φ(x) is provable in the system, but ¬φ(t) is provable for every expression t which can be substituted for x,
so as to yield a meaningful sentence \( \emptyset(t) \), it is manifestly impossible to give
the system a substitutional interpretation, but if its formation rules are
standard, and it is formally consistent, a referential interpretation is
possible. 119

Thus, although there are a few dissenting voices, the consensus among
philosophers seems to be in overall agreement that, even if substitutional
quantification does not violate Convention T, sooner or later we must refer.
But this is not yet to take the strong line that Wallace has taken on the matter
as we shall see.

Against this background, it is not surprising to find Davidson, in his
early papers, being as opposed to the substitutionalist brief as Wallace; that
a collapse of substitutional quantification into referential quantification
must inevitably come about that the terms of our language must denote or the
determination of its truth conditions will be impossible, and that a covert
appeal to an extra-linguistic ontology is hidden in the substitutional definition.
Davidson in fact cites Wallace (and Tharp) as having shown substitutional
quantification to be impossible in that it violates Convention T (but which we
have seen is not held to be the case by many philosophers):

Theories of truth based on the substitutional interpretation of quantifi-
cation do not in general yield the T-sentences demanded by Convention T.
...substitutional theories have no evident virtue to set against their
failure to satisfy Convention T. 120

Davidson acknowledges that there may be exceptions in the case of object
languages whose true atomic sentences can be effectively give, but hints that
this is not possible in general.

But, unlike for Davidson and Wallace, for whom — since substitutional
quantification merely postpones the problem to the ultimate semantical analysis
of certain atomic sentences for which we have to give a referential interpre-
tation, thus committing ourselves to the ontological consequences of those sent-
ces — substitutional quantification should be rejected, for Gottlieb it can
still provide the means whereby we can avoid completely a commitment to unwanted abstract objects such Davidson's events. Furthermore, if Kripke is correct, and substitutational quantification does not violate Convention T, the way will be open for a widening of the kind of constraints on the truth conditions theory which may help to overcome some of the difficulties encountered by Davidson's criteria for events.

Gottlieb fully acknowledges that we cannot use substitutional quantification in place of referential semantics altogether, and thus it is not an all-purpose panacea, Nevertheless he holds that it can be used to avoid ontological commitment, whilst at the same time providing the necessary reference for the atomic sentences. Thus, though Gottlieb contends that '...to avoid commitment in the end, it seems that a nonreferential semantics must be provided for the atomic sentences. But we have no such semantics' and that the tie of our language to the world will ultimately rely upon reference, nevertheless, this is no reason not to use substitutional quantification, since it is not required that all the quantifiers be explained objectually in order to tie sentences to the world. It is sufficient the connection of a sentence with a substitutional quantifier to the world be explained via reference at some point—but this point need not be the sentence itself. Thus, in other papers, this philosopher seeks to explain that though the atomic sentences will be assigned referential truth conditions, we do not re-introduce ontological commitment with respect to all substitutionally interpreted quantifiers. Gottlieb then applies his thesis to the problem with which we began—whether Putnam is correct in requiring that a (Platonic ) realist realm of numbers as abstract objects is needed to which to refer in solving the issue of numericalization of distances—then extending his application to the more general problem of Davidson's commitment to first-order logic with quantifiers whose substituends are singular terms that refer to abstract events. He claims that by using substitutional quantification with respect to 'what Davidson would call "predicates of events"' we can postpone the decision to add or not to add events to our ontology until we give a semantic analysis to the atomic sentences; then, what is required to avoid commitment to events completely is to provide truth conditions for the atomic sentences which are referential, and
which do not imply the existence of events—and this Gottlieb maintains he has shown how to do. Hence, though reference of our language to the world is unavoidable, by the use of substitutional quantification—which does not violate Tarski's constraints on Convention T—we can, if Gottlieb's thesis is at all correct, avoid the unwanted ontological commitment to Davidson's abstract events, together with the problems which his criteria for reference to such events engendered. Whether such a project is going to prove workable is an open question at present, since this work is on the brink of present research; nevertheless, Gottlieb holds that the success of Davidson's truth conditions theory stands or falls with the success of his own ideas. And, with respect to the use of substitutional quantification, it is interesting that Davidson has only very recently admitted that Convention T does not preclude the validity of substitutional quantification, and that he previously failed to take account of its full possibilities.

In answer to the third of our fourth points posed at the beginning of this section (5.22), reference to Davidson's events being admittedly problematic, we do appear to have at least some possibility of alternative solutions which will ameliorate the issue of reference to abstracta such as events, though the reference of our language to the world at some point is, of course, unavoidable. Yet the matter is not over for Davidson's truth conditions theory: for, if we are to admit the efficacy of substitutional quantification in the manner indicated above, it will have strong repercussions for the constraints Davidson assumed to be necessary for his truth conditions theory, repercussions which will also have consequences for our attitude to realism. This, however, is the fourth point our inquiry, and takes us into the final assessment of this aspect of Davidson's truth conditions theory.
5.3 Degrees of Discriminability

The suspicious mood aroused by the discussion in the last section—Davidson's interpretation of the constraints imposed by Convention T upon suitable truth conditions theories is too narrow, or at least is not the only option open—is one which may have repercussions for invoking richer theories of discriminating behaviour, and thus of reality itself. In other words, the fine discrimination of objective reality which can only occur via the structure of our intersubjective language, and which for Davidson can only be in terms of first-order logic and events construed in terms of causes and effects, may, within the limits of its applicability indicated in §2, be a viable 'ideal' solution, but it is not the only option open to us, nor is it the one which is imposed upon us by the constraints required by Convention T as Davidson thought. If so, then it may be possible, from within language of course, to consider alternative, richer, means of discriminating reality by the methods opened up by, for example, substitutional quantification.

Ever since Davidson's paper *Truth and Meaning*, the problem of giving a recursive procedure has been identified with the problem of giving a finitely axiomatized truth theory for the language—and it is this requirement which led Davidson to state that 'theories of truth based on the substitutional interpretation of quantifiers do not in general yield the T-sentences demanded by Convention T...'. Both Kripke and Gottlieb do not think such a restriction is needed. Kripke points out that we may have perfectly acceptable truth conditions for all the sentences of a language, and yet the deduction of the Tarski equivalences may still be blocked; and Gottlieb maintains that 'I can see no reason why an acceptable theory of truth must deductively determine the extension of "true"...'. The latter philosopher does not accept that the characterization of the Tarski equivalence is the basic fact that a theory of has to explain; he maintains that the substitutional truth method is correct without appeal to a Tarski-style referential semantics. He 'explicitly dissociates himself from Davidson's view that the only constraint on the provision of truth conditions is that Tarski equivalences be deducible from the assignment...' and says 'In my opinion, this condition is neither necessary
The 'strong componentialism', where the truth value of a sentence is a function of the semantic features of its parts— and which is one of the primary desiderata required by Davidson (see PART 1)— is unnecessary according to Gottlieb, and is lost in the substitutional interpretation, its characteristic being that the truth conditions of a substitutionally quantified sentence depends upon the truth conditions of its instances— and these contain expressions which are not sub-expressions of the original sentence. Hence, the semantics for substitutional quantification does not fit the Davidsonian framework, which now becomes too narrow, with its severe restrictions on the semantics for L. For Gottlieb, there is nothing that forces Davidson's strong componentialism upon a truth conditions theory of meaning; in his view, what is wrong with the criteria Davidson invokes is, not that Davidson picked the wrong restrictions, but rather that he invented restrictions where there are none: all that is required is a finite, effective assignment of truth conditions, and this, says Gottlieb, can be accomplished equally well by the substitutional interpretation. However, jettisoning the ersatz of the constraints imposed by Davidson may require that we have to admit there is no definite answer to the question of what our expressions mean. What this would seem to suggest, then, is that the imposition by Davidson of the severe constraints on his truth conditions theory of meaning in terms of an ideal first-order logical form, with its ensuing austere ontology of abstract events as Davidson envisages them, though not wrong, is an 'ideal' which we are not constrained to accept: there are other possibilities for providing the needed truth conditions semantics which, despite Davidson's early views to the contrary, can be accommodated within Convention T.

Very recently, Davidson has indicated that a liberalization of the constraints he originally anticipated as necessary to comply with Convention T is in order. Furthermore, it seems Davidson is now amenable to accepting that the use of substitutional quantification, and of modal logics, can provide the route to richer theories of meaning and thus of physicalism. This is an interesting admission by Davidson, since it is far from clear that Davidson's ideal of first-order logical form and austere ontology can cope with the
delineation of the structure of opaque contexts such as belief (see CHAPTER SEVEN). If Davidson's programme is to be plausible, it must provide truth conditions for all ordinary natural language sentences; it is not open to Davidson, for example, to deny the intelligibility of, say, modal sentences, as Quine does, and it may yet be that a richer semantics is required to accommodate their structure than Davidson's completely extensional approach. If Davidson's programme is to be plausible, it must provide truth conditions for all ordinary natural language sentences; it is not open to Davidson, for example, to deny the intelligibility of, say, modal sentences, as Quine does, and it may yet be that a richer semantics is required to accommodate their structure than Davidson's completely extensional approach.

Of course, we want to limit ourselves to first order logic if we can manage without recourse to non-extensional forms, due to the benefits of an austere ontology and the clarity and precision its use brings—though, as seen, there has already been some doubts expressed as to its supposed advantages in this area, advantages which perhaps become even more dubious when dealing with the problems of the intensionality of language. Popper, for instance, with his notion of verisimilitude—that we approach, but never attain a true model of objective reality by endless cycles of conjectures and refutations, 134 seems to hold strongly to the fact that in our exploration of deeper and deeper structures of the world (and we have seen that this is synonymous with the deeper and deeper exploration of language itself) we should use the strongest logic possible, that is, 'ideal' first order logic. Such a logic may fail to capture the 'richness' of the more opaque contexts which intensional logics do, yet all Davidson requires of such an ideal 'entering wedge' is that it captures the minimum outline needed for communicative intelligibility.

In any case, Gottlieb's use of substitutional quantification is predicated solely on the use of extensional logic. It is substitutional quantification alone which is said to provide the extensive advantages of quantification into opaque contexts, and this is endorsed by many authors. Kripke points out that the intelligibility of substitutional quantification into a belief context is guaranteed; 135 Belnap and Dunn claim that it is a special advantage of the substitutional point of view that it legitimizes quantification into quotation, as is admitted by Quine; 136 and Marcus has shown that we can explain unactualized possibles by using substitutional quantification which does not require the queer entities which Quine castigates. 137

Nor is there any reason not to invoke its advantages in truth conditions.
semantics, as far as Gottlieb is concerned, for, as we saw, form his point of view, it can do all that is required of such a theory— that is, provide a finite effective assignment of the truth conditions, without the unwanted ontological implications. It may be of course, that Gottlieb's thesis is wrong, and that an ontology for natural language rich in exotica is ultimately unavoidable, but only further research will prove this point. The investigations carried out earlier in this chapter suggest that if we can find a way to avoid commitment to the problematic events, we should do so. It must also be remembered that what Davidson could only mean when he maintains: that events must really exist in order that sentences of various kinds could be considered true is not that such postulations with the particular nature he accords to them must exist, but that such objects— by any name— are required in order to preserve the requisite truth conditions structure. It is the structure of sentences which matters, and not the choice of the assumed objects. This comes out clearly when Davidson begins to vacillate over the question of whether his events must really exist, after all. He admits now that though 'we know no promising alternative,' and that 'deep metaphysical problems will remain as to the nature of these entities, their mode of individuation, their relations to other categories.' Furthermore, Davidson goes on to offer what must be the coup de grâce to events, at least in the terms he conceives them:

Perhaps we will find a way of reducing events to entities of other kinds, for example, sets of points in space-time, or ordered n-tuples of such. Successful reductions along these lines may, in an honoured tradition, be advertised as showing that there are no such things as events.

Elsewhere, too, he says that a theory of truth of the kind he proposes would not specify which events exist, nor even that any do. If these are not admissions that those such as Martin and Russell are correct to hold that events are, in a sense, fictitious, then it is the next best thing. Yet just why Davidson can apparently recant on his early position that the existence of events are inviolable is made clearer in subsequent remarks: 'As long as the
quantifiers and variables remain in the same places, however, the analysis of logical form will stick. ¹⁴³ Plainly, what it is crucial to hang on to is the overall structure of the truth conditions theory, and not the exact nature of the assumed entities as Davidson has described them; there is nothing sacrosanct about Davidson's interpretation of events—even if, perhaps, they are the most perspicuous construal to date. As Quine has remarked, since the scientific system or total theory, including its ontology, is a 'conceptual bridge of our own making',¹⁴⁴ the nature of the events internal to our theory being our choice since 'the objects, or values of variables, serve merely as indices along the way, and we may permute, or supplant them as we please, as long as the sentence-to-sentence structure is preserved.'¹⁴⁵ This being so, what we are interested in doing is building the most unified theory of the structure of our language which is possible, and which, realistically interpreted, also describes the real structure of objective reality. In this sense Davidson is correct to hold that when we study the kind of structure our language requires 'we are not just making a tour of our own picture of things;'¹⁴⁶ and that 'what we take there to be is pretty much what there is,' but perhaps mistaken, if something like Gottlieb's thesis is not incorrect, to think that in reconstructing the 'best' most unified truth conditions structure, we need an ontology of abstract events as he initially imagined.
The arguments in the last section indicate that, as far as semantics is concerned, what is required is to build the most unified truth conditions theory of the structure of our language which we can manage, since, on the conclusions reached at the end of CHAPTER FOUR, in describing deeper and deeper structures of our language we are describing deeper and deeper structures in reality itself. The *raison d'être* behind Davidson's rejection of the notion that his truth conditions theory required any foundational basis in objective reality, and to which language subserviently refers (4.4), is plainly that, as far as structure is concerned, our descriptions of reality are immanent within the truth conditions theory of language, and do not require any direct 'correspondence' with reality in order to be considered true. This is the force behind such comments as to the effect that though we may need eventually 'to investigate directly certain relations between words and objects, and perhaps people too' (an interesting admission) 'there is no reason that would necessarily even touch the constraints I'm talking about'. 147 and that there can be no direct contact between linguistic theory and extra-linguistic reality(4.2) The only concern, as far as Davidson's semantic truth conditions theory is concerned, is, in the first instance, with the most perspicuous description of the structural relations within language. But if the 'best' theory of the internal structure of our language is what is of primary significance for semantics, as it surely is, we should be prepared to accept the benefits of methods such as substitutional quantification if it can help us to provide the kind of truth conditions structure we are seeking, and at the same time avoid reference to problematic entities like events. For events, even though they are said by Davidson to really exist, are also, in the first instance, postulations of our overall theory, designed to enable us to progress towards the best and most unified structure possible. Hence, if they fail to perform this task adequately, or are not needed in the process, there seems good reason not to admit them into an integrated total theory of our language and thus of our picture of the world. 148 In the process, itself, the use of substitutional quantification may aid a richer concept of reality.
To summarize the main issues of this chapter, we began with Davidson's rejection of the idea central to traditional realism, of any foundational basis in objective reality to which the truth conditions structure of language had to correspond; ontology was now basic for Davidson. With the structure of intersubjective language as the new foundational basis, reality is directly described via the postulated entities of events to which reference is made, such events being ostensibly completely extensional, and thus able to provide what facts could not: criteria for what it is for two sentences to refer to the same thing. In this, Davidson follows Quine's notions of objectual quantification and criteria for ontological commitment, and his starting point is that in making manifest that large features of language (by virtue of its quantified structure) we are also making manifest the large features of objective reality—ontology following in the wake of the required truth structure.

However, some philosophers hold that it should not be a question of logical form which decides what is said to exist, and that reference to such abstracta as events is impossible, they being logical fictions. And certainly, reference to events as Davidson construes them is not as perspicuous as Davidson thinks, and his criteria for their identity and individuation are at least open to doubt. Should we then attempt to side-step the difficulties involved in referring to such entities by eliminating their unwanted ontology? At least one philosopher thinks such a project is feasible, despite Davidson's early scepticism (probably following Wallace) that the use of substitutional quantification to do so fails because it contravenes the constraints of Convention T and anyway implies a covert reinstatement in the metalanguage of the ontological commitments we were trying to avoid. The work of those like Kripke and Gottlieb seems to show, however, that the use of substitutional quantification does not contravene Convention T, that suitable truth conditions can be obtained, and that the unwanted ontology can be eliminated, even though it is true that eventually we must refer.

There are consequences for truth conditions theories, since the suggestion is that Davidson's assumptions about the constraints imposed by Convention T, and leading to his own acceptance of first order logic and objectual quantification, and his construal of events, though not wrong, are an austere 'ideal'
which we do not necessarily have to accept, perhaps opening the way for more complex and richer theories of discriminating objective reality from within a unified theory of the structure of language. Davidson himself now appears to be more conducive to accepting the value of such methods as substitutional quantification in opening up the possibilities for richer theories of the truth conditions structure of language, and thus of how we construe reality. Since the thrust in semantics is towards the 'best' most unified theory possible and Davidson's conception of events as really existing is internal to such a theory and designed towards the most integrated theory semantics can achieve, the accommodation of such methods seems a plausible step.

What remains certain, whether or not such techniques prove feasible, is that our conception of objective reality must and can only be via such a truth conditions theory of language, and thus, reality for us is linguistic reality. Yet the use of such a framework in constraining our structured view of reality is a human enterprise, and as such involves considerations of what features of human behaviour are operative in such actions. But this is the concern of PART III of this thesis.
6.1 The Role of the Truth Conditions Theory

One cannot eliminate reference to human psychological reality from any theory of meaning. Wittgenstein asked: 'Every sign, by itself, seems dead. What gives it life?' Gadamer provided an answer: 'Language has its being...in the exercise of understanding between people', and follows this with the observation that for this reason, Artificial Languages are never languages in the true sense of the word. Dummett makes a similar point when he maintains that a theory of meaning which takes truth conditions as its central notion has to supply an explanation of what it is to ascribe to someone knowledge of these truth conditions, and thus he takes understanding to be the key idea in his own theory. Therefore, if the fundamental question in the philosophy of language, the one which was dealt with in PART II, is how language relates to objective reality, it is joined by the equally fundamental question in the philosophy of mind about the part which a speaker's psychological states play in enabling him or her to refer to the world, and how such a speaker understands such a use of his or her words. We, as (radical) interpreters of another's language need to understand how such a speaker understands the use of his or her own words; and this in turn raises the issue of what exactly is the nature of such human action and the psychological attitudes which lie behind such actions.

In Davidson's earliest papers, he seems to maintain, arguably, that the reconstruction of the concept of meaning could follow from the concept of truth conditions formal structure alone: 'I suggest that it may be enough to require that the T-sentences be true.' But his latest position, possibly under the influence of such Philosophers as Dummett, shows a marked change: 'It is wrong to think that we can automatically construe T-sentences as "giving the meaning"
The truth conditions theory is now thought of as giving the right kind of structure, but not meaning; apart from formal constraints, further empirical constraints will be needed.

It is easy to see now why the truth conditions theory alone gives the right kind of structure, but not necessarily the right meaning. As seen in PART 1, the uninterpreted intentional linguistic behaviour with which the radical interpreter is confronted is deemed to jointly manifest both what an (alien) speaker means about the world, together with what the speaker believes about that world. (Other psychological attitudes will be involved, too.) Plainly, the attribution of a structure of meaning and the attribution of a structure of belief are interdependent concepts, the sentences held true being partly a result of what is meant and partly a result of what is believed by the speaker. Davidson quotes Quine's argument that, from the linguistic behaviour, what a speaker means by his words can only partly be disentangled from what he believes about the world, adding: 'A better way way to put this would be to say: belief and meaning cannot be uniquely reconstructed from speech behaviour.'

Equally, the problem of interpretation is to simultaneously abstract, from the sentences held true, what the speaker's words mean, and what his beliefs are; yet the reconstruction of such components can only be fixed by the formal and empirical constraints which we (the interpreters) choose to place upon such sentences. But any number of theories are compatible with the available data, giving the right kind of structure, and which will fail to come up with the correct meaning. For example, we could have the situation where a truth conditions theory governed by formal constraints implies that "Snow is white" is true (in English) if and only if grass is green is no less acceptable than "Snow is white" is true (in English) if and only if snow is white. A truth conditions theory meeting the formal constraints alone need not correlate an object language with its metalanguage translations; at best, conditions yield extensional isomorphism: its extensional truth value is preserved, but not the (alien) speaker's meaning. Hence the formal schema 'is true if and only if p' cannot be equated as it stands with the claim that to give the meaning of a sentence is to state the conditions necessary for its truth. The point has been noted by
many philosophers, and underlies Dummett's criticism that Davidson's truth
conditions theory may give insight into problems of truth and reference, but
does not provide a suitable theory of meaning. Foster also claims the truth
conditions schema 'S is true iff p' gives the correct extension but not the
correct sense. Similarly, Loar notes that 'S is true iff p' is far too
permissive to capture even approximately what S means. Obviously, it seems
that more stringent conditions must be imposed upon a truth conditions theory
if it is to serve as a theory of meaning, if it is to generate the correct
meaning relationship between an uninterpreted sequence and the truth conditions
of the interpreted sequence. How are we to construe these additional constraints,
placed on the truth conditions theory, so that it yields anything like meaning?
It seems that we will have to find some way of referring to psychological
attitudes of the (alien) speaker in order to understand the way in which such
a speaker understands the reference and meaning of his own words. As Davidson
more recently comments:

... to explain why someone said something we need to know, among other
things, his own interpretation of what he said, that is, what he believes
his words mean in the circumstances under which he speaks.

In order, then, to ensure that the truth conditions theory will provide an accu­
rate manual of translation—maximizing agreement between the claims generated
by the truth conditions theory and the truth claims of the speaker—additional
empirical constraints will be required, and reference to the psychological
reality of the speaker, his or her beliefs and other attitudes deemed to be
behind the use of the language to refer to objective reality. As Putnam has
remarked: 'To state the reference (extension) of each term and to describe
what the language user believes of each term is to tell the whole story.'

For Davidson, the theory of truth suffices for a theory of sense and of
understanding. Yet how is reference to the fundamentally indispensable
features of human psychological reality — to the beliefs and other attitudes to
be made, if these are seen as playing a constraining role in how a speaker
himself understands what his own words mean? Such explanations are notoriously the bête noire of any approach which aims at scientific realism; even so, in attempting to explicate such intensional features as beliefs, and other attitudes involved in understanding intentional linguistic behaviour, there are distinct similarities to reconstructing the relationship of language to objective reality as described in Part II and Davidson says in fact that in elucidating the nature of the relationship of such intensional features as beliefs to intentional linguistic behaviour, no radically different concepts are involved. Whether Davidson's particular proposals are adequate is another matter which will have to be considered; what is important at present is to see that for Davidson's truth conditions theory, the reconstruction of such intensional propositional attitudes as 'A believes that p ', essential to understanding how another speaker understands the use of his language, also involves a rejection of any foundational basis in psychological reality, conceived of in extra-linguistic terms, and to which any interpreter can have access in understanding a speaker's words. Thus, it will be seen that Davidson repudiates 'traditional' Fregean and neo-Fregean theories of sense which require reference to intensional entities such as propositions as well as contemporary theories such as those of Grice which require reference to extra-linguistic intentions, in the foundational sense. Such a standpoint leaves Davidson's theory open to criticism to the effect that he ignores such essential features, as some would see it, of psychological reality, and which are necessary to a full understanding of the use of language. However, though for Davidson his truth conditions theory does not need any basis in psychological reality to which it is closely tied, it is certainly not his intention, as it is with Quine, to eliminate all reference to intensional and intentional aspects: indeed, there will be seen to be in Davidson's work a definite reciprocity between language and psychological reality. Although, however, language is not, in this sense, given the total conceptual primacy which it has for some philosophers, what is central to Davidson's thesis is that, for us, any structured access to intensional and intentional psychological features must be via something like the truth conditions structure of language. Thus, Davidson replaces the concept on which some
other 'traditionally-orientated' theories are based, and upon which language is subservient to abstract, intensional and intentional features, and replaces it with the notion in which our intersubjectively shared language is the new foundational basis from within which, as will be shown in CHAPTER SEVEN, such psychological features as beliefs and intentions are seen as reconstructions in relationship to such a language.

6.21. Davidson's Rejection of Any Foundational Basis in Psychological Reality

In a sense, Davidson's truth conditions theory reverses the roles, and the respective importance, given to the relationship of language and psychological features by more traditionally-orientated theories, and rejects the idea of any dualism between language and uninterpreted psychological reality. As radical interpreters, Davidson maintains that we have no privileged access to the contents of a theory of sense - whether we are endeavouring to interpret another speaker's discourse or our own; central to his conception of how an interpreter is to construe what it is for a speaker to believe his own words mean, therefore, is the rejection of the Fregean Theory of Sense and Propositions, and a return to a 'pre-Fregean semantic innocence.' A rejection of the kind of theory of sense in which the senses of proper names and other features are envisaged as the building blocks for the sense of sentences themselves, and in which sentences of the form 'A believes that p' themselves are seen as referring to abstract intensional entities or propositions - the 'grasp' of which is also seen as essential to any understanding of such sentences. If, as has been suggested, Davidson is to completely reject any reference to such entities, and that his truth conditions theory can afford to dispense with them, it will be best to examine Frege's Theory of Sense a little more closely, especially since it is regarded by philosophers such as Dummett as the paradigm for a theory of understanding, as will be seen shortly.

In the introductory paragraphs of Frege's paper On Sense and Reference he raises a problem about identity statements: 'Is it a relation between objects, or between names or signs of objects?' Frege observes that there is a
cognitive difference between 'a = a' and 'a = b', and proceeds to demonstrate the distinction between sense and reference which he thinks is necessary to account for the difference. Frege sees the reference of an expression as the object named by that expression, and the sense of an expression as containing the 'mode of presentation' of the reference, whereby the sign gives us its reference. 18

Used in their ordinary way, words refer to 'definite objects' which we wish to speak about, but it can also happen that 'one wishes to talk about the words themselves, or their sense.' 19 For example, in reporting the words of others—that is, in indirect discourse. When one reports the words of another, and they stand within quotation marks, it 'must not be taken as having its ordinary reference', but rather as having an indirect reference.

A proper name expresses what is taken to be some kind of public, 'objective' meaning or sense, and which is to be distinguished from any private, subjective, representation called an idea—which may be different for all men. For example, we must distinguish, says Frege, 20 between the public sense of a name such as a 'lion', which everyone understands, and the private idea of a lion, which is idiosyncratic and private. Frege seems, in this respect, to make the sense into an entity which can be thought but not observed, and which is part of some psychological mechanism.

