

**A TREATISE OF THE WHATNESS OF CONCEPTUAL ART IN THE
CONTEXT OF OBJECT, MEANING AND LANGUAGE**



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PLAGIARISM

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ÖZET

“Nesne, Anlam ve Dil Bağlamında Kavramsal Sanatın Neliği Üzerine Bir Soruşturma” adlı bu çalışma, adından da anlaşılacağı gibi metinde geçen her bir kavramın anlamının aydınlatılması amacını taşımaktadır. Kavramsal sanatın anlaşılmasını sağlamak bu türden bir soruşturmayı zorunlu kılar ve bu türden bir soruşturma ancak ve ancak felsefi bir çözümlemeyle mümkün olabilir. Sanatın, felsefenin ve bilimin evreni kavrama çabasıyla yapılan insan etkinlikleri olması tanımından hareketle bu üç disiplinin nesneyi, anlamı ve dili nasıl ele aldıkları metnin merkezinde durmaktadır. Nesnenin anlamla, anlamın dille, dilin düşünceyle olan ilişkisi kavramsal sanat üzerinden çözümlenmeye çalışılacaktır. Sanat, içerisinde bulunduğu toplumun tarihsel, felsefi ve bilimsel gelişme ve değişimlerinden bağımsız düşünülemez. Bu alanlar her dönemde birbirlerini etkilemiş ve değiştirmiştir. Ancak bu metinde sanatın değişen yaklaşımlarından daha çok, bu değişimin arkasındaki zihinsel süreçler ele alınacaktır. Dolayısıyla sanat tarihi bağlamında “bu değişim nasıl görünüyor?” sorusunun değil, “bu değişimin nedenleri nedir?” sorusunun yanıtı aranacaktır. İkinci tipte bir sorunun yanıtını ancak sanatı sanat olmak bakımından çözümleyen ve onun anlamını aydınlatmaya çalışan kavramsal sanat verebilir. Metin boyunca bunun nedenleri tutarlı bir biçimde açıklanmaya çalışılacaktır. Bu çalışma sanatın doğasına yönelik bir soruşturmanın nasıl yapılması gerektiğine dair bir öneri sunmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: nesne, anlam, dil, düşünce, kavramsal sanat

ABSTRACT

This study named “A Treatise of the Whatness of Conceptual art in the Context of Object, Meaning and Language” aims to elucidate the meaning of each concept in the text, as can be understood from its name. It requires this kind of investigation to understand conceptual art, and such an investigation can only be possible with philosophical analysis. Based on the definition that art, philosophy, and science are human activities in the effort to comprehend the universe, how these three disciplines deal with object, meaning and language stands at the center of the text. An attempt will be made to analyze the relation of object with meaning, meaning with language and language with thought through conceptual art. Art cannot be considered independent from the historical, philosophical, and scientific developments and changes of the society in which it resides. These areas have affected and changed each other in every period. However, in this text, the mental processes behind this change will be discussed rather than the changing approaches of art. Therefore, in the context of art history, instead of the question "how does this change look?" the answer to the question "what are the reasons for this change?" will be sought after. The answer to the latter type of question can only be given by conceptual art that analyzes art in terms of being art and tries to illuminate its meaning. The reasons for this will be explained consistently throughout the text. This study suggests how to investigate the nature of art.

Keywords: object, meaning, language, thought, conceptual art

Pluralitas non est ponenda sine neccesitate



To Art...

