The author clarifies some misunderstandings about the function of Linguistic Philosophy and then attempts to investigate the nature of philosophical questions. He argues that philosophical questions are questions about the logical behavior of linguistic expressions and provides a method of philosophical clarification (which is common among contemporary linguistic philosophers) for the analysis of the concept of education.

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On the Nature of Philosophical Questions and the Function of Philosophy in Education

"It is in words and language that things first come into being and are."
(Martin Heidegger,
Introduction to Metaphysics).

One's conception of the nature of philosophical questions determines his whole thinking about the function of philosophy; its goals, methods, and fields of application. In the first part of this paper it will be argued that there are disagreements and confusions among philosophers of education over the nature and function of their discipline which stem from insufficient awareness and investigation of the nature of philosophical questions. In the second part an attempt will be made to develop and defend the thesis that philosophical questions in education are conceptual ones that can and should be clarified by an analysis and elucidation of fundamental concepts in educational discourse. An appropriate alternative title of this paper, therefore, could be "In Defense of Linguistic Philosophy in Education". Of course, the best I can hope for is to put the onus on the opponents of this thesis for convincing counter-arguments.

The first point made above is a rather obvious one: when there is confusion about the nature of any question it is implausible to expect that agreement could be reached on the criteria for a satisfactory answer. On the contrary, it should be expected that these confusions and disagreements should be reflected in the goals, methods and practices of the disagreeing parties. In philosophy the result of confusion about the nature of philosophical questions usually leads the disputants into eristic arguments, with each one professing to defend his "presuppositionless" philosophy while hiding behind his cherished dogma.

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When this happens the historians of philosophy mark down one more betrayal of philosophy by those who use her name in order to put a front on personal beliefs. Such confusions about the nature and function of philosophy of education are clearly exhibited in the uninformed, conflicting and dogmatic criticisms that have been levelled against contemporary Analytical Philosophy by some educational philosophers. It is not the intention of this paper to enumerate those attacks — that task would be as disagreeable as the task of counting the casualties on the battlefield after the battle — but to provide a very limited sample of the most common assaults against Analysis in order to reveal the source of their confusions.

The first objection to Philosophical Analysis comes from those who maintain that the weakness of Philosophical Analysis lies in the fact that it is "value free" and "destructive" and therefore unsuitable for the constructive task of decision-making in education. J. P. Strain, for example, claims that Philosophy of Education and Philosophical Analysis are two distinct disciplines "not even attempting to do the same thing."[1] Philosophy of Education is described in the most vague terms as "a distinct discipline that uses every available source to discover the relationship between educational activity and the ideas of man."[2] Philosophical Analysis, on the other hand, is oddly misrepresented as "embarking on a program to eliminate general ideas from educational content"[3] and "it may well be that it is bringing consequences the enlightened mind may not want to have."[4] (!)

The same kind of haranguing about the function of Philosophy of Education and its relation to Philosophical Analysis is repeated by Neff in a recent article. Neff says:

> "Only a tenuous analogy can be drawn between analytic philosophy and the philosophy of education; for, whereas the analytic philosopher may make his observations with relative impunity, the philosopher of education is inescapably responsible for decision-making in respect to the values and judgments that guide his enterprise.
>
> The attitude of the analyst is one of "disinterested interest", while that of the educator stems from involvement. The analyst contents himself with describing, explaining, and predicting; the philosopher of education has the responsibility for prescribing what action to be taken in the educational situation . . .
>
> Analysis as it is presently conceived leaves little room for reflection. Rather, it represents learning the tools and playing the game."[5] (!)

No attempt is made by Strain or Neff to clarify their vague statements and substantiate their dogmatic claims; they simply state them — a

[1]John Paul Strain, "A Critique of Philosophical Analysis in Education", *Educational Theory* (July, 1964) p. 228.
[2]*Ibid.*
[3]*Ibid.* p. 186.
[4]*Ibid.* p. 190.
[5]Frederick C. Neff, "On Analysis, Decision-Making and Education", *Educational Theory*, Vol. 18 (Spring, 1968) pp. 149-150.

common practice among similar educational philosophers. At best their notion of philosophy is coextensive with the whole of knowledge and their notion of philosophy of education is coextensive with all knowledge pertaining to education. They insist on stipulating what Philosophy of Education ought to be but fail to provide criteria for the identification of philosophical problems in education. They maintain that they have the responsibility for decision-making in education, but when they are challenged they refuse to show their credentials or point to the agents who charged them with that responsibility. Actually their opposition to Philosophical Analysis stems from insufficient acquaintance with the work of contemporary analytical philosophers and is mainly based on the wrong assumption that 'analysis' must exclude synthesis and theory building in philosophy.

