THE PROBLEM OF TRUTH

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The main point of this thesis is to show the relationship between the concept of truth and the concept of the sentence.

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In the second chapter I have discussed that it is that is true-or-false, and have claimed that this is best identified as a sentence, which I have defined as a set of sounds or marks uttered by a human being in the course of a linguistic activity. True-or-false sentences are a subclass of sentences, and are those sentences centered in stating, asserting, denying, etc.
The main point of this thesis is to show the relation between the concept of truth and the concept of intention.

In Chapter 1 I give an account of what various writers have conceived the problem of truth to be, and have maintained that there are several different concepts of truth and that a complete philosophical discussion of the problem should explain and display the connections between the various concepts of truth and all other concepts to which they are related. Of these, the main problem that I have selected is that of the relation between the general concept of truth and the concept of intention, and asserted that this can best be understood by a consideration of the ways in which these concepts function in the course of linguistic activities.

In the second chapter I have discussed what it is that is true-or-false, and have claimed that this is best identified as a sentence, which I have defined as a set of sounds or marks uttered by a human being in the course of a linguistic activity. True-or-false sentences are a sub-class of sentences, and are those sentences uttered in stating, asserting, denying, etc.
Chapter III is a working out of the concept of "linguistic intention", which is defined as an intention which can only be achieved by the utterance of a sentence. The existence at some time of a linguistic intention is a necessary condition of linguistic meaningfulness, and in chapter IV I have argued that it is not a sufficient condition.

Finally, I have claimed that the truth of a sentence uttered in stating, etc., can only be explained by considering the complex activities of which it forms a part, e.g. doing science. The truth of a sentence, when it is true, is constituted by the success of a linguistic intention, but linguistic intentions are not self-justifying, and their nature and what is involved in their success can only be understood in the wider context of scientific and other human purposes in talking.
I refer from time to time throughout this thesis to the "traditional" theories of truth. I use this term simply as a convenient way of referring to the Correspondence Theory, the Coherence Theory, and the Pragmatist Theory. By the Correspondence Theory I mean the view that truth consists in the relation of propositions or judgments or beliefs to the facts, or to reality, and that this relation is that of copying, agreeing with, or corresponding. By the Coherence Theory I mean the view that truth consists in the coherence of propositions or judgments within a system, where the relation of coherence is partly logical consistency, but also has further characteristics (which it would be impossible to explain without going into the doctrine of internal relations and a great deal of idealist metaphysics). By the Pragmatist Theory I mean the view that truth consists in utility, or workability, or acceptability in the light of human interests. The exponents of these views that I have in mind are chiefly Russell; Bradley and Joachim; William James and F.C.S. Schiller, respectively. It is not suggested that these writers are the most representative of the exponents of the theories mentioned, nor that
there may not have been extensive disagreement between the proponents of each of them as to the best way of expressing the view, or as to its more important implications.

In the text, "P.A.S." stands for "Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society" and "PASSV" for "Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volume". All books mentioned in the text and footnotes, together with other relevant works, are contained in a bibliography at the end.

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1. See introductory note.
WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

Not the least difficult problem concerning truth is that of discovering what the problem is. According to exponents of the traditional theories, there were two fairly clearly defined problems. Many of the books on logic and epistemology published during the end of the last century and the beginning of the present one contained separate chapters on judgment and truth. There was a philosophical problem of judgment, frequently posed in the form of the question "What is the nature of judgment?" and a different, though connected and often correspondingly expressed, problem of truth, Russell inclining to the use of the expressions "analysis of" or "definition of the meaning of" in place of "nature of". It might I think be said that the two problems which these writers were attempting to answer were (i) What is the nature or description of the defining characteristics of that which is true-or-false (e.g. a judgment, or a belief, or a proposition)? and (ii) What is it for that which is true-or-false to be true?

1. See Introductory Note.
Now this approach to the problem(s) was dealt a death-blow by Ramsey, and what he said has set the key for nearly all subsequent discussions of truth. The crucial point of Ramsey's attack is made in the following paragraph:-

"But before we proceed further with the analysis of judgment, it is necessary to say something about truth and falsehood, in order to show that there is really no separate problem of truth, but merely a linguistic muddle. Truth and falsity are ascribable primarily to propositions. The proposition to which they are ascribed may be either explicitly given or described. Suppose first that it is explicitly given; then it is evident that 'It is true that Caesar was murdered' means no more than that Caesar was murdered, and 'It is false that Caesar was murdered' means that Caesar was not murdered. They are phrases which we sometimes use for emphasis, or for stylistic reasons, or to indicate the position occupied by the statement in our argument.....It is, perhaps, also immediately obvious that if we have analysed judgment we have solved the problem of truth."

Thus for Ramsey there was only one important philosophical problem concerning truth: the problem of judgment, by which he meant the analysis of the relationship between the mental factors involved in judging or believing or asserting, and the "objective" factor, i.e. the proposition. And since the proposition is defined as something which is true-or-false, and any given proposition is either true or false, the answer to the problem of judgment will be an analysis of the two different relationships involved in true judgment and false judgment. A similar point, in claiming that there is really

only one important problem concerning truth, and not two as the propounders of the traditional theories supposed, is made by Mr. P.F. Strawson:-

"What supremely confuses the issue" (i.e. the issue at stake in philosophical discussions about truth) "is the failure to distinguish between the task of elucidating the nature of a certain type of communication (the empirically informative) from the problem of the actual functioning of the word 'true' within the framework of that type of communication."¹

So far the problem - whatever and however diverse it may be - is still being conceived of as that of explaining the "nature" of something; a more precise method of approaching it is suggested by Strawson in the same article:-

"...it is, indeed, very strange that people have so often proceeded by saying 'Well, we're pretty clear what a statement is, aren't we? Now let us settle the further question, viz. what it is for a statement to be true.' This is like 'Well, we're clear about what a command is; now what is it for a command to be obeyed?' As if one could divorce statements and commands from the point of making or giving them!"²

I shall agree with Strawson that the answer to the problem of truth requires an account of the point of making statements, or, as it may also be put, of the function of statements in human discourse; but this is not the only problem concerning truth, nor even the only important or

2. Ibid., p. 141.
interesting problem. There are, I think, very many philosophical problems concerning truth; as Tarski says:—

"We should reconcile ourselves with the fact that we are confronted, not with one concept, but with several different concepts which are denoted by one word; we should try to make these concepts as clear as possible..........and then we may proceed to a quiet and systematic study of all concepts involved, which will exhibit their main properties and mutual relations."

Tarski is not entirely explicit as to the principles on which the vague, ambiguous concept of truth as it occurs in most everyday talk should be broken down into more precise and clearly defined concepts; he mentions the pragmatic conception, the coherence theory, and himself explores what he calls the semantic conception. But since all these conceptions are the fruit of elaborate theories of truth based on widely differing views as to the nature of the problem and the nature of meaning, the assertion that the ambiguous concept of truth must be broken down into these concepts before philosophical investigation can start seems to be question-begging. Nevertheless there can be little doubt that the word "true" is generally used in several different meanings, or with several shades of meaning. It is used to refer to objects, people, events, beliefs, statements, descriptions and theories; it is obvious that

"true" does not have the same meaning when applied to a statement like "Everything that is red is coloured" as when it is applied to a friend; that the kind of truth possessed by a likeness is not the kind possessed by the statement of the law of gravity.

It would indeed be impossible to distinguish between different concepts of truth without making some presuppositions, at least in regard to meaning, but we can try to keep these at a minimum and make some attempt to justify them. To begin with, we can perhaps take it for granted that "true" is used in a different sense to describe statements, judgments, beliefs, reports, descriptions from the sense in which it is used to describe objects or people. (This is an assertion with which perhaps even Mr. A.R. White would not disagree, since his claim is that "true" is applicable commonly to all these various types of things in an evaluative sense, which he sharply discriminates from describing.) And there is a sense in which "true" could be claimed to be a different concept according to whether it applied to a statement, a belief or a description. The function of a true belief in the psychological history of an individual person is different from the function of a true statement in a policeman's report. It might be

objected here that the kind of function which a philosophical discussion of a concept should be concerned to elucidate is logical, and not psychological or legal. To suppose that it is possible to study the logical function of a concept in independence of the other types of function it or the things or events it refers to has, is I think to oversimplify the problem, and one of my main purposes in this thesis is to show that the extremely difficult notion of the logical function of a concept can only be explained or exhibited by discovering its point, i.e. by showing its significance within a larger context. And since the context of a belief, which could be called a personal context, is different from the context of a description say in a newspaper, it is likely that the truth of a belief is a different sort of thing from the truth of a description.

On the other hand, judgments, assertion, beliefs, statements, descriptions all involve the utterance (or thought) of meaningful words and sentences, and it might be claimed - has, indeed, frequently been claimed - that what is true (or false) is not the belief or statement or judgment considered as an episode in the history of an individual but the object of such individual acts of belief, statement, judgment. The importance of this line of approach is considered established by the fact that
the question whether what someone states or believes or judges is true can in most cases be answered without any reference to the occasion of its utterance; whether it is true that grass is green does not depend on whether it is stated or believed or judged. If I state that grass is green what I state is true, and it follows from this that if I or anyone else believes that grass is green, we shall be holding a true belief. For these reasons I do not think it would be helpful to enumerate the concepts of truth as those involved differently in speaking of a true belief, a true judgment, a true description, etc., but nevertheless it will be important to remember that the fact that a belief and a judgment and a description function in different ways in human activities is relevant to any discussion of the point of saying things that are true.

There is of course a short answer to the question "What is the function of the concept of truth as it is applied to judgments, statements, descriptions, etc.?” and that is "What is judged or stated or described (as being the case) is true if it can be verified, i.e. passes the appropriate tests for truth". And such tests exist and can be and have been classified as to types: there is the "look and see" type, there are inductive procedures, and there are logical or deductive procedures, to mention a few. There are mathematical procedures also, but I do not wish to go into the question of whether these should be
included with other types of logical or deductive procedures. Thus it might be said that there are as many concepts of truth as there are different types of methods of verification; this is of course a view which has been held by many philosophers. If what we state or judge or believe is verifiable by means of the "look and see" methods, or these methods supplemented by the application of inductive procedures, then what we state or judge or believe is empirically or synthetically or contingently true; if, on the other hand, it is verifiable by logical means, e.g. by deducing what follows from the fact that certain words have certain meanings, then it is logically or analytically true. Here then we have two different concepts of truth: contingent truth and analytic truth, and if someone asks for a philosophical analysis of these concepts we can say: contingent truth consists in verification by means of sense experience and inductive procedures, and analytic truth consists in self-evidence, or logical necessity (the fact that there is philosophical disagreement as to the nature of analytic truth is irrelevant to the present point).

Now the traditional theories of truth have been criticised for not admitting that answers like these are

the most or best that can be provided to their questions as to the nature of truth. They have been accused of looking for the answers to questions which cannot, owing to the nature of the case, properly be asked. Among many writers who have criticised them along these lines may be noted White, in the article already mentioned:

"The correspondence theory fitted empirical statements, the coherence theory fitted mathematical and logical statements, and the pragmatist theory fitted scientific hypotheses. They were correct so long as they confined themselves to their respective types of statement and so long as only the descriptive function of truth was in question. It is when a theory seeks to universalise its criteria and apply to more than its own kind of statement that it errs."

and Strawson:

"...the puzzle about truth has commonly got entangled with the puzzle about certainty. So that the question 'What is the nature of truth?' leads naturally to the question 'What are the tests for truth?', and this, in its turn, to the question 'What are the conditions of certainty?' the historical or judicial search for truth is the search for the evidence which will set doubt at rest. The philosophical endeavour to characterise truth in general has tended to become the endeavour to characterise that which in general sets doubt at rest; really and finally at rest."

Now insofar as the traditional theories were an attempt to find a general criterion of validity, or some entirely

1. p. 323 and p. 325.
general or universally valid method of verification, there can be no doubt that they were mistaken; in any case such a criterion would have to be expressed so generally, if not vaguely, that it would be of no value in deciding whether any given statement (or belief, or judgment, etc.) were true or false. I do not however think that most representatives of the traditional theories would have agreed that this is what they were trying to do, or that their actual theories did provide general criteria, and consequently White's criticism here is to some extent misplaced. Russell was explicit on the matter:

"The question we have to discuss is therefore: What is the difference between a true belief and a false belief? By this I mean, What is the difference which actually constitutes the truth or falsehood of a belief? I am not asking for what is called a criterion of truth, i.e. for some quality, other than truth, which belongs to whatever is true and to nothing else. This distinction between the nature of truth and a criterion of truth is important, and has not always been sufficiently emphasised by philosophers. A criterion is a sort of trade-mark, i.e. some comparatively obvious characteristic which is a guarantee of genuineness.... Now I do not believe that truth has, universally, any such trademark: I do not believe that there is any one label by which we can always know that a judgment is true rather than false.... I wish to discuss what truth and falsehood actually are, not what extraneous marks they have by which we can recognise them."¹

Similarly Joachim, in defence of the coherence theory, and entirely in disagreement with Russell as to what the meaning of truth is, said:

"A criterion of truth, i.e. something other than the truth itself, by which we are to recognise the truth, is not what we require. We want to know what the truth in its nature is, not by what characteristics in its opposing falsehood we may infer its presence."

But neither Russell by claiming that he is not looking for an infallible label, nor Joachim by suggesting that criteria are tests only applicable to falsehoods, explains satisfactorily what this alleged difference between "meaning" and "criterion" is. And however much they protest to the contrary, their language in referring to the "meaning" of truth, e.g. the "nature" of truth, or what "constitutes" truth, does suggest that they are in fact looking for a super-quality, a defining characteristic.

As regards Strawson's criticisms of the demands embodied in the traditional theories, the "puzzle about certainty" can arise in two ways: on being told that truth consisted of several different concepts classified according to methods of verification, someone might ask:

(a) How can we be sure that we have applied the tests correctly, or that we have interpreted the results of the tests correctly? or
(b) How can we be sure these are the right tests?

The answer to (a) is obviously "We can't be sure; but this doesn't matter theoretically, for we can be sure that if we have applied the tests correctly, and interpreted their results correctly, then the judgment or statement or belief in question is true (or false, as the case may be)". And the answer to (b) is "We can be sure because the various concepts of truth are defined in terms of the tests".

Now although I think that the answer to (b) given above is correct as far as it goes, I do not think that to define truth in this way, by subdividing into different concepts of truth according to the different types of methods of verification, is to tell the whole of the philosophical story about the concept of truth. To explain fully the function of contingent truth, or of analytic truth, or indeed of moral or poetic or religious or any other possible kind of truth, it is certainly necessary to give an account of the ways in which it is established, and on the basis of which it is distinguishable from other concepts of truth; but it is also necessary to consider the "point" of the tests, e.g. the reasons why we have these particular tests and not different ones and, indeed, the reasons why we have tests at all. This point is suggested by some remarks of Mr. M. Dummett on the justification of different forms of arguments:

"Classification of arguments into (deductively or inductively) valid and invalid ones is not
a game played merely for its own sake, although it could be taught without reference to any purpose or interest, say as a school exercise. Hence there really is a problem of showing that the criteria we employ for recognising valid arguments do in fact serve the purpose we intend them to serve: the problem is not to be dismissed - as it has long been fashionable to do - by saying that we use the criteria we use."

I shall claim that the adjective "true" is sometimes used descriptively; that when it is so used it can be defined in terms of methods of methods of verification; but that to give a philosophical account of its use in this way requires more than a description of the appropriate methods of verification - it requires also, to use Dummett's phrase, "showing that the criteria we employ do in fact serve the purpose we intend them to serve".

And I shall further claim that the purpose we intend the various criteria of truth to serve is a complex of purposes which cannot be considered as the desire to discover or to tell the truth.

The passages from Russell and Joachim quoted above do suggest however that the larger demand of the traditional theories, the request for the "meaning" of truth, is in some way asking for an account of the general or inclusive concept of truth, which would apply to all types of truth, no matter by what criteria established. In so far as this

is based on a desire to discover an absolutely infallible
criterion - and I think it does, historically, reflect
in a slightly different context the attempt to justify
induction by reducing it to deduction - it may fairly be
discounted, but nevertheless I think it may be possible to
say something about truth in general, i.e. neglecting the
differentiation into different types of truth according to
methods of verification. Moreover I shall maintain that
it is this general concept which is of most interest and
importance in discussing the function of the separate
concepts of truth, or, rather, that in order to explain the
nature or function of contingent and analytic truth and
their methods of verification it is necessary to assess
their place in a framework which depends on there being a
general concept. It is at least not self-evident that the
concepts of contingent and analytic (and perhaps other kinds
of) truth are unrelated, and that it might not be possible
to say something of philosophical interest about a concept
of truth which would include both, or apply indifferently
to both. For both contingent and analytic are terms which
are applied to what is stated, believed, judged, conceded,
confirmed, admitted, denied, doubted, asserted, considered,
entertained; and it is possible to teach or persuade or
convince someone of both analytic truth and contingent truth.
Further, the fact that it has been possible to dispute
whether an accepted truth (e.g. "Every event has a cause")
is contingent or analytic suggests that there may be a concept of truth which is in some sense independent of contingent or analytic truth, or at any rate is not to be defined in terms of a particular type of method of verification. "It is a part of the concept of truth", according to Dummett, "that we aim at making true statements". Our aims in making statements may be various - even, perhaps, conflicting - but obviously these aims do not vary directly according to whether the statements we make are contingent or analytic. The problem of truth is to explain the function of judgments, statements, beliefs, etc. in human discourse; every particular individual judgment or statement or belief (or what is judged or stated or believed) is always either contingently true (or false) or analytically true (or false), or possibly some other type of truth or falsehood; but in describing the function of these judgments, statements, beliefs, etc. it is important to consider the purposes which underlie them, and the way in which these purposes may be classified cuts across the classification of judgments, statements, beliefs, etc. according to the types of methods of verifying what is judged, stated, believed, etc.