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The content of this study consists of the questions I have been thinking about for many years. In the process of answering these questions, the presence of *The Definition of Art Group* was always a prerequisite for me. I have endless respect and admiration for the group that carries out the process of enlightening the meanings of concepts with refined, elegant presentation forms. I would like to thank my thesis supervisor, Prof. Dr. Marcus Graf., who always supported me with his positive and friendly attitude throughout the process, both for his sharings and sincerity, and also for facilitating my dissertation period, which is the second time we worked together, just like in the first one, with his correct and consistent criticisms, Lecturer Dr. Hakan Özer, Assoc. Prof. Burcu Ayan Ergen, Lecturer Dr. Ömer Emre Yavuz, Assoc. Prof. Devabil Kara and my ‘dear’ friend Mert Ege Köse for their patience and my greatest critic, my husband Barış Akalın, who supported me passionately before and after the process and was involved in every process in some way.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Art, science, and philosophy are human activities carried out to comprehend the universe. Man performs these activities with the reason, which is his *differentia specifica*. Reason is man's ability to infer. Inference allows for a correct and consistent way of thinking. Systematic and methodical thinking is the way reason works. We use logic as an instrument to create a consistent system. This is the reason why Aristotle calls logic an instrument (*organon*) in terms of being the method and rule of right thinking.¹ Logic not only consists of valid inferences, it also involves reflecting on principles of validity. However, not all kinds of speech can be treated logically. For example, poetic or literary texts do not require logical sentences. Therefore, logic is the kind of conversation or investigation in which there is proof because to prove a statement is to validly infer it from correct premises. Proof has two conditions; these are correct premises and valid inference. In poetic or literary texts, the correctness of the premises is not necessary, in logic they have to be correct. Proof is done by deducting from a priori truths in mathematics, from general statements about the structure of the universe in metaphysics, and from contingent sentences in everyday inferences. According to Aristotle, only mathematical proof meets the definition of inference for proof. According to logic, right thinking is achieved through the laws of thought. Traditionally, these laws are the three fundamental principles of logic: (1) the law of contradiction, (2) the law of excluded middle (or third), and (3) the law of identity. The human mind realizes the universe of logical objects with help of the law of identity. With the law of excluded middle, it divides

¹ Although Aristotle explained logic as an instrument, he did not use the term "logic" in his writings collected under the name of *Organon*, but instead used the term "analytic".

the universe into two by accepting the existence of object and the opposite of its existence and by stating that the logical universe consists of two parts. By using the law of contradiction, mind grasps the whole of logical universe by indicating that these parts do not intersect.

These explanations about logic were deemed necessary in terms of indicating the way to follow to create a consistent text. The statement that art is conceptual, which will be reached as a result of an investigation into the whatness of art, will be shown with the correctness of the arguments to be included in the premises. This verification will be provided by the expressions of how important philosophical approaches deal with the concepts of object, meaning, and language. It is impossible to talk about an analysis without a full explanation of the concepts. Therefore, how both philosophy and science explain these concepts will determine the beginning of this text.

The first section of the second chapter titled Object, in which an investigation is made on whatness of object, contains the philosophical answers given to the question "What is object?" Since "whatness" is a design that shows what something is or what something means in mind, each concept necessarily has a whatness, because every concept occurs in mind as something to be thought. When a concept has a correspondence in the objective reality that is outside the mind, this constitutes the reality of that concept. When we say that there is an external world that is outside of our consciousness, which is the subject of our perception, and that this world consists of objects, we have to answer questions such as "what are these objects outside of our consciousness?" and "what are their characteristics?" Every answer given to these questions constitutes the approaches that emerged in the history of philosophy;

therefore, these approaches by some philosophers who established their own systems will be discussed in this section.

In the second section of the second chapter titled Science's Approach to Object, we try to show how science handles object. The approach of science to object will be analyzed through accepting a physical external world and the idea that our experiences are somehow compatible with this external world. Although science starts with an argument, it tests the physical and natural world through experiment and observation. Experiment and observation in science are not just a means of producing knowledge; they are also means of verifying predictions. Scientific facts have features that can be directly observed and reproduced as requested. Science observes objects, classifies them with specific measurements, and it makes this classification based on its observable properties. Experiments and observations allow science to make predictions about the future. Science's approach to object is more about "how" than "what" it is; because the distinction between the two questions reveals the difference between philosophy and science. The answer to the "how" question is observable, measurable, and testable, and serves to establish a causal relationship about the external world. However, the relation of regularity, which science accepts on the basis of observations about objects, is based on a presupposition. In order to establish a cause-and-effect relationship between events, it is necessary for science to take as a starting point, that the same reasons always give and will yield the same results. That is, it does not question the cause-and-effect relationship itself, it works with it. Therefore, unlike philosophy, the approach of science to object is relatively understandable. In this thesis, instead of scientific views, paradigm shifts, or scientific knowledge, science's view of the object will be emphasized.

In the third section of the second chapter titled “Object in the Context of Art”, object will be discussed in the context of art. Throughout this text, we will try to answer whether art is about “what object is” or “how it is described”. As noticed the first question seems like a question of philosophy and the second one, a question of science. However, art has given its own answers to these questions within its own field. The process from art's analysis of object to art's self-analysis is important in understanding the path to conceptual art. Art has always had some kind of representational relationship with the external world, even if this is an abstraction. However, this issue of representation will be dealt with in the text as necessary. We will try to explain in what sense and how the object is extracted (if it is so) from the reciprocity relationship of art with object, and define the path from sensory perception to intellectual processes. It will be shown that art has always been an analysis activity, and this analysis has not changed in terms of being an analysis, whether it is on object or on art itself.