This whole approach to Philosophy of Education is based on a serious confusion between the activity of philosophizing and that of making educational policy. The confusion becomes apparent in the way these educational philosophers try to define philosophy or educational policy. When they are asked what philosophy is they hasten to take the questioner on a grand tour of the various traditional philosophical doctrines. When they are asked to justify their educational recommendations they appeal to the doctrines of their schools of philosophy in order to show how their recommendations are "derived" from these doctrines — as if philosophical doctrines were mathematical axioms. They do not seem to be disturbed by the fact that philosophers who accept the same philosophical position may disagree about specific educational objectives, or that teachers who agree on specific educational objectives and methods may hold conflicting philosophical doctrines.

A second objection to analysis comes from those who deny the first charge and maintain that although analysis is useful in the elucidation of educational concepts and theories it is neither impersonal nor free of value commitments. In his sympathetic criticism of Philosophical Analysis Harry S. Broudy, for example, maintains that "the role of analysis is not so impersonal, not so value free, and not so innocuous."[6] In the final analysis then what Broudy seems to maintain is that all analysis in education is more or less progmmatic or persuasive in nature; it intends to orient educational practices according to the beliefs and attitudes of particular philosophers.

The difficulty in maintaining this position consistently is obvious. If all philosophical analysis is progmmatic or persuasive in nature, then analysis is nothing more than a useful tool both for villains and heroes alike. We cannot distinguish between the eristic arguments of the sophists and the dialectic method of Socrates, since the value of their analysis is only instrumental, depending on the kind of programs it supports or suggests.

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[6]Harry S. Broudy, "The Role of Analysis in Educational Philosophy", *Educational Theory*, Vol. XIV (October 1964) p. 261.

If Broudy's thesis were correct it would make rational communication among philosophers impossible since they would be talking at cross purposes. But if by his statement Broudy wants to suggest that philosophical analysis is a normative discipline, in the sense that it attempts to reveal the norms that govern the behaviour of concepts, then he says something that no analyst will deny.

Unfortunately this conception of Philosophical Analysis only pays lip service to analysis and does not consider seriously the problem of the nature of philosophical activity, which, in the final analysis, is the contested issue.

What makes it difficult to evaluate both criticisms mentioned above is the fact that they talk of analysis in general, as if it were a homogeneous and monolithic approach to philosophical problems. No attempt is made to distinguish, for example, between the philosophy of the Logical Positivists and the philosophy of the Linguistic (or Oxford) Philosophers, the early and late Wittgenstein, Wittgenstein and Ryle or Austin, etc. On the other hand they ignore the fact that concern with language is nothing new in philosophy. There is more continuity, for example, between Aristotle's work in the *Nicomachean Ethics* and Ryle's work in *The Concept of Mind* than between the work of the logical positivists and that of many contemporary linguistic philosophers.

I have considered these two charges against philosophical analysis because they are the ones most commonly used by opponents of Analytical Philosophy in education and most clearly exhibit their confusions about the nature of philosophical problems in education.

In any important discipline when confusion develops over its proper function and scope, it is always advisable to forego any further arguments and return to the re-examination of the nature of that discipline. In Philosophy of Education it is useful from time to time to step back and reconsider the question "What is a philosophical question in education?" The careful examination of that question will illuminate the nature of philosophical activity and will show us what we can expect of the activity of philosophizing in education.

One way the question "What is a philosophical question in education?" is usually answered, in text books and other writings on Philosophy of Education, is by reference either to the kinds of questions that philosophers have traditionally asked or to their metaphilosophical doctrines about the nature of philosophizing.

