

Transformational Theory of Meaning (Understanding)

Bryson Daudi Kinyaduka

Abstract: The purpose of the paper was to develop the Transformational Theory of Meaning (Understanding). The methods that were used include semi-structured interview, observation and introspective inquiry. The participants were four and the researcher himself was the fifth. Convenience sampling technique was used to rich the participants. The data collected were analysed through content analysis. From the analysis, the Transformational Theory of Meaning (Understanding) was generated. The main assumption of the Theory is that meaning or understanding of a word (symbol) used in language, or symbols in the universe happens in continuum. One does not know every detail about a word or symbol in the universe; however, the meaning or understanding of something manifests in versions, and each new version of meaning or understanding influence individuals in terms of behaviour, perspective or practice. The paper provides a comparison of Transformational Theory of Meaning (Understanding) with other related theories. As such, the contribution of the paper to existing theories of semantics is that we incrementally understand symbols in the universe. This includes the symbols of language. We do not understand symbols in totality. It follows that we remain lifelong learners in the universe from the time we are born to the time we die. Thus, we undergo continuous change or improvement in terms of personality from interacting with nature. Moreover, lack of knowledge on a particular symbol it is not a weakness, but it is a growth stage. Besides, the pinpointed theoretical and knowledge contribution, the paper provides the implications of the theory in some of spheres of life. The paper concludes that we know little about everything; we cannot understand every detail of a symbol (word, person or phenomenon etc.) in the universe. We understand things incrementally in interacting with nature. Nature encompasses man, and everything in the universe. Of course, nature includes, the universe, man and his mind.

Key words: Nature, Theory, Meaning, Understanding, Universe, Interaction, Language, Symbol, Change, Lifelong Learning.

INTRODUCTION

Transformational Theory of Meaning (Understanding) is an outcome of extended interpretation of data collected in developing Multiplicity Theory (Kinyaduka, 2024). The interpretation of the data appeared to go beyond the scope of the paper on the Multiplicity Theory. The understanding of the data pattern was reserved for future standalone paper. Thus, the data and the methodology remain the same but the interpretation and the logic behind the

data analysed is different. The extended interpretation and the logic culminated in the Transformational Theory of Meaning (Understanding). As a derivative of previous data, the paper presents the methods, data presentation, Logic of data, Transformational Theory of Meaning (Understanding), discussion based on existing related theories, and implications of the Transformational Theory of Meaning (Understanding) in some of spheres of life (contexts). The spheres of life include but not limited to social, political, educational, and technological. This is a grand theory; it explains a wide range of situations (Esieboma, 2024). As a grand theory, the Transformational Theory of Meaning (Understanding) explains whatever event in life relating to individuals or corporate person change or improvement in terms of behaviour, opinion, perspective, belief, view point, product, practice and what have you. To understand better this change, one has to understand that a human being action is guided by a theory (Esieboma, 2024). A theory that guides a human action can be implicit or evidence-based (Lindgren, 1959). Worth noting, implicit theory is not evidence-based whereas evidence-based theory is from science (empirical data) (Lindgren, 1959). This implies that in implementing evidence-based theories we need implicit theories to guide our actions or practices. Decisions and practices of a man are from theories. Therefore, human being actions are from the theories, which are implicit and evidence-based. In this regard, the Transformational Theory of Meaning (Understanding) like other theories is helpful in guiding a mankind actions.

From the view of the Transformation Theory of Meaning (Understanding) that we understand symbols in the universe incrementally, this explanation is similar to that of Karl Marx (1818-1883) on contradictions in the economic systems ultimately resulting in social change (Zwart, 2021) given this understanding; then, it follows that the Transformational Theory of Meaning (Understanding) assists us to: predict the nature and the possible behavioural change or improvement of an individual or of a organisation; understand that we cannot remain the same in terms of behaviour and/or shape in lifetime long, or all along; the behaviour and/or practices we see today into an individual or a organisation most of them are likely to **change**; predict possible changes or improvements in terms of behaviour, beliefs, perspectives, and practices of individuals or organisations in the future; predict possible risks emanating from change of individuals as we work with people; predict the risk of audience misunderstanding us in communicating with them; and take precautions to mitigate adverse effects from the possible risks. In this regard, the theory helps us predict possible changes and generate alternative plans for cushioning risk adverse effects in our life. Indeed, the theory may be useful in guidance and counseling; particularly, when individuals or organisations encounter crisis. This is because the theory is optimistic towards all events (including those which are perceived as incidents) in the universe. From the aforementioned benefits we may accrue from the theory, it is worth understanding the theory and applying it in real life situations to improve the wellbeing of individuals and organisations.

In another school of thought, Naom Chomsky talks about the Language Acquisition Device (LAD) Theory. The theory explains about early childhood seamless language development. The surprising ability to generate correct sentences in automation is well explained through the theory (Khakimova, 2025). However, how come a child or an adult seamlessly generates sentences using different words, but they take longer time to explain their meanings when required to do so? It is the role of the Transformational Theory of Meaning (Understanding) to explain or to answer this question. The Transformational Theory of Meaning (Understanding) was generated from the logic of data analysed. The next section is about the methods used in the study.