In the third chapter, where the concept of meaning will be explained, the problem of the meaning of philosophy, whether meaning is based on the principle of reciprocity, whether it refers to any object, whether it is objective or subjective, will be investigated, especially in the context of Frege, Russell, Wittgenstein, and Ayer. In the second chapter of this section titled “Meaningful Statements According to Science”, what the concept of meaning includes in terms of science, and the relationship between meaning and truth will be discussed in the context of the meaningful propositions of science. In the third chapter of this section titled “The Problem of Meaning of Art”, the concept of meaning will be analyzed in the context of art, the contents that make up the meaning in formalist art will be explained as

much as necessary to allow a comparison, and how conceptual art deals with the problem of meaning will constitute the main subject of this chapter.

The first section of the fourth chapter entitled “Language”, devoted to the definition of language, which is the last of the main concepts of the thesis, includes the analysis of language in a philosophical context. “What is language and what kind of relationship does it have with the external world?”, “How can the relationship between thought and language be expressed?”, “Does language have limits?”, “If yes, what are they?” Answers to such questions will be given in the context of Wittgenstein, Frege, Russell, Saussure, and Chomsky.

The last chapter titled “On Whatness of Conceptual Art” contains an analysis of the nature of conceptual art. This analysis will be done through the approaches and the artists who have done the purest analysis of the whatness of art rather than describing a process that covers a certain period in the artistic sense. In the chapter of this section titled “The End of Philosophy the Beginning of Art”, the expression forms of conceptual art in the context of Marcel Duchamp's art will be discussed and the results of the process that started with the aim of putting art back in the service of the mind will be shown. In this chapter of the section titled “Joseph Kosuth: Art After Philosophy and Artistic Propositions”, through Joseph Kosuth's 1969 text of "Art After Philosophy", we discuss what kind of propositions artistic propositions are and the reasons for Kosuth's argument that art is a tautology. In the chapter titled “Sol LeWitt, To Engage the Mind”, Sol LeWitt's approach that associates conceptual art with the types of mental processes will be discussed. This approach of LeWitt, unlike Kosuth, who argues that artistic propositions do not have to be logical, will be analyzed in the context of his "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art" and "Sentences on Conceptual Art" texts. In the last chapter of the last section titled "The Definition of

Art Group: The Definition of Art", we will try to explain the artistic approach of The Definition of Art Group, which, has been presenting art as an intellectual activity based on art, philosophy, science, logic, and mathematics, continuing to develop its own unique artistic approach throughout this process and creating an art environment since 1972 in Turkey.

2. OBJECT

2.1. What is Object?

"What is the object?" A question like this is not the kind of question that can be answered immediately. Since the "what is" question is about the nature of things, it does not include a description of the visible properties of that thing. Since the answer to the question extends beyond visible reality, there is no factual verification. Therefore, it cannot be said that the answers given to this question are right or wrong, but their consistency within themselves can be evaluated. In the course of time, the answers to such questions have been different and varied, and this is an ongoing process.

A starting point is required for systematic thoughts. First of all, we must begin by recognizing that there is a world of objects outside of us, which exists whether we perceive it or not, and which is the subject of our senses; since, as will be mentioned later, we will see that a type of reality can also be put forward which is non-existent when it is not perceived (according to Berkeley, objects are only ideas in the minds of perceivers and, as a result, cannot exist without being perceived). The object in the most general sense includes all that is outside the subject, independent of consciousness. In fact, although this is not a very revealing answer, it seems appropriate to start somewhere.

“The object defines the entity that is located at the opposite pole of the subject and which is the carrier of properties. Although the term object refers to physical entities in the external world, it is possible to talk about different types of objects. Accordingly, the physical object is a concrete and real object that occupies a place in time and space, independent of the mind.” (Cevizci, 2017, p. 316)

In this thesis, we are talking about physical objects that has a place, has a continuity in time and is the subject of our perceptions, rather than different types of objects. Therefore, we can define a physical object as a matter that occupies space in three-dimensional space and is continuous in time.

“Objects occupy space exclusively; objects are impenetrable, two separate objects do not exist at the same time. Wherever it seems to be located, the substance of one of the objects is either common to the other or fills the gaps left by the other in space.” (Denkel, 2003, p. 19)

The solidness and impenetrability properties of objects make space their own, so the area covered by an object is closed to other objects. Where an object is located another object cannot be found at the same time. Objects that are not in the same place at the same time have boundaries, and these boundaries are visible and concrete.