Now the objections to considering the notion of a general concept of truth are linked with the question of whether truth is a property. That truth is not a property is of course suggested in Ramsey's assertion, already
quoted, that "'It is true that Caesar was murdered' means no more than that Caesar was murdered" and most writers since Ramsey (with the notable exception of the semanticists, who think that it is a special kind of property) have agreed that it is not. But it is not easy to see the precise significance or importance of the alleged fact that truth is not a property. After all, almost any sentence can be put in subject-predicate form, and consequently anything that is said about truth will undoubtedly be formulatable in terms which allow truth, or statements or judgments or beliefs etc., to be characterised by means of it. By talking about "what constitutes truth" or "what truth in its nature is" it is not possible therefore to avoid representing truth as a property. To say "truth consists in correspondence with the facts" or "the essential nature of a true belief lies in its practical usefulness" thus does represent an attempt to show that truth is a property, or at least makes the assumption that truth is a property. For both of these definitions can be reframed: "A true statement (or proposition) is one that corresponds with the facts", and "A true belief is one which can successfully be made the basis for action" or, perhaps, "A true belief is one which, if made the basis for action, will result in successful action". And in each of these cases we have suggested a test, or a partial test, for truth. If any given belief corresponds to the facts, then it is
true; or, if any belief can be shown to constitute a basis for successful action, then it is true. Thus whatever kind of property truth is claimed to be, whether simple or relational or functional, it will always be possible to state this type of definition of truth in terms of a test or set of tests for truth.

Further, if truth is a property, then the adjective "true" has descriptive meaning: to say "p is true" (where p is a belief, or judgment, or statement, etc.) will at least sometimes be to describe p, to assert or state something about p. And if Ramsey is right, then to say "p is true" is not to make any further or other assertion than that made by p. Strawson, in the articles already referred to, has attempted to show that the expression "is true" is never used assertively, but generally, if not always, what he calls "performatorily". That is, to say "p is true" is not to make an assertion or a statement about p, but to confirm p or admit p or concede p, a different type of linguistic activity. In other words, "p is true" functions in the same way as "I confirm p", "I admit p" or "I concede p", and each of the latter three expressions are not descriptions of what I am doing in confirming or admitting or conceding p, but indications of confirming or admitting or conceding p; as it might be put, expressions of the acts of confirming, admitting, conceding themselves. To say "p is true" is to confirm p, (in cases where "is true"
is confirmatory) as to say "I confirm p" is to confirm p, and not to describe one's action in confirming p. However, even if it were the case (which I do not think it is) that in saying "p is true" we are never describing p but pursuing a different linguistic performance such as conceding p or confirming p or admitting p, it would I think be odd to claim that it would be logically improper to use "true" descriptively. As, also, it would be odd to claim that while, admittedly, "I confirm p" is usually more accurately described by saying that in uttering it I am indicating that I confirm p, or actually confirming p, a type of linguistic performance which is not assertive or statemental, it is or would be logically improper to use the expression "I confirm p" to describe my performance in confirming p. That I am confirming p, or pursuing any "performatory" linguistic activity is, when it occurs, a fact, and as such in principle describable. And as a matter of fact we do, when the occasion arises, describe such performatory activities by means of the same expressions that we use in performing them. Moreover if "it is true that p" functions in the same way as "I confirm p" (or "I admit p", etc.), and "I confirm p" can be used to describe my performance in confirming p, then the truth of "it is true that p" will depend on the conditions of truth of "I confirm p", viz. whether I am in fact pursuing this particular linguistic activity. This difficulty can
There is, however, no need to deny that truth is sometimes a property, or that the word "true" sometimes functions descriptively. In saying this I mean that whether it is logically improper to think of truth as a property or not depends on which concept of truth is being referred to. It is only when the general concept of truth is being thought of that the attempt to characterise truth in some way becomes the unjustifiable search for a general criterion of validity. When "true" means "contingently true" or "analytically true" there is no reason for insisting that it cannot be descriptive, or is not a property. If someone is asked to write "true" or "false" against each in a list of twenty statements, then he may be said to be describing the statements in question; "statement 1 is true" could be taken as meaning "statement 1 is in accordance with the ....... tests for truth, or has passed the ....... tests for truth", and "statement 2 is false" could be taken as meaning "statement 2 has not passed the ....... tests for truth", where the blanks are to be filled in accordance with whether the statement in question is contingently true or analytically true, or perhaps has passed some other type of tests for truth.

The problem of truth, as I see it, is that of discussing in order to explain and display the relations between the various concepts of truth, contingent,
analytic, etc. and the "general" concept of truth, and other concepts. This is obviously a very large number of problems, more or less inter-related, for the concept of truth is so fundamental in human discourse that it is related to very many other concepts. Its - or their - relationship to some concepts will be more interesting than its relation to others, although whether the relation of one concept to another is interesting and has far-reaching logical consequences may not always be clear until some investigation has been made into the nature of the relation. Among the concepts to which truth is most interestingly related might I think reasonably be supposed to be existence, meaning, intention (since true statements generally occur in the course of purposeful activities), implication, validity, and so on. In this thesis I shall be chiefly concerned to show the relation of the general concept of truth to the concept of intention. I do not think this is necessarily the most important problem concerning truth, but I think it is an important problem because it involves a discussion of the relation between meaning and truth, and that the concept of meaning is perhaps the most important and fundamental concept for philosophers to deal with, since what is said about almost any philosophical problem seems to me to depend on certain assumptions, which are sometimes explicit but more often entirely suppressed, on the nature
of meaning.

To show the relation between truth, whether the general concept or one of the particular concepts, and some other concept, is to discuss the ways in which these concepts function in the human activities comprising language. Now this can be interpreted in two ways. One might, I think, be interested in the ways in which the word "true" functions in language, or in the ways in which the things that are true (statement, or judgment, or belief, or proposition, or sentence, etc.) function in human linguistic activities. The difference between these two types of investigation might be made clearer by observing that the first type of investigation could only be carried on in a language which actually contained the word "true" or a synonym or translation for it; whereas the second type of investigation could be carried on in a language which did not contain any word for true. It is with the second type of problem that I shall be concerned, the question of the ways in which statements, judgments, beliefs, etc. function in human activities and human discourse, when these statements, judgments, beliefs etc. are true. For it could be said that statements, judgments, beliefs, etc. are true (and are false) whether we have any word to refer to this fact about them or not.

There are also further problems, which might also
be included as problems about truth, concerning the nature of the various tests for truth, and, as has already been suggested, of discussing the "point" of the tests and the ways in which they fit in with the "point" of making true statements, or true judgments, etc. in general.

To sum up: the main problem which I shall be dealing with is the problem of the way in which the things which are true function in human linguistic activities; thus the first question to be answered is "What are the 'things' which are true (or false)"? - i.e. how are they to be identified. I shall generally, and unless explicitly stated otherwise, be referring to what I have called the "general" concept of truth; most of the statements I make apply, I think, indifferently to contingent truth and analytic truth.
"True" is an adjective which is applied to many different nouns: we speak of true judgments, true beliefs, true statements, true sentences, true reports, true descriptions, to mention only a few. It has however been generally agreed by most writers on truth that what is true (or false) is not the act of stating, believing or judging, i.e., a psychological event in the history of an individual human being, but the object of such individual acts of statement, judgment, belief. Whether a statement, a judgment or a belief is true does not (with a few exceptions) depend either on the identity of the person who judges or states or believes it, or on the time at which or the manner in which it is stated, judged or believed. So far there has been fairly general agreement, but there has been a great deal of dispute over the way in which the object of these various acts is correctly to be characterised or identified, and over the question of which is the most accurately descriptive or least misleading word to use in order to refer to it. The idealists favoured the term "judgment"; the
pragmatists "belief". Russell, who himself used the term "judgment" in earlier writings, criticised the idealists and pragmatists for the use of these terms on the grounds that they frequently made important philosophical mistakes through failing to notice or acknowledge their ambiguity, by means of which they can be used to refer both to the act of judgment or belief and also to the object. The nature of these alleged philosophical errors is not relevant to my purpose in the present discussion, which is to claim that what is true-or-false is a sentence, and to justify this claim.

Russell used the term "proposition", a technical term generally defined to mean "that which is true or false", in order to avoid mistakes due to ambiguity; the word was also used by Ramsey and by many other writers. The introduction of a technical term however has given rise to speculations as to the logical or ontological status of propositions, and it might be criticised on the grounds that it is misleading, because of its suggestion that there is some entity, independent of any actual acts of judging and believing, to which it refers. In other words, by introducing it, it is possible to overstress the distinction between the act and the object of judgment or belief. More important, it raises problems about meaning: it has usually been defined in such a way that it is expressible in words but is not identical with the words in which it may be expressed (since the same proposition can, it is generally claimed, be expressed in
more than one set of words), and this invites the questions of whether the proposition has meaning, and if it has, of how its meaning is related to the meaning of the words in which it is expressed. Strawson, as we have been, has used the term "statement"; in a technical sense, indeed, to refer to what it is that is stated, as distinct both from the episodic act of stating and from the sentence used in stating it, but in preference to "proposition" I think as a less aggressively technical term. Against this background, I shall next outline what I think to be the correct answer to the question "What is it that is true-or-false?" and attempt to justify it by considering various objections which might be made to it.

What is true-or-false is not the act of stating, or judging, or believing, etc., considered as a psychological event, but what is stated, judged or believed. But what I state when I state that some bears are black is not it happens something which can be expressed or formulated in meaningful words, but is itself logically independent of the words in which I happen or choose to express it; what I state is the meaningful sentence "Some bears are black". There are other sentences which have the same meaning as "Some bears are black", e.g. the translation of this sentence into any other language into which it can be unambiguously and exactly translated, and perhaps some other English sentences which contain synonyms for some or all of the words in it.
If I state one of these other sentences, I am making the same statement as when I state "Some bears are black"; I am uttering (in order to state) a sentence with the same meaning as the sentence "Some bears are black". I maintained in the previous chapter that the concept of truth is logically connected with the concept of meaning; the reasons for assuming this are:

(a) frequently if a word in a sentence which is uttered e.g. in stating is replaced by a word with different meaning, the truth-value of the sentence is changed, and
(b) once meaning is fixed, truth is fixed. By this I mean that if a sentence uttered in e.g. stating is meaningful (i.e. true-or-false) it is either true or false; the person stating or hearing it may not know whether it is true or not, but it has in fact got a truth-value. All meaningful sentences uttered in e.g. stating are either true or false; what remains, in many cases, is for us to find out, discover or know whether they are in fact true or false. This is not to say either that if we understand the meaning of a sentence uttered in stating we know whether it is true or false, or that it is possible to deduce or in any way infer the truth or falsity of a sentence uttered in stating from its meaning; the latter may be true of sentences whose truth is analytic, but not of sentences whose truth (or falsity) is contingent.

For these reasons it seems to me to be essential to
regard the vehicle of meaning as identical with the vehicle of truth. "Sentence" I define as a linguistically meaningful set of noises or marks which is uttered or written (or thought) by a human being in the course of a variety of linguistic activities, including stating, asserting, warning, promising, threatening, commanding, and many others. Thus not all sentences are true-or-false; true-or-false sentences form a subclass of sentences. Meaning (linguistic meaningfulness) is not I think definable in terms of truth; it is possible to imagine a language which consisted only of say commands and threats, i.e., sentences uttered in commanding and threatening, and these would be linguistically meaningful utterances. I am here using "meaningful" in its most general sense. There are of course many different kinds of meaning. Even sets of noises or marks uttered or written by human beings may have different types of meaning: aesthetic significance, e.g., is very different from descriptive meaning. There is literal meaning, emotive meaning, evaluative meaning, rhetorical meaning, poetic meaning—there is a wide variety of starting-points from which different classifications of types of meaning may be made. Although, as I have claimed, there is a general sense of linguistic meaningfulness in which it is not possible to define meaningfulness in terms of truth and falsity, since other types of sentences besides statements, judgments, warnings, etc. are linguistically
meaningful, there is another sense of meaning in which the meaningfulness of statements and assertions and warnings, or sentences uttered in stating, asserting, warning, etc. is different from the meaningfulness of sentences uttered in saying commanding or threatening. This is the sense in which the meaningfulness of a sentence is dependent, to a large extent, upon its point, the fact, e.g. that it is being stated and not uttered in threat. There are even occasions when the same set of noises or marks may be uttered in the pursuit of different linguistic activities; the actual sounds or marks used might be the same, say, in a statement or a threat, but insofar as the point of uttering them in the one case is different from the point of uttering them in the other case, they have different meaning. There is a further distinction in types of meaning which could be made according to whether the set of noises or marks in question were stated or asserted or uttered in warning or prediction, etc. In this sense of meaning, "There is a tiger in the next room" has a different meaning according to whether I utter it in making a statement, giving a warning, excusing myself for not going into the next room. This sense of meaning, I shall claim, is important for the investigation of the concept of truth.

However, the present point is that linguistic meaningfulness, which will be discussed more fully in the
next chapter, is an attribute or characteristic of certain noises and marks uttered and written by human beings, and that it is a subclass of linguistically meaningful noises and marks which are true-or-false. What is true or false is a physical occurrence or object, but it is a physical occurrence or object which has linguistic meaning. Sentences can of course be considered simply as physical occurrences or objects, and they can be described as such, e.g. as long or noisy or unpleasant or euphonious. Physical attributes do not generally affect the linguistic meaningfulness of a sentence, although it is logically possible that the same noise might have a different meaning according to whether it was uttered loudly or softly, or that the same set of marks might have a different meaning according to whether it was made in pencil or in ink. As a matter of fact, this state of affairs is not common in language as we know it, but it could become so.

What is true-or-false, then, is a linguistically meaningful utterance or set of marks, or sentence, uttered by a human being in a context and on a specific occasion. Not all sentences are true-or-false. True-or-false sentences include sentences uttered in stating (statements) sentences uttered in asserting (assertions), sentences uttered in denying, some sentences uttered in warning, some sentences uttered in supposing or considering possibilities,
and others. They may also include sentences uttered in threatening, promising and predicting, but I do not intend to go into the question of whether statements about the future, or sentences uttered with future reference, which are in principle unverifiable at the time of their utterance, are correctly describable as true-or-false. Sentences which do not fall under the true-or-false category include sentences uttered in commanding, asking questions, and some sentences uttered in warning (e.g. "Look out!").

The notion that what is true-or-false may be identified as a sentence has been attacked by Strawson chiefly on the grounds that if it is accepted it is impossible to give a satisfactory account of inconsistency. I quote the relevant passage at length, as I may be able to make my position clearer by considering it in detail:

"I have spoken of statements as inconsistent with each other; and there is a temptation to think that in this context we mean by a statement the same thing as a sentence of a certain kind; or, perhaps, the meaning of such a sentence. But suppose I write on the blackboard the following two pairs of sentences: (i) 'I am under six foot tall' and 'I am over six foot tall'; (ii) 'The conductor is a bachelor' and 'The conductor is married'. In writing the sentences on the blackboard, I have, of course, not contradicted myself; for I may have written them there with a purely illustrative intention, in giving an English lesson. Someone might say: Nevertheless, the sentences in each pair are inconsistent,

1. Introduction to Logical Theory, pp. 3-4.
with each other. But what would this mean? Would it mean that if they were ever uttered with the intention of making a statement, an inconsistency would result? But suppose the first two sentences were uttered by different people, or by the same person at an interval of years; that the second two sentences were uttered in different omnibuses, or in the same omnibus, but on different days. Then there would be no inconsistency. What these examples show is that we cannot identify that which is true or false (the statement) with the sentences used in making it; for the same sentence may be used to make quite different statements, some of them true and some of them false. And this does not arise from any ambiguity in the sentence. The sentence may have a single meaning which is precisely what, as in these cases, allows it to be used to make quite different statements. So it will not do to identify the statement either with the sentence or with the meaning of the sentence. A particular statement is identified, not only by reference to the words used, but also by reference to the circumstances in which they are used, and, sometimes, to the identity of the person using them.

I do not wish to identify the statement (the sentence uttered in stating) either with the sentence considered simply as a physical occurrence, a "mere" set of noises or marks, nor with the meaning of the sentence, considered as something independent in some way of any given occurrence of a sentence. But I do wish to identify the statement (the sentence uttered in stating) with the sentence used in making it considered as a linguistically meaningful set of noises or marks uttered in stating; this is a tautology, in fact a repetition of the "Red is red" type,
but my point is that "the sentence used in making" the statement is only the sentence that it is (i.e. the linguistically meaningful set of noises or marks that it is) if it is the sentence used in making the statement in question. In other words, the meaning, just as much as the truth (or falsity) of any given statement or sentence uttered in stating, is dependent on what the statement is. The same sentence cannot be used to make different statements, because a sentence is a linguistically meaningful set of noises or marks, and what the statement is depends on what the set of noises or marks means, or is being used to mean. The same set of noises or marks, considered purely physically, can of course be used to make different statements. The same set of noises or marks, considered purely physically, can be uttered on one occasion in stating and on another in threatening; it may even be possible for them to function in both ways at once (e.g. in the case of "I confirm p", as already mentioned, it may be possible in uttering these noises both to confirm something and to describe one's performance at the same time). X and Y, i.e. two sets of sounds or marks made by human beings, are the same sentence if they are uttered or written with the same meaning, e.g. uttered in making the same statement or the same promise. The sentence "I am under six foot tall" written on the blackboard with illustrative intention is not the same sentence
as that uttered by the teacher in asserting that he is six foot tall. The former occurrence of the sentence is meaningful, but is not true-or-false; the latter is also meaningful, but has a different type of meaning from the former, and is true or false.