The first approach seems to be in principle inapplicable and fruitless since, as is well known, the questions asked by most of the great philosophers of the past cover an enormously wide range of distinct disciplines such as theology, philosophy, science, mathematics, political theory, etc. Success in distinguishing their philosophical questions from the non-philosophical ones therefore presupposes that we have already established

adequate criteria of what constitutes a philosophical question, before looking at their questions.

The second approach — appeal to the metaphilosophical doctrines of past philosophers — seems more promising, but unluckily philosophers do not seem to be in complete agreement on the nature of philosophizing. Thus philosophy has been vaguely and ambitiously defined by some as the search for ultimate causes, first principles, basic assumptions, a justified or good way of life, etc. Less vaguely and less ambitiously it has been defined as the critical examination of those ideas or concepts which are assumed in all or many disciplines, but examined by none of them. There seem to be two alternative courses of action within this approach. One is to ignore all philosophical disputes and offer our own stipulative definition of the nature of philosophical activity; the other is to enter into the on-going dialogue and take a stand on the subject. Since the first alternative would be at best useless and at worst an unforgivable philosophical hubris, there is really only the second alternative.

Philosophers who still take their questions to be about ultimate causes or first principles usually offer as two of the principle characteristics of philosophical questions the following: one, that they are the most general; and two, that they are logically the most fundamental or ultimate.[7] So the question "What is knowledge?" seems to pass the test and is therefore a philosophical one, whereas the question "Does A have knowledge of X?" does not, and is therefore excluded. Can we conclude, then, that philosophical questions are more general and fundamental?

Well, the question "What is God?", which is fundamental for many people, is not a general one and yet it is still considered to be a philosophical question. And we can think of a great many general questions that could not be classified as philosophical. For example, the question "Do *all* men wear clothes?" is a general and, in relation to the question "Does X wear clothes?", a fundamental one, but it is not a philosophical question. Generality and fundamentality, therefore, cannot be considered as the criteria for identifying philosophical questions, because they fail to separate philosophical questions from non-philosophical ones. But even if they did make that important distinction, still they would not tell us what *kind* of questions philosophical questions are; whether, for example, they are on the same level with scientific or common sense questions, or whether the scientific methods are appropriate in answering them.

What then does a philosophical question ask for? From the time of Plato many philosophers have said that wonder or astonishment is the source of philosophizing. A philosophical question then would seem to be a question that expresses wonder or perplexity at something. When

[7]Monroe C. Beardsley and Elisabeth Lane Beardsley, *Philosophical Thinking: An Introduction* (New York: Harcourt Brace and World, Inc., 1965) pp. 3-5 and John Harpers, *An Introduction to Philosophical Analysis* (second Edition, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1967) p. 55.

in the Platonic dialogue Theaetetus says that he is astonished at the *meaning* of some puzzling statements, Socrates remarks: "That shows that Theodorus was not wrong in his estimate of your nature. This sense of wonder is the mark of the philosopher. Philosophy indeed has no other origin."[8] Aristotle expresses similar views on the nature of philosophizing. He says: "It is through astonishment that men have reached now, as well as at first, the determining path of philosophizing."[9] For both Plato and Aristotle wonder is not only the beginning of philosophizing; it is the principle that pervades and guides all philosophical thinking.

Although it is true that wonder or perplexity motivates all our philosophizing it is not specifically philosophical. It underlies and directs all our intellectual endeavours, not philosophy alone. We must, therefore, specify more clearly the nature of wonder that accompanies philosophical problems.

The first observation about philosophical perplexity or wonder is that it could not be directed toward the phenomena of the empirical or social world. If the philosopher's problems were empirical problems then he should be able to formulate hypotheses about the world, devise experiments, and hope to discover some laws about it. But if he succeeded in such an endeavour he would not differ from a scientist! And the philosopher is not any kind of scientist; not even a bad scientist. The well-known fact that for a long time, after its inception, philosophy was not clearly distinguished from the special sciences is easily understood when the nature of philosophical inquiry becomes clear. The fact that some ancient philosophers asked some vague questions that later turned out to be scientific ones is not an excuse for asking similar questions today. There is after all no excuse for modern scientists resorting to the methods and practices of astrologers and alchemists. There have always been vague or bad philosophical questions in the same way that there have always been vague or bad scientific questions.