We are surrounded by an ever-changing external world, and the objects that constitute this world, lie at the center of this external world. Whether we notice it or not, there is mobility in nature. This mobility brings about a continuous and irreversible change.

“Objects are individual units in nature. Each of them has a unique world, countless properties, and they change in themselves so much that no object can be said to be identical with the previous self.” (Hacıkadıroğlu, 2003, p. 9)

Something permanent and unchanged is necessary to explain these constantly changing units. Otherwise, we cannot talk about objects. However, the fact that

something that remains the same is necessary for the process of knowing, does not mean that it can be known. As will be mentioned later, this common feature, which is thought to be present in every object and is described differently by every philosopher (although sometimes there is not a big difference), is something that is still discussed and has not been concluded.

We have mentioned that the "what is" question is a question about the nature of things because the ever-changing appearance of things cannot answer this question. Change in ancient philosophy is defined as the loss of an attribute and the emergence of another attribute. If everything changes, this means that everything is constantly changing to its opposite, according to this premise. This is in contradiction with the fundamental principle of *ex nihilo nihil fit*². This contradiction is inevitable when object and quality are considered as identical. Indeed, Parmenides also thought so. He argues that change is a contradiction, saying that existence is one, change is impossible, and existence is timeless and necessary. Change is one of the concepts that has caused lots of problems throughout the history of philosophy. However, the reason why we talk about change in this text is, rather than the definition of change itself, to show where the perceived change in the object carries the definitions of objects to. Because, according to the general opinion, we cannot get any information about something that constantly changes. Therefore, object must have something that remains the same so that it can be the subject of knowledge.

Our reason tells us that, to describe an object, it must have some permanent properties. The object becomes the subject of our sense perceptions. That we become aware of objects with our senses is not knowledge. When we justify them, knowledge is possible. These explanations raise many questions. If noticing with our senses does

² Nothing comes from nothing

not give us the knowledge of objects, do we know objects? Is it possible to know objects? Can we have precise information on this subject? Philosophers have tried to answer these questions throughout the history of philosophy.

Perceptions show us individual objects, and through thinking, we collect them under a single concept. In other words, an object that we show by pointing is a member of the general concept to which that object belongs. In this context, we can divide objects into two as universal and particular. Universal is something shared by individual objects in its most general sense and applies to all objects belonging to a group. For example, suppose there are two tables in a room. These two tables share the quality of “tableness”; in other words, they share a "universal". Universals are offered to our senses; they can only be comprehended by mind.

“Universals are especially important because they provide the opportunity to somehow classify or divide the multiplicity of different individuals in the world into species. Because regularities in the world can only be understood by referring to universals or species within which individuals are included.”
(Cevizci, 2017, p. 427)

Since universal is a general concept, for this reason, what we call universal is something that can be comprehended with the mind, which, we think, covers individual things. People, tables, cats, etc. are general names denoting universals. In Russell's Problems of Philosophy (1912), he argued that all facts must contain at least one universal. According to him, a sentence cannot be made up without at least one word denoting a universal.

Particular, on the other hand, includes not all members of a class, but one or several individuals; particular objects are proper names and they are the subject of our perceptions; our senses primarily focus on particular objects. What we call the physical object are particulars perceived by our senses. The general opinion in

philosophy is that we can only know particular things and that we can reach universals from these particulars. According to Aristotle; the most general ones are the furthest from senses, so universals are the furthest from senses. The particulars are the closest to senses and universals and particulars are opposed to each other. Universals cannot be known without resorting to particulars. Universals are logical because they are comprehended by reason, and particulars are existential because they are perceived by our senses.

Every answer given to the question “what is object?” is determined depending on philosophical approaches. Since these approaches will be explained later, it seems necessary to focus on the reasons for these differences here with regard to understanding this situation. This leads us to the epistemological discussion of whether the source of knowledge is reason or experiment.

“The most fundamental question asked in the problem of the source of knowledge is whether knowledge is based on reason, or is the product of experience, or whether it represents something that is the result of the cooperation of both reason and experience, or whether there is a third type of knowledge such as experience and intuition outside the mind.” (Cevizci, 2012, s. 68)

The approach, which maintains that the source of knowledge is experiment, argues that there is no knowledge of objects in our minds before experimentation and that the concept of object is derived from these individual objects. This means that there is nothing in mind that is not acquired from senses. Those who say that the source of knowledge is the reason claim that there are some concepts in our minds that precede experiment. These two approaches determine the answers to the above-mentioned questions throughout the history of philosophy. The discussion of whether the source of knowledge is reason or experiment is still ongoing.