Finally, Frege generalizes his conclusions from names to the semantics of other expressions and to whole sentences. He maintains that sentences, too, have both sense and reference: all true sentences have the same reference—the 'True', and all false sentences have the same reference to the 'False'; the sense of such sentences being the proposition expressed. However, such senses of sentences—the propositions or the thoughts which are expressed—are again public, not private: the thought is '...the common property of several thinkers.' 21 Furthermore—and this is crucial importance to what is to be said later—every individual declarative sentence is to be regarded as a proper name, the motive being to preserve the intersubstitutivity of coreferential terms *salva veritate*. 22 And, just as the reference of a sentence is a function of the reference of its constituent features, so the sense of a declarative sentence is a function of the senses of the various signs occurring within that sentence. 23
follow- in the case of sentences in which an embedded 'that' clause follows a propositional verb, as in 'Ptolemy believed that the earth was flat', the truth value of the whole sentence is not a function of the sentence in the subordinate clause. For Frege, then, such sentences are nonextensional; the reference of the embedded sentence following 'that' being the proposition it expresses (which is what its sense would be in an extensional context). The sense of such nonextensional sentences is then identified with the sense of the words 'the proposition that...'.

From the above outline of Frege's ideas, the following main points seem to emerge concerning his Theory of Sense. Firstly, sense is a cognitive notion, being introduced in the first place to resolve the problem about the information content of true-identity statements. Secondly, sense is the means by which reference is secured: a name or sentence has a reference only if it has a sense, the referent being whatever uniquely fits this concept. Thirdly, sense accounts for the meaningfulness of sentences which lack a reference, as in indirect discourse. And, fourthly, the 'grasping' of the sense is meant to provide an account of the speaker's understanding- it has to do with what we know when we know that a proposition is true, and it connected with one's beliefs. Fifthly, sense has an objective character: it is something which can be communicated from one individual to another in a way in which mental images and the like cannot. Sixthly, the point which returns us to our introductory statement, the senses of names and singular terms are the building blocks of the senses of sentences themselves (thoughts); in fact, since Frege, propositions have been seen as constructed out of the senses of the terms used in their expression, and the senses of such terms are the contributions they make to the truth-conditions of any whole sentence incorporating them.

Clearly, Frege's Theory of Sense is an extremely complex affair. If we are to accept that Fregean senses can accomplish such manifold tasks, we have to be sure of what exactly such entities are and how they function. The tentative suggestion at present is that, on the two primary functions singled out for criticism from the theory indicated above, Frege's notion of sense fails to
provide for Davidson what he thinks his truth conditions can provide: an 'intersubjective theory of sense and understanding. These two primary issues are that, in the first place, Frege's Theory of Sense requires us to accept in the case of indirect discourse, for example, the notion of some kind of isomorphic 'correspondence' between an infinity of individual sentences and an infinity of propositions or thoughts construed as Platonic abstract intensional entities. But, since such entities appear impossible to identify or individuate, it appears a hopeless task attempting to construe such a relationship or to reveal them as possessing any kind of internal structure, and without which it would seem we are free to reconstrue them more or less *ad libitum* as any ethereal objects satisfying the meager conditions laid down by Frege. The second primary issue is one which will be considered in relation to Dummett's ideas (6.22), and concerns the fact that for Fregeans, what it is to understand sentences requires us to accept the idea that we somehow 'grasp' such entities; yet no-one, least of all Frege, has ever said how such entities are 'grasped' or understood. The remaining question for this part of the study will then be to consider whether or not Davidson's truth conditions theory can, as he says, suffice to avoid any dualism between the structure of our language and these undefined entities construed as extra-linguistic abstract objects, and can suffice as a theory of understanding. Of course, the extremely complex and varied tasks which Fregean senses or propositions were introduced to solve means that the truth conditions theory also has some formidable problems to confront; but the two we are interested in, as radical interpreters trying to ascertain what an (alien) speaker believes his own words mean, and how he or she understands the use of such words, are the two outlined above. That is, can Davidson's truth conditions theory suffice to replace what Fregean propositions were primarily introduced to explicate: what 'thing' it is which two people who believe the same thing both believe, (since we are concerned here with belief), and what is 'grasped' when we understand the use of our words, or the words of other speakers.
It is as well to begin with the point on which Davidson's truth conditions theory is in agreement with Frege's Theory of Sense: that is, with Frege's insistence on the objective character of sense, as something which can be communicated from one individual to another, as opposed to subjective, mental, images, Lockean ideas, or Humean streams of consciousness. Certainly semantics need not concern itself with such entities, and, as usual, the point is well-put by Quine: 'We do not aim to make clear what the users of the unclear expression had unconsciously in mind all along. We do not expose hidden meanings...' Similarly, Putnam makes the point that understanding language has little to do with images in the mind. And Popper indicates that the semantics of language has nothing to do with the inner psychological workings of thought. H. Price shows that a good deal of thinking does not need to be accompanied by any imagery at all—verbal or otherwise. And, of course, since Wittgenstein's critique, it is accepted that it is impossible to determine the character of silent private thoughts, by any direct intersubjective means. Contemporary philosophers are agreed on such points.

But what of Frege's so-called 'objective' senses or propositions? Can these postulated abstract entities also be regarded as ultimately nothing more than mythical constructions hypostasized in order to try to see some order in the flux of psychological experience, and which can perhaps be dispensed with altogether by the truth conditions theory of meaning? It would seem that for Davidson they should be so regarded, for he seems to see it as an error to think that an infinity of the individual sentences of our language could be envisaged as in any way isomorphically corresponding to such entities, or as being required for understanding. The paradigm target for Davidson is the vagueness—as he sees it—of the Fregean notion of sense. He rejects as bogus the Fregean analysis of indirect discourse, since such an analysis requires the existence of intensional objects, as noted, and the idea of an infinity of sentences in correspondence with an infinity of intensional entities, whereas Davidson's holistic truth theory and extensional approach claims to suffice without such entities. There are many papers in which Davidson brings our attention to this aspect of his work. For example, Davidson notes that for Frege, a sentence like "Daniel believes that there is a lion in the den" being as it is dominated
by a two-place predicate, 'believes', with its first-place filled by a singular term, 'Daniel', and its second-place filled by a singular term naming a sense or proposition, means that not do we have to treat such sentences as singular terms, but that we also have to find entities for them to name, and that this requires an infinite number of such entities. Davidson sees this as a consequence of Frege's failure to conceive of the theory of our language in holistic terms.

The important aspects of Frege's ideas which Davidson does not mention, but which are obviously important to our argument are these. Frege's Theory of Sense does seem to require the notion of some kind of structural isomorphism - a one-to-one correspondence between individual sentences and thoughts or propositions, but it is an isomorphism which appears to make the abstract entities themselves basic: 'To the structure of the thought there corresponds the compounding of words into a sentence...'; and hence, there are as many thoughts (propositions) as there are sentences expressed. But even if, as Sellars says, for Frege these abstract entities 'must have structural characteristics,' they are not to be thought of as having, on Frege's analysis, any determinate character: Frege does not give any analysis of their internal structure; all we have is a host of artificially postulated *sui generis* entities of dubious character whose undefined structure determines the expression of our sentences. For Frege, such abstract entities are, in a way, foundational; and when Frege says that a sentence is true, he really means that the corresponding thought or proposition is true.

Yet surely Frege has matters the wrong way round in making such entities with, at best, a dubious structural nature, and for which there seems to be no evidence, as basic in the way he does. Certainly, they are not the kind of entity which could significantly enter into scientific discourse. Any notion of individual sentences as corresponding to such 'foundational' abstract objects is rightfully rejected by Davidson, and for the very good reason that such an idea would require us to envisage language as corresponding to entities which are completely obscure; any reference to such intensional, extra-linguistic entities is fraught with difficulties. Quine, of course, has mounted his own attack against such non-extensional objects, and has vehemently rejected
Frege's anti-physicalism. If Fregean intensions are entities with any discernable structure, what are their identity conditions? Deciding that they in fact lack any such clear criteria, it is not surprising Quine regards them as 'creatures of darkness' and that he will rejoice when they are exorcised, and sees their principle of individuation as obscure. Quine's objections centre on the failure of substitutivity in such non-extensional contexts: the context is 'referentially opaque' in the sense that individual terms within that context fail to refer to anything at all. For example, in the sentence 'George IV wished to know whether Scott was the author of Waverly', do we refer to something? Can it be the author of Waverly—i.e. Scott? Surely not, Quine argues, since George IV did not wish to know whether Scott was Scott. In the absence of any plausible entity for the referent of 'the author of Waverly', the expression itself must fail to refer to anything in that context; thus, for Quine, failure of substitutivity of a term in a given context is tantamount to failure of reference of that term in that context. Furthermore, failure of reference of a term prevents us from assuming that there exists any such object of which the predicate is true, and therefore bars existential generalization. Thus Quine concludes one cannot meaningfully quantify into referentially opaque contexts such as intentional contexts expressing the propositional attitudes. Although Davidson does not specifically say so, his reasons for rejecting Fregean propositions include the apparent impossibility of referring to such entities outlined by Quine.

Yet if reference to propositions advocated by Fregean and neo-Fregean theories such as the one propounded by Church is rejected, to what does 'that p' in expressions of the form 'A believes that p' correspond? What kind of entities can be discerned which will provide the kind of structure which reference to propositions fails to provide? There are several alternative suggestions which have been put forward by philosophers, none of which will be considered in any great detail since the point of importance here is that they are all rejected by Davidson—and for the same reason as he abjures Fregean propositions—that for him they fail to provide the requisite structure for intensions. For instance, for Carnap, indirect discourse involves a relation, in terms of intensional isomorphism, between a speaker and a sentence.
would analyse "s said(believes) that p' as 's uttered some sentence intensionally isomorphic to 'p) in English'. Similarly, Scheffler treats 'that p' in 's said(believes) that p' as corresponding to 's uttered (believes) a that-p utterance', where there is a separate predicate corresponding to each sentence 'p'. Quine goes further in this direction, treating the whole of 'said(believes) that-p' as a predicate of s. Quine's position is interesting, illustrating as it does a discouraging search for any theory of the structure of belief sentences, concluding that '...there is no need to recognize "believes" and similar verbs as relative terms at all', and that 'a final alternative that I find as appealing as any is simply to dispense with the objects of the propositional attitudes.'

All these approaches are unacceptable to Davidson, for they all, in their way, fail to give the needed structure. Unlike Frege's reference to propositions, which is a dark doctrine, together with the similar idea of Church's, and neither of which, Davidson says, are amenable to a Tarski-style truth conditions theory, his account does not need appeal to intensional entities. Unlike Carnap's analysis, it does not need explicit reference to a language. And, unlike Scheffler's treatment, which Davidson thinks gives no hint as to how the meaning of the predicates depends on their structure, it allows that what follows the 'that' is a sentence with 'significant structure' of the kind his truth conditions theory can exploit. And, of course, Quine's proposal which does not detect logical structure facilitating the incorporation of intensional discourse within a truth-definition is not one which goes far enough for Davidson's project.

Whether or not Davidson's 'paratactic' analysis can succeed in detailing the required structure is a matter which is considered in CHAPTER SEVEN, involving as it does theoretical and ontological considerations within the extensional truth conditions metalanguage. But enough has been said in this section to show why, in attempting to understand what it is a speaker believes (and the same will apply to other attitudes such as Desires, wants, or wishes) Davidson will not allow any recourse to any Fregean theory of sense which requires any reference to any 'foundational' extra-linguistic propositions, or
Reference to any other entities such as sentences since, for Davidson, all such proposals are not to be successfully utilised in delineating structure. Davidson is surely right to want to avoid reference to such intensional entities as propositions for, as Quine's criticisms indicate, being on the wrong side of the semantic fence, such mysterious objects are impossible to identify and to individuate; rather than accept any dualism between language and such unanalysed entities, Davidson's proposal in effect reverses Frege's notion, since it starts, as will be seen in CHAPTER SEVEN, with a well-developed semantics and then builds up the necessary intensional and intentional features of psychological reality from within such a truth conditions theory, and which, Davidson hopes, will also provide the kind of structure which the other methods mentioned could not.

6.22 Dummett and Understanding

Whether or not Davidson can successfully circumvent the need for reference to propositions as the objects of the propositional attitudes, there remains the second major point, mentioned in 6.21, for which they were introduced by Frege— that is, what it is to understand sentences requires us to accept, on Frege's analysis, that we somehow 'grasp' such entities, even though Frege fails in any way to explicate this notion of 'grasping'. Nevertheless, a major problem to be faced by Davidson's truth conditions theory, if it is to prove adequate to delineating how it is that one understands one's language, is whether his truth conditions theory can suffice for a theory of understanding.

This is just what Dummett has been led to deny, insisting instead on a Fregean Theory of Sense as the traditional paradigm for a theory of understanding. In fact, Dummett's criticism of Davidson's truth conditions theory as a theory of meaning is really founded upon his criticism of Davidson's rejection of the Fregean notion of sense and— as Dummett once saw it—the attempt by Davidson to explicate the whole function of language entirely in terms of a theory of reference. This is an inaccurate picture of Davidson's work, but the ensuing censure by Dummett possibly stimulated Davidson into formulating more clearly how an interpreter could understand how a speaker understands the use of
his words.

For Dummett, a theory of meaning is a theory of understanding. The point is made in several of his papers, for example, "We ought to say that the meaning of any expression is determined by what a speaker must know if he is to be said to understand that expression..." Elsewhere he stresses that he thinks a truth conditions theory gives no way of determining the content which a speaker gives a sentence: "I deny that Davidson's truth conditions theory can represent an individual's grasp of the meaning of a particular sentence," and concludes that Davidson's holism is wrong, since, unlike Frege's 'atomistic' theory, it does not allow that the sense which any speaker may attach to each sentence may be different. Davidson's theory, in Dummett's view, lies 'beyond human capacities', and fails to realize that our language is a 'diversity of many types of expression' which a 'single story' truth conditions theory cannot hope to cover. This of course is reminiscent of Wittgenstein's notion of language as a diversity of language games having only a family resemblance, and in fact Dummett's later ideas on the centrality of the 'use' of language again reflects this closeness. Dummett complains that there is no guarantee that the complexity of practices carried out by language will conform to the kind of systematic theory envisaged by Davidson.

In later papers, Dummett makes more specific his criticisms, and the issue of exactly what it is to understand the truth conditions of sentences comes to the fore, a matter central to Dummett's concept of Antirealism, since for Dummett, any theory such as Davidson's, in which sentences must be true of something (see 5.2) is equivalent to Realism. But it is important to note that Dummett's views which lead to his Antirealism and verificationalism arise because of his fundamental concern with what it is to understand the use of language; and it is Dummett's exclusive concern with such notions as competence, epistemology, and the theory of sense, which, it will be argued, lead Dummett to his false conclusions.

Questions about meaning, then, for Dummett, 'are best interpreted as questions about understanding,' Hence, a theory such as Davidson's, which takes truth conditions as its central notion, must supply an explanation of what it is
to ascribe to someone a knowledge of the truth conditions which must obtain for a sentence to be true. But just what is entailed by this 'knowing' the truth conditions? It is the failure, as Dummett sees it, on the part of Davidson's theory to satisfactorily explain this knowledge of what it is for someone to understand the truth conditions of a sentence, which leads him to reject Davidson's thesis.

Any theory such as Davidson's is equivalent, in Dummett's view to realism: that the world is determinately constituted and that sentences about the world are determinately true or false whether we can know this or not. Dummett objects to this 'transcendent' capacity; in his opinion, only a 'few sentences' are so decidable, natural language being full of undecidable sentences which are beyond our capacity to recognize as true or false. Such transcendent notions will not do for Dummett because a theory of meaning according to his original definition must tell us exactly what speakers know when they understand truth conditions, and Davidson's theory fails to account for this connection between the speaker's knowledge or understanding and the use of his sentences. Thus, the crucial link between the Theory of Sense and Understanding and the actual use of such sentences is broken in the large number of crucial cases where we cannot ascribe knowledge of truth conditions to the speaker. It is at this point of Dummett's argument that the closeness of his ideas to those of the Fregean notion of sense comes through, and indicates that the fundamental issue for Dummett concerns the Theory of Sense, and not the derived arguments relating to his verificationism and antirealism, which follow directly upon Dummett's requirement that the notion of sense be made fully manifest. For, in his view, 'someone who knows, of a given sentence, what conditions must obtain for it to be true does not yet know all that he needs to know in order to grasp the significance of an utterance of that sentence**, and the point of a theory of meaning is to make explicit this connection between a speaker's knowledge of the truth conditions of a sentence and the use of that sentence.

Hence, the theory must show how that knowledge enables the speaker to use the various sentences of the language. Dummett gives specific examples where Davidson's theory apparently fails to show what counts as the speaker's manifestation of his knowledge, and concludes: 'even the most thorough-going
realist must grant that we could hardly be said to grasp what it is for a statement to be true if we had no conception whatever of how it might be known to be true. What actually happens, according to Dummett, is that the realist surreptitiously extends the cases where sentences are decidable on an observational model to cover the cases of 'undecidables': we try to convince ourselves what it would be to be able to use such undecidables to give direct reports of observation; but, Dummett maintains, there is no justification for such an extension. Hence the truth conditions theory fails to answer how we come to be able to assign to our sentences a meaning dependent upon a use to which we are unable to put them.

Thus, for Dummett, understanding the truth conditions of a sentence must come down ultimately to having the recognitional capacity of precisely when such truth conditions obtain, and the understanding or grasp of sentences both determines and is determined by, the uses to which sentences can be put. But a theory such as Davidson's cannot explain what it is to know the truth conditions of a sentence since we have no way of saying how knowledge of the truth conditions can be directly manifested: it cannot show how a speaker's sense and the manifestation of a sentences use determine each other. Davidson's truth conditions theory is thus rejected by Dummett, and along with it the notions of bivalence. An alternative semantics is formulated based on the intuitionist account of the meaning of mathematical statements. Understanding statements on this view does not rest on whether we can know when these statements are true, but on an ability to recognize whether there is a proof for any given statement. Further, understanding any mathematical expression occurs if one knows how it contributes to determining what counts as a proof of any statement in which it stands. On this line, therefore, it is guaranteed that a grasp of any mathematical statement or expression is fully manifestable in a mastery of the use of mathematical language because the grasp is directly connected to use. Dummett maintains that this mathematical paradigm is readily transferred to ordinary language: the notion of proof generalising into that of verification. And verification here is the thesis that the understanding of a statement is being able to recognize precisely what verifies it; exactly what conclusively establishes it as true.
Dummett concludes his thesis with an acknowledgement of the efficacy of Quine's Verificationism\(^5\) (see 4.2), but enough has been outlined of his ideas to illustrate the motivation behind his attack on Davidson's truth conditions theory.

Elsewhere, Dummett admits that his 'Anti-realist position is a very strong one'\(^6\) in relation to how we come to grasp the sense of statements, and 'the use which is subsequently made of these statements.'\(^7\) Indeed, the central features which seem to emerge from Dummett's papers include the predominance he gives to the Theory of Sense at the expense of linguistic considerations, and the desire that our understanding, grasp and knowledge of the truth conditions of the sentences we use should be guaranteed; and further, the derived notion that the sentences concerned must be manifestly shown to be conclusively verified.

But to use such arguments against Davidson's theory is to argue that it fails to meet constraints which it neither purports to have nor it needs to have. Dummett's concern to do justice to the notion of understanding means he gives an undue emphasis to the ideas of competence and grasp of our language at the expense of the objectivity of language itself; and his concern that the sentences concerned be conclusively verified is verification of the worst kind, requiring as it does conclusive certainty. Rather than a step forward, the suggestion is that Dummett's theory is a retrograde move.\(^8\)

Dummett speaks continually of his quest for certainty in the Theory of Sense: about how meaning should be determined by what a speaker must know in order to understand expressions, or how the problem for a Theory of Sense is of saying conclusively what speakers know.\(^9\)

Likewise, he says that the Theory of meaning(sense) must be a complete representation of the propositional knowledge of the understanding it consists in- and how this must be fully manifested in practical use; and he speaks of the mastery of 'undecidables'.

Dummett's concentration of competence and the need for certainty in a Theory of Sense and Understanding makes it hard to see how the kind of structure a truth conditions theory accords to this area (see 6.3) of psychological reality via language can have any place in such explanations- and, of course, for Dummett it does not. For Dummett begins his enquiry into understanding by asking whether or not truth(structure) should be central to a theory of meaning, and his answer is a resounding 'no': But the thesis Dummett does end up with
and which destroys any hope of making the truth conditions structure of language a central feature in discerning structure within the otherwise pre-theoretically inaccessible contents of psychological reality is surely misplaced. Surely the kind of structure as given by Davidson's truth conditions theory (or at least something like it) is essential to any suitable explanation of understanding—even if it can only be considered a part of the total explanation. For part of what is fundamentally needed to explain the capacity of a speaker to understand unfamiliar sentences uttered by other speakers is common access by all such speakers to some kind of recursive truth conditions structure, since, for one thing, a good case can be made for the argument that understanding what is said is largely a matter of data processing which in some sense involves analytical and synthesizing processes akin to decoding and the like, and one of the criteria for such processing is that the utterance to be understood must also have a complex structure capable of being analysed and synthesized. And Davidson's Tarski-style truth conditions theory, with its necessary structure, (or something very like it) would account for this requirement, even if it eventually proves unable to account for the whole story. Dummett's concentration on sense and understanding in the manner he does so, takes us away from ever being able to see such a truth conditions structure of language as the means whereby we can have such common access to understanding between speakers, and must be rejected. The total focus on understanding by Dummett as the primary thing to be explained wrongly concentrates matters exclusively in this area and thus misses a large part of what also needs to be explained: the structure of language and the part that this structure plays in our understanding, and for which common access to a recursive truth conditions theory seems essential.

Similarly, Dummett's cry for 'mastery' over the contents of what is understood is also wrongly conceived—especially since it berates Davidson's truth conditions theory for failing to achieve what it never set out to achieve, and what it probably does not need to achieve. Davidson in fact specifically notes that he wishes to avoid speaking about the 'mastery' of this aspect of understanding or 'grasping' a speaker's use of his language, though his position to date is still that the possession of a truth conditions theory
together with the knowledge that it is possessed suffices for understanding:

'Indeed it still seems to me right, as far as it goes, to hold that someone is in a position to interpret the utterances of speakers of a language if he has a certain body of knowledge entailed by a theory of truth for - a theory that meets specified empirical and formal constraints - and he knows that this knowledge is entailed by such a theory.' Davidson even goes as far as to suggest, in a much earlier paper, that there is a mechanism in the interpreter which corresponds to the truth conditions theory - a point which emphasises what was said earlier about truth structure as essential to understanding. Yet Davidson is equally firm in making it clear that such a theory can be used to 'describe an aspect of the interpreter's competence at understanding what is said'. and, in one of his earliest papers Davidson fully concedes that there is always something grasped in understanding which we cannot communicate. In other words, the complete certainty and mastery in the area of understanding demanded by Dummett is not the aim of Davidson's truth conditions theory.

Of course, it can readily be accepted that such propositional truth conditions knowledge is not understanding in the pre-theoretical sense - that actual understanding and competence is quite different in certain ways from what the theory says it is. Some philosophers urge that because people have complex theoretical knowledge about language, always assuming that they do, it does not necessarily follow that they possess the skill for mastery and understanding of language. It can be plausibly argued that the connections between Davidson's truth conditions account and actual competence is ultimately left mysterious, or that the truth conditions approach does not account comprehensively enough for the real processes involved. But even if all this is admitted, it does not show that the theory of truth could not be a part of the overall explanation. Davidson allows that he has as yet not given a completely satisfactory formulation of what it is to understand another speaker's utterances, and that a theory of truth is not to be equated with the actual processes involved in any direct sense. Yet at least if we begin with a mechanism like his truth conditions theory, and the structure it describes within language, we have some means of entry into the processes of understanding other speaker's utterances;
of Sense as primary, and that what we must demand is complete and certain
explications of how a speaker understands or grasps the use of his language,
it is not only difficult to see what headway could be made in such matters, but
it surely goes against the fundamental need to find common structure in this
area of understanding, whether or not the kind of structure given by Davidson's
truth conditions theory is the whole of the story. Dummett's thesis has things
too much orientated in the direction of the Theory of Sense; it is better to
begin from the point where we do have a clearer picture, that is, from the
truth conditions structure of language, even if Davidson's theory will have to
be augmented. Again, Dummett's call for complete certainty in such matters is
a red herring; and when it is linked to the issues of guaranteeing the proof
of statements and of verificational requirements that understanding be fully
manifestable in the use of language the errors are merely compounded. 68 At
the very least, therefore, Dummett's criticisms do not show that Davidson's
truth conditions theory cannot suffice for a Theory of Sense and Understanding,
and there are strong indications that, in some form or other, such a truth
conditions theory is an essential element in such explanations.

To quickly summarize the issues discussed with respect to Frege and Dummett,
then, the main points are these. In order to explain why a speaker said some­
thing, reference to the psychological reality of the speaker was seen to be
indispensable: an interpreter has to know what the speaker believes his own
words mean, and how he understands the use of his own words. (6.1). The
Fregean Theory of Sense is rejected as unacceptable by Davidson, its reference
to propositions in explicating such psychological features as 'A believes that p
not only incurring difficulties in identifying and individuating such 'founda­
tional', extra-linguistic entities, but also making any intersubjective theory
of sense along the lines of Tarski's truth conditions theory impossible. The
claim is that the truth conditions theory does not need reference to such inten­
sional objects. Reference to other entities such as sentences is also rejected
by Davidson as being unamenable to the kind of structure a truth theory needs.
Frege offers little explanation of what it is to understand language, and
Dummett's concentration on the Theory of Sense and Understanding, together
with his desire to see guarantees of mastery in such areas makes no room for a truth conditions theory in this area - yet the kind of structure delineated by such a theory could well be an essential element in such understanding.

The hope is then, to reconstruct such intensional features of psychological reality as beliefs and also desires from within the extensional truth conditions metalanguage, and that the truth conditions theory will at least suffice for understanding, issues which are taken up in CHAPTER SEVEN.