METHODS

The author used introspection inquiry to understand the meaning contradictions. From introspection inquiry, the author chose any familiar word to explain its meaning, and then compared the meaning from that attached in him to that in the literature or dictionary. The author learnt that the meanings in him and those in literature or dictionary slightly varied due to word choice. The same technique was used to understand the meaning attached to participants of the study and that in the scholarly works or dictionary. The participants were required to state the meaning of a word that was presented to them, and then, their meanings were compared to those in a dictionary or scholarly works. Further, semi-structured interview was used to draw information on the meaning of a target word (concept). The word selected was the one assumed very familiar to participants. The word used was the Sun. Other words that were used to develop the Multiplicity Theory were: education, soil, capital, cough, and standing (Kinyaduka, 2024). The sun is used in this study because it was not included during analysis in the previous study. The rest of words were analysed in the previous work on Multiplicity Theory. The participants were Bachelor, masters and Doctor of Philosophy degree holders. Typical case sampling technique was used to include participants in the study. It was assumed from their level of education they could express their understanding about the concept, the Sun seamlessly. Four participants were involved in the study. During interview, the researcher used observation to learn how the participants were able and/or comfortable in explaining the meaning of a target word (concept). Content analysis was used to analyse the data from all methods of data collection. In view of this, rational coding was used. The researcher checked the similarity of content words that were used to define the target concepts across participants. Besides, the researcher compared the number of content words that were used to define a particular concept. The steps that were followed include: first, understanding the problem which was; do individuals have exactly same understanding of a concept they use in daily life? Second, the researcher chose the participants whom he assumed had rich understanding about a concept because of their level of education. Third, the research identified the similarity and differences in concepts used to define a word across participants. Further, the number of content words used to define a concept were determined; subsequently, the definitions, similarity of words

used and their number was compared to that found in the Cambridge dictionary. Fourth, concept development was made in a holistic sense, the concepts of which were used in developing the main assumptions, and subsequently, the specific assumption of the derived theory. Since the participants were few and the data were not that detailed, the analysis did not use any software to aid the analysis process. Importantly, the theory name was given after data were analysed and interpreted, the assumption(s) of the theory were developed and then the researcher went through different theories of meaning to check whether or not there was a theory which exactly echoed the name, contents, or with a different name, but with the same assumptions (contents).

Data Presentation

As has been hinted in the methods section, during introspection inquiry the author learnt that the meaning of target word (concept) that usually would be instantly and almost unconsciously employed to generate sentences, one would use a lot of efforts and time to explain its meaning. From the self-evaluation, for example, the researcher learnt that he used the words fluently without actually understanding the formal or professional meaning. From this experience, the question was, do I really understand the meaning of words I usually use during conversation or writing? The answer for this question was really not at all. This is easy to experiment. Take any word and try to explain its meaning and then go into the literature or dictionary to check the meaning and compare its meaning to that of yours. Through this introspection, you notice the differences in words used to explain the meaning of a particular word of your choice; consequently, variation in meaning from the one in the dictionary/literature and that of yours. This raises pertinent questions; do we share the same meaning during conversation? Do readers of books, or articles understand what authors exactly mean? The differences in word choices signals we have varied meanings we attach to symbols (objects or concepts).

Moreover, from the interview of the participants, there was variation in concepts that were used to explain a concept. Three participants whose data were available used different words to explain the meaning of the target word. The difference was in terms of number of content words that were used in explaining the meaning of a concept. In this regard, further evidence on variation of number of concepts and word choice in explaining the meaning across individuals and words is presented under:

Concept of the Sun

We had five concepts from which data were collected; however, one concept is going to be used to clarify the variation in terms of meaning of a familiar concept across participants. One concept is used because the variation in terms of words stating the meaning of a concept is vivid across concepts included in the study. Further, other concepts have been well articulated in a paper on the Multiplicity Theory and Its Implications in Education (Kinyaduka, 2024). In any case, one can make a reference to this paper if he/she wants to

see the variations in explaining the meaning of a word. Table 1 shows the variation in concepts used in explaining the meaning of the word, the Sun. The Table shows the meaning by a scholar, Cambridge dictionary, participants, concept, and meaning word clusters attributed to the concept, the Sun. As it stands, the meaning word clusters sound infinity.

Table 1. Scholar, Cambridge dictionary, Participant, concept and meaning word clusters

Scholar (S), dictionary (D) & Participant (P)	Concept	Layer/cluster 1	Layer/cluster 2	Layer/cluster 3	Layer/cluster 4
S (Haubold, H.J. & Mathai, A.M. (1995)	Sun	Main-sequence star	(Phase, stellar, evolution, stars, fuse, hydrogen, cores), (massive, ball, gas, together, gravity)	Word cluster for phase, stellar, evolution, fuse, hydrogen, cores is needed. Also, cluster for massive, ball, gas, together, gravity is needed	Word clusters from cluster 3 go on.
D	Sun	Star, provides, light, heat, earth, around, moves	(large, ball, burning, gas, space), (give, someone, something), (brightness, sun), (quality, hot/warm), (third, planet, sun), (direction, surrounding), (change, position)	Again, we need word cluster for large, ball, burning, gas, space and others as they appear in cluster in D cluster 2.	Word cluster from cluster 3 will do here. The clusters are endless.
P1	Sun	Light, natural, earth, surface, use, solar, nuclear	Each concept in cluster 1 may have a cluster of words from P1	Concepts in cluster 2 may have clusters from P1	Concepts in cluster 3 may have clusters of words from P1
P2	Sun	Central, body, solar, system	Each concept in cluster 1 may have a cluster of words from P2	Concepts in cluster 2 may have clusters from P2	Concepts in cluster 3 may have clusters of words from P2
P3	Sun	Light, provider, earth	Each concept in cluster 1 may have a cluster of words from P3	Concepts in cluster 2 may have clusters from P3	Concepts in cluster 3 may have clusters of words from P3
P4	Sun	Missing data	Missing data		

In Table 1, we see the meaning of the word, the Sun from astronomers. The astronomers have two meaning word cluster in cluster 1. In meaning word cluster 2, astronomers have twelve words explaining the meaning of the two-meaning word cluster for the Sun. The twelve words are clustered into two main groups based on the concepts in cluster 1, Main-sequence star. In cluster 3, we would expect a larger number of words and meaning word clusters, the same applies for cluster 4, 5, 6 and so on. The more you clarify each word the large the number of words. This is the pattern one sees in whatever word one describes based on the meaning explanation.