The philosopher does not ask his puzzling questions because some facts are missing, or some phenomena have not been observed adequately, or some experiments are inconclusive; as a matter of fact, he asks his questions when all the phenomena have been observed and the facts gathered. Perhaps this is the reason the untrained mind finds philosophical questions irritating and difficult to understand.

The argument that philosophical questions are not scientific questions is an important step, albeit a negative one, in our search for the defining characteristics of philosophical questions. The next step will be a positive one which hopefully will place us in the land of philosophical activities.

Unlike scientific questions, which are questions about understanding the world, philosophical questions are about our conceptual structure

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[8]Plato, *Theaetetus,* 155 d.
[9]Aristotle, *Metaphysics,* I. ii. g.

through which we understand the world. While scientific questions are primarily empirical, philosophical questions are conceptual. This is why philosophical questions are second-order questions in contrast with the scientific questions which are primarily first-order questions. They are derivative and secondary, arising out of the rest of our thinking about our moral, scientific, and practical problems. It is because they are second-order questions that they appeared later in the history of man's intellectual development. But the derivative and secondary character of philosophical questions does not belittle them. On the contrary, the late appearance of philosophical, as well as other second-level questions is an indication of an advanced state of self-consciousness and self-examination, or as Wittgenstein would have it, of a different "form of life."

Some examples will illustrate the important difference between first-order and second-order questions. The questions of how early young children can learn addition, or of what is the best method of learning foreign languages, are first-order questions, whereas the question of whether these are two different kinds of learning is a second-order question. The questions of how to explain the phenomenon of gravity and of how to explain De Gaulle's nationalistic policy are first-order questions, whereas the question of whether these are two different kinds of explanation is a second-order question.

But philosophical questions do not seem to be the only second-order ones. When we try to trace the historical development of the scientific methods in various cultures and times we seem to be engaged in a second-order activity called Sociology of Knowledge, and when we study the phonology and morphology of different languages we seem to be engaged in another second-order enterprise called Comparative Linguistics. These are both *second-level* activities but not of the same type as the activity of philosophizing. They are still of the same nature as first-order activities because they have to employ the scientific methods in their inquiries. So they are not philosophical inquiries by the already established negative criterion that philosophical questions are not scientific questions. The question "What is explanation?" is about the meaning of the term 'explanation', not about its historical or cultural career. An important corollary of the conceptual, second-order character of philosophical questions is that while the question "What is Philosophy?" is a philosophical question internal to philosophy, the questions "What is History?" "What is Physics?" and "What is Education?" are not internal to History, Physics, and Education because they are second-order conceptual questions. They are, as they should be, appropriately studied by the philosophers of history, science and education. Even the most refined scientific methods could not answer these questions because they are requests for illumination, not corroboration by further evidence.

In our search for the defining characteristics of philosophical questions at the beginning of this paper, we saw that it would be logically impossible to determine what a philosophical question is by studying the ques-

tions asked by philosophers or the answers they offered. It was argued that one had to have a concept of what a philosophical question is in order to know where to look for and how to identify it.

Concepts are not some kind of entities with labels hanging on them. One does not encounter the concept of philosophy in one's experience the way one stumbles over a stone; nor does one find out about the concept of philosophy by looking, as it were, behind the word 'philosophy'. Finally, we do not answer the question "What is Philosophy?" by carefully inspecting its "corresponding idea" supposedly existing independently in our mind. Actually the typical grammatical form ("What is X?") of traditional philosophical questions like "What is Philosophy?", "What is Knowledge?", "What is Learning?", etc., might be misleading because it can give the false impression that the question is about an entity that could be identified and analysed or about an idea that could be internally inspected and scrutinized. The contemporary linguistic philosopher who, for very good reasons, refuses to separate philosophical questions from their symbolic expressions regards philosophical questions as questions about the logical behavior of liguistic expressions. The only philosophical laboratory then is language, in which the world is crystallized and made intelligible. To give up our linguistic hold upon the world is very close to abandoning it. When we fail to show sensitivity and respect for the complex and subtle uses of language we fail to see important distinctions about the world. Those who insist on distinguishing between "mere matters of words" and "the real issues of the world" should remember that "We learn language and we learn the world *together*",[10] or as Wittgenstein would have it: "You learned the *concept* 'pain' when you learned language."[11]