However, the issue of the use of the truth conditions theory in reconstructing the intensional aspects of psychological reality, and of thus avoiding any 'dualism' in this sphere is only part of the story. The other part is concerned with the intentional aspect of how a speaker is construed as using his language, for the use of language is also an intentional activity. This is the issue dealt with in the following section.
So far, in considering the intensional features of psychological reality such as beliefs or desires, Davidson has rejected the need for any reference to extra-linguistic entities like Fregean propositions; nor does the kind of theory advocated by Dummett, which cannot countenance any truth conditions structure in the area of understanding, but which places all its emphasis on understanding and competence at the expense of truth structure prove acceptable. Davidson's truth conditions theory offers the hope of avoiding any correspondence to, and thus any dualism with, such 'foundational', extra-linguistic propositions, and also of providing structured access to understanding. But in discussing Dummett, the close connection between his theory and Wittgenstein's notion of meaning as use was noted. Wittgenstein's reaction to his own earlier views in the *Tractatus*⁶⁹, that language has a single function of reference by which meaning is to be explained, is echoed by Dummett's criticism of Davidson's theory as neglecting the variety of uses to which language is put. The emphasis is transferred to seeing sentences as having meaning because people use them; language is inseparable from human activity. Hence, for Wittgenstein, in his later philosophy, the idea of the language as 'the whole, consisting of language and the actions into which it is woven'⁷⁰. To master a language game, since such games are linked in a fundamental way to the things people do, is accordingly to master a scheme of beliefs and intentions: to enter into a humanly shared world view. The concern in the later Wittgenstein of language as use, and of language as a form of intentional activity is thus closely related to the views of other philosophers such as Austin, Searle, (and in particular, Grice,) for whom what is primary is not the explication of the truth conditions structure of language, but rather the wider question of how the use of language relates to the world by virtue of being a form of rule-governed intentional behaviour.⁷¹ Grice's theory of meaning, for instance, in its most general form, is the attempt to explain human communication as a species of rational human activity. On Grice's view what distinguishes such communication is the concomitant psychological states, that is, the beliefs and intentions with which communicative acts are conventionally performed. Such notions are envisaged as
providing, in the case of Grice, some kind of foundational basis in extra-
linguistic beliefs and intentions, for explicating the use of language by 
speakers. Not surprisingly, just as with the notion of extra-linguistic Fregean 
propositions, Davidson's truth conditions theory radically opposes any reference 
to such foundational, extra-linguistic notions: as with intensions, such 
intentional aspects of language use are indeed seen by Davidson as playing a 
crucial role in interpreting language as a form of intentional human activity, 
but not in the foundational sense required by Grice.

Grice begins by trying to find a ground of distinction between the meaning 
of 'meaning' in such contexts as 'Those spots mean measles' - what he calls 
meaning in its natural sense - and non-natural meaning, such as with 'Those 
three rings on the bell (of the bus) mean that the bus is full.' After two attempts, Grice arrives at a definition along these lines: that for A to 
mean something by uttering x, A must intend to induce, by uttering x, a 
belief in the audience and intend his utterance to be recognized as so intended. 
(The recognition is intended by A to play its part in indicating a belief).

In a later paper, Grice specifically brings in the issue of conventions, and 
a distinction is drawn between what a speaker said, and what he has implicated: he indicates that he 'would not want to deny that ... speakers' intentions are 
to be recognized, in the normal case, by virtue of a knowledge of the convention-
al use of the sentence', and says that his account of non-conventional 
implicatures depends on this idea. This latter feature of Grice's work is 
important since it is designed to show that all communication involves general 
agreement between speakers and hearers which Grice terms 'the Co-operative 
Principle', under which certain maxims specify the conventions which 
participants in a conversation normally obey. Discourse is part of a co-operativ: 
activity in which each participant's speech is designed to help achieve the 
purpose of the activity. Thus, one's contribution to a conversation must be 
appropriate in terms of its aim, and this is fleshed-out by Grice in the form 
of four maxims:

(1) **Quantity:** which says that the contribution one makes to a conversation
ought to be as informative as required in the situation: neither too informative, nor too un-informative.

(11) **Quality**: indicating that one ought to try to make a true contribution

(111) **Relation**: which says that one ought to make a relevant contribution

(IV) **Manner**: showing that one ought to avoid creating confusion as a result of obscurity, ambiguity, and the like, and to try to be clear and concise.

The importance of adopting such principles is that it provides an assumption about the participants in a conversation—roughly that they are following mutually known and accepted rules; and, very importantly, this enables them to infer various things about the proper ways to construe a speaker's utterance in connection with what it conveys beyond what the speaker has said. Accordingly such conversational implicatures are implications of a very different nature from semantic entailments or logical implications (see Part 1): clearly, they cannot be a part of the semantic meaning of sentences, since they depend on a prior understanding of this (conventional) meaning of a sentence. Another important feature is that it is the flaunting of these conventions which is the basis for the flexibility of the message conveyed, since any interpretation can be cancelled without contradiction.

Finally, in Grice's latest papers there are one or two interesting insights into his ideas on semantics. For instance, Grice (rightly, of course) regards intensionality as embedded in the very foundations of a theory of language—which accounts for his starting-off point in extra-linguistic psychological reality. Also, he sees a close analogy between intending and believing in the sense that the focal element in an intention is to be regarded as a certain sort of belief.

From this sketch of the main ideas in Grice's published papers, we thus see the following, each aspect of which is important to the later criticisms invoked by Davidson. In delineating his theory of meaning for individual utterances by particular speakers as outlined above, the basic idea in Grice's theory is that semantic properties of utterances are a function of the communicative
intentions of their utterers, or of conventions that associate sentence-types with such intentions. The key concepts are thus intention and belief: a speaker's meaning consists in a complex intention, the core of which is an intention to affect a hearer's beliefs, intentions, or actions, in a specific way. The other key idea is then to explicate the conventional semantic properties of sentences as deriving from conventional regularities that associate sentence-types with communicative intentions. Hence, Grice offers principles connecting the psychological propositional attitudes with semantics by means of conventions. The central point, from the perspective of the criticism to follow, is that Grice's explication depends for its viability on a notion of a foundational framework of propositional attitudes which does not depend upon the semantic properties to be explicated. For, even though the central elements indicated above from Grice's papers are indeed crucial to Davidson's philosophy of language as much as to Grice's, Davidson's truth conditions theory reverses the role which they are to play: any notion of extra-linguistic, foundational basis of intentions and beliefs is rejected as an unsatisfactory basis from which to explain a speaker's intentional linguistic activity; rather, for Davidson, they are constructed from within the extensional truth conditions metalanguage. (See Chapter Seven.)

The Gricean programme seems to offer, then, the prospect of analysing the concept 'means' without appeal to any semantic or linguistic notions whatsoever and on the basis of direct reference to the beliefs and intentions issuing in individual utterances. Perhaps Bennett has stated this most clearly: 'H.P. Grice showed how to give a clear sense to "By uttering x, U meant that P" without implying anything about language...’ Thus, according to Bennett, we can have an account of meaning which presupposes nothing about language, and which 'treats as basic the individual instance of meaning, by one speaker, at one time...'. This is the focus of Davidson's criticism: 'Grice', he says, 'if I understand his project, wants to explain linguistic meaning ultimately by appeal to non-linguistic intentions.' Yet even from his earliest published papers, it seems clear that Davidson regards the appeal to any extra-linguistic attribution of values or propositional attitudes as wholly
In later work, he notes that if someone utters a sentence like 'The sun is over the yard-arm,' one solution to interpretation might be suggested by the fact that 'he intended to convey to his hearers the impression that he believed the sun was over the yard-arm...'. For Davidson, however, what should be taken as basic is not what the particular person meant, but rather what the sentence itself as uttered meant, communication being via the literal, truth conditions structure of the sentence. (See Part 1) and this approach requires abstracting from any extra-linguistic intentions. In various other papers, too, Davidson emphasizes that there cannot, in his opinion, be any extra-linguistic knowledge of beliefs or intentions, that our best and only suitable route to such attitudes is via linguistic behaviour itself, and that consequently the foundational basis for interpretation in non-linguistic beliefs and intentions required by Grice is mistaken. But the most devastating critique occurs when, in again considering the possibility of a theory of interpretation starting from non-linguistic intentions, purposes and the like, and which he specifically relates to the tradition of Wittgenstein and Grice, he says 'There is a principled, and not merely a practical, obstacle to verifying the existence of detailed, general and abstract beliefs and intentions, while being unable to tell what a speaker's words mean.' For, continues Davidson, 'we have no good idea how to set about authenticating the existence of such attitudes when communication is not possible.' And he concludes:

My claim is only that making detailed sense of a person's intentions and beliefs cannot be independent of making sense of his utterances. If this is so, then an inventory of a speaker's sophisticated beliefs and intentions cannot be evidence for the truth of a theory for interpreting his speech behaviour.

Davidson's position, then, is absolutely clear: there can be no reference to any foundational basis of psychological reality in terms of extra-linguistic intentions and beliefs as required by the Gricean elaboration of the traditional theory of meaning. Is Davidson correct to hold such a point of view, and is there no prospect of rescuing Grice's ideas from such a fate? The argument to
follow will show that for Davidson any hope of retaining the Gricean view, even with the additional help which has been suggested, is futile; this does not mean, however, that Davidson is ignoring such elements of psychological reality as intentions or purposes. Indeed, such 'Gricean' features have a critical role to play—but not in any foundational sense. (CHAPTER SEVEN)

Many criticisms have been levelled at Grice's theory, some of which can be used back up Davidson's own claims. For example, Ziff invents an academic, George, who, given a test to establish his sanity for induction into the army replies with the nonsense phrase, 'Ugh ugh buugh blugh ugh blug blug'. By this utterance, George means to produce an effect on his audience—perhaps to offend them—and he intends this effect to arise from the recognition that he intended to offend them. Hence, George means something by his utterance in Gricean terms, but of course his utterance means, in itself, nothing whatsoever. Without language, in terms of a prior notion of sentence meaning, nothing that is semantically intelligible is conveyed.

Again, Searle postulates an American soldier captured by Italian troops. In trying to give them the impression he is a German, he addresses them with the words 'Kernst der das land, we die Zitraner blutter?' which, on the Gricean analysis mean 'I am a German soldier', but which really mean 'Do you know the land where the lemon-trees bloom?' On Searle's own revised version of Grice, the effects of U's utterance on A must be produced through the mechanism of A's knowledge of the rules governing the use of sentences of type x which U utters.

It is not clear that the above examples of nonsense, which however have an intentional point, are necessarily a worry to Grice's theory; they may have some relevance, but, since they both involve deceit, it could be argued that Grice's theory is readily modified to account for them. Nevertheless, they point to an area of unease over the matter of correlation between sentence meaning and extra-linguistic intentions. A third criticism by Neil Wilson hints in this direction. He maintains that Grice's thesis requires an untenable relation hold between the response which U intends to elicit and what is meant by x:

If I mean my guests to leave there are any number of different things that
I can say (and mean by what I say) in order to shoo them out. On the other hand, if I say "It's getting pretty late", meaning that it's getting pretty late, there might be any one of a number of different things I can expect of my audience. 91

The relation between intentions and utterance seems to fall apart. This raises the question of how regularities between the two are to be sustained on the Gricean account. Certainly there seems usually to be a regular connection between a sentence, an utterer's intentions in uttering that sentence, and the audience's response to such an utterance. But, the argument goes, surely that regularity is not a chance one; it is determined, rather, by the rules which determine the meaning of the sentence uttered, and these will be part of the total set of rules determining the literal meaning of every sentence of the language. Again, it is equally unclear that the utterance of any sentence will be standardly accompanied by any one set of intentions on the part of speakers; about the only plausible candidate for such intentions to regularly accompany the utterance of, say, sentence p, is that of actually saying that p. But once again, this linguistic notion defeats the point of the Gricean programme. 92

The dilemma, then, which all the above points indicate is this. The Gricean analysis of 'means' ostensibly achieves its aims by avoiding reference to any rules of language, or to any prior linguistic or semantic concepts, by taking extra-linguistic beliefs and intentions as basic. Yet our examples above at least suggest that an appeal to language as the prior determinant of meaning independent of the intentions and beliefs of particular speakers is indeed necessary to understand the very notions which Grice takes to be basic. The point is well-made by Ziff: 'Grice's analysis rings untrue. It was bound to; his alloy lacks the basic ingredient of meaning: a set of projective devices.'93

This is, then, Davidson's point that we can have no idea of how to get at the attribution of propositional attitudes apart from through language and the semantic structure provided by his truth conditions theory. Yet should we, along with Davidson, 'despair' at Grice's attempt to delineate them in extra-semantic terms? 94

The various criticisms have not shown, so far, that Grice's theory cannot
be modified to meet the arguments. In relation to the last example, for instance, if it could be shown that the general linguistic conventions which relate each sentence in a language to the other sentences of the language are in some way essentially Gricean communicative relations holding between particular speakers and hearers in specific situations of communication, then perhaps we could secure Gricean theory. Such a demonstration of the Gricean roots of linguistic conventions would need to go through without appeal to any unanalysed semantic notions, but since we have not yet seen any conclusive reason for denying this possibility, we must investigate further.

Jonathan Bennett has recently argued, for instance, that Grice's theory, when coupled with David Lewis's theory of convention, offers a way of understanding the relationship between an utterer's intentions and their conventional sentence meaning realizations. There are two aspects of Bennett's thesis which are relevant to what we are considering here, both of which would not be open to Davidson to accept, though he does not specifically discuss Bennett's ideas themselves. For Bennett, 'the essence of a statement is U's reliance on the Gricean mechanism to get A to believe something.' Since he specifically rejects language as a basis for ascribing beliefs and intentions—'I am working on a detailed theory about how non-linguistic behaviour can support working concepts of belief and intention,'—he obviously has to find behavioural criteria for ascribing such intentions and beliefs to people without linguistic considerations. To do this, Bennett has two solutions: (1) iconicity, by which he claims that the pictorial character of certain signals offers us direct insight into the nature of the belief which an utterer may intend to produce by his utterance, and (11) regular associations, which he claims offers us a way of 'escaping from icons' since if we find that certain gestures constantly seem to be correlated with certain environmental conditions, and if the social circumstances are such that we can reasonably impute to the person who produced the signal a desire to produce in others beliefs about those conditions, then we have grounds for treating the gesture as having a certain propositional content.

To take each of these matters in order. Surely, in the first case, there is
an enormous gap between taking non-linguistic behavioural evidence as indicating that there is a Gricean intention on the part of one person to produce a state of belief about a specific matter - as is the case in the simple behavioural example Bennett gives - and the transference of this to an explanation of normal utterances in natural language. Bennett's example is 'one day we observe a tribesman U, stand in full view of another, A, and emit a snake-like hissing sound while also making with his hand a smooth undulating horizontal motion which resembles the movement of a snake.' Bennett argues that U's performance indices 'the thought of a snake', and that we can therefore postulate that 'if U is trying to make A believe something, it is something about a snake', which, together with further behavioural evidence, can give us grounds for concluding that U intends A to believe that there is a snake. But why should we jump from this to accepting Bennett's contention that this constitutes the making of a statement, and that, since he assumes that 'the essence of a statement is U's reliance on the Gricean mechanism to get A to believe something', we can thereby help to explain the utterance of sentences of natural language?

As Davidson mentions in another context, it is perhaps possible that the very simplest of intentions can be detected quasi-behaviouristically (though not even this is certain); but for intentions of any complexity, this is simply implausible: the behavioural guide is simply too inexact. Any explanation of how more complex intentions are recognized will inevitably rely upon the recognition of the meaning of sentences in the first place, such sentences being the only plausible route to the speaker's intentions. Why should we accept Bennett's thesis that the essence of a statement is given by reliance on the Gricean mechanism to get someone to believe something? Surely it is possible to make a statement only by uttering some appropriate sentence in some natural language? The whole weight of Bennett's theory of language must therefore ultimately come to rely on an explication of sentence structure in all but the most trivial cases.

Secondly, Bennett argues that language is a set of Lewisian conventions founded upon the Gricean mechanism; but this, too, is at least open to dispute. Lewis demonstrates that it is a distinctive feature of conventional activities that they reflect a background structure of participant's intentions of
precedes the kind outlined by the Gricean concept of utterer's meaning. Hence, Bennett says: 'So we can smoothly combine Grice plus Lewis: conventional meaning involves the use of Lewis's conventions to coordinate the Gricean intentions of speakers with the belief acquisitions of the hearers.' Lewis regards conventions as solutions to what he terms 'coordination problems' which arise when two or more agents have interests which do not exactly conflict, but which are such that for each agent the best way of pursuing them depends on what the other agents do. It is known to the agents that such problems have been solved before by adopting a certain procedure, C; given they all know this there is a good chance, according to Lewis, there is a solution to the coordination problem by initiating procedure C. When such behaviour becomes uniform and regular, the community has acquired a convention, which, for Lewis, is a 'behavioural regularity sustained by self-interest.' Can we then, along with Bennett, that natural language is based on a system of Lewisian conventions which coordinate the Gricean intentions of speakers with the belief acquisitions of hearers?

On this issue, Davidson does have something to say in one of his latest published papers, and the criticism offered reiterate the points already made. Davidson admits that convention does figure conspicuously in many of our activities, but then he goes on to question the exact role of conventions in speech. Are conventions mere conveniences, just social flourishes, or are they really central to the existence of communication by language? In other words, how fundamental are they to explaining language? Plainly, the most important feature about Lewis's conventions as described above is that something must be seen to repeat itself over time: regularity is the crucial factor. However, though Davidson accepts that linguistic communication is to some degree regular, he has doubts about making it a condition of linguistic activity: '...it is an error to suppose we have seen deeply into the heart of linguistic communication when we have noticed how society bends linguistic habits to a public norm.' Davidson then goes on to make the point that, for him, regularities are not to be regarded as basic or as necessary to explaining language: though linguistic communication may make use of rule-governed repetition, it does not require it. Thus, conventions, per se though they may
describe usual though contingent features of linguistic communication, are not basic to explaining the use of language. 106

How are we to assess Davidson's contention, and what is its significance for Bennett's project and of augmenting the Gricean account of language? What Davidson seems to be saying is this. It is not that social habits, rule-governed repetitions, and conventions are not important, or have absolutely no role to play in explaining linguistic behaviour, but only that they cannot and should not be taken to be basic to explaining language in the way that Lewis, Bennett and others assume. As with other traditionally orientated concepts in this area, the requirement is that the issue of the meaning of sentences be connected with the beliefs and intentions of their users: conventions are supposed to do their work in making these connections between the linguistic meaning of sentences and human propositional attitudes described in non-linguistic terms; such conventions are the foundational basis for explaining language. But for Davidson, 'The only candidate for recurrence we have is the interpretation of sound patterns ': 107 the conventional regularities which are present in the use of language, and which are reflected in the fact that people tend to speak much as their neighbours do, can only be approached via such people's possession of a common sharable language, the possession of which is itself a condition for having these conventions. In Davidson's view, Lewis and others have got things backwards in taking conventions and the like as basic. Although he does not say so, perhaps Davidson would argue that the kind of conventions and regularities under discussion presupposes the possession of the kind of distinctive rationality by the humans who formulate them which can only be seen in terms of a language with the kind of truth conditions structure he delineates. Nevertheless Davidson does make it clear that 'language is a condition for having conventions.' 108

If Davidson is correct, therefore, it would seem to negate the second point of Bennett's thesis mentioned above: that language is a set of Lewisian conventions founded upon the Gricean mechanism, and there seems no hope of taking such conventions as basic in order to coordinate the Gricean intentions of speakers. As with Bennett's first point, it seems that good arguments can be adduced for taking the semantic structure of language as our foundational base.
What the discussion in this section (6.2) seems to indicate, then, is that reference to any Gricean extra-linguistic beliefs and intentions, in the 'foundational' sense required, is untenable. Nor does the appeal made by Bennett to Lewis's theory of convention offer any way out, both premisses which he invokes in this respect being open to question. We can have no access to such features of psychological reality as intentions - or of the conventions required by Bennett - other than through language itself.

In a similar spirit, it is easy to summarize the overall findings of section 6.2 in general. If Davidson is correct, and the arguments point in this direction, there can be no reference to extra-linguistic Fregean abstract entities such as propositions as the objects of propositional attitudes like 'A believes that p' or 'A desires that p' and the like. Davidson hopes to achieve a 'pre-Fregean innocence' by avoiding any dualism between language and such intensional objects by their construction within an extensional metalanguage.

But can Davidson's truth conditions theory suffice as a theory of understanding? Dummett claims not, yet it is difficult to see how Dummett's own theory of understanding, with its emphasis on certainty in the area competence can succeed, since the kind of structure it abjures, and which can be provided by Davidson's truth conditions theory, does seem necessary to any reasonable comprehension of how we understand the use of language.

Finally, though Grice's distinction between sentence meaning and utterer's meaning is crucial, as is his discernment of the kind of intentional structure which has to be invoked in defining meaning, such intentions and beliefs cannot play their role in any foundational, extra-linguistic sense that Grice supposes. As Davidson indicates, there is a principled obstacle to delineating and authenticating such propositional attitudes without language and the kind of truth structure he envisages; neither does the salvage attempt with conventions help matters in this respect, they themselves depending on something like a truth conditions interpretation of language.

This leaves us, if we accept Davidson's views, in the position that any description of the intensional and intentional aspects essential to understanding how a speaker uses his language must be explicated via language. But does this not make these features obscure, mysterious, perhaps even otiose?
Section 6.2 makes it clear that, for Davidson, describing the intensional and intentional features necessary to any interpretation of how a speaker uses or understands his language does not require any reference to any extra-linguistic, foundational basis in such features of psychological reality. The only access to the contents of the Theory of Sense, of thoughts, beliefs, desires, intentions and the like is via the truth conditions theory of language; hence Davidson's eschewal of any dualism between language and uninterpreted psychological reality. Many philosophers, however, have voiced opposition to Davidson's stance in this area, maintaining that it results in an anaemic construal, and even a neglect, of crucial evidence for the interpretation of language, leading to a concern only with the formal considerations of language. Contrary to the view that Davidson's position results in giving a total conceptual primacy to language, it is argued here that though Davidson does hold that any reference to any such extra-linguistic psychological features is unintelligible, the intensional and intentional aspects are not considered entirely reducible to language: indeed, they have a reciprocal role to play on Davidson's thesis. What is a requirement of Davidson's position is that for us as interpreters, the only access we have to a structured view of the elements of psychological reality—such as beliefs as the elements of thought, or of intentions—is via the 'entering wedge' of something like the structure provided by means of the truth conditions theory of language. Only in this sense can language, on Davidson's view be considered dominant. It is from this perspective that the structure given by Davidson's truth conditions theory of language becomes the new intersubjectively shared foundational basis for the construction of beliefs, desires and intentions.

This does not become clear without a detailed examination of Davidson's ideas. For surely, it could be claimed, the arguments against reference to Fregean abstract intensional objects, or against Gricean extra-linguistic intentions makes it obvious that for Davidson language is entirely to be regarded as conceptually primary? Davidson makes certain statements which
appear to emphasize exactly this: "...only a creature that can interpret speech can have the concept of a thought." \[^{110}\] or "We have the idea of belief only from the role of belief in the interpretation of language..." \[^{111}\] Such statements seem to suggest that for Davidson language is conceptually primary, and perhaps even that we should give up the notion of any extra-linguistic psychological reality altogether. But then we have other clues which indicate that Davidson does not want to give up the idea of an independent realm of psychological reality. He makes it plain, for instance, that his own theory of language differs markedly from Quine's, with its wish to eliminate the intensional, \[^{112}\] and we have such rebuttals as the one given to Foster: "My way of trying to give an account of language and meaning makes essential use of such concepts as those of belief and intention, and I do not believe it is possible to reduce these notions to anything more scientific or behaviouristic." \[^{113}\] In this manner Davidson seems to say that the 'reality' of the psychological realm is to be taken seriously in a non-linguistic sense. How then are we to reconcile the two seemingly differing contentions indicated above. One way is by comparing Davidson's position with that of a philosopher for whom language undoubtably does have conceptual primacy: Sellars.

The conceptual primacy which Sellars accords language at the expense of psychological reality can be clearly seen in the controversy which occurred on this issue between himself and Chisholm \[^{114}\] The bone of their contention is over whether the concept of thought is more basic than the concept of language. Both accept, as Davidson does (see Part 1) that a string of words as sounds is only meaningful when syntactically and semantically and logically well-formed. Further, that such structural characteristics of language delineate the relationship of language to the world, and that there are certain semantical properties which are analogous to the intensional and intentional features typical of mental episodes. \[^{115}\] Essentially Sellars attempts to explain the analogy between speech and thought (an analogy which Davidson says plainly exists \[^{116}\] ) on the model where the verbal episode is taken as primitive and the notion of a mental episode is characterized in a derivative way as an analogical extension of the verbal episode.

But why should one give conceptual primacy to the notion of the verbal
primitive, and characterized speech as an extension of thought? After all, is thought, as some have maintained, 'internalized speech', or is speech just externalized thought? For Sellars, as noted, language is more basic than thought; yet for Chisholm, the semantical talk by which semantical properties are ascribed to verbal episodes is covertly psychological in the sense that it involves an implicit reference to mental episodes. For, to say that a person's utterance was meaningful, Chisholm maintains, involves us in saying that the person knew what the words we used mean, and that he used them with the intention of conveying such and such. Hence, for Chisholm, it is only because of the intensional and intentional properties of mental episodes that the verbal episodes can be said to have the semantical properties that they have.

Thus, it is possible to see Sellars's thesis as the exact opposite of Chisholm's. For Sellars it is only because of the semantical properties of verbal episodes that mental episodes can be said to have the intensional and intentional properties they have— the mental episodes are postulated as entirely dependent upon the model of overt verbal episodes, the intentionality of thought being explained by reference to categories of semantical discourse about language—whereas for Chisholm the opposite is true. Sellars gives an undoubted conceptual primacy to language: speech is conceptually prior to thought, the notion of the thought being modelled or being an analogical extension of, the concept of speech. Chisholm, however, claims that thought is not just causally, but also conceptually, prior to language.

Plainly, then, what is dominant for Chisholm in the foundational sense is the realm of the mental, psychological reality; what is dominant for Sellars is the realm of language. Davidson's position is extremely interesting. At first sight, in view of what has been said in section 6.2, it would be expected that he would be antithetical towards Chisholm's position, and in complete accord with that of Sellars—especially if those philosophers who maintain that Davidson's position results in giving language a total conceptual primacy were correct. Certainly Davidson is no friend of what Chisholm advocates (see 5.2); yet, surprisingly perhaps neither is he prepared to countenance Sellars's views on the complete dominance accorded to language. Even though, along with Sellars's
Davidson accepts that there is a kind of analogy or correspondence between language and thought—some form of isomorphism or formal similarity. In one recent paper, Davidson asks what the connection is between thought, belief, and intention; and, whereas Sellars takes the notion of thought as central, Davidson, whilst admitting that most thoughts are not beliefs, takes it that belief is 'central to all kinds of thought' and is thus the primary concept to be explained in this context: the 'system of such beliefs identifies a thought by locating it in a logical and epistemic space.' But what are we to make of Sellars's contention that such intensional and intentional concepts are subsidiary to language? Bennett, for example, claims that his theory starts from the notion of thought and moves towards an explication of language; he further maintains that he thinks it possible for creatures to have beliefs without being language users, and that he has little sympathy for the idea that intentions must require language. And there are many philosophers, apart from Chisholm, who would argue for the conceptual primacy of the intensional at the expense of language. Before considering what Davidson says, let us very briefly look at some of the evidence for this.