Concerning the meaning of the word the Sun based on the Cambridge Dictionary, Table 1 shows seven meaning word clusters in cluster 1. In cluster 2, the seven-word clusters have twenty meaning word clusters. The meaning word clusters are in seven categories. In cluster 3, we need twenty categories with the meaning word cluster Y. The clustering continues as has been point out above. The creation of meaning word clusters is an endless process.

In relation to the meaning of the word, the Sun based on the participants, participant (P1) had seven meaning word cluster which relatively varied from the meaning word cluster of the astronomers and the Cambridge dictionary. The P2 and the P3 had four and three meaning word cluster, respectively. The words used in the clusters also varied. As for cluster 2 of the participants, we did not have the meanings for each word from cluster 1. The participants were not asked to state the meaning of each word in cluster 1. Without doubt, in cluster 2 there would be seven meaning word clusters for P1, four meaning word clusters for P2 and three meaning word clusters for P3. As such, the number of words in cluster 2, 3, 4 and so on would incrementally be larger than that in meaning word cluster 1. Indeed, there would also be some variations in word choice in explaining the target words in the meaning word clusters. From the above findings, we can present the explanations in a meaning diagram for any concept we know. Figure 1 represents the meaning word clusters.

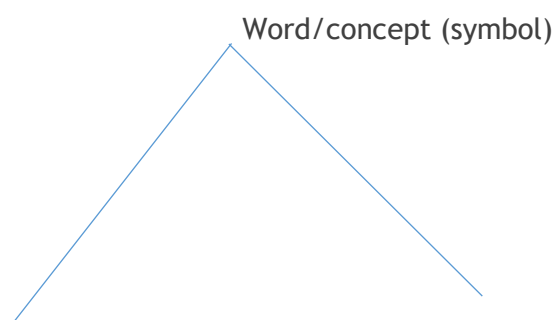


Figure 1: Baseless Pyramid of meaning

Figure 1 shows that a word or concept creates a pyramid of meaning because the number of words used to explain the meaning of words or the words one is required to comprehend concepts representing the meaning of a word. The number of words representing the meaning of a word increases with explanation of each word used to clarify a word/ main concept. For one to understanding the meaning of the main concept one has to comprehend all ingredients (words explaining it) of a symbol. A group of words explaining the meaning of a concept is called meaning word cluster. Further, Figure 1 shows that the words or concepts can be clarified without limits creating a pyramidal shape of meaning word clusters. This tempts us to name this theory as Baseless Pyramid Theory of Meaning (Understanding). However, calling it the Transformational Theory of Meaning (Understanding), it is better than the name, the Baseless Pyramid Theory of Meaning. This is because the theory covers the understanding of all

symbols (objects, person and/or organization practices) across the universe. Language symbols are not exclusive.

To add, during observation of participants explaining the meanings of concepts, it was revealed that the time used to reflect in explaining the meaning of a concept was relatively longer than the time usually used to retrieve and use the same word in generating sentences in conversations or in writing. One of participants was observed and heard talking to her-self aloud saying: *"I never thought I might be asked the meaning of soil; I find it hard to say what it is."* Having heard what she said, I encouraged the participant to just write what she thought soil was it did not matter. In the same way, the participants appeared reflecting and grappling to explain the meaning of the concept, the sun, which it was assumed familiar to the participants.

Logic of Data and Transformational Theory of Meaning (Understanding)

Logic of data

The meaning of the concept, the Sun is from an aggregate of other words (descriptors). This is to say the Sun is a concept with endless descriptors forming its meaning. The number of descriptors forming the meaning of the word, the Sun increases as one continues to explain each descriptor. As has been shown in Figure 1 If we were to put the concept the Sun at the top, and its descriptor under it, we would create a pyramid of words forming the meaning of the concept, the Sun. We would have a triangle of words without a base forming the meaning of the concept, the Sun. This understanding makes us wonder how is it possible for us to use the words fluently and in high tempo during speeches and/or in conversations at the same time considering the word meaning baseless triangle of each concept or word we use. If we cannot consider the word meaning baseless triangle during speech production or sentence construction, we can correctly conclude that we do not know the exact meaning of words we use during interaction. To say it differently, we do not know what we say. In the same vein, the listeners do not understand us because they suffer from the same problem of word meaning baseless triangle. In any case, we do not understand fully each other in speeches or through writings. This is because the concepts we use are summaries of countless descriptors under them, which we do not understand, or we have varied understanding of the same.