The examination of the sources or causes of philosophical perplexity will further illuminate the nature of philosophical questions. First a disclaimer: it should be clear that although philosophical questions are about language they are not like the questions of philologists, grammarians, lexicographers and linguists, which are about empirical aspects of language. The philosopher's questions are not about missing facts about language but about the *logical* behavior of linguistic expressions. According to Ludwig Wittgenstein, philosophical problems are "deep disquietudes" that arise through a misunderstanding of language; "their roots are as deep in us as the forms of our language and their significance is as great as the importance of our language."[12] These philosophical problems arise either when we confuse the logical features of different linguistic expressions or when we impose upon language a preconceived idea of its proper function. In both cases, according to Wittgenstein, "We do not *command a clear view* of the use of words."[13]

[10]Stanley Cavell, *Must We Mean What We Say?* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, Inc., 1969) p. 19.
[11]Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (Translated by G. E. M. Anscombe. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1953) § 384.
[12]*Ibid.*, § 111.
[13]*Ibid.*, § 122

Gilbert Ryle agrees with Wittgenstein that one of the main causes of philosophical perplexity is the confusion of linguistic expressions that have different "logical powers." The main reason for this confusion is the fact that expressions of the same grammatical patterns are used to express thoughts of multifarious logical forms. And people are misled by their "surface grammar" to think that linguistic expressions have similar logical powers. Ryle concludes his discussion on the source of philosophical problems by saying "Absurdities are the original goad to philosophical thinking."[14]

The way we go about answering questions depends upon the types of questions that are under investigation. If philosophical problems are absurdities, misunderstandings, or "lumps that our understanding has got by running its head up against the limits of language,"[15] then the appropriate goal (and method) of philosophy would seem to be a *therapeutic* one — the removing of obstacles to understanding rather than the making of new discoveries. Although this is the doctrine of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* it is hardly the practice; there is a great deal more than therapy in the book.

The so-called Ordinary Language (or Oxford) philosophers like Ryle, Austin, and Strawson agreed with Wittgenstein's basic conception about the proper function of philosophy but did not share his idea of philosophy only as a therapeutic activity aimed at removing logical tangles and perplexities. They agreed that many philosophical problems are caused by conceptual confusions, but they went on to argue for, and themselves practised, a more systematic description of the logical features of linguistic expressions, almost for its own sake. Ryle, for example, describes philosophy as "an exercise in systematic restatement"[16] and the philosopher as a cartographer,[17] who rectifies the logical geography of the concepts which we already have.

J. L. Austin also studied the rules that govern the behavior of linguistic expressions in various contexts for their own sake and made very delicate discriminations by describing the exact form of linguistic expressions and their place in sentences. In his famous theory of performative utterances Austin challenged the commonly accepted belief among philosophers that the fundamental use of language was to state or describe.[18] In *How To Do Things With Words* Austin developed this idea into a more general theory which distinguishes three aspects in any speech-

[14]Gilbert Ryle, "Philosophical Arguments" in A. J. Ayer (ed.) *Logical Positivism* (New York: The Free Press, 1959) p. 336. For examples of philosophical problems and Ryle's methods of philosophical analysis see his book *The Concept of Mind* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1949).

[15]Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigation*, § 119.

[16]Gilbert Ryle, "Systematically Misleading Expressions" in *Logic and Language*, A. G. N. Flew, editor. (Second series. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1963) pp. 11-36.

[17]Gilbert Ryle, "The Theory of Meaning" in *Philosophy and Ordinary Language*, Charles E. Caton, editor. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1963) p. 153.