Now it might be objected that to claim that a set of noises or marks which occurs in identical physical form in the course of stating, asserting, denying, promising and warning has a different meaning in each of these contexts is to multiply types of meaning excessively and unnecessarily. I think it is true that it multiplies them excessively, but that unless we do acknowledge the distinction in meaning between a set of sounds uttered e.g. in asserting and a similar set of sounds uttered e.g. in warning, we cannot do justice to the workings of language or give an adequate account either of what it is that is true-or-false, or of what it is that is true, i.e. statements and beliefs and judgments, etc. I do not wish to deny that if someone asks me "What does X mean?", where X stands for a set of marks customarily written in commanding, or promising, or stating, or some other kind of linguistic activity, or in several sorts of linguistic activity, I do not have to ask "Is X being uttered in commanding or promising or stating?" before I can answer. Let us consider an example. The question "What does the sentence 'There is a tiger in the next room' mean?" is
a meaningful sentence. It could be answered by uttering a sentence (set of noises which are meaningful because they are being uttered in answering a question) in which some of the words in the sentence quoted in the question were replaced by synonymous words. If someone asks me "What does the sentence "There is a tiger in the next room" mean?" I recognize the sentence quoted as being a set of noises frequently uttered in stating, asserting, warning, etc. and my answer, if it is a correct one, will also be a sentence which is frequently uttered in stating, asserting and warning. Of course, in this case, as in most cases, although the sentence quoted and the sentence given in answer are sentences which are uttered in pursuit of several different linguistic activities, and therefore with several different types of meaning, their physical aspects are similar and they are recognisable by their physical aspects as being sentences which frequently occur with these different types of meaning. So the question "Is X a meaningful sentence?" can mean two things:

(a) Is X, a set of noises or marks occurring on a given occasion, being used to state or assert or warn (and the answer will be "yes" if X is being used in one of these linguistic activities) or

(b) Is X a set of noises or marks which is frequently used by people in stating or asserting or warning?

Further, the actual occurrence of the marks "There is
a tiger in the next room" in the question "What does the sentence 'There is a tiger in the next room' mean?" has a different meaning from this (physically similar) sentence or set of marks as it occurs in contexts of stating, or asserting, or warning. In the question it is quoted, i.e. it occurs in quoting, and quoting is a different linguistic activity from asserting or warning; consequently a set of noises or marks uttered in quoting has a different type of meaning from the same set of noises or marks uttered in asserting or warning.

For some purposes, e.g. doing logic, and compiling dictionaries, it is possible and convenient to ignore these differences in types of meaning. But in order to explain adequately the concept of truth, these distinctions of meaning are of the utmost importance.

Thus the sentence "I am under six foot tall" (assuming that it is a meaningful set of marks) written on the blackboard is not true-or-false unless it was written in stating, asserting, denying, or in the course of some other linguistic activity which involves the utterance of a true-or-false sentence. Further, it cannot categorically be claimed to be a sentence (i.e. linguistically meaningful). If I go into a room and see the marks "I am under six foot tall" on the blackboard, it does not follow logically that what I see is a meaningful sentence. If this pattern of marks on the blackboard was caused by paint falling from
the newly-painted ceiling, or by a monkey playing with a piece of chalk, then they do not constitute a meaningful sentence. Of course, in the case of such a complex set of marks as "I am under six foot tall" (and most sets of noises and marks uttered in the pursuit of linguistic activities are physically complex) it is so unlikely that this would be the explanation of the occurrence of these marks on the blackboard that anyone entering the room would be reasonably entitled to assume that they were the result of a human action (allowing for the possibility that a monkey might have the facility of copying a human action of this kind) and further, knowing something about the general patterns of human behaviour, that they were written in pursuit of a linguistic activity. It is however true that even if they were caused by paint falling from the ceiling, it would be possible for someone who later came into the room to point to them as an example of a meaningful sentence. This I think is a special case, and can be accounted for by saying that anyone who pointed to a set of marks which had been caused in such a way and said "This is an English sentence" (or "This is an example of an English sentence") could be understood as saying "This set of marks is physically similar (or identical) with sets of marks frequently used by English people in making certain statements, uttering certain apologies, illustrating points of grammar, and so on".
I shall claim in the next chapter that it would be possible for a human being to write this or any other set of marks customarily written or uttered meaningfully, i.e. in the course of linguistic activities, without meaningfulness.

However, assuming that the set of marks on the blackboard has been written by a human being, and is meaningful, i.e. has been written in the course of a linguistic activity, it is not possible to say whether this actual occurrence of the sentence is true-or-false, for it may have been written e.g. as an example of a grammatically correct sentence. But my point is not only that it cannot be said to be true (or false) until it is known what statement it is being used to make; but that it cannot be said to be true (or false) until it is known what it means. Strawson, at the end of the passage quoted, ties the identification of a statement (something true-or-false) to "the circumstances in which" the words comprising it are used, and (sometimes) to the identity of the person making it; I wish also to tie the meaning of the sentence to these considerations. Suppose we know that the set of marks on the blackboard, "I am under six foot tall" was written by some human being, but we don't know which one. Then I do not think that we can be said to know the meaning of this sentence, although we are certainly entitled to assert that it is a meaningful sentence, if we know that this unknown human being wrote it in assertion or statement.
Thus I am claiming that it is possible to know that a given set of marks or sounds is meaningful without knowing what it in fact means; and this not in the sense that we know that it is meaningful because someone whose word may be relied on has assured us that it is meaningful, although we would never have recognised it as meaningful for ourselves; but in the sense that we ourselves recognise it, in this occurrence, as being a set of sounds or marks frequently uttered meaningfully, and in accordance with the rules of the English language, but we do not know what it means on this actual occasion - because, e.g., we do not know to whom the pronoun "I" refers. "I am under six foot tall" uttered by a person A has a different meaning from "I am under six foot tall" uttered by person B. This is a peculiarity of pronouns. The pronoun "I" functions in a similar way to the variable in a propositional function; what the sentence "I am six foot tall" (assuming that it is meaningful) means depends on the identity of the person uttering it; whether it is true depends also on the identity of the person uttering it, but in a different way - whether it is true depends on the height of the person uttering it; whether it is meaningful, or what it means, does not.

This is because one of the considerations the meaningfulness of a set of marks depends on is what the referring words in it are actually being used to refer to. I do not wish to
suggest that a propositional function containing a variable to which an actual value has not been allotted, or a sentence like "I am under six foot tall" uttered (meaningfully) in the course of a linguistic activity such as giving an example of a set of marks frequently uttered by people pursuing linguistic activities does not have meaning; although in this case no value has been assigned to the variable, or the pronoun "I" does not have any definite reference; here again, I should say that in this context the sentence has a different type of meaning from the physically similar sentence uttered in asserting or stating. Also that the type of meaning possessed by the former expressions is logically dependent on the type possessed by the latter. Only sentences which could occur in actual contexts, i.e. at specified times and places and utterable by human beings in pursuit of linguistic activities can be quoted or given in illustration of grammatical or logical points. The sentence "I am under six foot tall" is an example of a set of noises frequently uttered in making statements, assertions, etc." is true only because there have been, or could be, actual occasions of people stating "I am under six foot tall"; and it is only meaningful in the former context because it is meaningful in the latter context. If "I am under six foot tall" is true-or-false, then it is uttered meaningfully, by an individual person, and the pronoun "I" has a specific object of reference.
I have mentioned the case where someone might ask "What does the sentence 'There is a tiger in the next room' mean?" and suggested that it can be answered without finding out whether it is being uttered in warning or asserting etc., because a correct answer does not depend on the recognition of differences of meaning in each of these different linguistic activities, since the correct answers would be physically similar, whether the sentence is thought of as one uttered in warning, or asserting, etc. But consider the case where someone actually runs up to me and says "There is a tiger in the next room". If I say to him "What do you mean?" my question is ambiguous. I may ask him this question because I do not understand all the words in the sentence, or recognise the grammatical construction of the sentence; or I may be asking him the reason why he said it, e.g. whether he was warning me or giving me a piece of interesting information. I do not think it is correct to say that the question "What do you mean?" would be more appropriate in trying to get information in the one case rather than the other. If I say "What do you mean?" in order to find out whether I have been given a warning or a piece of information, I may correctly be said to be enquiring after the intentions of the speaker, but this is just as much an enquiry about the meaning of the sentence as is the request for a synonymous word or sentence. What I want to know is what the speaker intended to say (or possibly what
he expects me to do about it) and this can only be answered adequately by the utterance of another sentence. The importance of intentions in the account of the type of meaning relevant to the discussion of truth will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

It should now be clear that I do not think it necessary to distinguish between sentences and statements in the way in which Strawson does in the passage quoted in order to give a satisfactory account of inconsistency. The sentences "I am under six foot tall" and "I am over six foot tall" written on the blackboard are not necessarily inconsistent; they are not necessarily sentences. If they have been written by a human being, with the intention of making a statement or an assertion or giving a warning, then they are meaningful; if they have been written by one human being in making an assertion or a statement, within a relatively short period of time, then they are inconsistent, for one of them must be true and the other false (unless the writer is 6 feet tall; this complication is irrelevant to the present point). Nevertheless if I read in a textbook of logic "The sentences (or statements) "I am under six foot tall" and "I am over six foot tall" are inconsistent with each other" I can understand what I read and agree to it; though I may think it would have been better put "The sets of marks "I am under six foot tall" and "I am over six foot tall"
are sets of marks which are frequently uttered in making statements, or making assertions, etc., and if they are both so uttered by one man within a relatively short period of time, then they are inconsistent". Of course, if it were put in this way, then although its exact meaning would be more precise, the discussion of its logic would become impossibly cumbersome. I am not suggesting that all textbooks of logic, or arguments involving such expressions, should all be reworded in this way; but simply that it is important to bear in mind while reading e.g. a textbook of logic that the true-or-false sentences it is quoting and referring to are sentences which always occur in concrete circumstances and contexts in the course of numerous types of linguistic activities, and that the use or quotation of these sentences in the context of a logic textbook is parasitic on these other occurrences.

In the course of this chapter the references to linguistic meaningfulness and the function of sentences in actual discourse have been incidental and cursory; in the next chapter I shall discuss some of the problems which arise out of this in more detail.
III

WHAT IS THE FUNCTION OF WORDS & SENTENCES?

Words and sentences are sounds or marks, or sets of sounds or marks, uttered or written by human beings in the pursuit of linguistic activities. All human actions or courses of action could be classified as linguistic or non-linguistic, with a large number of types of courses of action which are mixed. Closing the door is a non-linguistic action, asking a question is linguistic; swimming the Channel is a non-linguistic course of action, writing a letter is almost entirely linguistic. Even linguistic activities like asserting and promising have, necessarily, a non-linguistic basis; it would be impossible to perform any linguistic activity without at the same time breathing, or moving one's lips or hands. But these physical motions do not in themselves make any difference to what particular type of linguistic activity is being performed; from the fact that someone is making marks on paper with a pen it cannot be deduced that he is pursuing any specific linguistic activity. It cannot, indeed, be deduced from this fact alone that he is pursuing any linguistic activity at all, since he may well be
doodling or drawing. Examples of "mixed" activities are playing chess and acting in a play. Thus many primarily linguistic activities, e.g. teaching someone a language and giving a lecture, involve non-linguistic components (opening the dictionary and wiping the board). Moreover not all sounds and marks uttered and written by human beings, even in the course of purposeful activities which may be primarily linguistic, are linguistically meaningful. Involuntary cries of pain or sighs, portraits and musical scores, are non-linguistic. The first two may or may not occur in the course of purposeful (linguistic or non-linguistic) activities; the drawing or painting of a portrait and the composing of a musical score would be purposeful activities, and the actual portrait and musical score could be said to possess significance; but they are not linguistic, although they might, especially the latter, be connected with linguistic activities (learning how to write down a musical score or express one's musical ideas by writing a score might involve linguistic activities).

Further, there are many types of activity which are borderline, and it would be extremely difficult to classify as either linguistic or non-linguistic without a good deal of discussion, and possibly a more or less arbitrary decision; expletives and ritualistic language fall under this category. There are also, of course, as has already been mentioned, many different types of linguistic meaning.
Now there are many activities that human beings pursue by means of language, i.e. by uttering or writing linguistically meaningful sets of sounds or marks. Some of them, e.g. warning, or threatening, may possibly be pursuable by both linguistic and non-linguistic means. Linguistic activities could be classified in many ways. At the highest level of generality they could be specified as thinking, talking and writing, although I do not wish to suggest that all thinking is in language; I should maintain that all conceptual thinking necessarily involves language, but there may be other kinds of mental activity, e.g. imagery, which resemble conceptual thinking in enough respects to merit the title "thinking". However whether or not this is so is a question I do not propose to go into, and is irrelevant to the present point; all that is claimed is that some thinking is in words and sentences.

At a lower level of generality the activities listed above could be thought of as part of a mixed activity, e.g. playing a game or bidding at an auction. Or, again, as a series of almost exclusively linguistic activities, like writing a novel, explaining to someone how to fill in a form, or making a political speech. At a lower level again linguistic activities might be thought of as those which are manifested in the utterance or writing of a single sentence, grammatically defined. At this level they could be specified as including stating, asserting, denying,
promising, predicting, commanding, asking a question, answering a question, telling a lie, considering a possibility, and many, many more. They would also include warning, threatening and other similar types of activity insofar as or when these are pursued linguistically. Answering a question may involve uttering more than one (grammatically defined) sentence, and there might be a case for describing the uttering of a sentence in answer to a question as stating or asserting. "Considering a possibility" may also apply to other forms of human activity besides that which consists in uttering a sentence starting "Perhaps...." or "Let us suppose that....". But the general lines of the type of classification suggested should I think be clear from the examples given.

It would be extremely difficult, if not (practically) impossible, to give an exhaustive list of such activities at any level except perhaps the highest, partly because they are so numerous and partly because there would be a considerable amount of overlapping. The overlapping increases as we descend the scale. As already suggested, answering a question may involve writing a book, and on the other hand a political speech might consist of one single sentence. There are means of referring to linguistic activities at the third level indifferently
or non-committally; such terms as "saying" and "telling" are used to cover several of the activities already listed. Sometimes it is possible to discover from the context that "he said" is being used to mean "he promised" or "he stated" or "he threatened"; sometimes what a speaker means by "he said", i.e. which linguistic activity he is referring to, is not important to the understanding of what he is talking about. The words and sentences we utter in the course of linguistic activities can be vague or precise; whether this matters will depend on our particular purposes.

The reason why I have classified linguistic activities in this way is that I want to suggest that it is by considering those at the third level above, i.e. those that are generally pursued by uttering one single sentence (grammatically defined) that it is most convenient to discuss the problem of truth with which I am concerned, and the notion of linguistic meaning that is relevant to the problem. Since that which is true-or-false has been identified as a linguistically meaningful utterance, or sentence, uttered in stating, asserting, denying, etc., in order to discuss the function of such sentences it is necessary to investigate the function of the linguistic activities of stating, asserting, denying, etc. in relation to the larger linguistic and mixed activities of which they form a part.

"Sentence" I have already defined as a set of sounds
or marks uttered or written by human beings in pursuing the activities of stating, asserting, commanding, asking questions, promising, and so on. There is also a grammatical criterion to which sentences must conform. A question, e.g., is a set of words combined in accordance with certain grammatical rules, and having a question mark at the end; but this is not a complete definition of a sentence which is a question. On the basis of it alone it would be impossible to know that e.g. "How do you do?" is generally not a question. In order to be a question, a set of words combined in accordance with certain grammatical rules and having a question mark at the end must be uttered in pursuance of the human activity of asking a question. Otherwise, that is if the type of activity involved were completely laid down by the rules of grammar and the meaning of the words comprising the sentence, it would be impossible to speak rhetorically.