Users of words tend to take longer time to explain the meaning of familiar words than time used to retrieve and use the same words to generate sentences. For example, if you ask an adult who is not an astronomer to tell you the meaning of the word, the Sun. He or she will take longer time to explain what the Sun is than when the same person uses the concept the Sun in conversations. If the test is subjected to children of three or four years, the likelihood is that they will feel difficult explaining the meaning of the word, the sun. The children may use the concept, the Sun in sentence construction fluently and in automated manner; however, when they are asked what the Sun is they may remain puzzled for some time, or provide a fallacious explanation of the same. It appears that the users of language use words through the principle of

automation. This automated ability to generate sentences effortlessly using words in speech production is an innate behaviour (Khakimova, 2025). Indeed, we are tempted to assume that interlocutors partly use their innate linguistic capabilities to understand what is in the mind of the speaker or the listener. This capability may be associated with the natural principles operating in us without our conscious knowledge of their existence. These principles are vivid when you call someone, and they tell you that they were preparing a text to send you, or they were scrolling your number to call. This happens among people many times, but we usually do not question how does this happen. In the same way, it happens during conversation; we share exactly the same meaning through natural operating principles.

Equally, the innate ability makes interlocutors use words in speech without much reflection on what actually they mean to us or others. There are principles of nature which operate and enhance communication beyond man understanding. As has been noted, the existence of principles of nature in operation can be proven through situations such as calling someone, and the one you call tells you that I was scrolling to find your number so that I call you. At times, one can say I was writing you a message; I was about to send it to you. If this ever happened to you, then this means in communication interlocutors usually tend to see each other's minds and/or understand what is happening to the other end. That is to say the same scenario happens during conversations.

If users of language would attempt to understand well the exact meaning of each word before using it in generating sentences in conversations, the purpose being to ensure that there is shared meaning between the speaker and the listener; then, communication could be a slow process, and it could take longer time than we know. What does this mean to us? This means that the words we use during conversations or speeches are not well understood to us and the listeners; however, we constantly negotiate through innate operating principles in combination with the para-linguistic features to have a closer shared meaning of what we listen from others. Indeed, some scholars (Morgan, 2021) calls this capability interpersonal intelligence. This ability is in every human being, but in some individuals, it is dominant and recessive in others. Accordingly, at times listeners may have a feeling that they do not understand the speaker correctly; then, usually they tend to ask for clarification. For example, they may ask, what do you mean?

The clarifications can help us get elevated to shared meaning of the speakers or writers. Since speakers have different descriptors of concepts, therefore, users of language or rather words do not tend to have the same meaning or understanding during interaction. The interlocutors may claim to have a shared meaning, but in actual sense they have varied understanding or meaning. Sometimes the really gap in terms of meaning or understanding is revealed from actions or practice. When one realizes that the action or practice does not align with what they meant; then, they realize that the other side did not conceive the right message. In such situations, clarification is made to

enable the exact action or practice to take place for intended outcomes. Indeed, as has been noted elsewhere in this paper that actions or practices are guided by theories (concepts), implicit or evidence-based; consequently, if one has a wrong theory or conceptualization definitely the action or practice will be wrong, and it may not be bearing the intended results. In such situations, clarification is needed.

Furthermore, if you see a black mamba is after someone, and you yell to them “run fast!” The person is likely to run but may not or may run at the speed appropriate to escape from the black mamba attack. The order to “run fast!” may not be well understood until you provide the details on how fast one should run. For example, “run fast the black mamba is after you”. Again, it is not clear whether or not the black mamba is very close or still very far from the one receiving the order. It is always not easy to have a shared meaning between interlocutors, until the meaning is negotiated through clarifications. In view of this, during interaction meaning is always incremental. It is incremental at three levels: a) at understanding a concept b) at understanding a phrase c) Symbol (man and the universe in general). This is to say meaning/understanding in conversations using language symbols and other non-linguistic symbols (the universe and its contents) is a continuum process. This is to say we interact with nature (the universe) and day-to-day we incrementally understand it better.

In the process of interaction, we always have versions of meaning or understanding of the language symbols and/or other non-linguistic symbols including man as an entity. Since meaning is incremental in nature, version one might be correct or wrong, version two of meaning is conceived after clarification or encountering experience that might change the meaning (understanding) conceived and shared earlier. In contrast, it might be correct meaning/understanding; however, it is not correctly grasped. It needs clarification to have a shared meaning or understanding. In practice, we use words for granted during interaction, or we take for granted other symbols we see in the universe, e.g. soil.

The soil we see we do not understand it. Actually, soil is our daily food and we are ourselves soil. We eat it and we drink it. To say it differently, there is no food we eat that has no connection with the soil or rather land. If we understand soil in this way; then, when we are asked what are you eating? The answer is I am eating the soil (land). Who is your employer? The answer is my employer is the soil. Why the employer is soil? The answer is; if you are employed in any manufacturing or processing industry, the raw materials are from the soil. If you are self-employed in a market or any product shop, the products are from the soil. Therefore, the soil in collaboration with other entities in the universe or planet earth is the source of everything we see or use.

The soil as a symbol in the universe, which is not well understood; we can always understand it incrementally. As such, since we eat foods linked to the soil; we are equally the soil. Indeed, the topic of soil is contentious. The soil

acts like a natural processing industry. It changes seeds to plants and ultimately the same turn into fruit or seeds. All this happens with a combination of process and ingredients (Kinyaduka, 2024). The soil (land) alone cannot make all this to happen, but it requires light from the sun for example. At times, it requires rainfall, and what have you. All these are ingredients of the processing industry, the soil. What it does it is not different from what man does during turning wheat into a beer, and other products you know. As has been noted, the topic of the soil is a lion share. It suffices to conclude that the universe comprises entities, which we know little about them. For instance, we know little about individuals even if they are our spouses, colleagues, parents or siblings. We can understand them incrementally only as we live with them.