[18]J. L. Austin, "Other Minds" in *Philosophical Papers* (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1961) pp. 44-84.

act: (1) The locutionary act, which is any act *of* saying something; (2) The illocutionary act, which is an act we perform *in* saying something; and (3) The perlocutionary act, which is the act we perform *by* saying something.[19]

While insisting that philosophical problems are problems of language, P. F. Strawson sees other even more imaginative sides to philosophical activity. He argues that in order to understand fully our conceptual equipment it is not enough only to correct conceptual confusions by describing the way our ordinary language works. In addition, he says, "We want to know also *why* it works as it does. To ask this is to ask how the nature of our thinking is rooted in our natures."[20] Or the philosopher might want to view the world through a different conceptual apparatus and conduct his discourse about it differently. Strawson sees these two kinds of imaginative philosophical thinking (i.e., explanatory and inventive) as complementary to the therapeutic and systematic aspects of philosophy. Though many linguistic philosophers today would argue that the explanatory and inventive aspects of linguistic philosophy do not appear to be very clearly defined or promising, the majority accepts both the therapeutic and systematic tasks and performs them successfully.

It follows that the charge that linguistic philosophy is restrictive and does not permit any kind of synthesis is simply false. The recent revolution in philosophy, like any other kind of revolution, began with dissent, refutation, and renunciation of some of the doctrines and practices of traditional philosophers and it is quite natural that it should be destructive and therapeutic. However, the primary target of its criticism was not synthesis but the belief that philosophy was some kind of super-science or pseudo-science.

The anti-linguistic philosophers were actually misled by the word 'analysis' which was more of a slogan and a battle-cry than an accurate description of the actual practices and doctrines of linguistic philosophers. The term 'analysis', which implies the opposite of 'synthesis', led them to the mistaken conclusion that those who are engaged in the analysis of concepts must necessarily be opposed to any effort towards synthesis or integration. This assumption is, of course, historically and logically invalid. The analysis of the basic concepts of our ordinary or scientific discourse has always been a major concern of philosophers. Even a superficial acquaintance with the dialogues of the great synthesizer Plato and the works of Aristotle is sufficient to show the truth of this.

Linguistic philosophers are not opposed to synthesis or integration as long as it does not proceed from some preconceived idea which makes philosophy programmatically a synthetic discipline. What the linguistic

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[19]J. L. Austin, *How To Do Things With Words* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965).

[20]P. F. Strawson, "Construction and Analysis" in *The Revolution in Philosophy*, Ayer *et al.* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1956) p. 107.

philosopher suggests is that we should investigate *whether or not* there can be such a synthesis by considering the extent to which the logical features of the basic concepts of various disciplines permit us to make any generalizations about them.   A more specific reason for being on guard against hasty and impatient synthesizers and integrators in education is that their high-sounding "generalizations" are usually vague and confusing slogans.   In their programmatic endeavours they very often use familiar and ordinary words in unfamiliar and extraordinary ways without asking themselves: "Is the word ever actually used in this way in the language-game which is its original home?"[21]   If they asked themselves this question, the answer would usually be negative and then they would have the responsibility for building the language-game that would serve as the new home for the word — something that the specialists in various disciplines always do.   And this difficult job of determining the use of a new concept has to be done always against the background of the rules and devices provided by ordinary language.   Gilbert Ryle argues that linguistic philosophers, unlike professionals and specialists, reject the technical philosophical jargon of their predecessors for a very good reason.   We know by what special sorts of work and under what circumstances the specialists master the technical aspects of their specialization.   What is the corresponding special sort of work by which philosophers master, for example, the technical concepts of 'essence', or of 'secondary qualities"?   Ryle asks "What exercises and what predicaments have forced them to learn how to use and not to use these terms?"   And he concludes: "Philosophers' arguments which turn on these terms are apt, sooner or later, to start to rotate idly."[22]

To the philosophers who insist on questioning the thesis that we should proceed from and rely on ordinary language Wittgenstein replies:

> "Is this language somehow too coarse and material for what we want to say? *Then how is another one to be constructed? —* And how strange that we should be able to do anything at all with the one we have!"[23]

In other words, the philosopher who chooses to deviate from ordinary language is under the obligation to justify his innovations by providing the conditions that would make his concepts — and, therefore, his philosophical questions and answers — intelligible.   If he cannot do that then we should not give him our ear — his arguments are most probably rotating like an idling engine.