There seem to be three main areas which are cited by various philosophers for holding that thoughts, beliefs and intentions do not require language, and that, since they are not reducible to linguistic concepts, language cannot be given conceptual primacy. These are the examples involving young children, animals, and deaf and dumb adults. If, in such cases, people and animals can have concepts such as beliefs whilst lacking any linguistic skills, one is justified, it is argued, in holding that conceptual primacy should be attributed to the mental realm rather than language. It could not be concluded, for instance that in such cases thought is impossible without the corresponding linguistic capacity to express such thoughts. So, for example, the fact, which no one doubts, that infants receive and react to stimulation of various kinds from their environment, and that they, according to recent research, appear to have a much richer mental life than hitherto imagined, poses the question of exactly how much mental life they are engaged in before linguistic capacity manifests itself: do they perhaps partially, or even in some sense completely, understand what is going on before they can properly articulate this in words?
How, it may be asked, can the behaviour of such infants be explained unless they can be described as thinking, and thinking in fairly complex ways, without language? If being able to identify and re-identify objects does not depend on the use of words (as perhaps some recent research indicates) then presumably it must be admitted that infants already have a complex apprehension of the world: a child who can pick out dogs from other animals presumably has some kind of concept of 'dog', even if it cannot use the word 'dog' yet. 124

Similarly with the case of animals. Surely, it is argued, their behaviour can only be satisfactorily explained by the fact that they have non-linguistic beliefs which govern their actions. Surely they would not be behaving as they do if they did not have some form of belief. For example, does not the cat waiting at the mousehole believe that a mouse may soon appear? And surely every dog-lover knows that his dog is thinking and believing that he is about to be taken for a walk? And again, the concept of intentions have been attributed to animals which do not possess a language: 'Intention appears to be something that we can express, but which brutes... can have though lacking any distinct expression of intention.' 125

Finally, we have the evidence that deaf and dumb people can have perfectly adequate thoughts, beliefs and intentions without having a language. William James is a philosopher who is often cited by some as having shown that thoughts, beliefs and intentions of considerable sophistication are possible by such handicapped people whilst they lack the use of a language - though Wittgenstein regards this example unfavourably. 126

Wittgenstein's understandable scepticism for the private and mental phenomena which lack any outward criteria of verification extended, of course, to the areas mentioned above. Thus, for instance, the example of the attribution of beliefs and intentions to dogs is rejected as an unwarranted anthropomorphism; and the notion of thought cannot in a sense be understood as independent of language. 127 Such a 'strong' behaviourism is reflected in Quine, who maintains that the attribution of beliefs and intentions to animals has no firm criterial foundations, and depends upon our imaginatively putting ourselves in the position of the animals and then using our actual language to express the beliefs we imagine we would have if thus placed. 128
is admissible. In a very similar spirit we return to Sellars, with his marked refusal to give anything but conceptual primacy to language: thinking is really silent speech. He warns against envisaging language as expressing inner thought. Rather: "an uttering of that- which is a primary expression of belief that- is not merely an expression of a thinking that- but is itself a thinking, i.e., a thinking-out-loud that- ." 129 Thus, for Sellars, thought equals linguistic activity in some very strong (thought unexplained) way.

It is not possible nor necessary to go into all the ramifications of the various arguments to appreciate, in view of what has been said, that even though the motives of those who wished to write-off all non-linguistic concepts of thoughts, beliefs and intentions because they are unamenable to outward criteria of verification were well-intentioned, the reduction of such areas of the mental entirely to linguistic concepts was too strong. Even if, as we shall see, construing beliefs, for example, as having a certain kind of structure necessarily involves us in linguistic concepts, this does not justify us in equating the whole of the mental area with language in the sense that any creature who does not possess a language cannot be said to have thoughts, beliefs, or intentions. A superficial reading of Davidson can make it appear as though he is in agreement with those philosophers like Sellars who give complete conceptual primacy to language, and this is a trap some criticisms have succumbed to. 130 Yet there is a fundamental difference in Davidson's work which sets his philosophy of language apart from those who would reduce the whole of psychological reality to linguistic concepts, a difference which reflects a more sensitive appreciation of the intensional and intentional.

Thus, there is the hint that the rejection by those such as Wittgenstein and Quine of the attribution of beliefs and intentions to dogs as an unwarranted anthropomorphism, or of Sellars' view of thought as silent speech is perhaps the result of a primitive behaviourism which is not really justified. 131 And certainly, Davidson rejects Sellars' notion that language should be given conceptual primacy:

neither language nor thinking can be fully explained in terms of the other, and neither has conceptual priority. 132
It seems, then, that Davidson wants to say that we cannot eliminate one at the expense of the other, or give conceptual priority to language rather than to psychological reality as required by those like Sellars. Indeed, for Davidson, the two appear to be reciprocally inter-related:

The two are, indeed, linked, in the sense that each requires the other in order to be understood; but the linkage is not so complete that either suffices, even when reasonably reinforced, to explicate the other. 133

The fact that we do not need, on Davidson's truth conditions account, to give up the notion of an independent psychological reality—even though (see 6.2) we have given up the idea of any dualism between the truth conditions theory of language and extra-linguistic intensional and intentional entities is reinforced by what another philosopher says, that 'though it!... may even be a logical necessity that certain thoughts can be manifested in linguistic behaviour only. this is completely compatible with the 'distinct existence in every case of mental states and the linguistic behaviour in which they may be manifested.' 134

It seems, therefore, that Davidson is sensitive to the fact, illustrated by the three examples given, that there may well be certain features of psychological reality which cannot be reduced entirely to language as some philosophers hold, and that they are independent of linguistic concepts.

But what about the other point—that Davidson has already accepted Sellars' point that there is some kind of isomorphism between language and beliefs (as the elements of thoughts) and intentions? And what about Davidson's comments, which again make some critics subsume his ideas in this respect to those of Sellars, to the effect that the concepts of thoughts, beliefs, and intentions, can only come from a creature which has the concept of a language? We must not lose sight of the 'reciprocal' role indicated above. The crucial factor in balancing the notions of independent features of psychological reality and the fact that they are somehow related to linguistic concepts lies in the distinction between the concept, say, of a belief, and the concept of a structured, true, belief. It is not that we should—or even that we can—write off the concept of extra-linguistic thoughts, beliefs, or intentions, or that
we should suppose that they cannot exist unless the capacity for language is present. But what we must accept is that the concept of structured, true beliefs and intentions cannot intelligibly be said to exist without the presence of a language suitably interpreted in terms of the kind of structure given by something like Davidson's truth conditions theory. It is in this sense, and this sense only that Davidson means us to understand the reciprocal role of language and psychological reality, and that we cannot attribute the notion of a thought, belief or intention without language. It is not that such intensional and intensional features are dependent upon language for their existence, or that they can be wholly reduced to the conceptual primacy of language; only that the concept of them as possessing intelligible, true structure is entirely parasitic upon something like the kind of truth conditions structure of language which Davidson envisages. Can infants, animals, and the deaf and dumb be said, on Davidson's analysis to possess thoughts, beliefs (or desires and the like), and intentions even though they lack a language? Possibly, even probably. Can they, on the same analysis, be said to possess the concept of structured, true thoughts, beliefs and intentions in the absence of a language? Here Davidson would surely (and undoubtably correctly) answer 'no'. For attributing merely the concept of thoughts, beliefs and intentions to a creature is by no means the same thing as attributing the concept of structured, true thoughts, beliefs and intentions to that creature. And the only intelligible way we have of entering into any precise, structured and true description of the intensional and intentional features of psychological reality is via the truth conditions theory of language.

Thus, we can probably conclude that pre-linguistic thought is a possibility, but only thought which can be articulated linguistically can have any degree of precision: wordless thoughts perhaps exist but they would on this account be shifting, unwilling to be anchored down. Similarly with beliefs (or desires and the like): it is certainly conceivable that beliefs can be attributed in the absence of language, but it is not possible to attribute structured, true beliefs without language, since surely we can have no idea of how the elements in a belief can be structured which is not derived from our understanding of how the elements in our language are structured — and this, as we have seen,
is for Davidson via the truth conditions theory of language: our only insight into the elements and structures of beliefs can only be through our understanding of the elements and structures of the true sentences of our language. Finally, even the concept of Gricean intentions as extra-linguistic is not impossible; but our grasp of them in any intelligible way surely depends, as Davidson says, on their interpretation via the truth structure of language.

The essential points which emerge from the discussion in section 6.3 are these. What has gone from Davidson's work is the idea that we can have any access to any 'foundational' basis in psychological reality in order to ascertain how a speaker believes and understands the use of his intentional linguistic behaviour; his use of Tarski's truth conditions theory does not require any reference to extra-linguistic Fregean abstract intensional objects or Gricean intentions. We do not, however, abandon the notion that such intensional features as beliefs or desires, or intenitions, cannot exist in the extra-linguistic sense, or that they are conceptually eliminable in view of the conceptual primacy of language, since it is possible to attribute such concepts to languageless creatures. All that is insisted upon is that any description of the true, structured elements in these features of psychological reality is immanent within language: the direct description of such structured elements is by virtue of the truth conditions structure of sentences. It is in this sense that the structure of language is in a kind of isomorphic 'correspondence' with the structure of psychological reality, and an 'entering -wedge' into that reality. It is also what Davidson meant by a return to a 'pre-Fregean'-and, in a sense, a 'pre-Gricean'—innocence.
The last section showed that, following on from Davidson's denial of the need for any foundational basis in psychological reality, to which we can have access in interpreting a speaker's words, although in his view language cannot be given total conceptual primacy, something like the truth conditions theory of language is still the only 'entering wedge' that we have into a structured view of the elements of propositional attitudes such as beliefs, desires or intentions.

Whether or not Davidson's conception of the structure involved is adequate to the task is a matter to be considered in Chapter Seven; what is relevant here is that the rejection of any extra-linguistic foundational base means that the truth conditions theory itself must provide the new foundational basis for an intersubjective theory of shared beliefs and attitudes. It is only from within the truth conditions theory of language itself that the identification and discrimination of the common, sharable, basis of beliefs and other attitudes needed behind successful communication can take place.

The identification and individuation of the common features of psychological reality from within the truth conditions theory of language occurs is a matter for the next chapter, but it is necessary here to stress that on Davidson's thesis this is the only means for describing the common elements of such over-lapping schemas of beliefs, desires and intentions. Also, just as we saw that in Part II, the concept of private reference is unintelligible—since the concept of reference itself is a semantic one, accessible only via the interpretation of language—so Davidson holds that, for example, belief 'as a private attitude is not intelligible except as an adjustment to the public norm provided by language.'

It is only because a creature is a member of a speech community that it can have the concept of beliefs (and other attitudes), and, as seen, the concept of such true, structured, beliefs and the like can only be via publicly accessible, and intersubjectively shared language structures. Hence, the business of the truth conditions theory is preserving, in intertranslation, the invariant, objective, shared elements of beliefs and other attitudes.
The central importance of ascertaining what elements of, for example, beliefs, are shared between the language of the interpreter and the language of the speaker he is trying to interpret, was made clear in section 6.1. For, the uninterpreted intentional linguistic behaviour with which the radical interpreter is confronted jointly manifests both what the speaker to be interpreted means about the world, together what that speaker believes about the world: the attribution of meaning and belief are interdependent concepts, the sentences held true being a result of what is meant and what is believed by a speaker.

And, in order to solve such a 'simultaneous equation', one has to fix the beliefs of the speaker in order to 'solve for meaning.' The idea, according to Davidson, being that we invoke the notion of further empirical constraints requiring reference to the speakers beliefs (or other attitudes) in order to get at the meaning. That is, for Davidson, meaning is discovered by holding the speaker's beliefs constant, and the principle employed here is known as The Principle of Charity, which states that speakers generally agree upon their beliefs. As Davidson puts it, in attempting to understand a speaker, we have to assume that the speaker's pattern of beliefs largely agree with our own and indeed that 'I can interpret your words correctly only by interpreting so as to put us largely in agreement.' (with respect to our beliefs.) Davidson's constitutive point is that we cannot take an alien speaker to be uttering meaningful sentences unless we take him as having (as far as possible) beliefs that are in agreement with ours.

Such a 'Principle of Charity' - that we share overlapping belief schemas (the invariant elements of which, as seen, are preserved by his truth conditions structure) - was first muted by Davidson in his earliest paper, and appears subsequently in many forms throughout his later work as more subtle restatements of the same principle. Undoubtedly, the early ideas were influenced by Quine and Neil Wilson, but latterly there have been moves towards more complex formulations. For instance, the earlier papers counsel, quite generally, to prefer theories of interpretation that minimize disagreement and maximize agreement; Davidson says things like: 'We make maximum sense of the words and thoughts of others when we interpret in a way that optimizes agreement.' But most recently, there is the admission that '...minimizing disagreement, or maximizing agreement, is a confused ideal.
There is now a new suggestion from Davidson. But it is one which returns us to
the point made at the beginning of this chapter (6.1) that the role of the truth
conditions theory must be to enable the interpreter to understand how another
speaker understands the use of his own (intentional) linguistic activity: 'The
aim of interpretation is not agreement, but understanding.' 145 The interesting
feature is that Davidson goes on :

My point has always been that understanding can be secured only by interpre-
ating in a way that makes for the right sort of agreement. The "right sort",
however, is no easier to specify than to say what constitutes a good reason
for holding a particular belief. 146

Perhaps this is because in order to fix a correct theory of interpretation,
what we ideally need to do is to reconstruct the whole of the complex of
attitudes which a speaker is bringing to bear in the use of his language, and it
is not yet clear whether the truth conditions theory as Davidson conceives it
is adequate to this task. (See CHAPTER SEVEN.) What Davidson is edging
towards may be what was indicated by Grandy:

Whether our simulation of the other person is successful will depend
heavily on the similarity of his belief-and-desire network to our own. It
would be desirable to base our simulation on all of the other person's
beliefs and desires but this is not possible. Thus it is of fundamental
importance to make the interrelations between these attitudes as similar
as possible to our own. 147

Grandy calls the his 'Principle of Humanity', and seems to hint at a 'richer'
version than Davidson's original conception of his own 'Principle of Charity',
but which he now appears to be feeling towards. In order to secure the best
translation, the ideal is to simulate all of the other speaker's beliefs,
desires and intentions if anything like wholeness of understanding is to be
achieved. As Grandy indicates, we have to bear in mind that the other speaker is
a person, and when choosing between translations of verbal behaviour, we should
do so on the basis of ourselves as the model; and presumably, the model we
have of ourselves is of psychologically complex human beings.

Of course, interpreting other speakers on the basis of ourselves seems to be
the intention behind Davidson's original conception of his 'Principle of Charity'
and of his associated 'Principle of Rationality' - but it is not clear that
these original conceptions were subtle enough or comprehensive enough to
accomplish all that is required - the proposal for maximizing agreement,
though not incorrect, was just too blunt in face of the complexities involved.
Thus, Davidson's constitutive point that if we cannot find a way to interpret
the utterances and other behaviour of a creature as revealing a set of beliefs
largely consistent and true by our own standards, we have no reason to count
that creature as rational, as having beliefs, or as saying anything, has been
criticised by some philosophers. There are many places where Davidson propounds
his thesis that the 'Principle of Charity' is 'not an option, but a condition
of having a workable theory' and that 'Charity is forced on us; whether we
like it or not, if we want to understand others...'. For example, such a
Principle is elaborated as 'The basic claim is that much community of belief is
needed to provide a basis for communication or understanding... which
echoes an earlier statement that 'we would have to assume a pattern of beliefs
and motives which agreed with our own to a degree sufficient to build a base
for understanding and interpreting disagreements...'. Furthermore, such
'widespread agreement is the only possible background against which disputes
and mistakes can be interpreted...', so that though 'we can make sense of
differences all right, but only against a background of shared belief' for
in Davidson's view, without such a vast common background of overlapping,
shared beliefs, 'there is no place for disputants to have their quarrel...'.
Davidson thus maintains that 'what makes interpretation possible is the
fact that we can dismiss a priori the chance of massive error...', even
though, of course, we cannot assume that speakers never have false beliefs.

However, Davidson's blanket assumptions have been questioned by, for
example, Devitt. It is accepted that the interpreter's task is an explanation
of the (alien's) verbal behaviour, and that we seek the 'best' explanation of
this behaviour which is, indeed, likely to attribute to the alien speaker
many beliefs which are like our own. Yet, for Devitt, Davidson's Principle of Charity is too strong, since the 'best' explanation of the alien's verbal behaviour is also likely to attribute many beliefs that are very different from ours. Devitt maintains that 'It is surely common for many of us to expect disagreement over vast areas of belief' in such areas as religion, or politics. And, if this is so it would certainly seem to jeopardize Davidson's Principle. Devitt gives an example of a 'religious' alien, whose behaviour, interpreted charitably by his own lights would not make sense, but which, interpreted uncharitably, apparently would. Perhaps, then, though Davidson's claim that there needs to be a widespread area of shared belief in order to provide a basis for interpretation though plainly not wrong, is not as subtle or comprehensive as it needs to be. Other philosophers make similar points.

Such criticisms are also levelled against Davidson's associated 'Principle of Rationality':

making sense of the utterances and behaviour of others, even their most aberrant behaviour, requires us to find a great deal of reason and truth in them. To see too much unreason on the part of others is simply to undermine our ability to understand what it is they are so unreasonable about.

In other words, we cannot take the alien speaker as having beliefs unless we also take him as being rational: not only must he have similar beliefs to us, but such beliefs must also be correct in a rational way. More generally, Davidson notes 'the satisfaction of conditions of consistency and rational coherence may be viewed as constitutive of the range of applications of such concepts as those of belief, desire, intention and action,' and that it is 'constitutive force in the realm of behaviour derives from the need to view others, nearly enough, as like ourselves.' Since 'would have to impute a large degree of consistency on pain of not making sense of what was said or done.'

Again, however, the criticism seems to be that Davidson's is too strong to account for the subtleties and variations involved in the concept of human rationality. Devitt says that though rationality is constitutive in so far as that to give a belief-desire explanation of a person's behaviour is surely to
make that behaviour rational in the light of his beliefs and desires, but that people can be rational or irrational in various ways (and, presumably, in various degrees), many beliefs about, for example, politics or sexual morality, being irrational. So that although one hopes that the views will be explicable, to explain them is not to make them rational in the strong sense demanded by Davidson. 164 Devitt sees no reason to accept Davidson's version of the Principle of Rationality which apparently demands that a person must have a unified set of beliefs with no inconsistencies in the total set, whereas most people maintain emotional and psychological equilibrium by going against such a Principle. Once more, therefore, though Davidson is obviously not wrong in his demand for rational explication—since plainly if an alien speaker were wholly unlike us in rationality and grip on the truth, it may be impossible to explain such a creature's behaviour—perhaps there can be subtleties and degrees of rationality (and irrationality) involved which Davidson's strong Principle would be hard pushed to explicate.

Such difficulties confronting Davidson's thesis of the Principle of Charity and the Principle of Rationality will become clearer in the next chapter, since they raise questions which concern the efficacy of the constraints Davidson imposes on the postulation of beliefs and desires in his reason-explanations of linguistic behaviour, and the extent to which such explanations can be considered lawlike given such beliefs and desires. The point of the discussion in this section has been only to hint at the fact that, in the essential consideration of a speaker's beliefs and desires in getting the 'right sort' of agreement for interpretation, though it is undoubtedly correct that we must presuppose something like the background of common, sharable belief and desire: networks behind the use of language which Davidson's Principle of Charity demands, together with some degree of rationality suggested by his Principle of Rationality, but it is not yet clear whether Davidson's constraints in this direction are adequate. The extent to which Davidson's truth conditions theory—as the foundational basis—is successful in seeking to capture the structurally-invariant features of such belief-desire-intention networks and in reconstructing the psychological reality of speakers, is the concern of CHAPTER SEVEN.
To briefly go over the considerations of this chapter which will lead us into CHAPTER SEVEN, the ground covered is as follows. In interpreting linguistic behaviour, essential reference must be made to the psychological reality of a speaker in order to understand how such a speaker understands the use of his or her own words to refer to the world. Additional empirical constraints are needed in order to ensure that a truth conditions theory will provide an accurate manual of translation; maximizing agreement between the claims generated by the truth conditions theory and the claims of the alien speaker necessitating reference to the intensional and intentional features of the psychological reality of the speakers concerned. But how is reference to the essential propositional attitudes such as the ones expressed by 'A believes that p' or 'A desires that p', or intentions to be secured? For Davidson's truth conditions theory abjures the need for any reference to the kind of foundational, extra-linguistic, Fregean intensional abstract entities such as propositions (or of sentences), and furthermore rejects the need, or the possibility of any reference to extra-linguistic Gricean intentions. It is Davidson's contention that his truth conditions theory can suffice for a Theory of Sense and Understanding by delineating the required kind of structure without the need for such entities as Fregean propositions, and that, while the kind of intentional structure propounded by Grice is indeed essential to understanding linguistic action, it cannot provide the kind of foundational base demanded by Grice, despite the efforts of those such as Bennett or Lewis. Davidson thus eschews any dualism between his truth conditions theory of language and psychological reality; yet, even so, the notion or concept of extra-linguistic beliefs and intentions does not give way entirely to the total conceptual primacy of language: what is demanded is that the concept of any structured, true beliefs (as the elements of thought) or intentions is entirely parasitic upon the 'entering-wedge' of the kind of structure provided by something like the truth conditions theory of language. In this sense, the truth conditions theory of language becomes the new, foundational basis for capturing the invariant structural features common to the belief-desire and intentional schemas which overlap between speakers. Yet it is not clear that the constraints suggested by Davidson's Principle of Charity and of Rationality are entirely adequate to gaining the 'right sort of agreement.'
7.1 The Truth Conditions Theory, Direct Description and Inventive Construction

So far it has been seen that it is only possible to interpret a speaker's utterances by assuming that the observed linguistic behaviour describes or refers to any given situation in the world as that speaker believes it to be, and that other attitudes such as desires may be involved; furthermore, that the use of language by such a speaker to refer to the world is a form of intentional activity. Uttering words to refer to the world is thus an action by a speaker which requires not only the theoretical reconstruction of what is referred to on the part of the interpreter, but also the attribution by the interpreter to that speaker of a network of beliefs, desires and intentions. Ultimately what we are seeking is a comprehensive theory of reference, intensional attitudes such as beliefs and desires, and intentional action, all of which play a crucial role in describing linguistic behaviour. ¹ But, just as with the issue of reference, since any extra-linguistic foundational base is rejected by Davidson, the direct description and inventive construction of the intensional and intentional features now under consideration also takes place from within the truth conditions structure of language as the intersubjectively shared basis for reconstructing their invariant characteristics. Thus, for instance, sui generis abstract entities such as Fregean propositions, being impossible to identify or individuate, are rejected as providing the basis for construing what it is that two people who believe the same thing both believe, which receive an analysis from within the extensional truth conditions metalanguage – as would desires and the like, together with intentions. Such aspects of the psychological reality of speakers – which we need to credit speakers with in order to satisfactorily account for the evidence of linguistic behaviour – thus become variables to
postulations to satisfy the truth conditions structure of language. However, Davidson's analysis involving extensional reference to such postulated entities and the construal of such 'reasons' as the causes of intentional linguistic behaviour, has been rejected by some philosophers. They would deem reference to such causes as being every bit as mythical as the reference to the intensional objects which Davidson eschews. Nevertheless, it is argued here that reference to some such independent, antecedent 'reasons' cannot be eliminated, even though Davidson's delineation of the 'springs' of linguistic action—though it suffices in many respects—is an ideal which requires augmentation by richer concepts if we are to understand more fully a speaker's reasons for his or her intentional actions. What remains the case, however, is that for us, our reconstruction of such features of psychological reality behind linguistic actions is a part of our overall truth conditions theory explaining such behaviour.

In the last chapter it was seen that in order to describe the elements of the network of beliefs and other propositional attitudes underlying the intentional use of language in structure, true, terms, we must do so via something like Davidson's truth conditions theory and the structured, true, elements of language which such a theory describes (6.3). The general structural outline given by such a truth conditions theory of language is taken by Davidson to directly describe or refer to the structural elements of such features of a speaker's psychological reality, and is thus tied to the simultaneous postulation of the assumed objects such as beliefs needed to satisfy such a structure. Hence, Davidson can maintain: 'Each interpretation and attribution of attitude is a move within a holistic theory, a theory necessarily governed by concern for consistency and general coherence with the truth...' and 'we cannot intelligibly attribute any propositional attitude to an agent except within the framework of a viable theory of his beliefs, desires, intentions, and decisions.' Thus the possibility suggests itself of a theory which deals directly with the relations between linguistic actions, treating beliefs, desires, and intentions as theoretical constructs; such a theory of complex linguistic action having
In effect to reconstruct, as Davidson suggests, the pattern of thoughts and emotions of an agent: the relevant pattern of those features of a speaker's psychological reality such as beliefs, desires and intentions which, as indicated in CHAPTER SIX, issue in linguistic actions. Moreover, the holism of this mental realm means that we can make sense of one particular belief, for example, only as it coheres with 'other beliefs, with preferences, with intentions, hopes, fears, expectations, and the rest.' in one vast network. Enough has been said, then, to make clear that for Davidson, the attribution of beliefs, desires and intentions necessary to any satisfactory explication of linguistic action becomes the study of the logical relations of language, their analysis involving the determination of an ontology, and it is only because such entities as beliefs or desires or intentions can play a useful part in the overall construction of a unified theory about the psychological reality of speakers as it is operative in issuing in linguistic action that they are to be admitted as viable: independent objects of belief and the like as required by Frege are of no interest to Davidson, since if they are needed, then they can be invented. Davidson summarizes this aspect of his philosophy of language by indicating that, if he is right, no embarrassing entities need be added to the world's furniture, his account needing only linguistic action itself, together with an ontology of propositional attitudes such as beliefs, desires and intentions. The reconstruction of psychological reality, of the beliefs, desires and intentions of speakers, is thus immanent within language, even though for Davidson such descriptions directly describe such features as really existing and issuing in the linguistic actions of speakers. The attribution of such postulated attitudes necessary to understanding a speaker's language, and which can involve the full range and subtlety of such psychological traits, can only be undertaken via the structure of language, for as hinted at in CHAPTER SIX, the finer distinctions among beliefs, desires, intentions and the like require a cognitive structure as complex as that of language for their delineation. That such a complex system of psychological reality is operative in issuing in linguistic behaviour in terms of a causal nexus is made clear by such statements as '...in describing an action as performed with a certain intention, we have described it as an action with a certain causal history.'
A closer examination of Davidson's thesis shows how he is committed to the idea of reference to propositional attitudes as real entities which must exist as the causes of intentional linguistic action. For Davidson, the distinguishing mark of the mental is intentionality in the sense described by Brentano—that is, of being directed towards something in the world, and intentionality is the distinguishing mark of actions themselves: 'A person is the agent of an event if and only if there is a description of what he did that makes true a sentence that says he did it intentionally.' And, as will be seen, a full explication of intentional action requires reference to entities such as beliefs, desires, and intentions, Davidson having changed his mind over intentions being entities referred to in the course of various papers. Each of these aspects will be discussed shortly, but the general picture is given when Davidson says: 'we can explain why someone acted as he did by mentioning a desire, value, purpose, goal, or aim the person had, and a belief connecting the desire with the action to be explained.' Elsewhere, too, he says:

When a person acts with an intention, the following seems to be a true, if rough and incomplete, description of what goes on: he sets a positive value on some state of affairs (an end, or the performance by himself of an action satisfying certain conditions); he believes (or knows or perceives) that an action, of a kind open to him to perform, will promote or produce or realize the valued state of affairs; and so he acts (that is, he acts because of his value or desire and his belief).