I have said that a sentence is a set of sounds or marks, and that it is made up of words. By "word" I mean a part of a sentence, which is itself linguistically meaningful, since the sentence of which it forms part is linguistically meaningful, and which is not generally used for the same purpose as a sentence. Of course, it is possible to make oneself understood as stating something by uttering a single word, but the notion of a word is
the notion of something which is not normally sufficient for pursuing the activities of stating, warning, denying, etc., unless used in conjunction with, or in relation with, certain other words. Words can function as sentences, i.e. they can be used to state, assert and deny in certain situations where we have reason to expect that our hearers will recognise them as elliptical for certain sentences; sentences can function as words, e.g. can be used to refer to objects. The relation of words to sentences is a matter of a difference of function. We use sentences in order to state, assert, promise, threaten, etc.; one of the important reasons why we use words, as words, is to refer; another is to connect together other words in order to form a sentence to utter in stating, asserting, etc. Referring, like asserting, is a linguistic activity; I wish to say not that words refer, but that people refer by using words. To refer to something is to indicate it, identify it, distinguish it by uttering a linguistically meaningful sound or set of sounds. Referring thus presupposes that there are things to refer to, but not that the things we refer to have any particular ontological status. The latter will depend on further considerations. All that is required, in order that we should be able to refer, is that there should be identifiable and distinguishable things. It might, indeed, be claimed that the activity of referring
does not even presuppose that there are things to be referred to, but only that we can identify and distinguish. However, it would then be necessary to say that there are things to be identified and distinguished, so these things are at least indirectly presupposed by the activity of referring. Some words are nearly always used to refer, e.g. "table", "dream", "cat". Other words, e.g. "by", "please", are rarely used to refer, though any sound can be used to refer at least to itself, while retaining its meaning, or at least some kind of linguistic meaning. There are many types of words, e.g. abstract nouns like "courage", "beauty", whose relation to things, considered as objects existent in the world, is extremely complex and the subject of much philosophical discussion, which is not relevant to the present point. Referring is a relatively incomplete activity; we normally refer to something in order to state or assert something about it, to warn someone of it, to threaten someone with it, and so on. I say "relatively" incomplete, because I do not wish to rule out the possibility that when I utter "chair" in response to your command (perhaps in a game) "Refer to something", my utterance is a linguistically meaningful sound, a word. Further, we frequently coin new words simply by uttering a sound in order to refer to something, or stating that

1. See pp. 95-8.
the intention to introduce a new word was our purpose in uttering a certain sound. However, even in these cases the purpose in uttering the sound was not just to make a noise in the presence of an object. For this reason, referring is not the same activity as pointing, or a linguistic version of pointing. Pointing, indeed, can count as referring, as shaking one's head can count as denying, but only when there is some convention linking the activity of pointing, which is non-linguistic, with the activity of referring, which is linguistic. Pointing could not function in the same way as referring unless there already were an activity of referring.

Referring, then, is indicating something in order to say something about it (we might say: it is a linguistic activity which is generally pursued in furtherance of a larger, or other linguistic activity), and if we are referring when we utter a certain sounds, then that sound is meaningful, is a word. It is a purposeful activity, and its characteristic purpose is to single out something in order to pursue some other linguistic activity. The place of proper names in this scheme raises interesting problems, but they are not relevant to the present issue. I shall claim that all purely linguistic activities, e.g. referring, stating, asserting, denying, are incomplete, and that it is a failure to recognise this that has led to
various misconceptions about truth.

Words and sentences then are uttered in the pursuit of linguistic activities. What makes an activity linguistic? When, e.g., are the activities of warning and threatening linguistic and not non-linguistic? It will not do to say "When they involve uttering sounds" since not all sounds, as we have seen, are linguistically meaningful. Nor can we say "When they involve uttering sounds generally recognised as meaningful or similar to those listed in the dictionary", for words and sentences are physical things and can operate in human activities purely in their physical capacity.

Let us consider what is involved in the activity of warning, in an attempt to become clearer as to what are the discriminating features of a specifically linguistic activity.

In general, to warn someone of something is to express concern for his welfare and to try to prevent him from coming to harm. It is possible that this describes animal as well as human activity. There are likenesses between a man's shouting "Stop!" and a dog's activity in barking and jumping up and down excitedly when its puppy goes too near the edge which might make us want to say that the dog was warning or attempting to warn the puppy. Concern for someone's welfare can be shown by behavioural
signs, by humans or by animals. These signs may be conventional, like raising a hand, or the intention with which they are used may be unmistakable by their actual form, like signalling to a driver that there is an obstacle round the corner with one hand, and waving him back with the other. The signs can be operating causally; a shout, loud or urgent. They can also be linguistically meaningful: "There is a tiger in the next room". However, the fact that I have uttered the sounds "There is a tiger in the next room", or any other sounds which are customarily uttered in the context of a linguistic activity, does not entail that these sounds are linguistically meaningful whenever they are uttered. They too could have been operating causally, since the speaker, or the hearer, or both, might not know of the existence of the English language, or before the English language came into existence, and yet the utterance might occur in the hope of preventing an accident, and might be effective in so doing. The same set of sounds might be uttered out of concern for someone's welfare, from a desire to prevent an accident, from a desire to warn someone of danger, or from a desire to warn someone that there is a tiger in the next room - to give only a few possible reasons for their utterance. More than one of such reasons might be operative on one occasion. In any of these cases they could be understood or misunderstood, correctly
interpreted or misinterpreted, acted on or ignored, by whoever hears them - or they may not be heard at all. But in order for an utterance or a sign to qualify as a warning there must at least be the intention or hope of being heard or seen, understood or correctly interpreted, on the part of the person warning. It is not necessary that there should be concern for someone's welfare - the policeman who warns me that parking is not allowed on this side of the road does not, in general, care whether I take notice of his warning or not; he might even hope secretly that I will not heed it, so that he will get a conviction. Thus a person's motive in warning might be to prevent someone else from coming to harm, to do one's moral duty, to do one's professional duty, or to pursue one's own interests. But for an activity properly to be called a warning there must be, I think, on the part of the Warner at least the expectation that the person warned will find what he is being warned of unpleasant or undesirable, or something he wouldn't take action to avoid unless he was warned. It is also necessary that the Warner should at least believe or think it likely that the person warned is able to change his course of action because of what has been said, or of the sign that has been made in warning. These conditions could be claimed to have been fulfilled in the case of the dog, since they can be demonstrated by behavioural signs, and since they
are necessary conditions of an activity's qualifying as a warning, they are also necessary conditions for a warning to qualify as linguistic.

Whether an activity qualifies as a warning does not depend on the consequences of the activity, since if, again taking the case of the dog, the activity is directed at two puppies simultaneously and one reacts appropriately and the other does not, the same activity can have different consequences, according to whom it is directed. The actual consequences are similarly irrelevant to whether a warning is linguistic or not, since the same meaningful sentence uttered in warning, i.e. one occurrence of it on one occasion, can be understood or misunderstood, acted on or ignored.

Whether or not an activity is correctly to be described as linguistic does not depend, then, on the consequences of the activity, the reactions of the person towards whom the activity is directed. Moreover many linguistic activities, e.g. thinking out a moral problem or wondering what will happen tomorrow, are not directed towards anyone, but are private. (This is not to say that there are any linguistic activities which are necessarily private; indeed I doubt whether it would be possible to have a criterion of linguistic meaningfulness which could (logically) be applied by only one person. I don't need an audience
in order to think out a moral problem or wonder what will happen tomorrow, but if I were overheard in my musings, there would be some reaction on the part of the hearer, if only that of understanding or misunderstanding or failing to understand altogether.

Nor does whether or not an activity is linguistic depend on the nature of the actual performance in its physical, i.e. visual or aural aspect. The hand raised in warning could be raised in exercising the arm. The sounds uttered in shouting "Stop" merely to make the child draw back (before the child understands the meaning of the word) may be uttered in pleading. And in the case of warning as a linguistic activity, again, the sentence uttered in warning someone that there is a tiger in the next room may also be uttered in excusing oneself for not going into the next room.

Does whether an activity is a warning depend on the speaker's intention? In the case of warning as a non-linguistic activity, this would appear to be a useful criterion. If I see you raise your hand, and am in doubt as to what you are about, I may ask you what you are doing. If you say "I raised my hand in order to warn you not to go into the next room", then I may (on the assumption that you are telling the truth) safely conclude that your activity was one of warning. Is the intention to warn you not to go into the next room a guarantee that
you were warning? It might be objected that the means of carrying out the intention on a given occasion were illchosen, and if they were sufficiently illchosen the activity could not be called warning. However, since I am primarily concerned with linguistic activities, I will consider this possible objection as it arises in that context.

The intention of the speaker would appear to be a useful criterion also for deciding whether a given utterance was a linguistically meaningful warning or not. I may be doubtful as to whether you were performing a linguistic, as opposed to a non-linguistic, activity in uttering the sounds "There is a tiger in the next room". An animal might be taught to react to them, and if they were then used to warn the animal - e.g. to prevent it from coming to harm - the animal's reaction would be related to them as an effect to a cause; they would be operating causally in the stimulus-response sense and not with linguistic meaning. The animal would react to them "automatically"; the human being who hears a linguistic warning can generally choose whether to act on it or not. If I am in doubt as to whether your activity in uttering these sounds is linguistic or non-linguistic, a good way for me to find out, again, is to ask you why you uttered them. I might also be in doubt, when hearing you uttering these sounds, as to whether you were warning me or simply
reporting to me a fact you thought I would find interesting, or perhaps excusing yourself for not going into the next room. In the first case, my doubt is as to whether your activity is linguistic or non-linguistic; in the second, as to what kind of linguistic activity you are performing. It should be noted that I am not suggesting that doubts as to whether activities are linguistic or non-linguistic are part of the worries of the ordinary man. The doubts are created by the definitions I have given of these terms, and the question at issue is how, on the definitions of linguistic and non-linguistic that have been given, it is possible to give an account of the crucial discriminating features of linguistic and non-linguistic activities.

We are at the moment concerned with the first type of case, the question whether an activity of warning is linguistic or non-linguistic. I want to suggest that if, in answer to my question as to why you uttered the sounds "There is a tiger in the next room" you say "Because I wanted to prevent you from going into the next room", or "Because I wanted you to draw back from the door", or "Because I wanted to warn you of danger", your activity may have been non-linguistic, and your utterance thus not a meaningful sentence; but if you say "Because I wanted to warn you that there was a tiger in the next room", or "Because I wanted to inform you that there was a tiger in
the next room, in the hope of preventing you from entering it", then it was a case of warning as a linguistic activity, and your utterance, by consequence, was a linguistically meaningful sentence. If you want to warn me that there is a tiger in the next room, you can only do this by uttering linguistically meaningful sounds, i.e. a sentence. You might of course do it by showing me a photograph of the tiger sitting in the next room, and then point to the next room and shake your head, but this activity would only count as a warning, i.e. it would only function as a warning if there were certain mutually understood conventions linking the photograph with the state of affairs in the next room, and linking my gestures with the utterance of sentences in warning on other occasions. The kind of intention that is particular to a set of sounds uttered with linguistic meaningfulness in warning, then, is the intention to warn that.........., where what follows "that" is something which can only be expressed or formulated in linguistically meaningful sounds, words and sentences. This kind of intention I shall call a linguistic intention, and there is an appropriate linguistic intention for every kind of linguistic activity. There are other activities, besides warning, which can be performed either linguistically or non-linguistically, e.g. threatening. Threatening is a linguistic activity, and the sounds uttered in
threatening are linguistically meaningful (i.e. words and sentences) when they are uttered in pursuance of the linguistic intention to threaten that..........., and so on.

The intention or desire to warn you that X might be considered as the intention to communicate something to you. The concept of communication is however of no help in explaining the nature of linguistic intentions. Communication itself can be a linguistic or a non-linguistic activity. Communication consists sometimes in bringing about a state of affairs where A knows what B knows, A believes what B believes, A feels what B feels. This can sometimes be achieved by other means than language; it can sometimes be achieved by behavioural signs. Communication is of course frequently a linguistic activity, but since in order to explain linguistic intentions in terms of communication it would be necessary to make clear the differences between linguistic and non-linguistic communication, and this itself can only be done in terms of linguistic and non-linguistic intentions (the differences between linguistic and non-linguistic acts of communication being similar in type to the differences between warning as a linguistic activity and warning as a non-linguistic activity, etc.) such an explanation would be circular.

Further, not all linguistic activities are
communicative, as has already been noted. There are many activities which would appear to be entirely, or almost entirely, linguistic. It would be difficult to find a non-linguistic counterpart to the linguistic activities of stating, asserting, denying, promising, asking questions, predicting. I may be able to assert something by nodding, or deny something by shaking my head, but these are not genuine counterparts, which are non-linguistic, to the linguistic activities of asserting, stating, etc. As in the case of warning by showing a photograph, accompanied by certain gestures, they only count as asserting and denying if and when there are certain conventions linking them to the linguistic activities of asserting and denying. The appropriate linguistic intentions in these cases would be the intentions to state that, assert that, ask whether, predict that, and so on. Some of these may be borderline cases, e.g. someone might want to claim that commanding could be a non-linguistic activity, which could be performed with the intention of displaying authority or perhaps some other non-linguistic intention; in the latter case it might be achieved by making signs which unmistakably indicate that I want the door shut. The intention to describe can be linguistic or non-linguistic, or mixed; I might be able to fulfil my intention of describing something to you by showing you a photograph,
or drawing a picture, and whether an explicit convention linking this with the linguistic activity of describing is necessary in order for my intention to be understood, or my activity to be understood, is I think a more questionable issue than that involved in the case of denying by shaking my head. Some of these activities shade off into others; it might be difficult to say whether a given activity was an example of warning or of threatening, even after the speaker had been asked his intention. It may be difficult, in a given situation, to say what one's intentions are, thus making it difficult to judge whether the activity in question is linguistic or non-linguistic.

A linguistic intention is one that can be carried out successfully, or achieved, only by uttering linguistically meaningful sentences. A non-linguistic intention is one that can be achieved successfully by the performance of activities which do not necessarily involve the utterance of linguistically meaningful sentences: they can of course involve the utterance of sounds, even sounds resembling those normally uttered meaningfully in sentences, but not all sounds, as we have seen, are linguistically meaningful. Further, a non-linguistic intention can be carried out successfully by the utterance of linguistically meaningful sentences. If I have the non-linguistic intention of warning you of
danger in the next room, it may be possible for me to achieve this intention by behavioural means, but I shall also have succeeded in this intention if I say to you "There is a tiger in the next room", i.e. utter the sounds "There is a tiger in the next room" and you understand them as giving you certain information; that is, you recognise them as sounds which are frequently uttered by people who have the linguistic intention of warning someone that there is a tiger in the next room. This proviso is necessary because otherwise, if no sounds uttered in the absence of an avowed linguistic intention could be said to be linguistically meaningful, it would be necessary to say that the actual presence, on any given occasion, of a linguistic intention would be essential if the utterance were to be linguistically meaningful. In claiming that intentions may be exhaustively classified as linguistic or non-linguistic, however, I do not wish to be understood to be using the term "intention" in any but the most usual senses. An intention, I take it, is something which can be achieved by pursuing a certain course of action, or uttering words and sentences. Whether people's actions, either linguistic or non-linguistic, are intentional or not, and what particular intention they are in fact the means of pursuing, are questions that can often be answered by observing the pattern of the actions in question, together with the knowledge we have of how people
generally behave. But in general there is no better way of finding out what someone's intention is than by asking him. If it is impossible to formulate one's intention - in linguistically meaningful sentences - then it is extremely doubtful whether one can be supposed to have one. To formulate one's intention is itself a linguistic activity; the existence of words and sentences is a necessary condition of the existence of linguistic intentions, and a necessary condition of the formulation of any intention, whether linguistic or non-linguistic. Intentions, both linguistic and non-linguistic, can be displayed in linguistic activities, but non-linguistic intentions can also be displayed in non-linguistic activities. Words and sentences are needed in order to formulate any intention, but they are a condition of the existence of a linguistic intention. The question whether it is possible to have an unformulated linguistic intention is one the answer to which I think does not hinge on whether we could find any means of detecting such unformulated linguistic intentions, but on the interpretation of what it is for a sentence or a set of sounds to be linguistically meaningful. In language, as in other activities, most prevalent intentions find expression in fairly stereotyped ways, and the methods, of courses of action, by which we can attempt to carry out our intentions successfully, are generally known and
recognised. Whether my action in putting on the kettle is intentional or unintentional does not depend on whether I have explicitly formulated my intention to boil the water. That is, it does not follow from the fact that I have not explicitly formulated my intention to boil the water that my action in putting on the kettle was unintentional. Similarly, the fact that I may not have said to myself "I must warn X that there is a tiger in the next room" before saying to X "There is a tiger in the next room" does not entail that the sounds I utter to X are not linguistically meaningful. If someone utters sounds which are usually uttered with linguistic meaning, in a context which indicates that they are also being used on this occasion with linguistic meaning, then we are entitled to assume that they are being used on this occasion with linguistic meaning, unless the speaker actually disavows a linguistic intention. A very large part of our use of language is habitual, i.e. we talk very often without thinking much about what we are saying, or what we are intending to say, but taking it for granted that we shall be understood as using sounds and marks in the ways in which they are generally used, or as though we were in fact using them with certain linguistic intentions.

The fact that our use of language is largely habitual and follows certain recognised patterns is one of the reasons why it might be supposed that to talk
meaningfully is to use sounds and marks in accordance with certain rules, and that to make statements, utter warnings, etc., is to use sentences in accordance with certain rules. It is of course true that most of the linguistically meaningful sentences that we utter are in accordance with certain rules; rules which lay down what sounds you must utter and how you must combine them if you want to be understood. These rules are necessary to linguistic meaningfulness in the sense that unless the regularities which they specify existed it would be extremely difficult for anyone ever to make himself understood. If, in order to say something meaningful, e.g. to warn someone that...... or state that......, it were necessary to as it were start from scratch and think up an entirely new way of expressing one's intention, very few people would ever say anything and still less would succeed in communicating what they wanted to say to someone else. But although the regularities of expression, the similarities of methods of carrying out linguistic intentions, are important factors in the understanding of what other people say, and in the possibility (practical) of formulating or expressing linguistic intentions at all for most people, these regularities which are recorded in the rules for the use of language are not constitutive elements in the meaningfulness of sentences, i.e. they are
not necessary conditions of the meaningfulness of words or sentences. If they were, if the meaningfulness of a word or a sentence depended logically on whether it was in accordance with certain rules (whatever types of rules they may be, e.g. syntactic or grammatical rules, or semantic rules about what is and what is not meaningful), then unanswerable questions would arise about how it is possible for language ever to change, for certain words not simply to become archaic but to change their meaning, and for individual speakers or writers to introduce new usages.