One of the most noticeable consequences of the thesis that philosophical questions are questions of meaning is the change in the way linguistic philosophers deal with philosophical questions.   As Waismann observes, while "previous philosophers have almost always directed attention to

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[21]Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations,* § 116.
[22]Gilbert Ryle, "Ordinary Language" in *Ordinary Language,* V. C. Chappell, editor.   (New Jersey, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1964)   p. 38.
[23]Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations,* § 120.

the *answers* given in reply to philosophical questions . . . the new point of view . . . ignores the answers and directs all its attention towards the questions."[24]

In their impatience to offer answers philosophers failed to examine the nature of the questions they were trying to answer. They did not see that they could be misled by the analogies, metaphors, and ambiguities of their own language. It is because of these unsuspected problems that much of what they said is not so much false as it is vague, confusing and misleading.

Now when linguistic philosophers direct their attention towards understanding the meaning of questions rather than answering them they appear to be only destructive and negativistic. This is true but with an important qualification; their operations are destructive but only, as Ryle remarks, in the way that threshing operations are destructive — they separate the meaningful and significant questions from the meaningless. When Ryle, for example, in *The Concept of Mind* examines a family of what he called category-mistakes in order to show that the double-life theory was mistaken, his purpose is partly destructive. But the result of his conceptual operations is the new way we are forced to think about the concept of mind if we are persuaded by his logical mapping of the concepts involved.

It would be a very complex task, not falling within the scope of this paper, to describe all the ways in which linguistic philosophers try to elucidate the logical features of various concepts in their complex network of relationships with other concepts. I have chosen to describe only the following method for three rasons. First, because the discussion of this method further illustrates the conceptual nature of philosophical questions. Second, because it illustrates both the systematic and therapeutic aspects of much of contemporary Linguistic Philosophy. Third, because it will serve us well in discussing an example of conceptual inquiry in education.

This method, which is employed to a certain extent by all major linguistic philosophers, is summarized by Cavell in his attempt to evaluate an alleged disagreement between Gilbert Ryle and J. L. Austin on the term 'voluntary'. Cavell distinguishes between three types of statements that linguistic philosophers make when they try to describe the logical features of a concept.

> "(1) There are statements which produce *instances* of what is said in a language ("We do say . . . but we don't say—"; "We ask whether . . . but do not ask whether—"). (2) Sometimes these instances are accompanied by *explications* — statements which make explicit

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[24]F. Waismann, *The Principles of Linguistic Philosophy*, edited by R. Harre, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965), pp. 3-4. Waismann makes the same remark in "How I See Philosophy" in A. J. Ayer, editor, *Logical Positivism* p. 351: "In philosophy, the real problem is not to find the answer to a given question but to find a sense for it."

what is implied when we say what statements of the first type instance us as saying ("When we say . . . we imply (suggest, say)—"; "We don't say . . . unless we mean—"). Such statements are checked by reference to statements of the first type. (3) Finally, there are *generalizations,* to be tested by reference to statements of the first two types."[25]

One would expect therapeutic philosophers to employ primarily procedures (1) and (2) in their attempts to dispel conceptual confusions (by revealing inappropriate uses of language), whereas systematic (linguistic) philosophers would use all three procedures in order to develop logical maps of our conceptual structure.

Now let us employ the above procedures in order to evaluate an important claim made by R. S. Peters in several of his writings on the concept of education. Peters maintains, purely as a result of his analysis of the concept of education, that " 'Education' is inseparable from judgments of value."[26] This, he argues, is not a programmatic statement about education but a conceptual or logical truth about the term 'education'. Two important corollaries of this statement are to be found in the "task" and "achievement" aspects of education; in its task aspect education "commits us . . . to morally legitimate procedures",[27] while in its achievement aspect we are committed to valuable or worthwhile objectives.