2.2. The Arguments about Object in Philosophy

Philosophy, science, and art are human activities in the effort to comprehend the universe. Unlike science and art, philosophy strives to gain more encompassing and general knowledge about the universe. This requires getting to the roots of things and investigating things not in themselves, but in their locations within the whole. To be able to know something completely depends on a holistic understanding of the universe or the essence of being. Therefore, philosophy has been concerned with the essence beyond the visible reality since ancient times. Being called in different ways by the first philosophers, this essence basically refers to something that remains the same, independent of time and space and something as it is. These systems, which claim to grasp the entire universe, are internally consistent. Because every argument put forward in a philosophical system must be consistent. Every metaphysical system consists of, firstly, establishing certain definitions of its concepts, and then drawing logical conclusions from these definitions. In this respect, when the definitions given as axioms at the beginning are accepted, the results derived from them must be accepted as true. According to Aristotle, knowledge is the knowledge of the universal and there is no knowledge about what is changing, and man is a living being who wants to know by nature.³ How will a person who by nature desire to know have knowledge of constantly changing appearances? In this context, to know something is to know its essence that remains the same. What a thing is, is related to the essence of that thing's existence and the most fundamental principles on which it depends. While the "how" question is directed towards the description of visible reality, the "what" question extends beyond this visible reality.

³ Aristotle starts with the sentence "All man by naturally desire to know" in the First Book, Chapter I of his work called *Metaphysics*.

The answers we give to the question “what something is?” are actually related to which intellectual system we are in. As far as the physical object is concerned, it is empirical to say that the object consists only of its perceivable qualities. As we have mentioned before, in the problem of the source of knowledge, empiricist argues that the only possible source of knowledge is experiment, and that, knowledge, which is independent of experiment, cannot exist. In this context, they acknowledge that the human mind does not have innate knowledge, that there is nothing in mind that has not been found in the senses before, and that knowledge other than the logical relationships between concepts cannot be *a priori*. According to the idealist, that is, rational approach, there is an essence (substance) that transcends experience over which all qualities are realized. The source of knowledge is the mind and the mind has some innate concepts. Philosophy has been formed between these two ideas in an epistemological context, and these approaches are consistent within their own systems.

When we accept the existence of an external world that is independent of our perception, which is a prerequisite for many philosophers, discussions arise about what this world consists of and how we can know things. Because, when we accept existence as a prerequisite, the problem is not solved and even just begins. As we will see in more detail later on, it does not seem easy to define what something such-and-such is outside of us. The only thing we can immediately know is sense data. When we say that I touch a table and get a sense of hardness, there is no doubt that this is certain. However, when we ask what the nature of this thing we touch is, we enter into a field (metaphysics) that we cannot reach with our senses.

Is object a totality of appearances that partakes of Ideas and is the subject of our perceptions? Is it a composite being of matter and form? Is it thing-in-itself about

which we do not know anything? Is it something with primary and unchanging qualities and secondary and changeable qualities? Is it something whose existence is dependent on perception, but non-existent when not perceived? Is it something that cannot think but takes up space? Does it consist of names only? Is it sense-data constructed as a logical structure? Or is it all of these? The answer to each question constitutes a system with its own presuppositions. Each system can be considered correct or rejected, and consistency within each system is more important than which one is correct. In the next part of this thesis, object will be discussed in the context of philosophers who have established their own systems in the history of philosophy. We think that this kind of analysis is necessary for understanding the intellectual dimension of the process leading up to conceptual art. The object depicted by formalist art has been analyzed together with conceptual artists and has been seen as an analysis tool rather than a representation tool. The answers to the question about how such elimination is done can be given with a philosophical approach.

2.2.1. The Distinction between Appearance and Reality in Plato

Plato is seen as the first philosopher in the history of philosophy, who established a consistent intellectual system, according to most commentators. That is why we started this part of our work with Plato. The central view of this philosopher having arguments in every field of philosophy, which will be discussed in the context of this thesis, is the theory of Ideas (form)⁴. Ideas are forms that, as a concept, are nowhere but in mind, put forward for a collection of objects expressed as a single noun and are the non-physical essences of all things.

⁴ 'Eidos' in Greek has meanings such as form, image, appearance, shape, type, type, idea, thought, design, or concept in the context of the discussions in the history of philosophy.