Moreover, words and sentences are not tools in the way in which this approach to the explanation of linguistic meaningfulness suggests. It is inaccurate to think of a sentence as a tool or instrument, and misleading philosophically, since it leads to mistaken theories about the nature of meaning. It is for this reason, i.e. that to speak of words and sentences as things which are used in making statements, giving warnings, etc., that I have used the word "uttered" rather than "used", as far as possible, in discussing the ways in which sounds and marks have linguistic meaningfulness. (It is more appropriate to use the word "used" in reference to words than to sentences. We may be in doubt as to which is the best word to use in a sentence, say in stating something, where there are alternative words (i.e. which of the sounds
customarily uttered in pursuing this particular linguistic activity is e.g. most likely to be effective in making myself understood, or in ensuring that it has the effect I want it to have). It is rather more odd to say that we sometimes wonder whether to use one sentence rather than another in warning somebody of some danger. "Use" is perhaps a better term than "utter" when it is a question of choice between various alternative ways of pursuing a particular linguistic intention.

It is inaccurate to think of a word or sentence as a tool or instrument because there are important differences between the ways in which words and sentences function and the ways in which things we ordinarily call tools or instruments function. We use a bicycle pump to put air into a bicycle tyre, but the existence of bicycle pumps has no logical connection with the existence of bicycle tyres; there might be some quite different tool or instrument with which to put air into bicycle tyres; or there might be no tool at all, so that it would be necessary to buy a new tyre every time a tyre punctured. Meaningful sentences are not tools in this sense; making an assertion is not doing something with the aid of a meaningful sentence (something which might be done by other means, or in the absence of any means); making an assertion is uttering a meaningful sentence, and uttering it with a
certain (linguistic) intention: the intention to assert whatever is being asserted. That is, it is a part of the definition of an assertion that it involves the utterance of a linguistically meaningful sentence; it is not a part of the definition of a bicycle tyre that it needs a bicycle pump in order to keep it in repair.

Dictionaries are records of the ways in which words are used - gathered from observation of instances of their actual utterance in the pursuit of linguistic activities) and semantic rules are records of the ways in which sentences (sounds which are linguistically meaningful) are uttered in the course of making assertions, giving warnings, promising, describing, etc. But there could be no rules unless certain sounds and marks, and sets of sounds and marks, already had linguistic meaningfulness, were already uttered in the pursuit of linguistic activities. Moreover, the rules themselves have to be understood; to formulate a rule, to record a usage, is itself a linguistic activity, which must itself be in accordance with the rules of syntax and semantics. Thus the existence of a rule presupposes certain rules, and the whole notion of explaining linguistic meaningfulness in terms of rules becomes circular.

Nevertheless, someone might say, it is extremely far-fetched to suggest that linguistic meaningfulness is connected with the existence of certain types of intentions rather than with rules, for the very way in which we talk
about languages - the English language, the French language, etc., and the fact that we learn languages in order to be able to talk meaningfully and pursue linguistic activities - indicates or is suggestive of the fact that to utter meaningful words and sentences is to apply certain rules. This is, I think, a stronger way of putting the point already made, that unless languages were formalised to some extent and regularities of utterance were recorded and taught, it would be practically almost impossible for most of us to have any conversation. But my point is a logical one, and it is that although rules are important, if not essential (in the practical sense) for talking and for understanding other people's talk, they are not necessary conditions of meaningfulness. My further point, which is more relevant to the present problem about truth, is that the fact that any given utterance is in accordance with syntactical or semantical rules is not a sufficient condition of its meaningfulness. It is possible to utter sounds which are normally uttered in the pursuit of linguistic activities, and which will be found on consulting the grammar books and books explaining nice distinctions of meaning to be entirely well-formed, and which are, on a given occasion of their utterance, linguistically meaningless. Consider the following two cases:
1. Suppose one Ancient Briton said to another Ancient Briton (before the English language came into existence; I do not say "before the English language was ever spoken, since this suggests that it might have existed before it was spoken): "Grass is green". We need not go into the conditions under which this phenomenon might come about; it is logically possible that this might have happened. The situation is one where, for some reason or other, an Ancient Briton uttered the sounds "Grass is green". Was what he said meaningful? Someone might say "What he said was in fact an English sentence, but he did not know it; it was therefore meaningful, but he did not know it". If we accept this, then it is surely impossible for us ever to say, with certainty, that any sounds anyone ever utters are meaningless, since for all we know there may in future be some language - or there may indeed be some language existing now of which we have never heard - in which sounds like these are meaningful sentences. Shall we then say "Of course, 'grass is green' may mean something different in another language from what it means in English, or it may be meaningless when measured against the rules of some other language, but nevertheless 'grass is green' is a meaningful English sentence, and although it was not a meaningful sentence when uttered by the Ancient Briton, who did not and could not have known the rules of English
it is a meaningful sentence whenever it is uttered by someone who knows English. Further, there is a sense in which it could be said to be meaningful in English when uttered at the present day by someone who doesn't know English, whereas it would not be correct to say that it was meaningful in English when the Ancient Briton uttered it; for at the time when the Ancient Briton uttered it there was no-one who could have said - either meaningfully or truthfully - "That is an English sentence", whereas although the Frenchman who happens to utter the sounds "grass is green" may not know that this is an English sentence, there are many people who, on hearing him utter these sounds, would recognise it as an English sentence". That is, whether "grass is green" is a meaningful sentence does not depend on someone's linguistic intentions, but on whether it is a part of an actual language, a language being the totality of all the sounds and marks uttered and written by a certain group of people when they talk meaningfully.

Now I do not wish to deny that "'Grass is green' is a meaningful English sentence" is true insofar as it means "The sounds 'grass is green' are customarily uttered by English people when they wish to pursue the linguistic activity of e.g. stating that grass is green, and by people of other countries when they utter the sounds customarily uttered by English people in pursuing this activity, when
they wish to pursue this activity. What cannot be maintained, I think, is that it follows from this that the sounds "grass is green" are linguistically meaningful on every occasion of their utterance, even when uttered by Englishmen. For consider

2. Suppose the sounds "grass is green" are customarily uttered by English people when they wish to state that grass is green, and are also uttered by French people when they wish to make some different statement. Further, suppose that someone who utters these sounds, on a particular occasion, knows both languages. It would be logically impossible on such an occasion to discover what the utterance in question meant without asking the person who uttered it what he intended to say. And if it is possible for an Englishman to utter the sounds "grass is green" without meaning what these sounds are generally uttered to mean, then it is possible for an Englishman to utter these sounds without any linguistic meaning at all, for there is no rule which says that every sound we utter is in some language or other.

But although it is logically possible for an Englishman to utter sounds which are customarily uttered by Englishmen in the pursuance of some linguistic activity without linguistic meaningfulness, it is at the same time true that it is as a matter of fact impossible to utter sounds customarily uttered by Englishmen in the course of
linguistic activities to Englishmen without being misunderstood. By this I mean that there would be little point in trying to prevent someone coming to harm by making a noise to alarm him, if he were an Englishman, by uttering the sounds "Everything's quite alright" in tones calculated to alarm. If I utter sounds customarily uttered in the pursuit of a certain linguistic activity, i.e. which are customarily meaningful, then I must expect the usual linguistic intentions to be attributed to me whenever I utter these sounds, at least in the presence of people who know what intentions they are generally uttered in pursuit of. But if I shout "Stop!" to a dog, intending merely to make it draw back, then all that could be meant by saying that this is a meaningful sentence is that it is customarily uttered in pursuance of the linguistic intention of warning people that they should stop. There are no grounds for asserting that it is meaningful on the actual occasion of its utterance to the dog.

A further reason why it is possible for English people to utter sounds like "Grass is green" without linguistic meaning is that unless this were possible, it would be impossible for human beings ever to give meaning to words, to cause a sound or set of sounds to be linguistically meaningful. "Cause" is being used here
in the sense "decide to give". For if it is impossible to withhold meaning from a set of sounds, it must be impossible to bestow it. In fact, talking meaningfully is I think a much more creative activity than many theories of meaning would lead us to believe. I do not however wish to pursue this line of argument since my intention is not to give an account of how words and sentences come to have meaning, but to show that it is impossible to give a satisfactory account of what it is for a word or a sentence to have linguistic meaning without showing the relation between linguistic meaning and certain types of intentions. But it is logically impossible that a set of sounds should acquire linguistic meaning by being in accordance with a set of rules, for if this were possible, it would be possible to decide what the man who uttered "grass is green" when this is a meaningful sentence in English and a different meaningful sentence in French, meant without asking him. And if a set of sounds which were once - before the existence of any language which incorporated them - meaningless become meaningful, then any account of what their meaningfulness consists in which makes their meaningfulness depend on something which logically could not have resulted in their acquiring meaning (at least on its own) must be false.
In this chapter I have discussed various kinds of human activities, which were classified as linguistic or non-linguistic. A linguistic activity is one which involves the utterances of linguistically meaningful words and sentences, a non-linguistic activity is one which does not. Whether sounds uttered in the pursuit of linguistic and non-linguistic activities are linguistically meaningful depends on the nature of the agent's intention, which is also either linguistic or non-linguistic. A linguistic intention is one that can only be successfully achieved by the uttering of linguistically meaningful words and sentences; a non-linguistic intention can be achieved either by uttering sounds which are customarily uttered in the pursuance of linguistic activities, provided that the agent does not disavow a linguistic intention; or by other non-linguistic means. Thus linguistic meaningfulness is essentially linked with linguistic intentions, but not in the sense that whenever sounds have linguistic meaning, there must be an actual linguistic intention; but that at some time previously these sounds must have been uttered with a linguistic intention, which is not being disavowed on this particular occasion. But if a person denies (truthfully) that he has a linguistic intention in uttering certain sounds, then these sounds do not have linguistic meaning, at least on this occasion.
A linguistic intention is an intention to state that..., warn that..., threaten that..., etc; thus the existence of words and sentences is a necessary condition of the existence of a linguistic intention. I do not think this raises difficulties of the "Which came first, the hen or the egg?" type. Linguistic intentions, like non-linguistic intentions (intentions to run across the road, dress oneself, etc.) presumably come into existence with the means of satisfying them; they are processes which develop side by side.

Linguistic intentions can be particular or general. In warning you that there is a tiger in the next room, I may utter the sounds "There is a tiger in the next room"; I could also utter these sounds meaningfully in warning you that there is a dangerous animal in the house, or that there is danger in the next room. To say that a linguistic intention is one that can only be achieved successfully by uttering words and sentences is to say that the achievement of a linguistic intention, at least in communicative activities, depends on the understanding of the words and sentences uttered on the part of the hearer or addressee.

Although sounds which have once acquired linguistic meaningfulness - i.e. are frequently uttered in pursuit of a particular linguistic intention - pass into current use, continue to be uttered in the pursuance of similar
linguistic intentions, it does not follow that on all subsequent occasions when these sounds are uttered they are being uttered with the same linguistic meaning, or with any linguistic meaning at all. If the first consequence is allowed, then it is impossible to explain how it comes about that words change their meaning. If the second consequence is allowed, then it is impossible to disavow a linguistic intention; or it is impossible that the disavowal of a linguistic intention should be taken as evidence that no such intention exists. Both of these consequences are unacceptable. Of course, once a word or a sentence has passed into current usage, i.e. is usually uttered in pursuance of a particular linguistic intention or set of linguistic intentions, then if we utter these sounds to people who are aware of these usages, we must expect the appropriate linguistic intentions to be imputed to us. This is why I think we may say that utterances may be assumed, often, to be linguistically meaningful, even in cases where a linguistic intention is not explicitly avowed. But the linguistic meaningfulness of any set of sounds depends, if not on the actual existence of a linguistic intention at the time of their utterance, at least on the existence of a linguistic intention at some previous time. I am thus claiming that the existence of a linguistic intention either in connection with an actual utterance,
or in connection with a physically similar previous occurrence of that utterance, is a necessary condition of the linguistic meaningfulness of that utterance.

In this chapter I have dealt with the way in which linguistic intentions are necessary conditions of linguistic meaningfulness; in the following chapter I shall discuss whether the existence of a linguistic intention is a sufficient condition of linguistic meaningfulness, and consider various further objections which might arise at this stage.
If I utter the sounds "Catherine can't come" with the intention of asserting that Catherine can't come, or of informing you that Catherine can't come, or of explaining to you that Catherine can't come, etc., then there can be no doubt whatever that the sounds I utter constitute a linguistically meaningful sentence. If I utter the sounds "Catherine can't come" without having previously formulated any linguistic intention - as is usually the case - but if asked why I uttered them would reply "Because I wanted to let you know that Catherine can't come" etc. it is similarly possible to assume that my utterance is linguistically meaningful, and such an assumption would, in this case, be justified, since the sounds I have uttered are easily recognisable as sounds usually uttered in pursuance of this linguistic intention. Linguistic intentions, like non-linguistic intentions, are however not always formulated in words, and not always enquired after. Does the existence of an honest linguistic intention guarantee the linguistic meaningfulness of the sounds uttered in its pursuit? Consider the following
cases:-

1. The sounds I utter in pursuance of a linguistic intention might be illchosen, and if they are sufficiently illchosen, can the utterance be said to be linguistically meaningful? "Illchosen" sounds might occur in two ways:-

(a) I might, in asking you whether you like a certain food, use a word you do not understand (utter a sound customarily uttered to refer to the food in question, but which you do not know is customarily uttered in this way). Since, as has been claimed, it is not necessary in order that an utterance should be linguistically meaningful, that it should be actually understood by another person, or the person to whom it is addressed, this would not detract from the meaningfulness of my word or question. Someone else might understand me, might recognise the sound as one customarily uttered in referring to the food in question.

(b) I might, in asking you a question, utter sounds which nobody could be expected to understand, since they are sounds which are not customarily uttered in asking this question, or in referring to the things the question is about; or utter sounds which are customarily uttered in performing a different linguistic activity. In these cases I may be uttering sounds
which I would understand if someone uttered them to me in pursuance of the linguistic activity of asking this particular question (i.e., I would recognise them as sounds normally uttered or sometimes uttered in asking this particular question) but which I am aware you are unlikely to recognise as such. If this occurs, it could be doubted whether my (linguistic) intention was serious. On the other hand, they may be sounds which I think are normally uttered in pursuance of this particular linguistic intention, but in fact are not. I might say to you "Do you like frow?" under the impression that the sound "frow" is customarily uttered by people who wish to refer to what is usually referred to by the sound "cheese". Are we to say that in this case I have a linguistic intention, but that the sounds I utter in its honest pursuit are not linguistically meaningful? This would appear to be the correct answer, though it is not entirely clear whether my avowed linguistic intention in this case is admissible. This is more difficult than the case where my intention may be confused, and my utterance confused, i.e., when I utter sounds that are something like sounds usually uttered in pursuance of a
generally recognised linguistic intention, or made up of sounds recognisable as words - i.e. usually uttered in referring to certain things, etc. - but in an unusual sequence. We are sometimes not clear what it is that we want to say, whether we are aware of it or not.

2. The sounds uttered by a dying man might be entirely incoherent, but he might be consciously aware of the desire for a glass of water, and in uttering them intend to be asking for a glass of water. The sounds uttered - and marks written - in pursuance of linguistic activities can vary a good deal in physical characteristics, but still be recognisable as similar to sounds and marks usually uttered and written in pursuance of these activities. In the extreme case, however, it is necessary to admit that it is possible to have a consciously formulated linguistic intention and to be able to utter sounds in pursuit of it, but sounds which are not linguistically meaningful. Of course, the man uttering them may be aware that the sounds he is uttering are not the sounds he wishes to utter. This is the straightforward case. But if he is under the impression that he is uttering the sounds he wishes to utter (not the sounds that are usually uttered) then it seems necessary to deny linguistical meaningfulness to them if they are sufficiently incoherent.

3. In performing a linguistic activity I may make a slip
of the tongue. In this case the sounds I utter are not the sounds I intend to utter, and on being asked what I mean, I can put things right.

The difficulty which arises out of 1(b) and 2 is not that they prove that the existence of a linguistic intention does not guarantee the linguistic meaningfulness of the sounds uttered in its pursuit, but that they suggest that it is possible to have a linguistic intention which is not formulatable in words, at least on the part of the person who has it. In case 2, this is only true if we mean "formulatable in spoken words"; there seems to be no reason why we should not say that there are some occasions when we are physically prevented from saying the things we want to say, but nevertheless we can formulate them in unspoken words. In the case of the man who thinks that "frow" is generally uttered to mean what "cheese" is generally uttered to mean, it is I think a matter for decision whether an intention which can only be formulated - by the person who has it - by means of a sound which has a definite reference but is not the sound which usually has this reference, can properly be called a linguistic intention or not. In both these cases, of course, the difficulty arises primarily because of the failure on the part of the people hearing the sounds uttered to understand what is being said - and this, it is felt, through no fault
of their own. It seems reasonable to deny meaningfulness to the utterances of the dying man and the man who asks "Do you like frow?" on the grounds that nobody could be expected to understand these utterances since they are not the utterances usually made in performing the linguistic activities that the speakers are in these cases trying to perform; and that this indicates that meaningfulness, at least in some cases, is more a matter of understandability than of linguistic intentions. And further that "understandability" depends on whether utterances are similar to those usually uttered with certain meaning, and thus in accordance with rules.