I take these statements to be *generalizations* about the concept of education which, according to the procedures described by Cavell, should be supported by *instances* and *explications* of the way we talk about education. Unfortunately there is only one instance where Peters does appeal to ordinary language. In order to support his value claim about the achievement aspect of education Peters says that it would be a contradiction to say "My son has been educated but has learnt nothing of value." When he comes to the task aspect of education Peters does not make any reference to ordinary language; he simply claims that one cannot "condition children to 'pick up' certain things without their realizing that they were picking anything up", or give children orders, or discourage individual choice and still claim that one is educating them.[28]

Now if Peters' claims were made as a result of a thorough examination of the logical features of the concept of education we should not be able to find *counter-instances* to his thesis. But the counter-examples in our ordinary talk about education are abundant. Against his example "My son . . ." we can juxtapose the statement "Your education is not worth

[25]Cavell, *Must We Mean What We Say?* p. 3.

[26]R. S. Peters, "What is an Educational Process" in R. S. Peters, editor, *The Concept of Education* (New York: Humanities Press, 1967) p. 3. Peters makes the same claim in "Aims of Education — A Conceptual Inquiry" in *Philosophy and Education*: Proceedings of the International Seminar, Made 23-25, 1966 (The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1967).

[27]*Ibid.*

[28]*Ibid,* pp. 3-4

a penny", or, since Peters insists that one should talk from the inside of a form of life, the statement "My education is completely worthless." Counter-examples to his task requirements one can find both in the family and the school, where some of the most valuable aspects of one's education, i.e., useful habits, refined tastes, desirable attitudes, etc., are picked up without much conscious effort or rational choice. Consider also the example of a parent who criticizes the excessive permissiveness and lack of discipline of the local school when he says "That school has neglected completely the education of our children." Simply to claim that these are not legitimate or significant uses of 'education' is to legislate for ordinary language and thus justify Broudy's claim that the work of linguistic philosophers "is not so impersonal, not so value free, and not so innocuous."

Peters' general claim then about the concept of education cannot be simply a conceptual truth arrived at through analysis of the concept of education. A close examination of his argument will reveal that Peters has restricted his discussion of the concept of education to those uses of the term that appear in contested claims over the legitimacy and value of particular educational processes and objectives. This is the programmatic or evaluative use of 'education' which incorporates, among other things, the value commitments of the disputants. Peters' thinking seems to have been completely dominated by the logical rules that govern the behavior of the word 'education' in this context. As a result, his view of the concept of education was distorted and he thought that what was true of the programmatic use of 'education' covered its whole logical behavior. In effect, Peters' use of the concept of education applies *only programmatically* to the following uses of the term:

(1) 'Education' as knowledge, skills, habits, attitudes, etc. that have been acquired or developed, and

(2) 'Education' as teaching, training, and developing the knowledge, skills, characters, etc., of the pupils.

Two other important *descriptive* uses of 'education' are completely neglected. They are:

(3) 'Education' as a social, political, cultural, and economic institution, and

(4) 'Education' as the systematic study of the problems, methods, and theories of teaching and learning.

If Peters' purpose was to clarify our thinking about education by analysing its most fundamental concept, then he has failed in two important ways:

(1) He claims to be doing conceptual analysis when he is actually offering us a programmatic definition of education, typical of most rationalistic philosophers.

(2)   His programmatic definition is narrow and restrictive because it leaves out very important educational processes and ignores important areas of educational study.   In addition, he fails to offer arguments for his value claims, mistaking them as the outcome of his conceptual analysis!   (I have considered only one important problem in Peters' argument.   A thorough criticism and evaluation of his thesis would require another long essay).

If the primary job of philosophy of education is to elucidate the conceptual foundations of educational thought — as this paper argues — then it cannot make educational policy.   Educational philosophy can only set the stage for educational recommendations; it cannot prescribe because it cannot be a substitute for evidence and good arguments which are also required in making educational policy.   Educational policy making is an *architectonic* discipline that presupposes, besides philosophy, knowledge of the cultural, scientific, and political values of a society.

In case of doubt or temptation to confuse these two kinds of activities one should ask himself the following two questions: (1) "By what special kind of training and skills does one earn the right to engage in the philosophical elucidation of educational concepts?", and (2) "By what special kind of training and with what kinds of knowledge does one qualify in making educational policy?"

When the role of philosophical activity in education is clear, then it becomes obvious that trying to make educational policy by appealing to some philosophical doctrines or through wrong-headed programmatic analysis comes about because of the failure in understanding both the function and limitations of philosophical analysis and the preconditions of policy making in education.