Expanding this basic idea by means of his ideas expressed in other papers, Davidson maintains that 'Someone who acts with a certain intention acts for a reason' and that furthermore, 'he has something in mind that he wants to promote or accomplish'—that is, some purpose. And, what is it to act for a 'reason'? Someone acting for a reason must have (primarily) a belief, together with a complex network of other attitudes, which undoubtably will include a desire; such complex states are what Davidson terms 'Primary Reasons': a Primary Reason consisting of a Pro-Attitude towards actions of a certain kind and a belief 'that his action is of that kind.'
Hence,

Cl. R is a primary reason why an agent performed the action A under the description d only if R consists of a pro attitude of the agent towards actions with a certain property, and a belief of the agent that A, under the description d, has that property. 19

is a necessary condition for Primary Reasons. Thus to interpret and explain why someone acts intentionally, reference must be made to a belief, desire, and possibly other attitudes behind such an agent's intentional action, since, as Davidson hints elsewhere, it is logically impossible to perform an intentional action without such appropriate pro-attitudes. 20

But this it not enough. Reference to the beliefs and desires, which is necessary to tell us an agent's reasons for acting intentionally, explain such an agent's reasons for acting only if those propositional attitudes are appropriately related to the action of the agent. 21 This is because 'we might allow ... that a man can have a desire and believe an action will satisfy it, and yet fail to act...' 22 Therefore, 'it is only if the desire and belief cause him to act that we can speak of an intentional action.' 23 An interpreter's understanding of (linguistic) action thus depends, on Davidson's view, on being able to see that an appropriate belief and desire can explain, and be the reasons for, an intentional action only if they can be regarded as having caused it in a special way. 24 Hence, Davidson needs to augment condition Cl above with:

C2. A primary reason for an action is its cause. 25

Davidson gives an interesting illustration of this thesis in another paper where he speaks of Hume's intentional act of admitting that he could not see how to reconcile two theses. 26 Hume must have believed that he did not see how this was possible, and he must have desired to reveal this fact; such a belief and desire were thus somehow efficacious in the making of the intentional admission. Davidson then indicates how he wishes the force of this to be taken. Hume made the intentional act of admission because he had the desire and belief, and:
If we interpret this "because" as implying (among other things) a causal relation- and I believe we must- then in describing an action as performed with a certain intention, we have described it as an action with a certain causal history.27

Thus, we have reached the point where we can say that, on Davidson's analysis, if an intentional action is done for a reason, then there must be rationalizing beliefs and desires (in the sense that their propositional expression puts the intentional action in a favourable light, providing an account of the reasons the agent had in acting, and which allow the interpreter to reconstruct the intentional action):

A can do x intentionally (under the description $d$) means that if A has desires and beliefs that rationalize x (under $d$), then A does $x$.28

However, the presence of such beliefs and desires when the intentional action is done does not suffice to ensure that what is done is done with the appropriate intention; we must add that the agent acted because of his reasons: this 'because' implying for Davidson, the notion of cause:

If the agent does x intentionally, then his doing x is caused by his attitudes that rationalize x.29

This notion of acting intentionally because of a belief and a desire as being causal is crucial to Davidson's idea of how we are to interpret intentional action; indeed, it is central to his thesis that the ordinary notion of cause applicable to scientific accounts of the world (see CHAPTER FIVE) is also central to the understanding of human intentional action, and thus, of course, to linguistic action. But, as will be seen in the next section (7.2), such a causal structure behind intentional action requiring reference to beliefs and desires as causes, together with Davidson's extensional construal of such beliefs and desires, is open to heavy criticism by some philosophers. Suffice it to say here that the right kind of causal chain is extremely difficult if not
impossible to specify: an agent might have the kind of beliefs and desires
that would rationalize an action, they might cause him to perform it, and yet
still the action would not be intentional since they may be further complica-
tions involving anomalous, wayward, or lunatic causal chains. The criticism of
reference to beliefs and desires as involving such a causal structure will, however, be left here for the present. 30 It is part and parcel of Davi-
dson’s ideas on the relationship of the mental realm to materialism, singular
causal statements (see CHAPTER FIVE) and the degree to which strict scientific
laws are applicable to the psychological causes of human intentional actions. 31
The important points of this part of the investigation is that, for Davidson,
to describe a (linguistic) action as intentional is to describe such an action
in the light of a special reference to real, particular beliefs, desires, and
perhaps other relevant attitudes of a particular person (and in a particular
context.) 32 Furthermore, it is to describe such intentional action as having
been caused, in a special way, by those beliefs, desires and other attitudes. 33

But we have not quite finished with investigating how Davidson wishes to
construe intentional actions, for, as mentioned earlier, Davidson’s opinions
in this area altered somewhat with respect to intentions themselves as entities
referred to in the course of explaining intentional actions. For, in his early
papers, Davidson held that ‘To know a primary reason why someone acted as he
did is to know an intention with which the action was done’, 34 and that the
intention with which the action was done does not refer to an entity or state
of any kind. 35 According to Davidson, expressions such as ‘The intention with
which Jones went to church’ has the outward form of a description, but in fact
is really syncategorematic, and cannot be taken to refer to an entity, disposi-
tion, or event; its function is rather ‘to generate new descriptions of actions
in terms of their reasons.’ 36 If Davidson had been right about this, then
there are no such states or events such as intentions to which reference is made.
As already seen, Davidson seemed to hold that statements like ‘A did x inten-
tionally’ were equivalent to corresponding statements affirming that the
intentional action was caused by a certain kind of primary reason. Davidson, at
this time was clearly claiming that a statement like ‘Jones went to church
intentionally’ is true just in case the intentional action was caused by
a complex of belief and a pro attitude such as desire, such pro attitudes being real mental states or dispositions to which reference is made, and which are something other than a state, or event of intending. Thus, there is, at this stage of Davidson's work, just no reference to intentions per se. 37

Yet surely Davidson's early views on this, and his syncategorematic approach to intentions was not very plausible. And certainly, Davidson could not use as an argument against the notion of reference to entities such as intentions the point of view that intensional locutions never really refer to events or states since, as seen, Davidson does accept reference to such entities as beliefs and desires. (See also 7*2) If, therefore, Davidson assumes that locutions such as 'John believes that his dog is immortal', or 'Daphne desires lots of wealth' genuinely refer to events or states or dispositions, it seems difficult not to assume also that a statement like 'Jones intention in going to church' refers to a state or entity. Prima facie, there seems no more reason to deny that intentions are genuine mental states to which we refer than to deny that beliefs and desires are real mental states or events or dispositions to which we refer. This is not yet to say that we are right to suppose that we must refer to to such entities in explicating intensional locutions: this is a matter for consideration in the next section; it is only to say at present, that on Davidson's terms it is incongruous to deny reference to intentions whilst accepting that reference to entities such as beliefs or desires are required. And there is evidence that would support such a thesis: for instance, in normal linguistic usage it does seem that a person can be said to have an intention which he has never acted upon, singular terms apparently denoting these intentions, 38 and which Davidson's early work fails to analyze adequately. Furthermore, as Austin notes, 39 the concept of intending is closely related to choosing and deciding, and both of these seem to apply to mental activities characteristically involved in processes of deliberation— an important issue which will be discussed in relation to Davidson's work in the following pages(see particularly 7*3).

In processes of deciding what to do, for example, one is faced with alternatives between which to choose; but the decision to choose to do X, rather than Y, is, among other things, to form an intention to doing X. And, if one does formulate such intentions in such cases, it would seem to be the case that one thus
It would appear that Davidson has now recanted on his early position and accepts that this is so: in a fairly recent paper he recognizes that the intention with which an intentional action is performed does refer to an entity or state of some kind. In developing the concept of pure intending, Davidson comes to admit that his original concept of what it is to act with an intention was inadequate. For his original position led him to hope, with respect to intentional action, that 'If someone digs a pit with the intention of trapping a tiger, it is perhaps plausible that no entity at all, act, event, or disposition, corresponds to the noun phrase, "The intention of trapping a tiger"—... Yet, with respect to pure intending, 'it is not likely that if a man has the intention of trapping a tiger, his intention is not a state, disposition, or attitude of some sort.' And, as Davidson concludes, it would be quite incredible to suppose 'that this state or attitude (and the connected event or act of forming an intention) in respect of pure intending—-—should play no role in acting with an intention.' It would be unacceptable to suppose that the something referred to in pure intending were not also always present in cases of grasping intentional action. With pure intending, there is 'no room for doubt that intending is a state or event separate from the intended action or the reasons that prompted the action.' and 'Once the existence of pure intending is recognized, there is no reason not to allow that intention of exactly the same kind is also present when the intended action eventuates. Davidson thus makes it clear that, on his new analysis, the concept of the intention with which an intentional action is performed does require reference to intentions as genuine events or entities. Moreover, in discussing Grice's contention that intentions imply beliefs, Davidson maintains that, though there may be loose connections, the thesis is not justified, since reasons for intending to do something are generally very different from reasons for believing one will do it. It therefore seems clear that Davidson now holds that a concept of
Intending separate from that of beliefs and of attitudes such as wants or desires is required. It is further interesting that, in attempting to arrive at a suitable account of intending and of intentional action, Davidson finds it necessary to bring in the additional notion of judgement; this aspect, however, raises questions which are connected with Davidson's causal account of intentional action, and whether his constraints are adequate to explicating such behaviour, and this matter is brought up later. (See 7.3).

Summarizing the position so far, then, we can say that on Davidson's analysis of intentional (linguistic) action, the following seems to be the case. Uttering words to refer to the world is an action the interpretation of which must include the attribution to the speaker of beliefs (in their action-guiding capacity), desires, and intentions, the attribution of which occurs in the form of a vast network from within his holistic truth conditions theory of language. It is thus a matter of the analysis of the logical relations of language together with the determination of an ontology—the direct description and at the same time the inventive construal of the entities concerned, (with, of course, no Fregean intensional objects or the like being admitted.) The attribution of psychological reality is thus immanent within language, but also refers to the needed entities as real states, dispositions or events. Thus, such real entities as beliefs and desires must exist on Davidson's analysis in order to satisfactorily explicate intentional linguistic action. Furthermore, such Primary Reasons behind intentional linguistic action must have a causal structure they must be deemed to have caused the linguistic action in a special way, (difficulties for this causal, lawlike delineation of intentional linguistic behaviour being one of the criticisms Davidson's thesis must circumvent). Also, on Davidson's amended account, he now accepts that reference to intentions as real entities must also be made—not only to explain the concept of pure intending, but also intentional action. Thus, in sum, Davidson's thesis requires that the explication of intentional (linguistic) action must involve reference to real entities such as beliefs, desires, and intentions, and that this involves the notion of a causal structure.

However, the characterization of such reasoning behind intentional action
in terms of describing the logical relations between beliefs, desires and intentions, with reference to such entities possessing a causal structure, has been challenged on two accounts by philosophers. Davidson's extensional reconstruction of the attribution of beliefs (and thus of other attitudes) replacing, for example, Fregean propositions in determining what it is for two people to believe who both believe the same thing, and also the notion of reference to reasons as causes, have both been rejected by different philosophers. The examination of both these aspects is the matter for discussion in the following section.

7.21 Davidson's Extensional Reconstructions a Myth?

As seen in the last section, for Davidson, reference to real entities such as beliefs, desires and intentions is required, together with a causal structure. But is Davidson's proposal for the extensional reconstruction within the metalanguage of such entities he assumes must exist and to which reference must be made satisfactory? Furthermore, is Davidson's notion of reference to reasons as causes in the explication of intentional (linguistic) action necessary? Certain philosophers deny that Davidson's analysis of both aspects is adequate. In the first case, Davidson's reconstruction within the extensional metalanguage of the pro-attitudes attributed to a speaker, and which, for example, with beliefs, is designed to eliminate the need for any reference to Fregean propositions as the basis for construing what it is that two people who believe the same thing both believe, is rejected by some philosophers as requiring the very type of semantic primitive in the metalanguage which it ostensibly obviates. And, in the second case, the (extensional) reference to reasons as causes is unacceptable for many philosophers who hold that the postulation of causes as an attempt to explain human agency must fail. Whether Davidson's truth conditions theory can meet these criticisms is what must now be considered; if it cannot, what are the alternatives suggested by other philosophers — and are their suggestions viable? Perhaps the problem is best seen in terms of exactly what constraints should be put on this aspect of Davidson's enterprise; if so, what are the consequences for Davidson's extensional account and scientific realism?
propositional attitudes necessary to understanding intentional linguistic action requires the quantification over something—reference to certain entities the precise nature of which will be made clear presently. Some philosophers, however, regard reference to the kind of entities Davidson assumes to be necessary in explicating the features of intensional discourse as, at the least, problematic, failing perhaps to avoid the kind of non-extensional metalanguage which his proposals are designed to obviate.

The manner in which Davidson proposes that we should attribute attitudes such as beliefs or desires is given by his explanation of indirect discourse in general; a paratactic analysis which ostensibly avoids the difficulties incurred by accounts requiring reference to Fregean abstract intensional objects, and which unlike proposals such as those needing reference to sentences, Davidson believes will allow what follows the 'that' clause to be treated as a sentence with significant structure which his truth conditions theory can exploit. (See CHAPTER SIX, section 6.2). We saw that Fregean propositions as abstract entities were introduced, in part, to stand for the 'thing' which two people who both believe the same thing both believe; Davidson's 'reversal of Frege' in the matter of attitude attribution hopefully eliminating any extra-linguistic reference to propositions as standing for what two people might be said to, for example, believe, in favour of extensionally reconstructed beliefs on the basis of the truth conditions structure of language alone. This aspect of Davidson's philosophy of language is, of course, crucial to his overall plans, to providing an extensional account of the whole of natural language. 'Of course my project does require that all sentences of natural languages can be handled by a T-theory, and so if the intensional idioms resist such treatment, my plan has foundered.' Yet, as Davidson in this same paper admits— and as was suggested in CHAPTER FIVE (5.3) — it is not clear that a theory of truth satisfying Convention T cannot allow an intensional semantics; indeed, it seems to be the case that the very severe constraints which Davidson places on convention T are not necessary. Thus, the argument here is that, even if certain philosophers are correct in their criticisms of this aspect of Davidson's theory, it need not mean that the truth conditions account itself must be abandoned.
of what are Davidson's proposals? His answers to the analysis of intensional locutions such as 'A said that p' - and by implication the analysis of the attribution of beliefs and other propositional attitudes are mainly given in one paper, but also appear in various other places. 52 As Davidson notes, in such cases of Oratio obliqua, the relation between truth and logical consequence seems to break down. 53 The truth-value of, for example, 'Galileo said that the earth moves', does not depend in any direct way on the truth-value of 'the earth moves'; furthermore, there is a failure of substitutivity, since, from a sentence such as 'John said that the moon is round' and where 'The moon equals the sole planet of the earth', one cannot infer 'John said that the sole planet of the earth is round.' The first step, Davidson urges, in explicating such intensional discourse, should be to parse a sentence such as 'Galileo said that the earth moves' as:

Galileo said that.
The earth moves.

Davidson's paratactic analysis for the logical form of attributing pro-attitudes thus takes the form of two utterances paratactically joined:

sentences in indirect discourse...consist of an expression referring to a speaker, the two-place predicate "said", and a demonstrative referring to an utterance. Period. What follows gives the content of the subject's saying, but has no logical or semantic connection with the original attribution of a saying. 54

Obviously, the full logical form proposal must assign structure to each of the sentences involved in this paratactic analysis. For the first sentence, attributing a saying to a speaker, it will be determined by Davidson's proposal for dealing with action sentences—since uttering a sentence is an action. In the case of the second sentence, what Davidson terms the 'content' sentence, it is determined by Davidson's truth conditions theory for that kind of sentence. There are certainly unresolved difficulties over Davidson's logical form proposal.
however, the issue to be concentrated upon here from Davidson's overall proposal that we should treat 'said' as a two-place predicate, taking as arguments expressions referring to speakers, a demonstrative 'that' referring to an utterance, and with no logical or semantical connection between the two sentences concerned, is the additional requirement of samesaying— for it is here that the feature of semantic primitives manifests itself.\(^{55}\)

The matter of samesaying has to be brought in because of the following. In 'Galileo said that the earth moves' Galileo is obviously attributed with saying something which the formal representation Davidson gives is meant to recapture; but it is unlikely Galileo uttered that very sentence— for one thing Galileo probably did not speak English. We must add, then, the requirement that Galileo and I are samesayers: 'when I say that Galileo said that the earth moves, I represent Galileo and myself as samesayers.'\(^{56}\) That is, there was an utterance of Galileo's that has the same import as my utterance does here and now. Thus:

The earth moves.

(Ex)(Galileo's utterance x and my last utterance make us samesayers).

And, since utterances are actions, and hence events, we can quantify over them.

Davidson's explication of indirect discourse involving 'A said that p' thus relates an agent or speaker to utterances. Similarly, by analogy, all propositional attitude constructions such as 'A believes that p', 'A desires that p' and to like will receive a similar treatment, since Davidson thinks that these constructions all involve concealed demonstratives.\(^{57}\) 'A believes that p' is again fully captured by the relation of the agent to an utterance.

Davidson's account is problematic: there is still the question of explicating the notion of 'samesaying'. For, on the paratactic approach to an utterance such as 'Galileo said that the earth moves', the first utterance ('Galileo said that') is true if and only if an utterance of Galileo's was the same in content (that is, it translates) the utterance to which the 'that' refers ('the earth moves').\(^{58}\) But it is clear that Davidson's proposal, requiring as it does that Galileo's utterance has the same import, or the same content, as my utterance
that this is indeed so. He appears quite happy to account for the fact that there is something said (or believed, etcetera) which makes Galileo and I samesayers in terms of synonymy. But surely, if this is so, then Davidson's account requires a semantic primitive of samesaying in the metalanguage, and in this case, the metalanguage will not be purely extensional - and this, as seen at the beginning of this section, is the very aim of Davidson's programme. Davidson insists that his truth conditions theory be given in terms of an absolute definition of truth which uses no semantic primitives. (See PART 1).

What price, then, Davidson's non-Fregean semantics, in view of this methodologically disquieting feature? Davidson's answer to this criticism is that the appeal to samesaying and synonymy is admissible because localized:

We are indeed asked to make sense of a judgement of synonymy between utterances, but not as the foundation of a theory of language, merely as an unanalysed part of the content of the familiar idiom of indirect discourse.

Yet is Davidson's claim really justified? Davidson appears unconcerned about his move, and does not regard it as bringing back all the old headaches about synonymy: he regards his general account as appealing only to the Tarskian truth conditions theory, even though the specific account of 'says that' does require samesaying as a semantic primitive.

Furthermore - and this is related to the issue of understanding discussed in CHAPTER SIX (6.22) - Davidson argues elsewhere that that the notion of the sameness of content between utterances required above need not threaten his overall truth conditions theory since the concept of synonymy itself is concealed within the idea of a Tarski-style truth conditions theory of translation. Davidson, in replying to Foster's point that apparently 'no T-theory can give a satisfactory semantics for sentences that attribute attitudes...' , and that intensional notions such as 'states' would need to be invoked, seems to want to make it clear, among other things, that he believes that his truth conditions theory of radical interpretation, if it succeeds, already gives the
Notwithstanding what Davidson maintains, it cannot be denied that many other philosophers have regarded Davidson's moves in this area as wholly inadequate—and even as a form of cheating. Simon Blackburn, for example, rejects Davidson's theory of propositional attitudes as unsatisfactory. Blackburn maintains 'of any utterance I now make it will be possible that X' (that is, Galileo) 'should have said that the earth moved and not same said that, since the utterance might have failed to mean what X said.' He concludes, 'the only natural solution is to take the demonstrative to refer to the thought or proposition X in fact expressed', and that this means that 'propositions are brought in by the back door.' Similarly, McFetridge holds that Davidson's proposal involves 'propositions in the minimal sense. They are utterances.'

The most that can be said at this present stage of research, then, is that there is still considerable controversy about whether Davidson's semantic primitives in the extensional metalanguage can be considered 'local' as Davidson says, and whether his required same saying and synonymy proposals threaten his overall extensional account of sentences which attribute attitudes such as beliefs or desires. Certainly it seems that insofar as Davidson fails to provide us with any axioms or conditions for the employment of the same saying relation he demands, his theory remains, to that extent, undeveloped.

But there is a further issue, one that touches on what was mentioned in CHAPTER FIVE (5.3) and which will again arise in the next part of this present chapter: the very constraints which Davidson places on his truth conditions theory. As mentioned in CHAPTER FIVE, it does not appear that the constraints Davidson originally assumed to be a requirement of Convention T are in fact necessary; indeed, it is not even a requirement of the kind of particularist theory Davidson espouses that it must have an extensionalist semantics. If it transpires, therefore, that Davidson's austere 'ideal' constraints cannot satisfactorily accommodate indirect discourse locutions and sentences attributing propositional attitudes, there are wider possibilities for suitable theories dealing with these aspects which do not appeal to intensional objects such as propositions, and which remain within the constraints on a truth conditions theory demanded by Convention T.
In the last section, Davidson's extensional programme for sentences attributing propositional attitudes such as belief or desire was considered, and it was seen that Davidson's proposals here must still be regarded as extremely problematic. However, to return now to the other issue directly concerning intentional linguistic action mentioned in 7·1, it was stated there that, on Davidson's thesis, the explanation of such linguistic action as it is used to refer to the world requires not only reference to postulated entities: beliefs, desires, and intentions; it also required that the primary reasons said to rationalize an action be deemed to cause (in the ordinary scientific sense) that action in a very special way. But this notion of reference to reasons as causes is utterly rejected by some philosophers of neo-Wittgensteinian persuasion who hold that the explanation of human intentional actions entirely eludes the notion of scientific cause. accordingly to physical things: the logical connection argument ensues and with it reference to beliefs and desires as the causes of intentional linguistic action is ostensibly eliminated. Nevertheless, other philosophers still maintain that it is in fact impossible to eliminate reference to reasons as causes, even though Davidson's criteria for acting on such reasons are unacceptable. Thus the questions asked here deal with whether it is possible to avoid reference to reasons as causes, and whether, if Davidson's criteria for intentional action are not satisfactory, what alternatives are suggested. Answers to these problems will take us into the final assessment of Davidson's truth conditions theory and scientific realism as it pertains to psychological reality.

Earlier in this chapter (7·1) it was shown how Davidson explicates intentional (linguistic) action in terms of primary reasons consisting of pro-attitudes such as beliefs and desires; according to this account, the reasons which rationalize the action are the reasons which have caused that action. Thus, in discussing Hume, Davidson says that someone who is proud, or states that he is proud always has his reasons which are the cause of such an action, and which will rationalize it: giving the beliefs and other pro-attitudes on which the pride
is based explains the pride by providing a causal explanation; and giving a full description (in logical terms) is all that is needed to reconstruct the agent's reasons. For Davidson, then, reference to real entities such as beliefs, and desires as the causes (in the ordinary scientific sense) of action and also to intentions must be made. For an agent to act in a certain way, the agent must have such reasons for acting in that way, and must also act in that way because of such reasons; if Davidson is correct, then knowledge of an agent's reasons for acting involves knowledge of mental causation, or, as Davidson puts it, the 'because' must have causal force.

But, must this 'because' be a causal because and, if not, what is it exactly? For many philosophers hold that reference to reasons such as beliefs, desires, and the like as the causes of intentional (linguistic) action is wholly misplaced, that it is not a requirement of the logical description of actions that such things are said to exist as their causes. Are such philosophers correct, and if so, what other proposals do they have for explaining the relationship between (linguistic) action and the beliefs, desires and intentions of agents or speakers?