I think however that this is a practical difficulty, of the type previously mentioned in the discussion of meaning as being possessed by sounds and marks combined in accordance with rules, and does not show that meaningfulness is sometimes independent of linguistic intentions. That there is a gap between linguistic intention and linguistic performance, very often, is undeniable. Very occasionally, someone, e.g. Shakespeare, introduces a new usage, utters sounds which have never been uttered before with linguistic intention, with a certain linguistic intention, and is understood. The fact is that sometimes it is possible to get away with it, and sometimes it is not; the relevant factors include command of language and facility of expression. When a
scientist introduces a new term or a new way of talking about things, the change is generally more gradual, and its relation to the customary uses is generally made explicit. The difference between "getting away with" and "not getting away with" introducing a new usage is the difference between succeeding in getting yourself understood and not succeeding. But it is possible to utter sounds which have never been uttered before in pursuit of a certain linguistic intention, or in pursuit of a new linguistic intention, and to be understood; that this is possible proves that linguistical meaningfulness is not entirely explicable in terms of rules. That a given utterance is in fact in accordance with the rules of English can be a sufficient condition of its meaningfulness in the sense that it can often be understood by a hearer or a reader (especially) simply by being interpreted in accordance with the rules; that a given utterance is uttered in pursuit of an honest linguistic intention is not a sufficient condition of its meaningfulness. Nevertheless, the claim that the existence of a linguistic intention, either on the actual occasion of or at some previous occasion of any given utterance is a necessary condition of the linguistic meaningfulness of an utterance is I think not affected by the cases discussed so far in this chapter.
It might be objected at this stage that linguistic meaningfulness is not only possessed by human utterances. Sounds can be uttered by animals, and sometimes when these sounds uttered by animals resemble sounds uttered by human beings in pursuit of linguistic activities, it would be arbitrary to deny them linguistic meaningfulness. Suppose my parrot escapes, and is found some distance away by strangers. It utters the sounds "I live at 47 High Street", as a result of which the people who found it return it to me. Can it be claimed that the parrot's utterance was not linguistically meaningful - for if it was not, how did the people who found it know where to return it?

The answer to this seems to be that anyone who found a parrot, and on hearing it utter the sounds "I live at 47 High Street" returned it successfully to its owner, would be doing so not because he recognised the parrot's utterance as a linguistically meaningful sentence in its own right - i.e. as uttered by the parrot in pursuance of the linguistic intention of stating that it lived at 47 High Street - but because he recognised the sounds as sounds which are frequently uttered by human beings when they are pursuing that particular linguistic intention, and knows that (a) it is possible to teach parrots to utter such complexities of sound, and (b) it is likely that the
owner of this particular parrot taught the parrot to utter these particular sounds because the parrot might escape.

If it turns out that the parrot does not belong to the people who live at 47 High Street, it does not follow that the parrot has made a false statement. Nor does it follow that the man who returned it did not understand the meaning of the sentence uttered by the parrot; it would be more accurate to say that he misinterpreted the parrot's utterance, i.e. treated it as functioning as a sign of something which it in fact did not function as a sign of.

The sense in which he could be said to have "understood" what the parrot said is that he recognised the sounds the parrot uttered as sounds customarily uttered, etc., and while I do not wish to say that it would be logically improper to allow some limited sense of linguistic meaningfulness to the parrot's utterance, the main point is that this example does not show that linguistic meaningfulness is ever independent of human intentions.

But since the parrot could not have a linguistic intention, or understand the sounds he uttered, i.e. its owner uttered in teaching it, it would be very odd to say that its utterance was linguistically meaningful. I am not suggesting that the parrot's inability to formulate linguistic intentions and utter meaningful words is a logical impossibility; the parrot is, I think, in this respect in the same case as the Ancient Briton.
It might further be contended that linguistic meaningfulness is sometimes possessed by human utterances which are entirely unintentional; Gladys hears her husband say, in sleep, "I love Dorothy". She immediately takes steps to prevent him from seeing Dorothy again. Was her husband's utterance linguistically meaningless? It was certainly unintentional.

Several possible explanations could be offered as to how Gladys' husband came to utter these sounds in sleep, assuming that he does love Dorothy. They might be interpreted by Gladys as a sign (in the non-linguistic sense that smoke is a sign of fire) that her husband, when awake, pursues certain linguistic (and amorous) activities, namely, thinking and stating (on carefully chosen occasions) that he loves Dorothy. Or she might simply recognise them as sounds which are frequently uttered by people who do have linguistic intentions in uttering them, and reasonably conclude that, although uttered unintentionally on this occasion, these sounds do indicate that her husband is in love with Dorothy. But if she turns out to be wrong in her supposition, she cannot blame her husband for misleading her, as she could if he had uttered the sounds when awake with the appropriate linguistic intention. There is of course a sense in which her husband may "mean what he said" even if he is not aware that he is uttering the sounds. This is I think that if he were awake,
and were asked an appropriate question, he would answer (if he is honest) "I love Dorothy". Here again, it may be more appropriate to allow a sense of linguistic meaningfulness analogous to the linguistic meaningfulness possessed by sounds that are actually uttered with linguistic intention, rather than to say that Gladys' husband's utterance was linguistically meaningful in the strict sense, but the important point is that the example does not show that linguistic meaningfulness is ever logically independent of linguistic intentions, for if "I love Dorothy" were never uttered by people actually pursuing linguistic intentions, Gladys would not have been able to attach any significance to the utterance at all.

The question might also arise as to whether, if linguistic meaningfulness is dependent on linguistic intentions, either at the time of utterance or at some previous time, sounds or marks which occur "out of context" as, e.g. in a foreign phrase book, or a textbook on logic, can be said to possess linguistic meaningfulness, since even if they are recognisable as sounds and marks which have been uttered on previous occasions in the pursuit of linguistic intentions, we cannot suppose that the usual linguistic intention which results in the uttering of these sounds is to be imputed to the writer of the foreign phrase book or the logic textbook. The sounds "I am hungry"
are customarily uttered in pursuance of the linguistic activity of stating or asserting that I am hungry ("I" referring to the speaker, whoever he may be). If I open a foreign phrase book and read:

I am hungry

J'ai faim

are the marks "I am hungry" and "J'ai faim" linguistically meaningless, since the writer of the book is not to be supposed to be asserting or stating that he is hungry - moreover he would probably deny that he wrote these marks in pursuance of the linguistic activity of stating or asserting that he was hungry? And if the marks do not have linguistic meaningfulness, how can the one set be said to be a translation of the other?

In this case, we may say that the marks "I am hungry" and "J'ai faim" are linguistically meaningful, since they are being uttered or written in pursuance of a linguistic intention, but the linguistic intention prompting the writer to produce the marks "I am hungry" and "J'ai faim" is not the intention to state or assert that he is hungry. They are linguistically meaningful because they form part of the larger linguistic activity of writing a foreign phrase book, or providing translations of English sentences into French sentences (i.e. sets of sounds customarily uttered by English people in pursuance of the linguistic intentions of stating that..., asserting that...., etc., into sentences or sets of sounds customarily uttered by
French people in pursuance of the same linguistic intentions), together with the linguistic intention or intentions appropriate to these activities. These would be e.g. the intention to write a foreign phrase book, the intention to provide translations (in the sense already described) of English sentences into French sentences, the intention to illustrate the ways in which some English sentences have the same meaning as some French sentences, etc.

The linguistically meaningful marks "I am hungry" function in this context of the foreign phrase book as a word, rather than as a sentence; they could be said to be occurring in reference to the set of marks commonly written by people who want to assert that they are hungry. And as any sound, if uttered in pursuance of the linguistic intention to refer (allowing for the qualifications made at the beginning of this chapter) is linguistically meaningful, so this particular set of sounds or marks normally uttered by people who want to assert that they are hungry, is also linguistically meaningful.

Similarly, if I say "Socrates is mortal" in illustration of the syllogism, or explanation of the rules of the syllogism, the set of marks "Socrates is mortal" which, it might be claimed, must be linguistically meaningful if they are to provide an example of part of a syllogism, is functioning not as a sentence uttered in
pursuance of the linguistic activity of stating that or asserting that Socrates is mortal, but as part of a more complex sentence or linguistically meaningful utterance, uttered in the course of the linguistic activity of talking about logic, or explaining the rules of the syllogism. Only marks which are generally uttered or written in stating or asserting (or some other linguistic activity which involves the utterance of true-or-false sentences) are appropriate for me to write at this particular stage of this particular activity of talking about the rules of the syllogism, but these marks function differently in this context from the way in which they function when they are uttered by someone who is actually arguing (another linguistic activity) in syllogistic form. In this context of the logic textbook they are being uttered in pursuance of the linguistic intention to refer to the set of marks which are usually written or uttered by people arguing in syllogistic form.
HOW DO TRUE SENTENCES FUNCTION IN HUMAN DISCOURSE?

True-or-false sentences, it has been claimed, are linguistically meaningful utterances which occur in the pursuit of certain types of human activities, such activities being characterised by their being pursued in the attempt to fulfil or achieve certain types of intentions, which have been called linguistic intentions. What, then, is the relation between any particular intention which results in the utterance of a sentence, and the truth of the sentence so uttered (when it is true)?

The particular classes of linguistic intentions which give rise to the occurrence of true-or-false sentences have been claimed to include the intentions to state that..., to assert that..., to warn that..., to deny that..., to concede that..., to allow that..., to admit that..., to confirm that..., to report that..., and so on. These intentions cannot be grouped together as different varieties of the intention to communicate that..., as has already been noted, because the intention to communicate is not always linguistic, and also because all linguistic...
activities are not communicative. It would, however, be possible to group the sentences which occur in the pursuit of these various linguistic activities under the heading "those that give information". This is not very helpful, since sentences uttered in pursuit of other types of linguistic activities may also give information. My command "Shut the door", in most circumstances, gives the hearer the information that I want the door shut just as definitely as if I had, instead, said "I want the door shut". Further, many of the activities listed which involve the utterance of true-or-false sentences are not uttered with the primary intention of giving information. This would apply especially to conceding, admitting, allowing that; frequently also to warning and threatening, and sometimes even to stating and asserting, e.g. on occasions when I state or assert something because this is what is expected of me, and not because I am anxious to give someone some information.

We cannot then say that true sentences are those that succeed in giving information. Only things that can try to do things can succeed, and thus this would have to be interpreted: sentences are true when uttered with the intention of giving information, and this intention is successful. But this is not acceptable; as we have seen, a person's intention in uttering a sentence which is
in fact true may not be to give information; it may, indeed, be to misinform, since he may mistakenly believe that the sentence he is uttering (in stating, asserting, etc.) is false. Nor can we say that true sentences are those from which we can as a matter of fact obtain information, in the sense of learning something that is in fact true, for if this were the case sentences uttered in such activities as asking questions, commanding, etc. would frequently be true (or false). I may not only gain information that you want the door shut from your command "Shut the door", but I may also gain information about your character, your mood, and so on.

Let us consider the activities of stating, asserting, denying, etc., taken individually. Is it possible to say that true sentences are those uttered in pursuing these activities successfully, that truth is constituted by the success of the linguistic activities of stating, asserting, denying, warning, etc.? Now the words "state" and "assert" are not precise in their meaning. They are frequently used by logicians in a technical sense (often unacknowledged) in which they are related to "statements" and "assertions", the latter being themselves technical terms in these contexts for "that which is true-or-false". In speaking of "stating" and "asserting" I have so far intended these terms to be taken as referring to actual types of human activities, activities which involve the
utterance of sentences. Let us consider in more detail what activities these could be. "To state" can be taken as elliptical for "to state the truth of something" and "to assert" elliptical for "to assert the truth of something". "To state the truth of something" could be "to state something to be true" or "to state that something is true"; "to assert the truth of something" could be "to assert something to be true" or "to assert that something is true". If we consider the first of the possibilities described in the last sentence, then if "to state something to be true" is "to state something that is true" and "to assert something to be true" is "to assert something that is true", then, evidently, the success of the activity guarantees the truth of the sentence uttered. And since a successful activity, at least for our purposes, is an activity in which the intention of the agent is successfully achieved, in these cases truth will be constituted by the success of the appropriate linguistic intentions. To succeed in one's intention to state something that is true and to succeed in one's intention to assert something that is true is to utter a sentence which is true.

But this doesn't get us very far. For if stating and asserting something that is true (or something true) marks the success of the linguistic intentions of stating and
asserting something that is true, the concept of truth has been introduced into the formulation of the linguistic intention, and therefore a reference to the success of linguistic intentions does not provide any interesting information about the truth of the sentence uttered.

Consider next the other senses of stating and asserting, viz. "stating that something is true" and "asserting that something is true". It might be said "Clearly the success of these intentions does not constitute the truth of the sentence uttered in their pursuit. It is possible to state that something is true, e.g. that "the moon is blue" is true although the moon is not blue, and it is possible to assert that "pigs can fly" is true although pigs cannot fly. Thus I can succeed in stating and asserting, although what I state or assert may be false".

We may accept, as Ramsey has pointed out, that to assert that something is true is to do no more than to assert something, and similarly to state that something is true is to do no more than to state something (otherwise, again, it becomes necessary to introduce the concept of truth into the formulation of the appropriate linguistic intentions: the intentions to state that something is true and to assert that something is true).

1. See p. 7.
But what is the function of stating and asserting in the complex of human activities and interests? These are not complete activities in the way in which warning and threatening are sometimes complete activities, and running and eating a meal are complete activities; they do not "stand on their own" as these latter activities do. In saying that they are incomplete, I mean that it is not possible to give a full account of them without describing their point: a complete activity is one which it is possible to understand fully, or to give a full account of, without describing the reasons why it was performed. I shall claim that all linguistic activities which can only be pursued by uttering true-or-false sentences are incomplete in this sense. If I utter the sounds "The house is on fire" you may ask me "Why did you say that?" and if I reply "Because I wanted to state something", or "I wanted to assert something", you would be justifiably puzzled; there is no point in stating something for the sake of stating, or in asserting something for the sake of asserting.

"But if", you might say, "when I asked you why you uttered the sounds "The house is on fire" you had replied "Because I wanted to warn you (that the house is on fire)" then I should not have been puzzled; this activity of warning is complete in itself, and self-justifying; and in this case it is a linguistic activity". This raises
important points. There are at least three different types of activity which might be called warning. I may warn you by behavioural signs, e.g. raising a hand. I may warn you by shouting "Stop!" or by saying "There is danger in the next room". The first of these, if it is properly to be called warning (i.e. can in principle be understood as a warning, e.g. by animals, without requiring to be supplemented by various conventions linking it to the linguistic activity of warning) is a non-linguistic activity; the second and third are both (generally) linguistic. It is in the third case that the difficulty arises: what is uttered, it might be said, is a true-or-false sentence, and nevertheless as a warning it is a complete, self-justifying activity. I have up to now classified warning as a linguistic activity at the same level as stating and asserting, but if we investigate further the nature of the intention involved in the activity of warning someone that there is danger in the next room, it becomes clear that the intention in this case could be said to be only partly linguistic. My intention in the first type of warning, the behavioural case, is of the form "to prevent you from coming to harm" etc. This is a non-linguistic intention. However, since "warning" covers all three types of activity listed above, and in particular covers both linguistic and non-
linguistic activities, to say that an activity of warning is linguistic when it is performed in pursuance of the intention of warning that..., or that a set of sounds uttered in warning is linguistically meaningful when uttered in pursuance of the intention of warning that..., is not to give an adequate account of the nature of the linguistic activity of warning, since it has not been made clear whether "warn" is being used in the linguistic or the non-linguistic sense in the description of the intentions necessary to warning as a linguistic activity. In fact, I think, it would be more accurate to say that the sentence uttered or the set of sounds uttered in pursuance of the intention of warning someone that there is danger in the next room is linguistically meaningful if it is uttered in the pursuance of the intention of stating or asserting that there is danger in the next room, in the hope or expectation that it will prevent him from coming to harm, or put him on his guard, or, as in the case of the policeman's warning, in the desire to do what is expected of one or to do one's duty.

Now the intention to state that..., or assert that..., in the hope or expectation that it (the understanding of the sentence stated or asserted, by the hearer) will prevent the hearer from coming to harm, etc., could be described

1. See p. 64.
either as a mixed intention, i.e. an intention which is partly linguistic and partly non-linguistic, or as two intentions, one linguistic (the intention to state that..., or to assert that...) and the other non-linguistic (the intention to preserve or try to preserve someone from harm, etc.). In either case, it is only insofar as the intention involved is linguistic that the activity is incomplete in the sense I have adumbrated. And indeed, whether the sentence uttered in warning "There is danger in the next room" is true or false obviously depends on the same considerations as whether any sentence uttered in stating or asserting is true or false. To warn someone, in the linguistic sense, is to give them some information to act on; put this way, also, it is clear that the intention involved is partly linguistic and partly non-linguistic.