“These forms are like patterns set in nature, and other things resemble them and are likenesses; and this partaking of the forms is, for the other things, simply being modeled on them.” (Plato, 1997, p. 500, 132d)

One of the main approaches of Plato's philosophy is the distinction between the world that is the subject of our experience and the world we comprehend through reason. The world we comprehend through reason is the world of Ideas, and the world that is the subject of our experience is the world of appearances coming into being by partaking of Ideas. The world that is the subject of our experience causes illusions because everything we perceive with our senses is in a constantly changing structure. Therefore, we cannot talk about the continuity or permanence of the external world, which is the subject of our perceptions. The world we perceive is the illusory world of appearances and cannot give us the knowledge of reality. However, Ideas are thoughts and occur only in minds and they are not subject to change; therefore, only they can give us the correct knowledge of reality.

According to Plato, truth is immutable and permanent. The world in which there are such permanence and immutability must be another world beyond the world we perceive. Plato thinks that this world is the world of Ideas. Ideas are the non-physical essences and the physical world is just an imitation of them. The reality can only exist through partaking of Ideas. Thus, the universe is divided into two as the world of appearances and the world of Ideas. The divided line, a visual metaphor for Plato's ontological and epistemological views, divides reality into two fundamental parts. These two parts are the constant realm of ideas and the realm of ever-changing physical objects that are the subject of experience.

“It is like a line divided into two unequal sections. Then divide each section—namely, that of the visible and that of the intelligible—in the same ratio as the line. In terms now of relative clarity and opacity, one subsection of the visible consists of images.” (Plato, 1997, p. 1478, 510a)

Plato also divides these worlds into two, which he describes as divided by a line. He mentions two sections of knowledge for each world. These are *doxa*⁵ ve *episteme*⁶. The knowledge of the visible world is *doxa* that is subject to change and the knowledge of the intelligible world is the *episteme* that remains unchanged. As a result, the existence of an intelligible world beyond the senses becomes a prerequisite for understanding and explaining the truth in the world of appearances that are described as illusions. Plato, who thinks that reality is eternal and that all changes must be illusions, therefore necessarily recognizes the existence of a permanent, constant, and unchanging reality. Plato argues that, whenever a number of individuals have a common name, they also have a common 'Idea'. For instance, though there are many chairs, there is only one 'Idea of a chair.' 'A chair' is not real, being only a copy of its 'Idea.' 'The Idea of a chair', which is the only real chair, is made by God. Therefore, physical objects in the sensory world exist only as copies of Ideas.

According to Plato, man is a member of both the world of appearances and the world of Ideas. Man belongs to the physical world with his body; he has the ability to obtain knowledge of the world of Ideas through his reason, which is not material. While man can only reach physical objects through the senses, he can obtain knowledge of the world of Ideas with reason. Man is not only an Idea in the mind but also something that has a reality of its own, is outside and independent of mind. Man cannot perceive the mental world with his senses but can reach it through his mind.

⁵ The term *doxa* is an Ancient-Greek term that originates from the verb *dokein*, meaning 'to seem, to think, to appear, to accept'. According to Plato, *doxa* is the knowledge of the world of perception. Since it contains opinions that are not based on any proof, thus unrelated to reason, it is also defined as illusory knowledge and does not have certainty.

⁶ *Episteme* is true and correct information obtained through reason; according to Plato, true knowledge is attained in this way. *Episteme* is the knowledge that belongs to the universe of Ideas, and like everything else in the universe of Ideas, it has a true, real, and unchangeable feature.

Ideas are perfect things; the sensory world is an imperfect imitation of it. According to Plato, there is a kind of participatory relationship between these two worlds. Ideas are universals; for instance, the Idea of 'chair' is not this or that particular chair. It is a general class of all chairs. Physical things exist by partaking of Ideas.

“In terms of Ideas, that sensory things partake of their Ideas, corresponds to their presence in sensory things. The presence of an Idea in an object will give it its existence, continuity and reality; if it abandons the object, leaves it, this will lead the sensory object to nothingness, non-existence, not being real.” (Arslan, 2018, p. 262)

Like the ancient Greeks, Plato thinks that there are four basic elements that everything was made up of: Earth, water, air, and fire. According to Plato, all kinds of objects consist of mixtures of four basic elements in certain proportions. The elements are “pure,” but cannot be found in that state on the Earth. Everything in the physical world is made up of a particular combination of earth, water, air, and fire.