The 'tradition' which would reject Davidson's causal thesis is, of course, that of the 'neo-Wittgensteineans' and which sees the purposeful, goal-orientated actions of human beings as of a completely different order to that of the material events which science explicates (on some views) in terms of cause and effect. (See CHAPTER FIVE). Such views which envisage a sharp and unbridgeable gap between human action and the events of the physical world, if it were true, would naturally put paid to any hopes of a materialist account of human action, and of explaining the relationship between the psychological reality of speakers and their (linguistic) actions in completely causal terms. The neo-Wittgensteineans thus see man and human action as in some way eluding the kind of causal network in which physical things may be emeshed, the scientific, Humean causal explanations not being applicable to human reality in the way that the world of material things is said to be susceptible to scientific explication. Human behaviour is deemed to fall under a set of concepts which are not causal, and which are wholly inconsistent with causal explanations. To show this—that explanation of human behaviour in terms of, say, beliefs and
desires is not causal, it is maintained that such pro-attitudes, as causes, are non-contingently connected with their manifestation in (linguistic) behaviour, and that the reasons for action are not amenable to explanation by reference to causes:

Desires, tryings, intentions, and the like, serve no better than volitions as the causes of actions—and for precisely the same reason—namely, that it is impossible, as it is in the case of any known instance of a real causal connection, even to begin to say what these events are without describing them in terms of their alleged effects. 69

Thus, Richard Taylor puts forward the standard neo-Wittgensteinean view and the animadversion on the notion of reference to reasons as causes. On Taylor's view, intentional actions have no mental events as their causes and to which any reference must be made, if such causes are postulated in an attempt to explain agency, they must fail in this attempt. Taylor's thesis questions both of the assumptions made by Davidson which were mentioned earlier—that the notion of 'because' is a causal one, and that beliefs and desires and the like as causes must exist in order that reference can be made to them in explicating actions. Though ordinary locutions used for explaining human action may look like expressions of causality (Davidson's 'because'), Taylor holds that this is wrong. In an example which is directly relevant to the issue of causality, and so will be quoted in some detail, Taylor notes, firstly, that supposing that there is a man who goes to the pantry, and that this is correctly explained by saying, for instance, that he did this because he desired some salami. 70 The word 'because' in such statements indeed seems to suggest that an agent's desires, say, were the cause of his action; but Taylor maintains that explanations of this sort which grammatically seem to assign causes to intentional actions, really assign reasons which are 'wholly different in kind from causes', and that to 'assimilate them to causes is simply to distort them and to create an entirely misleading conception of human agency.' 71 Taylor then gives two sets of statements to illustrate the contrast between the ordinary notion of causal connection and that of intentional action:
Both of the sets contain statements which are grammatically similar, expressing a relationship between events conveyed by the word because. And, since the relation in the first set is obviously that of causation, it seems reasonable to suppose the relationship in the second set is also one of cause and effect. However, the statements in the second set are, maintains Taylor, in an ordinary context, equivalent: 'Under ordinary circumstances one could not insist that one was true but another false.' But the statements in the first set do not all say essentially the same thing: correctly explaining a man's fall as the result of slipping is far from equivalent to explaining it by his being pushed. 'The truth of any of the statements in the first set would ordinarily (though not necessarily) exclude the others...' Thus, for Taylor, the second set does not, unlike the first set, constitute a variety of causal explanations for an event; rather, it is a variety of ways of giving one and the same explanation, without directly, or even tacitly, mentioning any causes at all: 'It gives no causal explanation whatsoever.' Furthermore, the statements of this second set are entirely equivalent to:

III. Jones went to the pantry in order to get some salami,

Jones went to the pantry for the purpose of getting salami, ...

and such statements do not even bear any resemblance to causal explanations, no causes being alluded to whatsoever. Why then, Taylor asks, should anyone want to hold that they really mean that some state of desire (or the like) caused Jones to behave as he did? Taylor concludes that the only reason seems to be the
IV. Jones went to the pantry for some salami,

   Jones went to the pantry for some cheese, ...

Such statements, like those in the first set, but not like those of set two, are not alternative ways of saying essentially the same thing, the truth of any of them being consistent with the falsity of the others, and would ordinarily, (though not necessarily) exclude the others as explanations of the agent's actions. Yet the differences expressed by the various statements is not a difference of causes, since no causes are in any way referred to; the differences are differences of ends, differences in the possible states of affairs following upon the action which would or would not constitute the attainment of the purpose in question. 75

In summary, then, in set one we have several causes and evidently no end at all, while in the second set there are several ends, and evidently no causes; and, the statements of set two, being equivalent to those of set three, explain the agent's action by citing his reason for acting in terms of his ends or goals or purposes, and say what the agent was aiming or intending to accomplish, with no reference to causes at all. This, as Taylor notes,76 does not entail that there were no causes of the actions, but only that the linguistic explanations itself gives no hint of it: they suggest nothing— even if there were anything— made the agent act as he did. Thus, the truth of such statements is consistent with denying them causal explanations. The statements themselves in no way suggest that any reference to reasons such as desires must be made in order to give a causal explanation of the agent's actions, and an explanation in terms of intention or aim of the agent, the purpose or goal he was trying to realize, is
all that is needed. Whereas, as we saw, for Davidson, reference to reasons like beliefs or desires as causes must be made in order to explain an agent's actions ("Central to the relation between a reason and an action it explains is the idea that the agent performed the action because he had the reason.")

for Taylor, the teleological account provides the real explanation of actions, an account which is different in kind from, and does not presuppose, any causal account. Explanations of such actions, on Taylor's account, simply does not require any reference to reasons as causes, as it does for Davidson; for him, explanation is given entirely in terms of the linguistic statements themselves.

Some time has been given to Richard Taylor's neo-Wittgensteinean point of view since it seems to encapsulate very clearly the ideas shared by many other philosophers who, in the last decade or so have emphasized a sharp dichotomy between explanations in terms of scientific causes and explanations of human behaviour in terms of purposes and intentions; the issue is plainly crucial for philosophers like Davidson, for whom the notion of scientific cause is central to explaining human behaviour as well as that of physical objects. On teleological accounts such as the one outlined above, the reasons assigned to explaining the actions of human beings is not just different in degree, but wholly different in kind from the causal explanations of the natural world, and to assimilate the former to explanations in terms of causes is simply to distort and to create an entirely misleading conception of human agency. The correct explanation demanded of human behaviour on such views is a representation of that behaviour as the means to some end: we are asking for some indication of the purposes, goals or intended result.

Like Richard Taylor, other philosophers have claimed similar arguments in hoping to justify the sharp distinction between explanations in terms of reasons and motives and causal explanations. For example, Kenny has claimed that the relation of an attitude or emotion to its object is a non-contingent and thus necessary one, and that therefore it cannot be causal; in particular, Kenny's claim is that an emotion is non-contingently connected to its manifestation in (linguistic) behaviour, and thus the relation cannot be causal. Moreover, his animus is directed against the possibility of any causal
account in this area. Kenny's thesis is initially directed against traditional
theories of the emotions, those of Descartes, Locke and Hume, and he then goes on
to distinguish emotions from other feelings such as bodily sensations by virtue
of the fact, apropos Brentano, that the former are essentially directed towards
objects, making a radical distinction between the intentional objects of mental
states and the objects of physical actions. Hence, Kenny wants to claim that
there is a total distinction between the object of an emotion and its cause: he
thinks that the objects of emotions and causes of emotions form two mutually
exclusive classes. Yet the point of relevance for us here is that Kenny's
requirement that there be a sharp dichotomy between a causal account and that of
reasons can be, and will be, questioned. As with Taylor, the invective against
any attempt to completely reduce explanations of human, intentional, behavior
to causal explanations is indeed laudable; but this is not sufficient reason
in itself to show that the notion of cause has no part to play, or that the
dichotomy between reasons and causes is as radical as these philosophers would
like to maintain.

This line of approach is the one we find in Davidson (and also in Pears). In particular, Davidson's arguments are directed against Melden's criticisms of
the causal account, which relate closely to those of Taylor and Kenny mentioned
above. Taylor, it will be recalled, maintained that there is no way of connecting
human action with beliefs and desires except by representing such actions as a
means to the attainment of the object of those beliefs and desires; any causal
solution is otiose and the connection is, he would have it, only logical and
semantical. This is the central feature of Melden's argument against the
causal view, the heart of which is his development of the logical connection
argument. Melden's logical connection argument claims that reasons are
logically connected with the actions they explain, and, since causes and their
effects must be logically independent, reasons cannot be causes. As with
Taylor and Kenny, to suppose that the motive for human action is a cause is
wrong:

As the alleged cause of the action, it cannot serve further to characterize
Melden's claim, then, is that a cause and its effect must be distinct and logically independent, but motives need not be; and, in the case of actions for which there is a motive, there is no prior mental event: there is nothing other than the action itself. Hence, the motive must be a part of the action, rather than anything antecedent to the action. And, as with Taylor, Melden suggests that to give the motive is to say what the agent's intention is in so acting: it is not about an intention which had been previously formed, but is about the action itself. Thus, the intention cannot be separated from the action to describe the one is to describe the other. Precisely the same kind of argument is used by Melden in relation to propositional attitudes such as desires: desires, wants, and the like are also, for Melden, logically connected with the related actions. They cannot be characterized without reference to their objects— to desire or want something entails doing the action for which one has such reasons. In summary, for Melden, neither intentions, nor pro-attitudes such as desires can be separated from actions, and to describe the action is actually to describe the intentions and pro-attitudes concerned. Thus the intentions and pro-attitudes are logically connected with the action. This is in direct agreement with what we learned from Richard Taylor and Kenny, and in contradistinction to Davidson's claim that we must refer to reasons such as beliefs and desires behind the (linguistic) actions of an intentional nature since they in fact caused such actions.

Melden's argument that intentions and pro-attitudes like desires are not states or events which are in any antecedent to or independent of the (linguistic) actions they explain but are rather completely internal to the actions themselves...
Jas a rutner important consequence, Melden maintains that in explaining an action an interpreter is making clear what is being done, that one 'reveals an order or pattern in the proceedings which had not been apparent'. It is a 'what' explanation, concerned with showing what order is present, what something is, rather than being a 'why' explanation concerned with showing why an action came about as the result of antecedent factors dealing with its origin - the paradigm of which is the causal explanation of physical happenings. Thus, whether with an action, an event, or the explanation of a poem, a 'what' explanation would be in terms of the pattern as redescribed, and not in terms of what caused it. This aspect, too, is obviously crucial to this part of the thesis, since Melden's notion suggests that in teleological explanations we are concerned with 'revealing the pattern', or redescribing it, and ought not to be concerned with referring to antecedent or separate causes such as beliefs, desires and intentions. For again, Davidson's position, as our discussion has already shown, is that the explanation of intentional human (linguistic) action in fact involves both the 'what' explanation and the 'why' explanation, since with respect to the former his truth conditions theory is certainly concerned with revealing the pattern in linguistic actions (See PART 1) whilst also holding that, with respect to the latter, we must refer to real entities such as beliefs, desires and intentions as the extra-linguistic causes of linguistic action, and of behaviour in general. (See CHAPTER SEVEN section one.) The crucial questions to be answered next, then, are whether explanations of actions are, as Melden says, only dealing with the notion of 'revealing the pattern', together with the related issue raised by Melden and like-minded philosophers such as Richard Taylor and Kenny as to whether reference to reasons as causes is indeed otiose.

We have already seen that it is the very notion of Davidson's causal 'because' which was called into question by the teleological accounts of human action propounded by philosophers of a neo-Wittgenseinean persuasion. Certainly, there are, as will be seen, grave difficulties in maintaining a wholly causal account of intentional actions; but need the ensuing difficulties preclude the notion of cause entirely? Plainly, Davidson thinks not:

Noting that nonteleological causal explanations do not display the
element of justification provided by reasons, some philosophers have concluded that the concept of cause that applies elsewhere cannot apply to the relation between reasons and actions, and that the pattern of justification provides, in the case of reasons, the required explanation. But suppose we grant that reasons alone justify actions in the course of explaining them; it does not follow that the explanation is not also—and necessarily—causal. 87

Davidson goes on to note, vide the discussion above, the distinction between Melden's explanation in terms of revealing pattern ('what' explanations) and explanation in terms of causes ('why' explanations), and accepts that Melden's 'pattern of justification' argument indeed provides insight into how we are to explicate human action; what Davidson will not accept, however, is Melden's claim that causal explanations are 'wholly irrelevant to the understanding we seek' of human action. 88 Explanations wholly in terms of the pattern of justification means for Davidson that something essential is being left out, and that the 'notion of justification becomes as dark as the notion of reason until we can account for the force of that "because".' 89 But this, of course, is the very essence of the problem: whether the 'because' can be given the kind of causal force which at this stage of his work he assumed it could. Just how problematic the notion of cause as applied to human intentional actions can be must now be shown.

If reasons are causes, then a belief and desire which constitute a reason must cause the action they explain. One of the major difficulties in the way of any causal connection between reasons such as beliefs and desires and (linguistic) actions is the seeming impossibility of connecting up the actions or behaviour with that attitudes in any straightforward way which will do justice both to the complete freedom which it is commonly felt that the intentional action of human beings possesses with the sense of determinacy which a causal explanation seems to indicate. Thus Austin's contention that being free to perform an action cannot be a causal power at all, and hence that a causal theory of human action must be false. 90 As will be seen, the possibilities of giving necessary and sufficient conditions for intentionally acting on a reason, or of delineating
strict scientific laws connecting such reasons with actions seems remote indeed; but it is unclear that this entails that freedom to perform an intentional action cannot be a causal power at all. Nevertheless, as Davidson comes to admit, trying to distinguish when intentional actions must be caused by certain beliefs and desires is an almost impossible task. The attempt to provide necessary and sufficient conditions for intentional action must confront the problem that radically different propensities to behave may issue from similar beliefs and desires. We can, for instance, have two actions, one of which is intentional and the other of which is unintentional, both of which result from similar beliefs and desires. This is clearly seen by what Davidson says. First he states that 'The only hope for the causal analysis is to find states or events which are causal conditions of intentional actions,' and that 'The most eligible such states or events are the beliefs and desires of an agent that rationalize an action, in the sense that their propositional expressions put the action in a favourable light, provide an account of the reasons the agent had in acting, and allow us to reconstruct the intention with which he acted.' But then Davidson goes on to admit that 'Beliefs and desires that would rationalize an action if they caused it in the right way—through a course of practical reasoning, as we might try saying—may cause it in other ways. If so, the action was not performed with the intention that we could have read off from the attitudes that caused it.' Davidson uses the following example to make the point clear:

A climber might want to rid himself of the weight and danger of holding another man on a rope, and he might know that by loosening his hold on the rope he could rid himself of the weight and danger. This belief and want might so unnerve him as to cause him to loosen his hold, and yet it might be the case that he never chose to loosen his hold, nor did he do it intentionally.

Now if Davidson wishes to maintain his causal thesis of holding that beliefs and desires are the causes of intentional action, he must find a way of distinguishing between intentional and unintentional actions—all of which result from similar beliefs and desires. Davidson, however, freely admits that he has not
yet found such a way: 'What I despair of spelling out is the way in which attitudes must cause actions if they are to rationalize the action.'

And the problems of providing necessary and sufficient conditions for acting on a reason are only beginning. An analysis of freedom to act that makes it a causal power must stand or fall, according to Davidson, together with a law giving the conditions under which agents perform intentional actions. Yet the attempts which have been made to date to give such a lawlike account of human action all seem to have failed. One notable attempt to give a scientific and lawful delineation of human action is Hempel's schema for explaining why a person X did a certain action:

1. X was in a situation of type C
2. X was a rational agent
3. In a situation of type C, any rational agent will do f.
4. Therefore X did f.

The key notion for Hempel is that of a rational agent. This he says must be conceived of as 'a descriptive-psychological concept governed by objective criteria of application'; furthermore, it is 'a broadly dispositional trait: to say of someone that he is a rational agent is to attribute to him, by implication a complex bundle of dispositions, each of them a tendency to behave in characteristic ways in certain kinds of situations.'

What is important about the above points is that statements (II) and (III) of Hempel's schema seem to presuppose that there is one and only one notion of a 'rational agent', and that this is the same for any agent and all kinds of human action. In another publication, Hempel makes this even clearer, indicating that references to motivating reasons 'provide explanatory grounds for the resulting actions only on the assumption that people motivated by such and such reasons will generally act, or will tend to act, in certain characteristic ways.'

Hempel's hope of introducing laws of such generality and which will say something about what all people will do under certain conditions now seems hopelessly optimistic. And, unless it can be shown in an objectively determinable way when people will and when they will not act on their reasons it is difficult
to see a place for laws that could be used in reason explanations. Hart and Honore, for example, in what seems to be accepted by philosophers as one of the most important discussions of the relationship between causes and human action in the realm of jurisprudence, claim that though the ordinary scientific causal explanations involve laws, but rationalizations do not: 'The statement that one person did something because, for example, another threatened him, carries no implication or covert assertion that if the circumstances were repeated the same action would follow.

The status of laws in the explanation of human behavior is indeed important, since if human action differs radically in this respect from ordinary causal explanations, it would seem to be more ammunition for backing the views espoused by those philosophers like Taylor, Kenny and Melden discussed earlier. Richard Taylor, for example, specifically says that he, echoing Hart and Honore, does not believe there can ever be general scientific laws for human behavior.

On this issue Davidson would agree, for he says 'generalizations connecting reasons and actions are not and cannot be sharpened into the kind of law on the basis of which accurate predictions can reliably be made.'

Even though Davidson holds that the notion of causal connections is invoked in both scientific accounts of the world and in teleological explanations, he does accept that it is not possible to hold that there can be any strict scientific laws covering the teleological explanation of actions. Though we can say that it is logically impossible to perform an intentional action without some appropriate belief and desire, the best it seems we can expect, says Davidson, is for very low-grade statistical explanations of when such beliefs and desires will lead to intentional action.

Davidson is not denying that there can be laws far less strict or deterministic were intentional action is concerned; only that the kind of generality demanded by Hempel. Elsewhere, Davidson makes it clear that, although (as mentioned earlier) a causal analysis of intentional action stands or falls with the notion of a law, in his opinion, 'they fall together if what we want are explicit, non-question begging analyses, or laws without generous caveats and ceteris paribus clauses.'

Davidson's rejection of the possibility of turning very low-grade statistical tendency statements implied by the attribution of beliefs and desires into anything like serious laws is of course at one with his views on the impossibility of their being any strict psychological-physical
laws in general, and no explicit definitions of the mental in terms of physical behaviour.

In this area, Davidson goes against the kind of strong identity thesis and materialism advocated by those like Hempel and Smart. Such a strong physicalism asserting the existence of a general identity between each psychological condition and a physical counterpart is less acceptable to Davidson than the more sophisticated and 'weaker' version of the 'identity-theory' of materialism advocated by Nagel. The latter kind of physicalism does not require that a physical condition be found identical with every psychological condition. Davidson's rejection of any very strong identity thesis between mental and physical events which argues a presumptive optimism that all mental events are identical with physical events— in the sense that all intensional concepts can be analysed in terms of physical concepts, and allowing psychology to be exhaustively reduced to physics—is apparent in many papers, where he argues for the irreducibility of the mental at the expense of physicalism. For example, in considering the relationship between the mental and the physical, Davidson offers what he sees as the four alternatives: nomological monism, affirming correlating laws between mental and physical events; nomological dualism, incorporating various forms of parallelism, interactionism and the like; anomalous dualism, combining ontological dualism with a general failure of laws correlating the mental and the physical (as in Cartesianism), and Davidson's own position of anomalous monism. And anomalous monism entails that 'no purely physical predicate, no matter how complex, has, as a matter of law, the same extension as a mental predicate.' Thus, mental events 'resist capture in the nomological net of physical theory.' The holism of the mental realm is what entails the autonomy and anomalous character of the mental; mental and physical predicates are just not made for one another, and hence there can be no strict psycho-physical laws. Yet on Davidson's thesis of anomalous monism, even though the realm of the mental resists capture in any nomological net, this can still be reconciled with the causal role of mental events in the physical world, since it is still possible to hold a version of the identity theory in which at least some mental events are identified with physical events. In this sense there can be a degree of 'reciprocity' between the mental and the physical since, even though, as a class, mental events cannot be
explained in terms of physical science, we can still obtain a kind of 'entering-wedge' into the realm of the mental by means of particular identities. In this respect, it is consistent to hold that though there can be no strict scientific and physical laws of the psychological, the mental can still in some sense be said to depend on the physical. This is because 'psychological events are describable, taken one by one, in physical terms, that is, they are physical events.' This, then, is Davidson's anomalous monism, and a sketch of his kind of materialism in which the two aspects of mental events in relation to physical events—causal dependence together with nomological independence—are combined.

This slight divergence to Davidson's ideas on materialism and the identity thesis is in fact directly relevant to Davidson's views on the status of laws in the causal analysis of intentional action. For, with respect to the first issue, the nomological irreducibility of the mental is linked to the fact that 'the attribution of mental phenomena must be responsible to the background of reasons, beliefs, and intentions of the individual.' Similarly, the same kind of responsibility to the complex pattern of beliefs and desires of the individual prevents us from being able to give any serious laws connecting reasons and intentional actions, and thus prevents us from giving any necessary and sufficient conditions for acting on a reason. In order to be able to give necessary and sufficient conditions or serious laws for the explication of human intentional action, we would need, according to Davidson, a 'quantitative calculus that brings all relevant beliefs and desires into the picture.' And this, Davidson thinks, is not a possibility. The laws that are implicit in reason explanations seem to me to concern only individuals—they are the generalizations embedded in attributions of attitudes, beliefs, and traits.

Unlike for Goldman or for Armstrong, Davidson now bars defining intentional action in terms that fully identify the causal conditions; his initial optimism in this direction thus seems to have been premature. It will be recalled that Davidson initially enunciated two conditions \( C_1 \) and \( C_2 \) for explicating intentional action. (See 7.1) These two conditions were deemed to be necessary, but Davidson also believed that condition \( C_2 \) (that a primary reason for an action be its cause) could be strengthened to make the condition sufficient as
Can we somehow give conditions that are not only necessary, but also sufficient, for an action to be intentional, using only such concepts as those of belief, desire and cause? I think not.

The reason why this cannot be achieved, as hinted at above, being that in order to distinguish the right sort of causal process, we need to take into account how a decision by the individual is reached in the light of conflicting evidence and conflicting desires. But to do this would mean going beyond the constraints Davidson envisaged. The notion that Davidson's constraints are inadequate in this respect, and that his account must be augmented is echoed by other philosophers. What is lacking, on one account, in Davidson's analysis, is the very point just mentioned: that we must have an explanation of how a *prima facie* reason becomes a cause. The claim that a primary reason just is a cause tells us little, explaining nothing about how an agent arrives at his reason and how it relates to his action. And what turns an agent's reasons into causes, it is suggested, entails an account of how an agent deliberates, and how he evaluates such reasons. This matter about how Davidson's constraints may need to be augmented is is dealt with later; for the present, enough has been shown to see that Davidson now recognizes we cannot define intentional action (or 'free action') with concepts that fully identify the causal conditions of intentional action. Davidson thus admits that we must count our search for a causal analysis of 'A is free to do x' a failure, even though he still sees it as a causal power of the agent.

If, then, on Davidson's own admission, we cannot give necessary and sufficient conditions for intentional action by reference to reasons as causes, this would appear to go some way towards the views expressed by Philosophers such as Taylor, Kenny and Melden that reference to reasons as causes cannot explain human, intentional action, and that perhaps, as Melden suggested, intentions and pro-attitudes such as beliefs and desires are completely internal to the actions themselves and that explanation of such actions is in terms of 'revealing the
pattern'. Yet Davidson also still maintains that intentional action is a causal power of the agent. Is it therefore necessary that we must refer to reasons as causes of intentional action, and that Melden's logical connection argument in terms of 'what' explanations which reveal pattern in (linguistic) actions, but where the intentions and reasons are wholly internal to the action, cannot be sustained? For, though Davidson's constraints could not be expanded to provide sufficient conditions for explaining intentional action, this failure does not in his view prevent them from being necessary: '...there is not a good argument to show that causal relations rule out necessary connections.' The arguments utilized by Melden, and which rest on an ability to reveal coherent pattern in the action of the agent still do not, in Davidson's view, touch the question of 'why' an intentional action occurred; we cannot infer from Melden's arguments that reasons like beliefs cannot be causes. Is Melden wrong? Can we show that we must refer to reasons and that explanations concerned with only revealing the pattern, and which see reasons as wholly internal to the intentional action, are incorrect — or at least inadequate to the extent that, as Davidson would have it, explanation by redescription does not exclude the possibility of causal explanation?

Melden's grounds for alleging that intentions, desires, and other reasons cannot be separated from intentional actions — that they are logically connected with the action (and thus cannot be any kind of Jusian cause) is that they cannot be characterized without reference to their objects, and that, for example, to desire something entails trying to do the very action for which one has such a reason. Unlike Davidson's causal 'why' explanations, Melden's 'what' explanations consist of redescribing the object of the explanation: they do not link two distinct or independent actions, but rather mention only the action being explained from which an alternative description is found. For example, John's action in standing up is explained in terms of his intention of trying to see the game better. To state his intention is to redescribe accurately his action. And John's having such an intention is not a separate event from his intentional action; hence to offer an explanation in this way is not to give a cause for the action.

But is it enough to claim that such explanations involve only the kind
Of redescriptions which Melden's argument suggests: Certainly, of course, the answer for Davidson is 'no': 'Reasons, being beliefs and attitudes, are certainly not identical with actions.' And, although he was prematurely optimistic that his causal analysis would provide sufficient conditions for explicating intentional action, surely on this latter issue he is correct. If Melden's claim that 'what' explanations are only explanations by redescriptions is to be sustained, he must show that such explanations by reasons in terms of redescriptions do not involve any reference to a cause, and that hence they do not involve a 'why' explanation. But surely reference to a cause is involved in many instances. Melden is undoubtedly correct to maintain that, for example, desires are not some kind of Humean impression (as do Taylor and Kenny): but it does not follow that they cannot be, as Melden supposes, independent of the action they explain, or that reference to them is not required—it does not follow, that is, that they are only internal to the action.

To see this consider Melden's example of a man driving and raising his arm in order to signal: his intention, to signal, explains his action, that of raising his arm, by redescribing it as signalling. Melden's argument is alleged to show the interdependence of reasons and actions; clearly his point is that there can be no prior pro-attitude to act as a cause since there are no prior independent mental events or states of mind to be identified: the intention is not a prior event, and to say that the agent did the action because of an intention is to say something only about the action, since there is only the agent's doing of the action. The intention, that is, cannot be independent of the action. And thus, to give the agent's intention is just one more description, and not a description which refers to independent events, but rather a description of an internal characteristic of the action itself. Yet as Davidson notes, Melden's explanation of this example is unsatisfactory, and explanations in terms of patterns does not answer the question of how reasons explain actions. Davidson's criticism that Melden's explanation cannot be fully adequate is also emphasized by another philosopher. For Milligan, as for Davidson, the having of a reason and the acting upon it need to be seen as independent. With respect to Melden's example, Milligan says 'To ascribe an intention of signalling to him is to say more than that he has signalled.' Milligan goes on to note that
every action has many characteristics, some of which are unknown to the agent and are thus not part of his intention, some of which are known but are incidental to the action and thus not strictly part of his intention, and still others which are known to the agent and provide the reason for his action and constitute his intention. In the last example, the difference is, as Milligan says, that the agent's attitude towards the feature must be involved. And, 'Since the agent can have a favourable attitude towards a feature without it providing the reason or intention for the acting, it looks as if the attitude has to be such that it is the having of the attitude which leads to the action being done.' In other words, the agent has an attitude towards the feature mentioned in the intention, and the action is carried out because of such an attitude. This is in effect to endorse Davidson's contention, for Milligan concludes: 'Thus the action and the intention appear to be separable; without there being some additional link between the two the intention does not explain the action.' And, as Milligan notes for Davidson, this link is given by the intention being the cause.