If all linguistic activities which involve uttering true-or-false sentences are incomplete, then it is necessary to discuss the function of these activities in a larger context in order to discover the reasons why we perform them. Let us consider stating and asserting again. One's reason for stating something might be to comply with the policeman's request for a statement. This sort of case does not however provide much help in understanding the reasons people generally have for stating. The policeman's request might be complied with unwillingly,
and in this type of case it could perhaps be said that "state" means much the same as "describe". Let us consider the kinds of contexts in which we utter true-or-false sentences without regard for the moment to the question of what particular activity we may be pursuing, at least at this level. Whether a sentence uttered in pursuing the linguistic activities of stating, asserting, denying, predicting, wondering whether, considering the possibility that, etc., is true or false does not depend on which of these linguistic activities it is being uttered in pursuit of. Whether any such sentence is true or false depends, as we have said, on whether it passes certain tests, but since in order to give an adequate account of the concept of truth it is necessary to discuss the "point" of the tests, the relation of the tests to the purposes we have in uttering true-or-false sentences, a discussion of the larger contexts of human discourse in which true-and-false sentences occur may throw light on the general problem.

Some of the larger activities in the course of which we utter true-or-false sentences (i.e. state, assert, predict, consider, etc.) are describing our experiences, doing science, doing mathematics, doing logic, and influencing people's behaviour. Now these are not all exclusively linguistic performances. We can describe our experiences by drawing pictures or showing...
photographs, and influence people's behaviour by physical force or possibly by psychological techniques. Doing science includes performing experiments, and doing mathematics includes performing pieces of calculation. True-or-false sentences are sounds uttered in the performance of these activities insofar as they are linguistic activities, but it would be impossible neatly to classify every item of activity performed during the course of say doing research into the effects of a certain drug, and label what the scientist was doing on each occasion as linguistic or non-linguistic.

Let us first consider some of our purposes in describing:

A. (a) To say what something is like  
(b) To tell someone else what it is like  
(c) To convey a general impression  
(d) To convey how we felt  
(e) To make someone else want to see it  
(f) To make someone jealous  
(g) To answer a question as to what it's like.

These intentions may be classified as follows:

(a) Linguistic  
(b) Linguistic  
(c) Non-linguistic  
(d) Non-linguistic  
(e) Non-linguistic  
(f) Non-linguistic  
(g) Linguistic.

1. "Purpose" is here being used interchangeably with "intention".
(a) and (b) are linguistic intentions, and can only be achieved by uttering true sentences. It is possible that in (b) one might, in order to let someone know what something was like, have to utter a false sentence, since one might have a reputation for being a liar, and the hearer might therefore disbelieve what was in fact stated. This is unimportant, since it is only because the standard way of letting someone know what something is like is to assert something about it which is true that the speaker in the possible exception to (b) can put things right, and ensure the success of his intention, by uttering a false sentence. This case is thus derivative on the fact that if one wants to tell someone what something is like, or let someone know what something is like, one must utter a true sentence.

(c) - (f) are all non-linguistic, and could, logically, be achieved by uttering either true sentences or false sentences. It might be claimed that (g) could be achieved by uttering a false sentence. I do not however think that the alleged fact that it is possible to answer a question by giving a false answer, i.e. by uttering a false sentence, is evidence that linguistic intentions can sometimes be achieved by uttering false sentences. For the person who asks the question does not want simply to hear someone state something; he
wants to know the (correct) answer to the question. Of course, if someone asks me "What did you do with the pencil?" and I say "I put it in the drawer", under the mistaken impression that this is what I did, whereas in fact, although I have forgotten it, I put the pencil in my pocket, there is a sense in which by saying "I put the pencil in the drawer" I am answering the question, although I have uttered a false sentence. But I could not here be said to have succeeded in my intention, for my intention was to answer the question correctly. Suppose, however, that my intention was to misinform the questioner, then in order to succeed in my intention I must, it might be claimed, utter a false sentence. But if my intention is to misinform the questioner, then my intention is not to answer the question, but I use the question as an occasion for pursuing my intention to misinform him. Asking a question is not uttering sounds in a certain tone of voice, or writing marks with a certain grammatical form and a question mark at the end. Asking a question is an activity: we ask questions because we want to know the answers, the correct answers. Of course, if I ask you where you put the pencil, and you incorrectly answer "I put it in the drawer", your statement that you put it in the drawer, which you may believe to be true, and I may believe to be true, may

1. The eccentric asking of question, e.g. rhetorically, is not relevant to the present point.
satisfy me in a practical sense; I may accept (wrongly) that it is the right answer, the correct answer (note that we do not say the "true" answer) and I may act on it. But insofar as my intention in asking the question was linguistic, it was logically connected with the desire or intention to know the correct answer, and thus my linguistic intention in asking a question can only be completely achieved by receiving the correct answer. Asking questions and answering questions are logically related linguistic activities; the intention to ask a question is not simply the intention to utter a sentence of a certain grammatical form, or signify one's curiosity, but to discover the answer to it; it is the intention to acquire some information.

Nevertheless, it might be urged further, my intention in telling you something, even if not in answer to a question, might be to misinform you, to deceive you, to tell a lie. In these cases my intention would be successful only if I uttered a false sentence. Now the intention to deceive is not always a linguistic intention; it may be sometimes, in which cases it would probably be necessary to speak of the appropriate linguistic intention as the intention to deceive someone into believing that..., or to deceive someone into
thinking that.... It is possible that I might utter a true sentence in pursuance of my intention to misinform someone, under the impression (mistaken) that what I was saying was false. If this happened, then I would not have succeeded in my intention, although I may have thought that I had succeeded. The intention to tell a lie is I think an entirely linguistic intention, and as such is a further example of a linguistic activity which needs to have its point explained in order to give a satisfactory account of it. Normally we tell lies in order to deceive people. However, my point at the moment is not to discuss the implications of the statement that no linguistic activities are self-justifying, but that although there are some circumstances in which it might appear necessary to utter a meaningful sentence in order to deceive someone, or to misinform him, e.g. if one's intention was to deceive someone into believing that Germany is in Asia, or to misinform him as to the geographical location of Germany, it does not follow that some linguistic intentions can only be achieved by uttering false sentences. The linguistic activities, insofar as they are linguistic activities, of deceiving and misinforming are not on all fours with those of being honest with people and informing. If we are to succeed in misinforming, our activity must essentially consist of pretending to pursue the activity of informing; it is only because it is generally known and accepted that the primary purpose of informing is to utter true sentences that it is possible to succeed in misinforming, and this activity thus is logically derivative.
Next consider some of our intentions and purposes in doing science:

B. (a) To find cures (in medical science)
(b) To find causes
(c) To construct scientific hypotheses
(d) To predict (to give information about the future)
(e) To cure people of diseases
(f) To build bridges
(g) To make money
(h) To achieve fame
(j) To formulate sentences to act on.

The notion of what constitutes "doing science" implied in this brief classification may be extremely sketchy, and the intentions and purposes mentioned a very limited selection from the mass of human interests reflected in the pursuit and application of scientific knowledge, but I do not think it could be denied that these are some of the purposes involved, and since my aim is not to arrive at a generalisation by induction from a few instances, but to illustrate a point which I take to apply to all the intentions and purposes embodied in "doing science", a consideration of these few examples may be sufficient to make the point clear.

Which of the intentions listed above are linguistic, and which non-linguistic?

(a) Linguistic
(b) Linguistic
(c) Linguistic
(d) Linguistic
(e) Non-linguistic
(f) Non-linguistic
(g) Non-linguistic
(h) Non-linguistic
(j) Partly linguistic, partly non-linguistic.
Now of these intentions, (a) is linguistic because it is possible to find cures, i.e. discover what the cures for certain diseases are, without applying them, or ever curing anyone. Further, this intention - the intention to find a cure - is general, i.e. the cures would apply to all cases of the disease in question, thus ruling out "finding a cure" in a practical sense of trying out various remedies for a particular discomfort until one hit upon one that worked; this would not be a linguistic - or a scientific - activity. Here, in the case of the intention to find a cure for all occurrences of a disease, the success of the linguistic intention can only be achieved by uttering true sentences. The same applies to (b), (c) and (d); all these are linguistic intentions which can only be successfully achieved by the writing or utterance of true sentences; if the scientist's statement of the cause of X is false, then he has not found the cause of X. In the case of the construction of scientific hypotheses, and of prediction (here being taken to mean "giving information about the future") it is indeed disputable whether sentences uttered in pursuance of these activities are correctly to be called true-or-false (primarily, I think, because of the fact that statements or assertions about the future are in principle unverifiable); however, for present purposes these
questions are not important. The point is that if they are not true-or-false sentences then they may be omitted and are not relevant to the present discussion; if they are true-or-false sentences then they are only true if they do explain observed facts, and do give information about the future. Thus in all of the cases (a) - (d) the intentions are linguistic, and can only be achieved by the utterance of true sentences (whether these sentences are stated or asserted or denied). The non-linguistic intentions (g) and (h) could be achieved by uttering either true sentences or false sentences (it would be possible to achieve them by formulating false theories or telling people what they want to believe, but is not true). However, these two, (g) and (h) could perhaps be considered as ulterior intentions; it would probably be necessary at least to give the appearance of having some of the non-linguistic intentions, or at least of intentions (e), (f) and (j) in order to succeed in them.

(e) and (f) - the intentions to cure people of diseases and to build bridges I have called non-linguistic since both are intentions to do something, the actual doing of which does not necessarily involve uttering sentences. These non-linguistic intentions, however, are obviously connected with other, linguistic activities; in the case of curing someone, with (a), finding cures;
in the case of building bridges, with the (linguistic) activities of (b), finding causes; of (c), constructing scientific hypotheses; of discovering relevant mathematical formulae and in short of pursuing all the linguistic activities involved in doing theoretical physics or engineering. This leads to a consideration of intention (j), that of formulating sentences (or theories) to act on. It is this type of intention which provides the link between the linguistic intentions (a) - (d) and the non-linguistic intentions (e) and (f). Insofar as (j) is a linguistic intention, it can only be achieved by uttering a true sentence.

The point which these examples of types of intentions and purposes in describing and doing science are intended to illustrate is that truth consists in the success of linguistic intentions in these activities. This is consequently a different point from that made by the traditional pragmatist theory of truth. The pragmatists, James, Schiller, etc., were concerned to establish that truth consisted in the success of non-linguistic, practical intentions. The basic principle of pragmatism, as put forward by William James, is that the whole meaning of any idea or concept whatever is correctly expressed in an account of its practical consequences; indeed that the meaning of a concept is identical with an account of its
practical consequences. The pragmatist maxim may be summed up: if you want to know what any concept means, then consider what practical consequences are involved in its acceptance and rejection. James says:

"Grant an idea or belief to be true, what concrete difference will its being true make in anyone's life? What experiences (may) be different from those which would obtain if the beliefs were false? What, in short, is the truth's cash-value in experiential terms?"

There is here, I think, a certain confusion in the use of the terms "concept", "idea" and "belief", but I have quoted the passage in order to illustrate the pragmatists' belief that truth is connected with human purposes, which are assumed to be entirely practical purposes. This would appear to be a one-sided account of the nature of human activities and the purposes and intentions they embody. It will however be useful to consider the traditional pragmatist notion of truth in a little more detail, in order to make clear the implications of the statement that truth consists in the success of linguistic intentions, and to show the exact respects in which this differs from the traditional pragmatist position.

The pragmatic theory of truth was of course intended to provide a criticism of and an alternative to both the coherence and correspondence theories of truth, which it condemned together as "intellectualist". By "intellectualism" James and Schiller meant, I think, undue 1. The Meaning of Truth, p.v.
abstraction. The correspondence theory, for example, they criticised for treating truth as a relation between purely "objective" entities, propositions and facts. Propositions were objective in the sense of being logically independent of any mind, or what I have called linguistic activity, and facts objective in the sense of being chunks of reality, of the external world, which exist and are what they are quite independently of any human intentions or even of language. This, the pragmatists said, misrepresents the situation: truth is a property of certain of our beliefs, which have their subjective and objective aspects, being, according to James, "more allied to the emotions than to any supposed faculty of pure reason". Now the difficulties attendant on speaking of facts, considered as chunks of reality, have been exposed sufficiently completely by many writers for it not to be necessary to go into them at this point. If is over the question of what truth is most properly to be ascribed to that the pragmatists are most interesting at this point. While I do not wish to go into what James may have meant by asserting that truth, or true beliefs, are more allied to the emotions than to pure reason, I should agree with him that "true" is applicable to beliefs rather than to

propositions, and for similar reasons: what he calls the "subjective" aspect of belief may I think be interpreted as the notion of belief as an actual human process (not activity, since I have defined activity as something which is normally purposeful, or displays certain intentions). Believing, like knowing and understanding, are not purposeful or intentional activities, and it is for this reason that they have not been included in the list of linguistic activities which involve uttering true-or-false sentences.

The "situation" in which we find ourselves, and which the pragmatists accuse the correspondence and coherence theories of truth of misrepresenting, is described by the pragmatists as follows. The most important and interesting feature of all human activity, they claim, whether it be practical, ethical, cognitive or of any other kind, is its purposiveness. The business of philosophy, for the pragmatist, is to analyse the relations between various kinds of human activity and their purposes or aims. Pragmatism is defined by Schiller as

"the thorough recognition that the purposive character of mental life generally must influence and pervade also our most remotely cognitive activities....an assertion of the sway of human valuations over every region of our experience".

The analysis of truth and belief is concerned with these more "remotely cognitive" activities. Whenever the truth of a belief is in question, according to Schiller, we find ourselves in the following situation: we have behind us a body or system of accepted (true) beliefs, and we have to fit the belief in question into this system. If we can do so, the belief is true, if we cannot, then it is false. The peculiarly pragmatic twist is given in the assertion that by "fitting" the belief in question into the system we make it true, by finding that we cannot do so, we make it false. Thus the pragmatist gives a special meaning to the term "verification". Every true belief has arisen because of some human need. It has been formulated by human beings to meet not an objective demand of reality (to correspond to the facts) or the world as it in fact is - "the world as it in fact is" obviously cannot, and does not need, to make any such demands - but to meet a need of human nature. It is a "practical postulate claiming truth". In verifying a belief we do not discover it to be true, but make it true. James says:

"The truth of an idea is not a stagnant property inherent in it. Truth happens to an idea. It becomes true, is made true by events."

The making of truth in this way is identical with the

1. The Meaning of Truth, p. xii.
verification of a belief. If we discover that certain fresh beliefs serve our purposes better, the old beliefs that we took to be true become false, and the new beliefs that we adopt become true because they are found to work.

In "Studies in Humanism" Schiller gives an elaborate analysis of the act of knowing and the "making" of truth. He distinguishes seven stages in each "act of knowing":

1. we always use a mind which has some prior experience and possesses some knowledge, and so (2) has acquired some "basis in reality" which it is willing to accept as "fact", because (3) it needs a "platform" from which to operate further on a situation which confronts it, in order (4) to realise some purpose or to satisfy some interest, which defines for it an end and constitutes for it a good.

5. It consequently experiments with the situation by some voluntary inference, which may begin with a "mere predication", and proceed by reasonable inference, but always, when completed, issues in an "act". (6) It is guided by the results (consequences) of this experiment, which go to verify or to disprove its provisional basis. Hence (7) if the results are satisfactory, the reasoning employed is good, the operations performed valid, the results are right, while the conceptions used and the predications made are true.

1. p. 152.
Schiller goes further than this, however, and asserts that the making truth is necessarily and ipso facto also a making of reality. "Successful predication extends the system of knowledge and enlarges the borders of fact. Truth and reality grow for us together, in a single process." He modifies this statement, however, by admitting an ambiguity in the use of the word "fact". In a wider sense, he says, everything (i.e. every object, qua experienced, whether imagined or dreamed of or the subject of an illusion) is a fact; it is independent of us, and is "found" and not made by us. Fact in this sense is taken to mean object, or a collection of objects, and he claims that as immediately experienced these objects forms a meaningless chaos. On the other hand, we make our immediate experience into facts - in the second sense, in which facts are the objects of true beliefs - by selection, valuation and segregation. James makes a similar assertion and distinction when he says of reality "in one sense you create it, and in another sense you find it".

The criterion of truth, for the pragmatists, is utility, or usefulness to believe. A belief is true if it is "workable", if its practically consequences, or the practical consequences of acting on it, are acceptable;

1. Humanism and Truth, p. 94.
acceptable, that is, in the light of human interests, and not in the sense of "worth accepting, because true". This latter sense does not exist for the pragmatists; for them, "acceptable" means (and means only) "can be fitted in with human interests" - or, of course, with accepted beliefs and theories, but these also are only true if they are or have been proved to be acceptable in the first sense, i.e. have been accepted and fit in with those beliefs whose acceptability has already been established. This criterion of utility of workability was applied by the pragmatists not only to empirically or contingently true beliefs, but also to the laws of logic and mathematics and the principle of contradiction itself. Schiller admitted that the acceptance of certain truths of logic would seem to involve no practical consequences, but in the working out of the theory both he and James extended the scope of "consequences" to include practical, theoretical, mental and intellectual, although I do not think they dealt fully enough with or succeeded in explaining the interrelations between these various types of consequences of holding beliefs which would be necessary to show that they were all important for human interests.