In any case, language uses symbols which users need to understand their meanings to communicate effectively. The universe is a concept is a symbol like that of language. The universe as a symbol has other myriad symbols within it. The symbols within the universe are countless, and together they make the whole, the universe. For example, soil is part of the universe; a man and his mind is part of the same (universe), and we really do not know all about the soil or all about man. There is a lot is yet to be known about the soil, and similarly there is a lot yet to be known about man.

From the cases of symbols above, with audacity, we may conclude that we know little. Even what we claim to know very well, we do not know it exhaustively. This is the reason every year scientists claim to come up with millions of discoveries (Baker & Powell, 2024). These discoveries support the assumption that understanding or meaning is a continuum process. We keep reshaping our understanding of meaning of phenomena such as people, and other objects in the universe well progressively, but never exhaustively. To say it differently, claiming that we know all about a concept, person, subject or an object in the universe is a fallacy. It is therefore taking for granted the reality just like the way we use words in language seamlessly without actually understanding their exact meaning. In the same way, symbols in the universe (people, creatures, objects, the list goes on) we see, and those we do not see with our naked eyes are mere summaries. This means we do not know a lot about them. This is because concepts, people, and objects we see are summaries, we do not know everything about them. Therefore, we can understand them incrementally through by stages (phases) as we happen to discover the new realities a bit by bit over time.

From discovering new realities, we get shaped such that we stop taking meaning/understanding for granted. Therefore, we cannot understand reality as it is, but we can continuously discover new realities about meaning of symbols (people, objects and the universe at large); consequently, understanding of reality is something infinite. For instance, you may claim that you understand man, but what is the purpose of man in the universe? What would happen if man never existed on the planet earth? From these questions, one learns that what we claim as man's environmentally devastating activities on the planet earth;

probably, the activities are not devastating, but rather are performed for a reason (are from logic of nature) and are therefore meaningful. Probably the activities create balance and sustainability of the universe.

Interestingly, the technological advancements by man are at times perceived as having unpopular effects to the environment; however, for some reason, man exists to contribute to the sustainability and balancing of the universe through what we perceive as devastating activities of man on the planet earth, for example, the nuclear weapon related projects. The basis for these assertions is from previous discussion in this paper that we know little on everything we claim to know. Since nature is logical, the existence of man and the so called environmentally devastating activities are from logic of nature. Indeed, this is because man is from logic of nature, all activities from them are therefore not destructive, but rather they have a defined role to play in the universe, or logic of nature would not allow man to exist with such big brain to cause adversity in the universe.

For example, today we witness sophisticated research and technological advancements in health sciences such as the surgical technology discoveries, despite these advancements on man related sciences, it is wrong to entirely conclude that we know all about the man's body. As human beings, we will all die knowing little about the universe, and ourselves. We will all remain becoming a new version of ourselves from discoveries (new meanings/understanding) we make as we continue living (interacting with nature) until we die.

Interestingly, when we die, we remain part of the universe in the new form, decomposed matter. We turn to be organic matter to sustain the life of other organisms which also ultimately die and turn into organic matter. This is life-organic matter vicious cycle principle operating in the universe. Nature (the universe) operates under self-creation and self-degeneration principle. Indeed, even the earth-quake events "incidents" are meaningful and reasoned; the volcanic eruptions; the tornado, the list goes on. All the events are reasoned (logical), and therefore are meaningful. We perceive them as incidents because we do not understand in fully the logic behind creation, existence, and mortality. We can only understand the hibernating realities (realities in symbols and logic of nature) incrementally. Having understood the logic of data and their extend interpretations, let us see the Transformational Theory of meaning (Understanding) as a derivative of the data, and its implications in life.

Transformational Theory of Meaning (Understanding)

Main Assumptions

Meaning (understanding) of the universe and its symbols is a continuum process. The process happens from birth to the time one dies. Meaning (understanding) of a symbol continues to be revised from time to time until one dies.

Reality is hibernated in symbols and logics from nature. It is incrementally discovered through constant intercourse with and contemplation about nature.

Man or organisation changes behaviours, viewpoints, perspectives, beliefs, decisions, practices, and what have you because of intercourse with nature. As one interacts with nature gains understanding; consequently, changes and reviews their behaviours, decisions and/or practices.

Lifelong learning is an innate principle of learning, the most reliable, beneficial and authentic way of acquiring knowledge in life. As such, theories earned through learning by living or by doing (practice) are the most practical and useful. Education earned by practice and/or doing is the most reliable and effective.

Nature (universe and its symbols) is a language man has to understand. Man has to read the language between the lines to attain breakthroughs. In so doing, man's wellbeing is improved.

Nature is out of logic. Man and his mind is part of nature; consequently, manmade objects do not exist, but the universe and its symbols are out of processes (activities) from nature itself. To clarify, man has created and continues to develop different forms of technologies, termites create hills, tectonic plate movement create mountains, bees create honey and what have you. All the creations are from logic of nature and have a defined purpose, which at times it is beyond man's understanding.

Specific Assumptions of Transformational Theory of Meaning (Understanding)

People feel comfortable and confident that they effectively communicate to the audience or the audience feels understand the speaker or the writer; however, at times, the reality is that what the speaker or writer communicates is not understood by both, him/herself, and the receiver of the message. This is to say they do not understand what exactly the speaker or writer mean. This is because words and other symbols are summaries. We therefore lack the details of symbols; more often than not, we hardly know the details, or take interest to know. We cannot know every detail of a word or a symbol other than a word itself.