Furthermore, Milligan goes on to suggest that the evidence of immediate actions indicates that intentions and reasons such as beliefs and desires, though internal to the actions as Melden says, are nevertheless also external and independent of the actions. Hence, 'Though a reason may give a what-explanation of an action, it also gives a why-explanation.' Actions are not only done with intentions; they are done because of the intentions. This, again, is to argue against Melden's notion that intentions and pro-attitudes such as beliefs and desires are not antecedent or independent of the actions they explain, but are wholly internal to such actions. And thus there is a further endorsement of Davidson's position expressed earlier, that the explanation of intentional human action involves both a 'what' explanation concerned with 'revealing the pattern' of such actions, and a 'why' explanation concerned with how the actions originated as a result or antecedent factors. As Davidson stressed, Melden's 'what' explanations which reveal coherent pattern in actions, and which see reasons as wholly internal to the actions, does not preclude the necessity or the possibility of 'why' explanations in which we must refer also to external reasons as causes. Thus, though intentions, desires and beliefs are indeed internal to intentional action, it does not also follow, as Milligan says, that they cannot
be independent and external to the action as well.^

On these issues, then, it seems that Davidson has substantial support, not just from Milligan, but from many other philosophers not mentioned. It therefore appears that there is at least a good body of evidence to suggest that Melden's claim that reasons are logically connected with the actions they explain and that there is no reference to such antecedent or independent reasons as causes, should be rejected: reasons do provide 'why' explanations, and are necessary to the actions they explain.

To very briefly summarize the concerns of this section, we began with Davidson's notion that the explanation of intentional required not only reference to entities such as beliefs, desires, and intentions, but that the primary reasons which rationalize an action must cause that action (in the ordinary scientific sense). This was completely rejected by neo-Wittgensteinians like Taylor, Kenny, and Melden, who hold that the explanation of intentional human action completely eludes any such explanation, and that reference to reasons as the causes of intentional action is otiose, with reasons being wholly internal to the actions they explain. Though it had to be admitted that Davidson's early optimism for providing necessary and sufficient conditions for intentional action only in terms of reasons as causes, it does seem that there are good grounds for holding that we must refer to such antecedent and independent reasons as causes- in addition to any explanation which is only concerned with revealing the pattern of actions. Nevertheless, the fact that Davidson's criteria could not provide necessary and sufficient conditions leads to the conclusion on the part of some philosophers that there is something lacking in Davidson's account, that what is needed is an augmented explanation indicating how an agent arrives at his reasons for action, and that this involves an account of how the agent evaluates and deliberates upon his reasons. The repercussions which this would have for Davidson's proposed constraints and for his account of intentional action in terms of scientific realism is discussed in the following sections.
Many philosophers are willing to accept that Davidson's constraints as so far discussed though necessary, are not able to provide both necessary and sufficient conditions for the explication of human, intentional action, as Davidson himself now recognizes. There is in fact a close relation between intentional action and the matter of choice or decision in acting, as Davidson sees; however, the springs of intentional action are, in the case of human beings (and unlike the analogue of 'intentional' behaviour in machines) grounded in an extremely complex psychological network of attitudes and emotions of the individual, which makes the application of the Decision Theory model somewhat problematic. Alternative solutions have been proffered which purport to give necessary and sufficient conditions for intentional action which deny the efficacy of the use of the 'ideal' approach of Decision Theory and deductive logic in this area, and which envisage the involvement of essential processes of deliberation and the evaluation of the individual's reasons as being needed in explaining intentional action. The problem here is that such processes seem, in one case at least, to require reference to private, subjective features, which would go beyond what Davidson's explanation of intentional action in terms of scientific realism would find acceptable. A totally unified theory meaning together with essential reference to the agent's beliefs, desires and a theory of decision thus seem to be the best solution at present to explicating such intentional action and remaining within the constraints of a truth conditions theory, though accepting that other approaches augmenting Davidson's proposals will be needed.

That Davidson's constraints on explicating intentional action in terms of reasons as causes are necessary but not sufficient is expressed by many philosophers in various ways. Thus, Aune, for example, says 'What I have been principally concerned to show here is that a primary reason (as Davidson seems to conceive it) is not sufficient for doing something intentionally: such a reason however, may be necessary for intentional behaviour.' Hence, Aune sees Davidson's account of intentional action as 'seriously oversimplified'
and that a particular desire typically leads to rational action only by means of a line of reasoning or deliberation whose outcome is partly determined by a variety of beliefs and other pro-attitudes. 136 Similarly, Milligan states that

What is needed for Davidson's view to be acceptable is an account of how a prima facie reason becomes a cause, what it is that turns it into a cause, or what criteria we need to decide whether a prima facie reason is a cause. Without such an account the claim that the primary reason is a cause tells us little, and says nothing about what an agent's reason is and how it relates to his action. 137

We will return to Milligan's views in a moment since it is he who seems to offer the most detailed explication in present research of the processes of deliberation and evaluation which are seen as leading to an intentional action. For the present let us just register the fact that intentional action is closely related to issues of choice, decision, and deliberation, and that its outcome is also partly determined by an extremely complex psychological network of attitudes and emotions of the individual agent to which the process of decision and deliberation and the intentional action may ultimately be traced back. This latter fact is clearly recognized by Wilson: 'It is the beliefs, desires and emotions which are intentional, and our account of this notion must have reference to features of their states and dispositions themselves.' 138

Indeed, it can be plausibly argued, as Wilson does, that a person's intentional actions - unlike their analogue in the 'intentional' activity of machines - only forms a coherent whole because such intentional actions are rooted in a complex network of attitudes and feelings. 139 It is such a complex network of attitudes and feelings as a coherent whole (though not an entirely consistent one) which ultimately lies behind a person's actions, rather than the fact that it is merely goal-directed, as a machine's behaviour may be deemed to be. This is surely right; and, to the extent that a machine, though in a sense it may be considered to have intentional behaviour (and even thoughts, and beliefs) lacks a comparable complexity of organization involving such thoughts, attitudes,
and emotions, it must surely fail to be an adequate analogue by which to judge the intentional actions of human beings. Thus it seems reasonable to demand that our basis for judging the intentional actions of other human beings and the related processes of decision and deliberation which lie behind such actions should be the shared attitudes and emotions of human beings, and not the goal-directed model provided by a machine or a computer. That we do possess a common stock of attitudes and emotional responses helps us to explain how we can understand the intentional (and, of course, unintentional) actions of our fellow human beings, since another person's intentional actions (for example) will make sense to me only if they are seen as springing from attitudes and feelings which form a part of my own set of characteristic responses:

If I know how it feels to feel as he does, I can understand how he defines the situation in which he is acting, and why he acts as he does. If the feeling out of which his action springs is foreign to me, to that extent his action is unintelligible.

Thus, emotions, as well as other attitudes are central to our understanding of how people act in the world and towards one another, and it is only by taking such an overall largely coherent and consistent, but extremely complex, psychological network into account that we can finally understand and successfully interpret another person's intentional actions. Indeed, for Wilson, it is plain that 'emotions are the final touchstone of sincerity.' It is also to emphasize, as we draw to the end of this thesis, the point made at the beginning of PART III, that in the interpretation of the meaning of an agent's intentional (linguistic) actions, one must make reference also to all the features comprising the psychological reality of such an agent.

That the explanation of intentional (linguistic) action must take cognizance of decision and deliberation, and is ultimately responsible to the complex psychological network of attitudes and more of the individual is recognized by Davidson. The problem is whether his own proposals in this direction go far enough. Hence, it is not just that the interpretation of the meaning of a speaker's words and the
interpretation of the related beliefs, desires and intentions must go hand-in-hand, but any unified theory must also include a theory of decision:

All this strongly suggests that the attribution of desires and beliefs (and other thoughts) must go hand in hand with the interpretation of speech, that neither the theory of decision nor of interpretation can be successfully developed without the other. 143

In fact, the central importance of Decision Theory to Davidson's overall theory of language goes back to his original papers published in the early 1950's. 144 More recently, as the above quotation indicates, the matter has taken on increasing importance:

The theory for which we should ultimately strive is one that takes as evidential base preferences between sentences—preferences that one sentence rather than another be true. The theory would then explain individual preferences of this sort by attributing beliefs and values to the agent, and meanings to his words. 145

The introduction of Decision Theory is necessary since 'where one constellation of beliefs and desires will rationalize an action, it is always possible to find a quite different constellation that will do as well.' 146 Of course, such a theory itself relies on language, so that 'If we think of all choices as revealing a preference that one sentence rather than another be true, the resulting total theory should provide an interpretation of sentences, and at the same time assign beliefs and desires, both of the latter conceived as relating the agent to sentences or utterances.' 147 Finally, in his latest published work, the matter is refined still further: the issue now is 'to tell when a person has a certain degree of belief in some proposition, or what the relative strengths of his preferences are.' 148 (emphasis added) and Davidson concludes 'So if we could discover degree of belief in sentences from preferences that sentences be true we would have a successful unified theory.' 149

The hope was, therefore, that Decision Theory would offer a more
sophisticated way of dealing with the reason explanations of intentional action, since it is concerned with how an agent chooses among several competing action, and with the problem of the effect of variations in the strength of desire, or degree of belief. But taking Decision Theory as a model for explicating the reasons and preferences behind choices of courses of action has problems. Firstly, as Davidson notes, 'Some ordinary desires, however, do not translate directly into preferences, so that not all reason explanations have a clear decision theory counterpart explanation', this being especially so in relation to conflicting desires, a problem which Decision Theory appears to skip, barring possible evidence for conflict in behaviour.

The suggestion, already, is that Decision Theory is not able to cope with the complexity in the processes which eventuate in human, intentional action. This is the brunt of the criticism levelled at Decision Theory by Milligan: 'This model of decision-making seems to force on us a view of desires which does not apply to all that originates action' and indeed seems to 'force on us a mistaken view of desires.' Decision Theory as a model for the reasoning process leading to intentional action is hopelessly inadequate by Milligan's standards. It is too limited, being applicable only where the consequences of different possible actions can be accurately predicted, and where preferences of an agent for these consequences can be ordered; and, according to Milligan, 'In some cases we do not have the required predictability or cannot measure the likelihood of alternative outcomes' while 'In other cases to give an agent's preferences for alternative outcomes is an unsatisfactory way of showing how his wants relate to each other.' But, most important of all for Milligan's thesis, Decision Theory has nothing to say about the formation of preferences:

...most important of all, the decision theory model can give no account of the formation of preferences and the way they are ordered, and their formation is often an essential part of the agent's deliberation.

Milligan's case is thus predicated on the fact, for him, that Decision Theory is of little help in explicating the complex processes of deliberation and evaluation leading to intentional action on the part of an agent. Of fundamental
importance to an account of reasons is that it is through the agent's evaluation of the relevant factors involved that he determines what is to be a reason, a good reason, and then finally a decisive reason, and that this process throws some doubt (as we have seen) on a complete causalist account, and upon deductive methods. Hence, an agent's beliefs, desires and other attitudes are not themselves sufficient to result in action, nor can Decision Theory aid us in fully understanding the process; it is only through the agent's own process of evaluation of his attitudes that the link to intentional action occurs, and it is this which an interpreter must comprehend. Though of course, as we have also seen, it is the case that without reference to such entities as beliefs and desires we cannot explain why an agent would have done an action, having such reasons on the part of the agent is not sufficient for the action to have followed; whether or not it did follow depends on that agent's evaluation of his reasons: 'In explaining an action by saying that a factor is the reason for it, we are not merely mentioning the presence of that factor or its connection with the action; we are also saying something about the way it is connected through the agent's evaluation of it.'

For Milligan, 'Reasons are not mere abstractions which have logical relations,' and an account of whether reasons are causes is best approached by considering how the agent comes to have such reasons:

The explanation of why the action takes place must be in terms of how the agent comes to make up his mind, and that will depend on the way he thinks about and assesses his situation and the courses of action he believes are open to him. The agent's reason must similarly depend on what he thinks and the factor mentioned in his reason is something which he has taken into account of in his deliberation; indeed it is that factor which, as he deliberates, swings him decisively behind the line of action he takes.

Thus it is such processes of deliberation and evaluation on the part of an individual agent which Milligan sees as the necessary addition to a theory such as Davidson's, since it is an account of how a reason becomes a cause, and what it is that turns it into a cause, that Milligan saw as lacking in Davidson's thesis. Yet the passage like the one quoted above, with its
emphasis on the individual's processes of thought and evaluation also point the way to why Milligan's views would presumably be unacceptable to Davidson with his truth conditions account, together with Milligan's rejection of reasons as logical relations and his dismissal of deductive logic as being adequate to dealing with an individual's deliberations and evaluations; such evaluations are seen as essentially value judgements beyond the scope of deductive logic. Not all the reasoning which occurs in deliberation is deductive or causal for Milligan, and mistakes will be made if it is assumed that the real form of thinking must be deductive, it thus being 'legitimate to widen the notion of logical reasoning to cover all reasoning,' as Milligan puts it in his discussion on Von Wright's Deontic Logic and Kenny's Logic of Satisfactoriness.

The flaw in such demands - from the point of view of Davidson's truth conditions theory anyway - is that ultimately they depend on evidence which is beyond the province of a truth conditions account. For, on Milligan's thesis to explain an action fully we not only need to understand the individual agent's reasons and how he arrived at them, but also the way all the other factors affected his awareness of and response to the situation in which he acted. The required rationalisation is the one which is closest to the individual agent's actual processes of thinking. The 'mean' deductivist, in Milligan's view tries to reduce the elements of deliberation to the rules of logic, whereas for him it is such elements in the individual agent's deliberation process which are far wider than can be allowed for by logic. What Milligan appears to be doing is placing the individual agent's processes of evaluation and thought as beyond those of formal methods, which should therefore, in most cases, be rejected as inadequate. Instead of putting the intentional actions themselves, and the formal interpretation of their structures first - as on Davidson's truth conditions theory - the emphasis has swung completely in the opposite direction, and it is the individual's subjective process leading to deliberation and thence to action itself which have become paramount. Thus Milligan contends that the agent 'decides in his own way and can act in a unique way or for reasons which he alone has', and that 'Since agents determine their own reasons, we are not entitled to infer one person's reasons from those of another.' Furthermore 'each person evaluates for himself' and '...makes no reference to anything outside himself.'
Elsewhere Milligan comes close to admitting what, from the point of view of Davidson's truth conditions theory, is the fatal flaw in his delineation of the processes of deliberation and evaluation necessary to any understanding of intentional action: 'According to my account, reasons relate to the intention of the agent and, in the case of deliberative actions, to private processes of reasoning; none of these are directly accessible to an observer.' (emphasis added.) But, as Milligan accepts: 'It may, therefore, be more difficult to combat the charge of subjectivity' on his account.

The problem which such opinions focus on is one which has been met often in the course of this thesis: whether we can allow the evidence of extra-linguistic factors into our explanation and interpretation of linguistic action, together with the relative importance which should be attached to the truth conditions structure of language at the expense of such extra-linguistic considerations. And the central point which has been continually made is that though, on Davidson's thesis there is a kind of reciprocity between language and extra-linguistic reality, and that an argument can be put forward for holding that total conceptual primacy should not be given to language, we nevertheless have little choice but to accept that any structured view of both objective and psychological reality must come from the side of something like the truth conditions theory of language. The same applies with relation to the arguments above for the needed concepts of deliberation and evaluation in understanding intentional (linguistic) action. It is not disputed by Davidson that the processes involved on the part of the individual take us beyond the capacities of his truth conditions theory and of Decision Theory; all that is claimed is presumably any access to the needed processes of decision, deliberation or evaluation must also be from within a unified formal theory. Milligan's aims are admirable, but it is hard to see how his ideas can escape such constraints. Certainly Davidson's proposals in this area will no doubt have to be augmented, but on the latest stage of research, it would seem that a unified theory of the truth conditions structure of language which attributes a complex network of meanings, belief, desire and intention, together with Decision Theory accounting for the processes leading to intentional action, is the best approach.
The conclusions reached in the last section indicated that Davidson's use of his Decision Theory left a lot to be desired in accounting for the processes which eventuate in human, intentional (linguistic) action, and will no doubt require further refinement, the alternative suggested by Milligan, on the other hand, seems to necessitate an understanding of features of deliberation and evaluation on the part of the individual agent which would take us beyond the area of operation of something like Davidson's truth conditions structure of language and the Decision Theory. And, since our ultimate aim (7.1) is for a unified theory of meaning together with a theory of the beliefs, desires, and intentions which issue in (linguistic) actions, (including an account of how the agent or speaker chooses or decides on the course of action), Davidson's truth conditions theory of interpretation and theory of action seems, at the present stage of research, the best approach.

To see how this conclusion was reached, let us briefly summarize the main concerns of this chapter. We began by seeing that the only way to interpret a speaker's utterances was by assuming his words referred to the world as that speaker believed it to be, that other attitudes such as desires were involved, and that the use of language to refer to the world was a form of intentional activity. Our description of the linguistic action of referring to the world must therefore make crucial reference to the beliefs, desires, and intentions of the speaker. Yet, just as with reference, since any extra-linguistic foundational basis, such intensional features as beliefs must receive an analysis from within the extensional truth conditions metalanguage; it is thus a matter of the analysis of the logical relations of language together with the determination of an ontology. The attribution of such features of psychological reality is thus immanent within language, even though reference is made to real entities such as beliefs and desires on Davidson's analysis, such reasons having been deemed to have caused linguistic actions in a special way. However, both Davidson's extensional reconstruction of beliefs and other attitudes, and also the notion of reference to reasons as causes have both been rejected by various philosophers. Whether Davidson's truth conditions theory can satisfactorily
explicate sentences attributing propositional attitudes is so far unclear. The second issue of reference to reasons as causes is more complicated: though it had to be admitted that Davidson's early optimism for providing necessary and sufficient conditions for intentional action only in terms of reasons as causes was unjustified, it does seem that we must refer to such antecedent reasons as causes in addition to any explanation (such as Melden's) which is concerned with such reasons only as internal to the actions. Nevertheless, shortcomings were revealed in that an account of how the agent arrives at his reasons for action needed also to be considered. The fact that the springs of intentional action are grounded in extremely complex attitudes and emotions of the individual makes the application of Davidson's Decision Theory model somewhat problematic; yet alternatives such as the suggestion by Milligan for explicating the processes of deliberation and evaluation behind intentional action seem to require notions which would go beyond what would be acceptable if we wish to retain the truth conditions structure of language as our foundational basis. Thus, Davidson's unified theory of meaning and action, though it will no doubt need augmentation in this area, seems the best approach at present.
CHAPTER EIGHT
CONCLUSIONS

8.1 Resume

The original problem with which this thesis began was 'what is the nature or structure of language and what is the relationship of language so construed to the objective reality of the world and to the psychological reality of the speakers who use it.'

Ascertaining the solution to the problem of what it is about the nature of the linguistic behaviour of others which allows an interpreter to construe it as meaningfully referring to an extra-linguistic objective reality, as it is so used by speakers, has in fact brought us full-circle: from taking such linguistic behaviour as the only really scientifically objective and concrete evidence available to an interpreter who is trying to discover what is being said about the world by a speaker, to finding out that language itself is the common shared resource from within which the theoretical reconstruction of the objective reality which is being referred to, together with those features of the psychological reality of the speaker which are deemed to constrain the use of such a linguistic action, must take place. For, what has become clear in the course of this thesis is that, for Davidson, there is only our intersubjectively shared language and an extra-linguistic world (which includes of course the speakers of a language) which must- and can only be- finely discriminated from within such a language.

What is equally clear is that such a notion renounces utterly the idea of all dualisms between scheme and content: whether within language itself, or, more pertinent to the theme of this study, between language and objective reality or psychological reality. Thus we have a complete rejection of any traditional theories of realism (or their contemporary counterparts) which give credence
to any form of empiricism or of the idea of language—whether in terms of words, sentences, or of a whole language—as labelling, corresponding to, or organizing an extra-linguistic reality. Similarly when it comes to the necessary consideration of those features of the psychological reality of speakers (such as beliefs, desires, intentions plus decisions) which guide and constrain the linguistic action of meaningfully referring to objective reality: unlike as with traditional theories of meaning, no extra-linguistic access to such features is allowable. In fact, it is no exaggeration to say that Davidson's use of Tarski's theory of truth effectively reverses such traditional conceptions of the connection between the elements of language and the elements of objective and psychological reality; the elements of the latter being brought into relation, on Davidson's view, with those of language. This is in accordance with Davidson's adherence to the tenets of scientific realism: just as the early Wittgenstein and Russell in their philosophy of language are clearly in line with the science of their day, so Davidson's approach reflects the 'bootstrap' theory of contemporary physics.

Nevertheless, this need not place a total conceptual primacy on language at the expense of extra-linguistic features of reality, as some critics of Davidson maintain: it is not necessary, for instance, to hold that the elements of objective reality, or the elements of thoughts, beliefs and the like are to be identified with linguistic elements. It is argued here that though there is, on Davidson's thesis, a degree of 'reciprocity' between language and objective or psychological reality, this need not be taken to imply that linguistic concepts exhaust those of reality. What is central to Davidson's thesis is that the only access we have as radical interpreters to understanding the true and structured elements of objective reality, as with those intensional features such as beliefs within psychological reality, is by means of the 'entering-wedge' provided by something like the truth conditions structure he advocates; the qualification implied by 'something' being important, as the research showed.

It is in this sense, too, that the truth conditions theory of language becomes the new intersubjectively shared foundational basis from within which the invariant structural features of reference ('meaning'), belief, desire,
and intention (plus decision) are preserved in the inter-translation of conceptual schemes between an interpreter and an (alien) speaker—since, in translating between languages we no longer have, for Davidson, any access to any foundational basis in objective or psychological reality in the sense required by traditional notions of realism or traditional theories of meaning—such inter-translatability (the 'essence of languagehood') merely correlating two comprehensive theories concerning all that there is. This being so, of course, only on the assumption that 'in front of' the intersubjectively shared truth conditions structure of language there is a real, extra-linguistic objective reality (one common world at the most, as Davidson would have it) about which there are already over-lapping schemas of reference involving substantial general agreement concerning the nature of these inferred externals ostensibly referred to; and that 'behind' the intersubjectively shared truth conditions structure of language are equally real dispositions to believe, to intend and the like, (language being for Davidson, amongst other things, one large disposition to believe) about which there are over-lapping schemas of commonly shared beliefs and other attitudes. The existence of such over-lapping schemas of common, shared features of reference, belief and other attitudes being an essential prerequisite if successful communication is to be achieved about external objective reality and human psychological reality, the invariant structural characteristics of which, on Davidson's analysis, are captured by the translation schema of the truth conditions theory of language. Of course, in order to achieve the ideal or best translation—to make maximum sense of the meaning of the linguistic utterances of other speakers, an interpreter must, ideally, also simulate to the maximum extent all of the other speaker's beliefs, desires, intentions (plus decisions) if anything like wholeness of understanding is to be achieved. Davidson's early formulation of such requirements in terms of his Principles of Charity and Rationality are open to some criticism, his later and more subtle statements being perhaps more appreciative of the kind of understanding we should be aiming for. But the essential point remains: that, on Davidson's analysis, with no recourse to any foundational basis in an extra-linguistic objective or psychological reality possible, the interpretative reconstruction of how a speaker refers to the world (and
to what he is referring), as with the necessary consideration of the complex of attitudes taken to guide and constrain such a linguistic action, can only take place from within (something like the truth conditions theory of) the intersubjectively shared structure of language itself. Language is thus the real intersubjectively valid foundational basis by means of which minimum agreement between speakers is secured with respect to matters of reference to any extra-linguistic objective reality, and the beliefs, attitudes and aims underlying such a reference. No foundational basis other than the very fine distinctions provided by language in the attribution to a speaker of these features of reference, belief, desire, and intention (and decision) is possible or necessary for Davidson.