Now I think the pragmatists were right in asserting the central importance of what they called "purposiveness"
in the philosophical discussion of the meaning of various concepts, but that their chief mistakes were (a) that "utility" or "acceptability in the light of human interests" cannot be made into a criterion of truth, and (b) that they did not carry their point far enough. The type of criticism of pragmatism offered by e.g. Russell and Moore does not, I think, apply. In "Philosophical Essays" (1910), Russell does indeed maintain that utility is not a satisfactory criterion of truth, but not, I think, for the correct reasons. He asserts, e.g., that it is "surely far easier to discover by direct investigation that the Contrat Social is a myth than to decide whether belief in it has done harm or good on the whole" 1. What the pragmatists would presumably reply to this is that "direct investigation" is itself finding out the practical consequences of holding a belief, and Russell's criticism therefore only applies if a certain assumption, viz. that "direct investigation" and "discovering the consequences of holding a belief" are different processes, is made which the pragmatists do not make. Most of Russell's arguments in this chapter are aimed at proving that "A is true" does not mean the same as "A is useful to believe". None of these arguments are, however, valid, for they all

consist of trying to prove this conclusion by stating alleged facts about how people talk and scientists construct theories and hypotheses. He says, e.g.,

"According to the pragmatists, to say 'it is true that other people exist' means 'it is useful to believe that other people exist'. But if so, then these two phrases are merely different words for the same proposition; therefore when I believe the one I believe the other. If this were so, there could be no transition from the one to the other as plainly there is. This shows that the word 'true' represents for us a different idea from that represented by the phrase 'useful to believe', and that, therefore, the pragmatic definition of truth ignores, without destroying, the meaning commonly given to the word 'true', which meaning, in my opinion, is of fundamental importance and can only be ignored at the cost of hopeless inadequacy."

All that Russell is doing here is to deny what the pragmatists assert - that "true" means "useful to believe", and questions concerning what goes on in people's minds when they use these expressions are surely irrelevant. In order to show that these expressions do not have the same meaning, it would be necessary to show that if it is supposed that they do have the same meaning, certain logical absurdities follow, and this is not Russell's course. The same may be said about Moore's argument

in his essay "William James' Pragmatism" (Philosophical Studies, 1922). Moore here attempts to show that "A is true" does not mean the same as "A is useful to believe" by asserting that it is possible to ask whether A, a belief (statement, proposition, etc.) which it is useful to believe is true or false, and that since this is a meaningful question, "true" cannot mean "useful to believe". Here again, the argument only applies if certain assumptions are made which the pragmatists deny; the pragmatists could deny that the question whether something which is useful to believe is true or false is a meaningful question; in fact it follows from their premises (that "A is true" does mean the same as "A is useful to believe") that this is not a meaningful question. But since their premises were not put forward on the grounds that these are the ways in which people talk about truth and belief and utility, but on (at least purportedly) logical grounds, they cannot be defeated by an appeal to the ways in which people actually talk, what words are (normally) used to mean, or what the people who generally use them think they mean.

It should I think be observed that it might be held that the question whether this type of argument carries depends for its answer on the view that is taken of the nature of philosophical method. Moore certainly held, I think, that any philosophical view that was in contradiction to a statement of fact (observed or
established) must be mistaken, and it would only be necessary to refer to the matter of fact to show that it was mistaken. And if this is so, then of course it cannot be denied that "true" does not mean the same as "useful to believe". But the pragmatists obviously did not think that the fact that "true" and "useful to believe" are sometimes used by people who think that they do not mean the same thing, and that it is possible to ask "Is A, which it is useful to believe, true or false?" (at least when not talking about the philosophical problem of truth) disproved their theory. Thus in order to refute the pragmatist theory of truth it would be necessary to prove that their method of dealing with the problem was incorrect, and it is not sufficient simply to apply, as Russell and Moore do in the passages referred to, methods of arguments which would not be accepted by the authors of the theory they are put forward to demolish.

The more appropriate criticism to apply to the statement that utility is a criterion of truth - and the pragmatists thought that it was both a criterion and the meaning of truth - is that the pragmatists do not explain, and indeed it would seem impossible to explain, exactly what tests this criterion would consist of, and how they could be applied. It is obviously not the particular interests of the person who happens to hold a certain belief that determine whether the belief in question is
true or false, and the pragmatists never supposed this. When they did talk about the actual relationship between true beliefs and human interests, they took refuge in such assertions as that the true belief is the belief that is useful in the long run. They even went so far, on occasions, as to say that truth is an ideal, and that we may find that the beliefs we now hold, even the ones that are most firmly accepted, turn out to be inadequate foundations for action when future human needs and interests become apparent. The perfect truth, according to Schiller, would "satisfy every purpose and unify all endeavours". But the main criticism of the notion of the possibility of a workable criterion of truth which would assess the truth or falsity of any belief in terms of its ability to be used as an aid to the furtherance of human interests in the long run, is not that this criterion is unworkable because it is so complex but (a) that there is no reason for supposing that there are many common human interests, or, even supposing that there are, that they may not change radically as time goes by; and (b) that the pragmatists do not succeed in establishing that there is such a direct link between human interests and human beliefs as they suppose. The further point, that they conceived of human interests in purely practical terms,

I shall refer to again later.

That they did not carry their idea of the importance of "purposiveness" in discussing philosophical problems far enough is a consideration which throws light on another aspect of the difficulty of using "utility" as a criterion of truth. In trying to meet the objections of Russell, Moore and many other writers that the pragmatic theory of truth was "subjective", they conceded more, I think, than was necessary. Despite the passages affirming that "truth and reality grow in a single process" and the way in which we "make" truth already quoted, and numerous other arguments directed against the notion of "fact" used by the correspondence theory, most pragmatist writers do admit the existence of facts in some sense or other, as existing independently of human purposes, in trying to prove that pragmatism preserves the "objectivity" of truth. Now the charge that the pragmatist conception of truth is subjective might be brought in many different ways. If the truth of a belief is determined by whether it is useful to believe - even "in the long run", i.e. whether it is acceptable to human interests - even as a whole - then it would seem to be undeniable that whether any given belief is true depends on what human interests as a matter of fact are. Even if we do not suppose that human interests sometimes change, on a large scale, it is obviously possible that human interests might be other than
they are, and it would therefore follow that any given belief we now hold as true might be false, in the same world, but given a different set of human interests. Thus, it appears, "grass is green" might be false. And that "grass is green" might be false, either because human interests were different, or for any other reason than that grass in fact changed its colour, seems to be entirely un plausible. 

Now from the fact that human interests might be other than they are it does not necessarily follow, even on pragmatist assumptions that "grass is green" might be false. If our interests were different, not only would the truth-value of the sentences we uttered in pursuit of the linguistic activities of stating, asserting, and the complex activities of doing science, describing, etc., be different, but their meaning also would be different. Since our linguistic intentions in stating, asserting, etc., which are modified by and reflect our non-linguistic intentions as in the more complex activities of e.g. doing science, are of the utmost importance in determining the meaningfulness of the sentences uttered in pursuit of these activities, it is evident that meaningfulness is just as dependent upon human interests (which I take to be the sum total of human intentions and purposes and motives and likes and dislikes and (possibly) moral and artistic preferences, etc.) as truth is; though this dependence is
not, I think, as direct as the pragmatists supposed. Schiller, indeed, did apply the principles of pragmatism to the theory of meaning, and in the book "Logic for Use" he outlined a theory of meaning in which he did state that the meaning of words, also, is dependent on and entirely determined by human interests. I have said that the pragmatist theory of truth does not go far enough because I think for the reasons just stated that it is not necessary for the pragmatist to admit that there are certain basic facts of experience - what James called "the hard core of experience" - in trying to avoid the difficulties suggested by critics who say that the pragmatist theory of truth is subjective. Nevertheless I do not think it is possible to avoid assuming the existence of facts at the level of meaning, or that linguistic meaningfulness can be accounted for solely in terms of human interests.

It was part of the argument put forward in attempting to show the kind of methods used by people who have said that pragmatism is subjective that according to the pragmatist view of truth, "any given belief we now hold as true might be false", in the same world, but given a different set of human interests". The phrase "in the same world" is of the utmost importance here; it does seem necessary to suppose that there are some objects of experience, if not objects existing in the external world (though I do not think it is possible to account for the common understanding of
language and its power in communication without assuming that there is common experience of external objects and not just objects of individual experience) and this involves at least acceptance of the statement that there are facts that objects, certain objects, exist. Further, that the truth of these existential sentences is not dependent on human interests, but entirely dependent on the question of whether these several objects do in fact exist.

Another way in which this point might be made is to say that while, if our interests were sufficiently different, our whole conceptual system or language might be different, it cannot be denied that language is about something - that in pursuing linguistic activities one of the centrally important elements of these activities is referring. Nearly all describing is saying something about something, and while it may be true that we might have very different interests in describing, that we might even classify the things we describe differently, and distinguish them from each other on different principles from those we now use, and identify them by different methods, or with different further purposes in mind, nevertheless there must be something or some things for us to refer to, identify, classify, distinguish, for us to be able to talk meaningfully at all. It is not possible that all conceptual or linguistic activities
should be **evaluative** of experience, or of the world, for anything it is possible to evaluate or appraise (i.e. express an opinion of in the light of human interests) it is also in principle possible to describe. In other words, the terms "descriptive" and "evaluative" are defined in terms of each other. It is not possible to evaluate something that does not exist (is not identifiable) and anything that is identifiable is at least in principle describable.

But although the truth of existential sentences may be independent of linguistic intentions, I do not think it would be correct to say that their meaningfulness also is independent of such intentions. What existential sentences mean, in the sense of what kind of ontological status they have, is obviously determined largely by our purposes in various activities, e.g. science, poetry, description, etc.

In discussing pragmatism at some length my main purpose has been to show that although I have claimed that truth is connected with intentions, I do not think that the connection between the truth of any given true sentence (sentence uttered in the successful pursuit of a linguistic activity) and any human intention or purpose, except a linguistic intention, in direct enough for this necessary connection to provide us with a **criterion** of truth. And further, that although the
connection between the truth of a sentence and the
linguistic intention with which it was uttered is direct,
the statement of this connection cannot provide us with a
criterion of truth, because linguistic intentions are
incomplete, and can only be justified in a wider context
of non-linguistic intentions. The pragmatists, I think,
saw that there was a connection between the truth of
sentences (or as they called them, beliefs) and human
intentions and purposes, but they assumed that only
practical purposes were respectable. In a sense, they
were right: they clearly saw (although they did not put
it in these words) that only practical purposes are self-
justifying. In order to explain the connection between
truth and purpose, it is I think necessary to distinguish
between various types of intention in the ways I have
suggested. In classifying intentions and linguistic and
non-linguistic I do not think I have introduced an entirely
new concept or two new concepts, or even that I have been
using the terms "linguistic intention" and "non-linguistic
intention" as technical terms, but these terms are merely
suggested as convenient words for referring to different
types of intention the existence of which, of the
possibility of classifying in such a way, is already
suggested or implied by many of our normal uses of the
term "intention".

Thus I have asserted in this chapter that truth
consists in the success of linguistic intentions and have illustrated this point by discussing the various types of intentions involved in describing and in doing science. Since truth, however, consists in the success of a type of intentions which are not self-justifying, i.e. can only be explained by reference to other non-linguistic intentions, it is not possible to formulate a criterion of truth on this basis. In any case, such a criterion of truth is neither possible nor necessary; as in the first place it has been conclusively shown (as mentioned in Chapter I) that there can be no general criterion of truth, and in the second we have, in the criteria or tests for contingent truth, analytic truth, etc. all that we require. Further, since the business of a philosophical discussion of a concept like truth is not to give a "better-than-the-dictionary" definition, but to explain and display the relations between truth, or truths, and certain other concepts, that the statement of some of these relations does not give rise to a criterion of truth is neither surprising nor regrettable.

In conclusion, I will deal with a possible objection which might be made to my classification of different types of linguistic intentions involved in doing science and describing, as this may I think throw a little more
light on the connections between linguistic and non-linguistic intentions. Someone might say "Surely all these alleged different linguistic intentions which can only be achieved successfully by the utterance of true sentences really all amount to one single linguistic intention, the intention to tell the truth? And it is obvious that if my intention is to tell the truth, I can only succeed if I do tell the truth. Thus the explanation of truth in terms of linguistic intentions is circular, for the definition of "linguistic intention" is in terms of truth".

This argument is not, I think, valid, because the alleged linguistic intention to tell the truth is not, except possibly in a moral and a logically derivative sense, not a genuine intention at all. By this I do not mean that it is an incomplete intention, which needs further justification, but that the notion of the desire to tell the truth or the intention to tell the truth as a separate, identifiable intention cannot be given any substance. I may of course tell the truth, or utter a sentence I know or believe to be true intentionally, but this is not to say that my linguistic intention in uttering it was to tell the truth. In telling the truth - uttering a true sentence - I may have a variety of intentions or motives. I may be intending to warn someone, to impress someone with my
superior knowledge, or to do my duty, amongst many other intentions. But if I feel that I have a moral obligation to tell the truth, I must be able to back it up with reasons - there are always reasons why one should perform one's moral obligation, even if they are only of the "Because my conscience tells me" or "Because it is self-evident" types. If someone asks me, "Why are you morally obliged to tell X the truth about Y?" I cannot answer "Because whatever the true sentence about Y that I ought to state or assert to him is, is true"; this is no reason at all. The reason offered may be that I think X is entitled to know the truth about Y, or that I do not think that I am entitled to withhold the truth about Y from X; but this is not to say that X ought to be told the truth "for its own sake".

Nor is it possible to give a satisfactory account of the pursuit of truth "for its own sake" in non-moral terms. If it is said that a scientist, or a historian, is interested, in the study of science or history, in the pursuit of truth for its own sake, or that he studies these subjects out of a "disinterested desire for truth", what could be meant? A scientist, say a medical scientist, whose interest in performing experiments and using scientific procedures was said to be the pursuit of truth for its own sake would be the scientist who was interested in the purely theoretical side of medical
science, in formulating theories about the causes and cures of various diseases, but had no interest in applying them. The historian whose interest in finding out about the ancient Greeks was the disinterested desire for truth would be the historian who was interested in finding out what the ancient Greeks were really like and what they really did, as opposed to the historian whose interest was in writing a historical novel or finding evidence in support of a theory he might hold about the nature of historical development of the inhabitants of Greece. But to specify the "disinterested" motives of the scientist and the historian in this way is largely a matter of saying that he does not have certain other or ulterior motives in doing science or history. The medical scientist who wants to know what the cure for X is, and the historian who wants to know what the ancient Greeks really did, may want to satisfy their curiosity about these matters, or they may pursue these studies because they take some sort of pleasure in them, as a theoretical mathematician may take pleasure in working out complex mathematical problems. But there are no criteria by which we could judge that a man pursuing one of the activities mentioned above, who had disclaimed all the motives and intentions listed above, and any others, had the intention of pursuing the truth "for its own sake".
If a man said "Yes, I wish to find out if X is true", or "My intention in doing what I am doing is to find out if X is true", and followed this by saying "but I have no ulterior motive for this, nor am I at all curious about whether X is true, nor do I take any pleasure in doing it", this would be a very odd statement.

Consequently, although the "desire to tell the truth for its own sake" or the "disinterested search for truth" sounds as though it would be a self-justifying linguistic intention, I do not think it is possible to give any content to the intention which it purports to describe; the actual linguistic intentions which we pursue in describing and doing science are incomplete, and can only be justified by reference to a further, non-linguistic intention, but they are concrete and various.

In attempting to show that truth consists in the success of certain types of linguistic intentions I have in this chapter considered certain of such intentions against the wider background of the activities of doing science and describing our experiences. Now it might be supposed that this shows (if I have been successful) the relation of contingent truth to linguistic intentions, but since no reference has been made, or no
examples taken from, the wider contexts of doing logic and influencing human behaviour, other types of complex human activities which I referred to as relevant at the beginning of this chapter, there would appear to be no evidence that I have been dealing with the general concept of truth, and not simply contingent truth. This would I think be based on a mistaken idea of the nature of the enquiry. It is not in respect of their contingency that sentences uttered in the pursuit of these linguistic activities are true, if the linguistic intentions of which their utterance marks the pursuit of are successful, but in respect of their truth. The examples which have been given were chosen merely for their convenience and facility in illustration. But sentences which are true are not contingently true or analytically true because of the type of human activity they occur in, but because of the types of criteria or tests which are applicable for their verification. The pursuit of scientific activities, whether physics, biology, medical science, or any other kind, involves the utterance of analytically true sentences as well as contingently true sentences. In particular, mathematics is an important part of most sciences.

Thus although my examples have been taken from the activities of describing and doing science my conclusions

1. See p. 108.
apply to what I have called the general concept of truth, i.e. to all types of truth indifferently, irrespective of their particular types of methods of verification.

There are indeed other problems concerning truth and verification which are extremely relevant to, though beyond the scope of, this thesis. There is, most importantly, the question of just how many types of truth there are: whether analytic sentences are true-or-false, as I have assumed throughout, whether mathematical sentences are true-or-false, whether sentences expressing moral judgments are true-or-false. The answers to these questions depend largely I think on the extent to which the arguments commonly put forward in support of e.g. moral judgments can be systematised and shown to possess some sort of logic sufficiently like or analogous to the methods used in establishing the conclusions of arguments whose conclusions are generally accepted as true-or-false, viz. methods of establishing contingent truth and analytic truth. Also connected are the problems of the relations of sentences uttered in stating, asserting, etc., to sentences uttered in promising, warning (when this is a linguistic activity, but does not involve uttering a true-or-false sentence, but a sentence like "Stop!").
commanding, etc.; I have been primarily concerned with
the relation of the linguistic activities of stating,
asserting, denying, etc. with non-linguistic activities.
There is also the problem of discussing in more detail
than I have done the different types of meaning of a
sentence according to whether that sentence is uttered in
stating, or warning, or excusing, etc., as I have suggested
on p. 33. In the case of all of these problems, and
numerous others, however, I do not think that their solution
or elucidation is necessary for the discussion of the main
points with which I have been concerned.

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