Users of words in languages take their meanings for granted; thus, failing to know that they do not know the words/concepts they use. In the same way, the receivers of information usually take for granted that they understand what speakers or writers articulate; however, in reality they do not know in the same way. Therefore, Interlocutors do not always have clear understanding of words used in conversations or communication.

The concept of shared meaning/understanding among interlocutors is paradoxical. Interlocutors most of the time use words they do not know their exact meaning; however, interlocutors' effective communication survives

because of understanding each other through shared proximal meaning or through the operating principles of nature.

Understanding of a symbol in the universe is an incremental process; we do not understand symbols in the universe exhaustively. We gain better meaning (understanding) a bit by bit and this shapes our knowledge, skills (behaviour) and values (Education). This is to say we obtain education incrementally through interacting with nature in lifetime. Therefore, education is not a single stroke process; it is a multidimensional and incremental understanding of reality through interaction with nature, the universe. Schooling offers incomplete and tiny interaction. Thus, education systems always prepare incomplete graduates. This is because understanding of symbols from nature is never exhaustive (complete). Graduates continue to learn through interaction with nature even after completing all forms of education and training cycles. Therefore, nature is a core and effective curriculum. This is because man learns more through intercourse with nature outside schooling than they do through education systems. Man interacts with nature from the time they are born until when they die.

We are born totally ignorant of the universe; we die with incomplete understanding of the universe and its symbols. This is because we cannot understand every detail of a symbol. We always have access to meaning in form of summaries. For example, the word “candy” we know it by our naked eyes, but we may be ignorant of the manufacturing processes, its ingredients or its chemistry. Despite the ignorance about its chemistry; we confidently claim that we know it (candy). Thus, the understanding we possess from what we see, write, do, listen or from any sense of organ is incomplete in nature; consequently, skepticism on what we see, write, do, or listen is a compelling practice in our day-to-day decisions and operations to achieve the most sophisticated meaning of a symbol in life.

Interlocutors tend to have different blue prints of meaning/understanding of a word/concept, or phenomenon. From the differences in meaning/understanding, it results in varied responses when the individuals are subjected to the same situation. This is the reason men do not act or behave in the same way when subjected in the same situation. This is because every man understands the world differently through experiences from interacting with nature since one was born to the time they die. We can see this in different cultures, for example, food culture and forms of marriage. On food culture, there are societies that eat snakes, and frogs whereas some societies strictly do not take snakes and frogs as edibles. In the same way, there are polygamy, polyandry, and monogamy societies. These societies live on the same planet earth, but different cultural practices on food and marriage. Therefore, meaning/understanding varies from one individual to another and from one society to another. The differences are from varied interpretations from nature.

People and/or organisations constantly become new versions of themselves because they continuously gain a new understanding of symbols in the universe.

The new understanding makes people change attitude, beliefs, views, perspectives and practices in life in different settings. Thus, always there are chances of change or improvement of an individual or organizational decisions, perspectives, beliefs, views, policies or legislations.

People tend to take words, symbols and individuals for granted. People do not take trouble to understand every detail of each symbol they see every day; consequently, they assume they know the same, but in reality, they do not know them (symbols). We do not know our environment or nature once and for all. We understand our environment and ourselves incrementally. Thus, learning is an incremental and infinitive process.

DISCUSSION

A Comparative Analysis with Related Theories

Semantic theory (korzybski, 2023) considers meaning of words and sentences, but it does not consider speech tempo (speed in speech (words) production) in relation to lucid understanding of their meanings before using the same (words). Further, the theory does not show the tendency of speakers taking longer time to explain the meaning of a word which is usually used in automation duration interaction, and/or communication. The Transformational Theory of Meaning (Understanding) considers tempo and the understanding of the meaning of words being used. Further, it perceives everything in the universe is a symbol with meaning, or to be understood. The theory assumes that we do not understand in exhaustive manner a symbol. As such, the theories vary in terms of scope in relation to understanding in communication and other entities in the universe. In another development, semantic theory assumes that people understand meanings, in contrast the Transformational theory of Meaning (Understanding) assumes that individuals at times do not precisely understand the meaning of words they use during communication. From the imprecise understanding of meanings of a word in use, individuals gradually grow in terms of understanding meanings of the same after clarifications or from encounters during practice.

Furthermore, Burgess and Sherman (2014) contend Meta-semantics Theory attempts to explain the essence of meaning. In contrast, Transformational Theory of Meaning (Understanding) attempts to posit that individuals do not have detailed understanding of meanings carried in words, and other symbols in the universe. The Transformational Theory of Meaning (Understanding) strives to show that individuals know little about words or symbols they use or see on daily basis including the universe itself. To add, Soames (1997) posits that there are no ingredients for meaning, which results in meaning skepticism. This view is similar to that of the current theory, Transformational Theory of Meaning (Understanding), which posits that we know little about everything because we lack some of details about words we use on daily basis, or we do not understand well people we have known for a long time, or we do not know well the universe

and symbols embodied in it. In contrast, the Transformational Theory of meaning (Understanding) assumes that meaning comprises ingredients and the failure to understand all of them results in inadequate understanding of a concept or phenomenon. From this situation, like Soames (1997) who views skepticism in meaning is crucial, in the same way, the current theory also encourages skepticism in meaning we conceive because in this theory understanding is an incremental process. Moreover, The Transformational Theory of Meaning (Understanding) goes beyond linguistic symbols and their meanings. Further, it provides that meaning is a continuum process and tentative. One may not doubt about the meaning of something, but their understanding at some point may change or improve because of gained experience from interaction with nature. From this understanding, they adopt a new version of meaning and equally change or improve their beliefs, perspectives, views or practices. Transformational Theory of Meaning (Understanding) ignores the issue of equivocation and the forms of meaning, but literal meaning. It is thus useful for explaining meaning in situations where there is good will or where there is no sinister motive during intercourse among interlocutors (nature). As it stands, Transformational Theory of Meaning (Understanding) is a different theory from other related existing theories. The theory shows that man is constantly renewing ones understanding of meaning of symbols in the universe through intercourse with nature. The new or modified understanding improves the version of oneself in terms of conceptualization of a phenomenon. This is to say man is constantly changing or improving because of interaction with nature.