“First, we see (or think we see) the thing that we have just now been calling water condensing and turning to stones and earth. Next, we see this same thing dissolving and dispersing, turning to wind and air, and air, when ignited, turning to fire. And then we see fire being condensed and extinguished and turning back to the form of air, and air coalescing and thickening and turning back into cloud and mist. When these are compressed still more we see them turning into flowing water, which we see turning to earth and stones once again. In this way, then, they transmit their coming to be one to the other in a cycle, or so it seems.” (Plato, 1992, p. 1633, 49c)

Plato associates each of earth, air, water, and fire with a regular solid. These four basic elements correspond to four distinct geometric solids: Fire is a tetrahedron (four-sided solid), Air is an octahedron (eight-sided solid), Water is an icosahedron (twenty-sided solid), Earth is a cube (six-sided solid); these geometric solids are made up of triangles.

“First of all, everyone knows, I’m sure, that fire, earth, water and air are bodies. Now everything that has bodily form also has depth. Depth, moreover, is of necessity comprehended within surface, and any surface bounded by straight lines is composed of triangles.” (Plato, 1992, p. 1638, 53d)

Geometric shapes also reflect the properties of the elements they encounter. For instance, the causticity of fire is due to the sharp tips of the triangle. Plato also designed objects as geometric shapes, and physical objects are explained through these geometric shapes. Everything we can see in the physical world has features that can be expressed both in a geometric form and in a mathematical language such as width, height, depth, and weight. In other words, for us, physical objects are just three-dimensional shapes. These perceived appearances of objects are reflections of their original forms, that is, their Ideas outside the perceived world.⁷

According to Plato, there are distinct Ideas for each object in nature and every object in the world is a reflection or copy of the Idea which it partakes of. Ideas are general concepts and function as models. We can only describe physical objects through these concepts.

“We customarily hypothesize a single form in connection with each of the many things to which we apply the same name.” (Plato, 1992, p. 1569, 596a)

There are so many physical objects in the world, like tables and chairs, but all tables are gathered under one table Idea, and chairs are gathered under a single chair Idea. Ideas that encompass individual objects make it possible to talk about these objects. Physical objects are auxiliaries, for instance, when thinking about the Idea of a horse. The Idea of a horse is something being thought, while a physical horse is something being seen. This can be compared to a mathematician using a drawn triangle while

⁷ For Plato's detailed explanation of how the four basic objects called fire, air, earth, and water came into being, see Chapters 53, 54, 55, and 56 of his *Dialog of Timaeus*.

thinking about a triangle. In this way, Plato paves the way for a person, who is interested in science, to be able to use his perception. However, the objects whose information is obtained in this way are not perceived objects. In other words, it is not possible to completely ignore physical objects; but the knowledge of the real cannot be obtained in this way.

2.2.2. The Composite Being of Matter and Form in the Context of Aristotle

The concept of Idea, which plays an important role in Plato's philosophy of knowledge and existence, is, for Aristotle, not in another world, but in a particular object, and yet the possibility of knowledge is not in doubt. As is known, Plato put forward the concept of Idea to justify knowledge, because, according to his worldview, the only objects of mind that can provide knowledge, are Ideas. Unlike Plato, Aristotle believed in the common properties of objects and argued that exact knowledge can be attained through induction. For Plato, the Ideas are the beings from which the things in the physical world partake of themselves. Aristotle disagreed with Plato on this point; Ideas are not in a separate world; they exist in the physical world. In other words, where Plato mentioned the world of Ideas, a place where all universal forms subsist, Aristotle argues that universals exist within each thing on which each universal is predicated.

“Above all one might discuss the question what on earth the Forms contribute to sensible things, either to those that are eternal or to those that come into being and cease to be. For they cause neither movement nor any change in them. But again they help in no wise either towards the knowledge of the other things (for they are not even the substance of these, else they would have been in them), or towards their being, if they are not in the particulars which share in them; though if they were, they might be thought to be causes, as white causes whiteness in a white object by entering into its composition.” (Aristotle, 2005, p. 21, 991a)

According to Aristotle, to say that Ideas are patterns and the other things partake of them is to use empty words. For him, the form is in things, not in a world of entities separate from them. Ideas, which are claimed to be the substance of things cannot exist independently because it would be impossible that the thing and Idea of which existed separately. For instance, the "Idea" of a cat is intelligible and applies to all cats; this Idea never changes, even though cats vary among themselves; the Idea of a cat would never change even if every cat in the world were to disappear. However, for Aristotle, when we think of the concept of a cat, it is not apart from the particular cat that is the subject of our senses. Likewise, it is not possible to think of the Idea of whiteness independent of any perceptible things.