It is in this way, then, that if one accepts the overall correctness of Davidson's arguments— as it is suggested in various sections of this thesis we must, despite the sometimes justified criticisms made by philosophers of certain aspects— the only conclusion which can be drawn is that reality, for us, in any discriminated sense, must be linguistic reality. For, only from within the truth conditions structure of language can direct, extensional reference be made to the simultaneously postulated entities which are assumed to exist in objective reality, together with— since it is all part of a single project, 'no part of which can be assumed to be complete before the rest is'— extensional reference to the theoretical constructs of beliefs, desires, intentions as well as decisions. Particularly in his very latest papers, Davidson makes it clear that the interpretation of (linguistic) action requires that we treat such elements as meaning (reference), belief, desire, intention, along with decision as fully-coordinate elements in a unified theory. Therefore, from within the 'new' foundational basis of our truth conditions theory of the structure of language, such a perspective must require that there is no interpreting how a speaker's words meaningfully refer to objective reality (the extensional reconstruction of such reference being also to ask what objects are being assumed) without also seeing too such a linguistic act of reference as being intrinsically linked to a complex background network of beliefs (as action-guiding), desires, (which aim at realisation in action), intentions plus
decisions (as involving the ultimate aims or purposes of the action, plus the

closely connected matter of the choice or preference for one course of action

over another) - the attribution and extensional reconstruction of which (together

with the assumed entities) must also be from within the foundational basis of

language. 10

Let us expand this just a little in a final explication of the conclusions

which must be drawn from Davidson's truth conditions theory and his adherence to

the tenets of scientific realism. From the starting point that the only

scientifically objective and concrete evidence available to us in attempting to

comprehend the behaviour of other people must be intentional linguistic

behaviour, a theory of interpretation for a certain fragment of that language

was required - for the indicative sentences taken to manifest, simultaneously,

what the complex human organism, which a human speaker is, must be meaningfully

referring to in the objective world, together with such a speaker's beliefs and

other attitudes towards that world. Davidson's claim is that Tarski's truth

conditions theory is a theory of the kind required, a theory which gives the

'meaning' - or rather, the structure - of all the true sentences of the language,

which, with the notion of recursion on satisfaction, relates such sentential

functions to (infinite) sequences in objective reality, thereby defining

'truth'. But the importance of this part of the research from the present

point of view is that it gave a good argument for showing how, and why, the

whole of natural language could be regarded as one autonomous structural

network of logical possibilities - accepting that for some philosophers there

are doubts, as seen in PART I, about whether Davidson's ideas about logical

form are entirely adequate (the more radical contention that natural language

has no logical form whatsoever, or even, as for the Deconstructionalists, that

language is a mere play of differences and displacements which can never be

pinned down, being ultimately unacceptable) - and how that fragment of

language of concern to us relates to objective reality. 11

That is, as shown in PART II, it could be seen how such a truth conditions

structure of the relevant sentences (as given by at least something like the

kind of theory advocated by Davidson) though in no sense 'corresponding' to

objective reality in the way envisaged by traditional realism, could
nevertheless, from within language itself, be construed as having extensional reference to objective reality whilst simultaneously 'inventing' the postulated abstract entities required for such reference (such assumed entities being, for Davidson, events with an internal structure of causes). Thus, reference to objective reality and the assuming of abstract entities could only be seen through language (even though language must not be thought to create nature, since the latter can always refute our conceptions of it). Language, as the structural framework it is, thus structures any human contact with objective reality, providing a matrix of order and control: language creates the categories through which we experience the world, and which we, as human beings, impose on the world. The structure of objective reality itself is, for us, identified and individuated from within language, and what counts as an entity is a function of our linguistic structure of representation as delineated in PART 1 of the thesis. As far as this aspect of the interpretation of the utterances of speakers is concerned, then, the burden of PART II of the thesis, an interpreter in redescribing a speaker's utterance as meaningfully referring to the world is in effect realizing (in terms of his own linguistic conceptual scheme) the structure of objective reality and the entities assumed within such a speaker's language. Such a referential element within language is best seen as the structural pattern and abstract entities which human beings project and impose upon objective reality (but which are nevertheless understood by Davidson as being really there) and which reflect the human propensity to order inferred externals as a means of controlling the structural pattern assumed to exist in objective reality; as such it should be considered the fundamental category of language, the 'operative' element, as Davidson would have it. Presumably, in this respect, it is in our own interests to make the mesh of the structural network as 'fine' as possible in order to capture in ever-increasingly sensitive terms, as much of objective reality as we can—a good reason, perhaps, for accepting Davidson's notion of the structure of language, even if it is not taken to be the only possible solution. But the essential points have been emphasized: extensional reference to the inferred entities in objective reality, and the fine discrimination of such reality, can only be from within (something like) Davidson's truth conditions theory of
the structure of language. It is in this sense that objective reality, for
human beings, is linguistic reality. 14

But again, the use of words with such a structure to meaningfully refer to an
objective reality which is so inferred is a linguistic action of speakers,
and is thus intrinsically linked to an extremely complex background network
of the psychological reality of the speaker, incorporating a structure of
beliefs, desires, intentions and decisions which guide and constrain such
reference. Once more, with no access to such features in the sense required by
traditional theories of meaning, their attribution necessarily is from within
language itself, and hence reference to such features of psychological reality
behind the linguistic utterance concerned receives a reconstruction within
the extensional metalanguage, together with the postulated entities. PART III
of this thesis dealt with this aspect of the reconstruction within the exten­sion­al metalanguage of such propositional attitudes as 'A believes that p',
(and also the causal structure Davidson takes to underlie such assumed entities)
Thus beliefs, as indissolubly linked to meaning, appear to be taken by Davidson
as mainly action-guiding: a kind of internal map or network by which we
interpret objective reality and which guide a speaker's linguistic actions
which sometimes result from such beliefs 16. Similarly, desires are closely
connected with such beliefs, since dominant desires, if they are in suitable
co-operation with beliefs, can be seen as jointly responsible for a speaker's
linguistic actions, action having as its objective the satisfaction of the
desires. 17 Similarly with intentions and decisions: intentions for example,
in Davidson's view are obviously crucially related to beliefs and desires,
since intending to perform an action is to hold it desirable in the light of
our beliefs; but, in his later work at least, intentions are to be distinguished
from beliefs and desires in a way not always done by other philosophers. 18
Plainly, too, intentions are closely related to the concept of will behind
intentional action — behind, that is, the imposition of the structural pattern
imputed to, and imposed upon, objective reality in the manner described a little
earlier, since such wilful 'striking out' at objective reality must be
inherently related to our purposes, aims and goals of such action. 19 Likewise,
essentially related to intentions is the notion of decisions and of choosing or deciding to act—the decision to choose to do $X$ rather than $Y$ being, among other things, to form an intention of doing $X$; what action is ultimately performed, then, will depend on one's decisions (and which may further, for some philosophers, required the notion of deliberation, the latter being construed as purposeful thought having as its aim a decision to act.) Hence it is that for Davidson, as mentioned earlier, that (along with meaning and reference) such elements as belief, desire, and intention plus decision must be treated as fully-coordinate features in a unified theory explicating linguistic action.

But the fundamental point emerging from this part of the thesis was that, just as an interpreter, in redescribing a speaker's utterance as meaningfully referring to objective reality had to construe such reference to objective reality and the simultaneous postulation of abstract entities in terms of (something like) Davidson's truth conditions theory of language—and that in this sense, objective reality, for us, is linguistic reality—so the attribution by an interpreter of the necessary background of the complex network of psychological reality(described above)to a speaker—a network which is necessarily imputed to such a speaker since it is deemed to lie behind the act of linguistic reference under consideration—must also be seen in terms of the truth conditions theory of language. The conclusion is obvious: any reference to such inferred entities in psychological reality, and the fine discrimination of that reality having to be made from within (something like) Davidson's truth conditions theory of the structure of language, then this psychological reality, too, for human beings, is linguistic reality.

If one accepts, in overall terms, that Davidson's arguments for rejecting any foundational basis in objective reality and psychological reality are correct—and the studies in the various sections of this thesis suggest we must accept this—then what replaces these central features of traditional realism and traditional theories of meaning can only be, in the manner indicated above, our intersubjectively shared foundational basis of language, the truth conditions structure of which decides what is to be objective reality for us, together
with the various beliefs and attitudes underlying this. It is in this sense that such a structure of language reflects the nature of objective reality as well as the human attitudes towards the inferred entities in objective reality; the latter aspect is uneliminable since language always implies the presence of human speakers' attitudes as well as the presence of the world. The interpretation of an utterance of language thus requires that it be seen as part of the dynamic, complex which is language as a whole— the starting- off point for our investigation in PART 1—and explains Davidson's contention that the interpretation of 'meaning' (reference), belief, desire, and intention plus decision is all part of a single project, no part of which can be assumed to be complete without the rest, since we can understand fully how a speaker's utterance meaningfully refers to the world only if we understand his complex background network of attitudes towards that world. Hence, to the sensitive interpreter, and with respect to his own construct system, the language he is interpreting, by its very truth conditions structure, appears to represent the structure of objective reality within its sentences, and by this truth conditions structure it relates the assumed objective reality it represents to the attitudes of its speakers. Perhaps one can now go further than the suggestion in Wittgenstein's remark that language is a 'form of life' and see it as representative of a 'person'.

With respect to the arguments presented in CHAPTERS FIVE and SEVEN, and the summary given above, reality must now be considered immanent within language, 'all ascription of reality, its identification and individuation being from within language by virtue of (something like) Davidson's proposed truth conditions theory of the structure of language. Objective reality (for Davidson in terms of events as temporal, unrepeatable, particulars with an internal causal structure, and complimentary to objects— see CHAPTER FIVE) together with the psychological reality of people (in terms of such entities as beliefs and desires, intentions and related decisions, and also invoking the relevant causal structure— see CHAPTER SEVEN) is all represented as theoretically postulated from within the truth conditions structure of language. And, since such a theoretically postulated structural network of entities is already immanent, reality for us is linguistic reality.
Yet, as also made clear in CHAPTERS FIVE AND SEVEN, is not the whole story.

For even if, in the first instance, reality must be considered immanent within the structural network of language - as it must - what is equally plain is that such a structured network of interpretants within language must also be taken to be referring to an extrinsic objective reality (5·2) and psychological reality (7·2) which is really taken to exist. That is, language which seems to be about something, really is about something in objective reality, and language, which seems to have been ushered-in by a complex of speakers' attitudes really should be taken to have originated in this way. In other words, even though reality itself mostly eludes us, language should not be taken as merely signifying nothing but language itself, unlike for those philosophers who would want to maintain that the structure of language cannot be taken as really referring to objective reality, or for those philosophers who take it that the structure of linguistic actions does not involve reference to independent and antecedent reasons. With respect to the first issue, it seems that language must be provided with a semantics in which at least some of its quantifiers are referentially interpreted (5·2); similarly, linguistic actions must be construed as involving independent and antecedent reasons to which reference is made in their explanation (7·2). This is so irrespective of whether the criticisms centred on Davidson's construal of the nature of events - particularly in relation to their causal structure - or of the austere constraints Davidson assumed to be required in order to satisfy Convention (T) are valid. Even if, for example, it does prove feasible to eliminate a troublesome ontology, and whether or not Davidson's causal structure of events is inadequate, the points are still valid. 23

Thus, even if it is the case that reality is immanent within the structural network of language, and that therefore the investigation of the disclosures of such a web-like structural network of language is of paramount significance, the fundamental mechanism, nevertheless, these disclosures of language do not just speak about language itself, but reflect and reveal something else and something more about a real external reality to which they ostensibly refer, and do refer. 24
Even accepting, as it is argued we must, that the fundamental mechanism for us should lie in the investigation of the disclosures of the structural network of language, since reality is immanent within language, and that these disclosures refer to an external reality, it is further argued that this does not mean we should be too accepting of Davidson's initial presumptions about the necessary constraints on theories of truth satisfying Convention (T) which are to provide a truth conditions account. Although, as noted in various parts of the thesis, Davidson's austere methodological constraints have certain distinct advantages, it now seems certain that, if required, there are many more possibilities for providing richer theories for investigating the structure of language and still remaining within the constraints demanded by Convention (T). This being so, and richer semantic theories being open to us, Davidson's ideal of the fine discrimination of reality from within language, in the terms he originally envisaged, cannot be considered the only choice we have in our investigation of deeper and deeper structures of language and thus of reality itself. Language is the source, not just of the fine discrimination of reality, but also of many other alternative ways of being as well. Of course, such investigations of the structures of language are still constrained by nature; reality always has the final say. But, as Quine notes, our theory demands of the world only that it is structured so as to assure us that the sequences of stimulation the theory makes us expect are really there; if philosophers of other persuasions such as Ricoeur are correct and man has withdrawn from the world and, after his break with nature, is intelligibly re-creating that world within language, then it is not surprising that we should be aiming for the most unified theory possible which nature will accept. But there seems no reason why that theory should be limited to the constraints Davidson originally anticipated.
1. The Myth of Orpheous is recounted in Book X of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and illustrates the power of Orpheous to bring the world into being through language.


7. The term 'traditional' indicating, mainly, the realism of the early Wittgenstein and Russell, also of Frege, and some elements in the philosophies of Quine, Grice, and Dummett.

8. The exception to this is probably Heidegger, who belongs, of course to the Continental tradition in philosophy.
CHAPTER ONE


2. cf. Radical Interpretation, in Davidson 1984:127. 'Intentional' linguistic behaviour because otherwise our descriptive project could not be carried out.

3. Quine, W., *The Roots of Reference*, La Salle 1973; also *Word and Object*, Ch. 3.


5. See CHAPTER FOUR.

6. As Davidson makes clear in many papers.


11. Ibid.

12. See CHAPTER SEVEN.


15. Davidson's contention that 'We will try to notice under what conditions the alien speaker assents to or dissents from a variety of his sentences' (Truth and Meaning) is questioned in Grayling, A., *Epistemological Scepticism and Transcendental Arguments*, Oxford 1981:Ch. 4.

17. cf. Davidson 1984:45. Also 162.

18. Ibid.


20. Ibid.


27. See CHAPTER SIX (6.4)


29. Davidson, D., Semantics For Natural Languages in Davidson 1984:56.


31. Ibid:55;56.


38. Ramsey, F., op.cit.


CHAPTER TWO

2. See CHAPTER THREE.
5. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
11. Convention (T) is a criteria for suitable truth theories.
15. cf. Peano Postulates.
25. Ibid.
26. See PART 11.
27. See PART 11.
30. See PART 111.
32. Ibid:23.
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid.
40. Ibid:57.
41. See CHAPTER FIVE ,discussion on Substitutional Quantification.
43. Ibid.
44. Ibid.
47. Davidson 1984:73.
49. See 6:2.
57. Ibid:29.
59. See PART III also.
60. See CHAPTER THREE, where this is discussed.
62. See CHAPTER THREE.
64. Ibid.
67. Ibid; also 45-6.
68. Ibid:29.
69. Ibid:34-5.
70. Ibid.
71. Davidson 1984:75.
73. Ibid:202; also 14-15; 133.
82. Quine does not make truth-theory central to the investigation of logical form in natural language.


85. Ibid.


91. Ibid.


94. Davidson 1984: 204.


96. Cf. CHAPTER ONE.

97. See CHAPTER THREE.


99. Ibid.

100. See 3.3.
CHAPTER THREE

1. In the 'strong' sense of Davidson's use of first-order logic.
3. Intuitions about validity of inference are not enough as Kaplan has made clear: see Flatts, M., Ways of Meaning, London 1979:106.
5. Ibid.
7. Traditional logicians may go beyond the truth theory semanticist.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid:143.
13. Wittgenstein's own view was that it is a radical mistake to try to construct a systematic theory of meaning.
15. Ibid.
18. Davidson, D., Semantics for Natural Languages in Davidson 1984:63; also:133.


29. Especially in the Continental tradition.


34. 'Many people, including Tarski, have thought it was impossible to give a truth definition even for the indicative sentences of a natural language. If this is so, we must find another way of showing how the meanings of sentences depend on their structures.' Davidson 1984:8n.


36. Davidson, Ibid.


38. Davidson, 1984:34n;35.

39. Ibid.
40. cf. Ziff, P., Understanding Understanding


42. Ibid.


45. Ibid:137; also 145.


49. Ibid:132.

50. Ibid:137.

51. Ibid.

52. Davidson 1980:115


54. Cargile, op. cit.

55. Ibid.


59. Ibid.

60. Ibid.


63. Davidson 1980:141.

64. Ibid:142.

65. Ibid.

66. Ibid.


69. Ibid:144.

70. Ibid.

71. Ibid.

72. Ibid:140.
This brings us full-circle to whether Davidson's notion of semantic monism is feasible or not, or whether it is a mistake (as Wittgenstein and others maintained) to try to construct a systematic theory of meaning. That there can be no systematic theory is belied by the facts such as that anyone able to use a language is able to understand a potential infinity of sentences— which can only be explained if the speaker has a mastery of rules of the language, general principles which can be stated explicitly. Hence Davidson is right to hold that it should be possible to apply the notion of semantic monism across all of natural language—and even to metaphorical discourse. cf. What Metaphors Mean in Davidson 1984 :245-64. Also cf. Searle, The Logical Status of Fictional Discourse, New Literary History 6:1975; cf. Kant.

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81. This brings us full-circle to whether Davidson's notion of semantic monism is feasible or not, or whether it is a mistake (as Wittgenstein and others maintained) to try to construct a systematic theory of meaning. That there can be no systematic theory is belied by the facts such as that anyone able to use a language is able to understand a potential infinity of sentences—which can only be explained if the speaker has a mastery of rules of the language, general principles which can be stated explicitly. Hence Davidson is right to hold that it should be possible to apply the notion of semantic monism across all of natural language—and even to metaphorical discourse. cf. What Metaphors Mean in Davidson 1984 :245-64. Also cf. Searle, The Logical Status of Fictional Discourse, New Literary History 6:1975; cf. Kant.


84. Davidson 1984:xv.


86. Tarski, A., The Concept of Truth in Formalised Languages: 1931. But in 1957 Tarski and Vaught, R., (Arithmetical Extensions of Relational Systems, Compositio Mathematica 13,) gave a model-theoretic definition. Davidson once held that there was sufficient doubt about whether the model-theoretic definition satisfies all the constraints Tarski used in his 1931 paper to warrant preferring the absolute definition.

88. Gupta, op. cit.
90. Gupta, A., op., cit.: 117.
92. See CHAPTER TWO.
93. i.e. with respect to the choice of logics.
94. Davidson, D., 1984:127; 113-4; 164-5; 274-5. The Autonomy of Meaning is of course crucially tied to Davidson's semantic monism.
95. cf. Davidson, D., Thought and Talk.
98. Davidson, Thought and Talk: 170.
100. cf. Davidson 1984:xv-xvi.
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10. Ibid.
22. Davidson, D., Reply to Martin, Ibid: 130
23. Ibid:130
24. Ibid: 130
25. Ibid:130
27. Ibid:48
28. Ibid:48
29. Ibid:37
30. Ibid:37
31. Ibid:41
32. Ibid:41
33. Ibid:41
34. Ibid:43
35. Quine, W., On What There Is in From a Logical Point of View, New York 1961.
39. Ibid:49
40. Ibid:49
45. Ibid:37
46. Ibid: 38
47. Ibid: 38
48. Ibid:38
49. Davidson, D., True to the Facts, Ibid:47


59. For example, Davidson.


61. Ibid:278.


63. Ibid.


65. Kripke, Ibid:48

66. Ibid:58


70. Haack, S., op.cit.

71. cf. Quine's mathematical cyclist in *Word and Object*:199.


75. cf. Lewis, D., - 'When I profess realism about possible worlds, I mean to be taken literally...', *Counterfactuals*, Harvard, 1973:183.


77. Ibid.

78. Quine, op.cit.,199.

83. Russell, Ibid.
84. Quine, W., From a Logical Point of View, 1953:13.
87. Ibid:430.
93. Ibid:222
94. Ibid:223
95. Synthese 27, 1974.
97. Davidson, Reality Without Reference, op.cit., 221
100. Trigg, R., Reality at Risk, 1980: 60.
102. Ibid:122
103. Ibid.


117. Quine, W., Synthese 27, 1974:489, 495.


119. Ibid:71-80

120. Ibid

121. Quine, W., Word and Object:72.

122. Ibid:73


126. Field, H., Quine and the Correspondence Theory:206; see Davidson, Ibid.


134. Ibid:189.


139. Ibid:198.

140. Ibid:194.

141. Ibid:194.

142. Ibid:194.


144. Davidson, 1984:198.


148. Ibid:172

149. Ibid

150. Ibid:166

151. Ibid:3

152. Ibid:110-111.


161. Reference for Davidson is public and objective.

162. Reference being a theoretical posit of the truth theory.
CHAPTER FIVE

2. *cf.* Quine's reluctant admittance of classes.
5. Ibid:3.
11. Ibid:22
13. Ibid:201
20. Ibid:212
22. See PART 1, CHAPTER Three.
33. Ibid:177.
34. Ibid:179.
37. Davidson,D., 1980:166
38. Ibid:179.
42. Ibid.
43. For the abridged version of Reply to Martin see Davidson 1980:129; the much more revealing original version appears in Fact and Existence, Oxford 1969.
44. Ibid.
46. Ibid:194.
48. Ibid.
53. Ibid.
55. Ibid:160.
56. Ibid.
58. See Einstein's *Special Relativity in Fact and Existence*, loc. cit.:95.
60. Ibid.
66. Kim, J., Ibid.
69. Ibid.
70 Ibid:81
71. cf. PART 1 and Davidson's notion of logical form.
72. Ibid.
73. Kim, J., in *Synthese* 97, op. cit., 173.
77. Ibid:184.
78. Ibid.
82. Davidson 1980:xi.
83. cf. Brand, op.cit.
85. Schlick, M., Causality in Everyday Life and Recent Science, in Philosophical Analysis ed. Feigl & Sellars:513-34.
88. Ibid:147.
89. Ibid:80.
90. Ibid:191; 231.
91. Ibid:150.
94. Ibid:223.
95. Ibid:224.
96. Ibid:296.
99. See Brand, M., loc. cit.
110. Ibid: 45.
114. Ibid: 199
130. Ibid.
133. See Brand, M., Synthese 97.
137. Marcus, loc. cit.
139. Davidson, Ibid.
140. Ibid:146.
141. Ibid.
145. Ibid.
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CHAPTER SIX

14. See CHAPTER SEVEN.
15. See CHAPTER SEVEN.
18. Ibid:56, 57.
22. Salva veritate- by which is meant that if two terms A and B have the same reference, then term A can be substituted for term B in any sentence in which B occurs, without changing the truth-value of the sentence.
23. See Frege, loc. cit.
24. Ibid.
25. See Quine, The Roots of Reference, La Salle, 1973; also Word and Object, Ch.3.
27. Popper, see Objective Knowledge, Oxford 1972.
31. Frege, G., Negation, in Geach & Black:123; also The Thought.
32. Sellars in Intentionality, Mind and Language.
34. For Church's neo-Fregean views see Intensional Isomorphism and Identity of Belief, Philosophical Studies 5 1954:65-73.
37. Quine, W., Word and Object:44.
40. Ibid.
41. See CHAPTER SEVEN. The work of Kripke, Putnam and others has shown the defect in Frege's notion of sense, as determined by a speaker's beliefs, as a route to the referent. For, however the belief set is chosen- the set, that is, that in some way will determine the sense, it can be riddled with error; hence the Causal Theory of Reference advocated by these philosophers.


46. Ibid.


49. Ibid:83.

50. Ibid.

51. Ibid:100.

52. Ibid:100.

53. Ibid:103.

54. Ibid:105-110.

55. Ibid:114.


57. Ibid.

58. Certainly it is contrary to the spirit of contemporary science.


62. Ibid:172; also 141.


64. Ibid.


68. Dummett loc. cit..


71. Of course, linguistic behaviour is rule-governed for Searle whose views differ from those of Grice.

73. Ibid.


76. Grice 1968, op.cit.


78. cf. Davidson.


84. Davidson, D., in 1980:221; 257; also Davidson 1984:143-4.

85. Ibid.

86. Ibid:144.

87. Ibid.


91. Ibid.

92. cf. Davidson.


94. Davidson, D., *Belief and the Basis of Meaning*.

95. Bennett, J., loc. cit.:54-63.


100. cf. Grice, loc. cit.
104. Ibid: 265.
105. Ibid: 277
111. Ibid.
114. See *Intentionality, Mind, and Language*.
115. Ibid.
120. Ibid. Ibid.
121. Ibid.
123. Which need not jeopardize Davidson's theory.
127. Ibid: 174; 207.
132. Ibid:156.
133. Ibid.
135. cf. Davidson.
137. Ibid:162.
139. Ibid.
140. Davidson, D., Truth and Meaning.
143. Ibid:197.
144. Ibid:xvii.
145. Ibid.
146. Ibid.
148. Davidson,D., Mental Events, in Davidson 1980:208; also 1984: 137.
150. Ibid.
151. Cf. Davidson,D., Radical Interpretation.
152. Ibid:137.
154. Ibid.
155. Ibid:200-1
158. Ibid: 111.

159. cf. Trigg, R., Reality at Risk.


162. Ibid: 239.


CHAPTER SEVEN


5. Davidson, D., Mental Events, in Davidson 1980:217;221.

6. See Davidson, Belief and the Basis of Meaning, op. cit.


10. See later discussion.


17. Ibid.


22. See Intending.


27. Ibid.
29. Ibid:79.
30. See later.
33. Ibid.
34. Davidson, Actions, Reasons and Causes, in Davidson 1980:
38. Ibid.
40. Davidson, op. cit.
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid.
44. Ibid:89.
45. Ibid:91-95.
46. Ibid:96; also 102.
48. See CHAPTER EIGHT.
49. cf. Davidson’s 'PARATACTIC' analysis of propositional attitudes.
51. Davidson, D., Reply To Foster in Davidson 1984:176.
52. Davidson, D., On Saying That, loc.cit.; also Thought and Talk:166 and Reply to Foster, op.cit.,:176.
53. See also CHAPTER SIX.

55. With respect to the unresolved difficulties, cf. Platts, M. *Ways of Meaning*, 123-4 where it is maintained that, amongst other things, Davidson's proposal makes it unclear how certain inferences are to be revealed as valid in virtue of their form, and how the quantified-in sentences are to be represented. (126). Davidson, however, (*Thought and Talk*, in Davidson 1984:166) thinks the latter difficulties can be overcome.


57. Ibid.


60. Ibid:104.


66. Note the similarity to *CHAPTER FIVE*.


68. cf. Brentano's thesis.


70. Ibid:147.


73. Ibid:149.

74. Ibid:149.

75. Ibid:150.

76. Ibid:151.

80. Ibid:71-5; also 187.
82. Taylor, R., Action and Purpose:222-3.
84. Ibid:114.
85. Ibid:102; see also 100-103.
86. Davidson, D., Communication and Convention in Davidson 1984:271 makes his acceptance of extra-linguistic intentions clear.
92. Ibid.
93. Ibid:79
94. Ibid.
95. Ibid.
96. Ibid:76.
98. Ibid.
101. Taylor, Action and Purpose.
103. Davidson, D., Hempel On Explaining Action in Davidson 1980:263,4;also 268.


114. Ibid.


118. Ibid.


121. Davidson, *Actions, Reasons and Causes*.

122. cf. Melden.


127. Milligan:129.

128. Ibid.

129. Ibid:130.


134. Aune, B., *Reason and Action*, Dordrecht 1977:55 says 'What I have been principally concerned to show here is that a primary reason (as Davidson
134/cont. seems to conceive it) is not sufficient for doing something intentionally. such a reason, however, may be necessary for intentional behaviour.'

136. Ibid.
137. Milligan:110, op. cit.
140. Ibid.
143. Davidson, Thought and Talk in Davidson 1984:163.

147. Ibid:163.
151. Ibid:269.

153. Ibid:54.
154. Ibid.
156. Ibid:3.
158. Ibid:6; 62.
159. See CHAPTER ONE.
162: Ibid.
163. Ibid:171.
164. Ibid:175.


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CHAPTER EIGHT

1. See PREFACE.
6. See CHAPTER SIX (6.4)
11. Another reason for rejecting the arguments of the Deconstructuralists is that for those like Derrida language speaks only of our own experience in interpreting it.
14. See CHAPTER FIVE.
15. cf. Davidson, D., *Thought and Talk* in Davidson 1984:165 on the implied verbal attribution of attitudes in the case like an utterance of 'Snow is white.'
16. 'Sometimes' since we do not always act on our beliefs.
17. Davidson always links Desires to Beliefs.
18. cf. Grice

20. cf. Taylor, R., for whom, like Milligan, Davidson’s notion of decision is inadequate. See Chapter Seven.

21. See Chapter Seven.


23. See Chapters Five and Seven.


27. cf. similar aims towards a Grand Unification Theory in current physics.


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