Implications of Transformational Theory of Meaning (Understanding) in life

The implications of the theory are based social, educational, political and technological spheres of life (contexts). Through transfer of learning one can apply the theory in some more life territories such as culture, economic, the list goes on. The explanation for other territories of life through the theory is plausible since it is a grand theory.

Social context

The individuals we understand today in terms of their character, beliefs, views, perception, and perspectives on a particular phenomenon may not remain the same after some years of interacting with nature. As one interacts with nature, they get shaped in form, understanding and behaviour. Interaction with nature may not only change character, beliefs, perspectives and practices, but it may also change the shape and the entire conscience of a man. For instance, when one is a survivor of an earth quake, they may be amputated. This further shows our shapes are not guaranteed. This signifies that man's shape is not necessarily the same through lifetime. The change of our shapes can be due to aging and "incidents" such as natural disasters or accidents (events).

Since man is part of nature, even the disasters (events) from wars are natural; there is nothing like manmade objects on the planet earth, and/or in the universe, everything is from nature. This is because all events/phenomena are from nature intercourse. From nature intercourse, (nature interacting by itself), events or forms occur. Some of these events or forms are perceived as having unpopular effects; however, this understanding may be out of man's ignorance about reason (logic of nature) and its intercourse.

From nature intercourse, there are events or forms. The events are logical and meaningful. The events are perfect as they culminate in hemostat (internal and external balance) of the organism, the universe. From this understanding, there is no event that occurs, which we may consider as bad. This is a social stereotype; it is a socially constructed perspective; however, nature locates all events as necessary and meaningful. Nature is logical; therefore the logic of nature would not allow bad events to occur. It would not allow even bad organisms to exist. This is to say what is not logical to nature does not exist. Nature is logical or rational. Something not logical or rational as per nature never or does not exist or occur. This is because it is useless to nature, the universe; consequently, everything is reasoned; thus, it is perfect. Man is continuously shaped by nature.

During communication, we should always be wary of meaning we conceive. It might be that we are not being understood, or we are being misunderstood. Therefore, it is always important to check every time to satisfy ourselves that we are correctly understood. The checking helps us minimise confusions that may result in failed programmes. Checking whether or not we are understood, it is important because we do not understand words we use in the same way. In the same vein, we understand the universe differently. From this variation in understanding, for example, we witness different dominations of major religions in the world. Indeed, we even have atheists, monotheists and polytheists. All these differences are out of variation in understanding about the existence of God. Thus, as we interact with nature, we have multiple interpretations across individuals and humanities. This is to say each of us has their own conceptualisation on the principle of the universe; consequently, we live in the same world, but in different worlds. Though at times, there are transformations which harmonise our understanding of the universe in some aspects. The harmonisation of our understanding makes us be on the same page on perspective of some of aspects of life.

All decisions we make are ideas in development, or all products we see are subject to improvement after typical or incremental understanding about the same. As such, whatever decision, alternative or product we have on our table, we do not understand it in totality. It is at its development stage, this does not mean that it is imperfect, but rather it is at one of its development stages. To clarify, a germinating seed of baobab tree at its tender age is weak. From this analogy of a baobab tree, this implies failure to understand the full meaning of an alternative or idea is a growth stage towards maturity. When a baobab tree

geminates, it sounds weak, but it is not real weak. It is in its early stage of development to maturity.

Based on the above understanding, an individual's misconception of meaning, it is not a weakness, but rather a growth stage (process) to improved understanding of a concept or symbol. We gain our understanding of symbols incrementally in the same way plants or organisms grow. Thus, imperfect ideas do not exist, but crude ideas that are subject to improvement. Thus, nothing is imperfect, since everything is from nature, which is perfect, or rational. What exists is development or growth to maturity or sophistication. This is because everything is nature (reason), and nature is logical and perfect. Indeed, even our incremental understanding of environment is from reason/nature. What we call imperfect is in principle a development process toward maturity or sophistication. For instance, a new born cannot walk. This does not mean it is imperfect, but rather in a development process toward maturity.

We do not understand the universe in totality and we will never do. Thus, we are lifelong learners as we keep gaining new understanding of the universe through interaction with it; we keep modifying our behaviours. To recite, nature comprises man, the universe and all that is embodied in it (anything else). Man must not exclude himself from nature. He is part of nature. As such, all events come from nature intercourse. That is to say nature has logical interaction to itself; the intercourse of which results in events or products. This includes change of mankind behaviour.

Based on the above narration, all events are from nature and are logical. Reason from nature is perfect, meaningful and logical in every situation. Thus, events or "incidents" such as death are from the logic of nature; thus, they are perfect. The view that death is bad is spurious. The reality death is from the logic of nature. Thus, it is something perfect and meaningful. Therefore, we find death as something bad out of our ignorance or little understanding about the logic of its existence. We may not be able to understand the logic behind the existence of death because nature cannot directly tell us the reason for its existence in the universe. However, without doubt, death is logical; it is not a haphazard event or "incident". As it is, we find death and other disasters as bad, but actually there is nothing bad at all in the universe. The view that we see some of events as incidents is a result of failure to understand the logic of nature.

Policies, constitutions, standards, guidelines or Acts are temporary. This is to say they manifest one of social version of understanding phenomena at the time of their existence and enactment. This means that new understanding of the same is plausible, or inevitable in time ahead. Therefore, reforms of the said documents are not unsurprising. Since man is a lifelong learner in the universe (learns all the time from nature), he changes or improves the meaning or understanding of symbols; consequently, need for reforms or repealing of existing documents. When we say man learns from nature, we mean that they learn from themselves and from other entities in the universe. Without doubt,

the meaning or understanding that dominates in society guides the reform contents of the documents, or products.

Never trust people once and for all, or never trust people permanently in a certain situation or context. This is because as they interact with nature the chances of changing in terms of behaviour and/or practice are high. For instance, Married couples should expect changes in terms of behaviour of their spouses since they are not immune from interaction with nature. As they interact with nature, they change perspectives, beliefs, views, perception, and practices, which may amount to popular or unpopular effects in marriage. Indeed, even committed courtship is subject to dissolution and possibly reinstatement. Indeed, the same may happen in marriage.

Political Context

In the context of politics, political parties should always expect shift of party members from one party to another because of an enhanced understanding or ignorance, and should expect some of them to return to the former parties because they choose alternatives or parties which they do not know well. As they happen to know them well, they will change their previous beliefs, perspectives, and decisions; consequently, political party members are more likely than not shifting from one party to another. To conclude, people adopt new decisions from gaining new understanding or meaning.

Educational Context

In education systems, tutors should always expect variation in student performance in the same class. This variation in student performance is partly attributable to differences in understanding of concepts used during teaching-learning process. Students may all feel at comfortable zone at the time of teaching-learning process; however, feedback from assessments make students realize that what they believed to have been understood in teaching-learning process was misconceived. Therefore, feedback in education systems is paramount for student to acquire quality education.

Curricula change, and/or review is a permanent process in education systems. This is because man learns and changes all the time. The change of a man from gaining new understanding dictates reforms of curricula in education systems. The change in perception of society in terms of understanding on what is knowledge, what skills are the most important, and what values are important determines practices on what to teach, how to teach and how to evaluate the teaching-learning process. The curriculum changes and/or review is an outcome of new understanding about what kind of education is important to society. This drift in understanding is usually gradual and incremental. For instance, what is important in education today is ability to learn how to learn, ability to evaluate information, and developing creative minds. This is because there is proliferation of information and discoveries or changes in all spheres of life. The changes in the spheres of life are faster than the changes happening in

education systems. This makes it important for education systems to rethink about current practices in education systems.

Continuous profession development is inevitable in all professions. On one hand, practice on Continuous Professional Development is crucial because of potential changes, on the other hand, it is important because education and training cycles do not offer all forms of knowledge, skills and values for a respective profession or for life territories. The understanding is incomplete even amongst professionals who are gurus in their fields. This is because there is always skepticism in whatever we claim to understand in our fields of specialization. There is nothing we know in totality. Moreover, there are millions of discoveries every year in different territories of life, which require our attention or understanding. Therefore, lifelong learning is part and parcel of our life whether or not one is educated.

Technological Context, Research and Deveopment (R & D)

We should understand that the universe and symbols in it are summaries. Thus, we do not know the universe and its symbols once and for all. We know little about the universe and its symbols whether or not the symbols are visible with our naked eyes. This is because we cannot readily understand all about the logic of their existence, their nature (processes caused their existence), and their ingredients. Thus, research and discoveries, Research and Development are infinity processes.

CONCLUSION

Transformational Theory of Meaning (Understanding) informs us that our understanding grows like a plant. That is to say we steadily learn and change from the new understanding we acquire as we interact with nature. As a consequence, the theory is a tool for understanding nature of change of behaviour. In addition, it acts as a useful tool for forecasting possible changes one may encounter in life in any sphere of life. To clarify, we can predict some of man's behaviours or events which are linked to new understanding. For instance, we can predict that someone who is committed to repay their debt at the time of borrowing the money may not do so after gaining a new understanding through interaction with nature. In a situation whereby one is committed to repay a debt because of fearing internal fire in the life after, the same person may resolve not to repay the debt after gaining a new understating that there is no life after. Further, the theory in a way helps us know that everything we do or plan to do is subject to change/improvement, and it contains hibernated realities. Hibernated realities are truths or facts which are not readily visible in the first sight. It follows that improvement of plans, ideas or products is inevitable. As such, we have to be wary of people we trust and our own plans because they are likely to change or to be modified. Indeed, even us, we are likely to change our perception and opinions from gaining a new understanding or experience. Worth noting, we know little in everything we claim to know because of fact hibernation in symbols or logics. Thus, there is

nothing we know in totality. At times, communication or observation of a phenomenon result in multiple interpretations. This culminates in variation, change, or difference in practices. Moreover, the difference may manifest in way of behaving across individuals or societies. Finally, Transformational Theory of Meaning (Understanding), informs us that lifelong learning is a principle of life. This is because there is nothing we know once and for all. Therefore, we keep learning and growing infinitively. Thus, we always improve ourselves to new versions of ourselves in terms of understanding the universe and its objects in lifetime. To say it differently, discoveries in the universe shall never end, and our understanding about the universe and its symbols remains incomplete in lifetime.

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