The world, which is considered real by Aristotle and subject to our senses can only be understood by explaining the constitutive elements, the relationships between these elements, and how these elements work. All physical objects are changing, and as far as philosophical knowledge is concerned, it is not possible to exclude these objects altogether on the ground that they are changing. However, according to Aristotle, there is no knowledge of the particulars or the relationship between the particulars and it is possible to reveal what remains unchanged based on the change of objects subject to the senses, and therefore it is essential to look at the root of this change. Aristotle asserts that reality is concrete, and he says that reality does not make sense or exist until the mind processes it. Therefore, truth is dependent upon a person's mind and external elements. The mind can do many things, but for Aristotle, the mind also has the potential to receive knowledge from objects in the external world that we are conscious of.

According to Aristotle, every being in nature has a cause, and there are four causes that enable anything to come into being and determine its function. Something

is known only when the cause is known. For Aristotle, accurate knowledge is the knowledge of the causes; he thinks that one does not have the knowledge of a thing until he has comprehended its why, that is to say, its cause.

“Now, the causes being four, it is the business of the student of nature to know about them all, and if he refers his problems back to all of them, he will assign the ‘why’ in the way proper to his science —the matter, the form, the mover, that for the sake of which. The last three often coincide; for the what and that for the sake of which are one, while the primary source of motion is the same in species as these.” (Aristotle, *Physics*, p. 38, 198a22-23)

Aristotle is clearly a strong proponent of the view that giving the relevant cause (or causes) is equivalent to offering a scientific explanation. Nature is constantly changing, it is a transforming structure; when we want to explain something in accordance with nature, and we have to explain its being and change. In this context, Aristotle's theory of four causes also corresponds to the answers given to questions that may be asked about a changing thing. These questions are structured as follows: What is changing? (The material cause), what does the changing object change towards? (The formal cause), what causes it to change? (The efficient cause), what is the purpose of the object? (The final cause). So, bronze is the material cause for sculpture, the sculpture is the formal cause for sculpture, the sculptor is the efficient cause and the bronze sculpture is the final cause, because of his definitions of four causes, Aristotle shows the material cause and the formal cause as the real causes by reducing the efficient cause and the final cause to the formal cause.

Aristotle divided the knowledge that can be obtained about things into ten categories. Nine of these ten categories are related to the perceptible aspects of things and are obtained through senses. The word category defines a predicate in Aristotle's thought; they are various classes of predicates about an entity or a topic. Categories place every object of human understanding under one of the ten categories.

“Expressions which are in no way composite signify substance, quantity, quality, relation, place, time, position, state, action, or affection. To sketch my meaning roughly, examples of substance are ‘man’ or ‘the horse’, of quantity, such terms as ‘two cubits long’ or ‘three cubits long’, of quality, such attributes as ‘white’, ‘grammatical’. Double, ‘half’, ‘greater’, fall under the category of relation; ‘in the market place’, ‘in the Lyceum’, under that of place; ‘yesterday’, ‘last year’, under that of time. ‘Lying’, ‘sitting’, are terms indicating position, ‘shod’, ‘armed’, state; ‘to lance’, ‘to cauterize’, action; ‘to be lanced’, ‘to be cauterized’, affection.” (Aristotle, 2013, p. 4, 1b25-2a5)

Besides, these categories allow us to talk about an object. Categories relate to both the physical world and logic⁸ and they form the most general predicates about entities. The particulars that gain concrete existence by the combination of matter and form are determined according to these ten categories and these ten categories give answers to all questions that can be asked about particulars.

“Categories constitute the most basic forms of understanding objects. Whatever can be attributed to particulars, what can be said as predicates of particulars, will be said within the context of one or the other of these categories.” (Denkel, 2011, p. 126)

The tenth category, which can be comprehended by reason and therefore devisable, is called "Substance". The other nine categories except substance do not have independent entities; therefore, they need substance to exist. The other nine categories are predicates loaded onto substance and they cannot exist independently. All categories except substance accept change, that is, their transformation to each other or their disappearance does not bring about a change in the object itself. However, the substance is permanent in that it is what makes the object be called that object.

⁸ There have been various discussions about categories in the history of philosophy. It is still debated whether Aristotle's categories are based on a classification that expresses characteristics belonging to language, being, or both.

“Now there are several senses in which a thing is said to be first; yet substance is first in every sense in definition, in order of knowledge, in time. For of the other categories none can exist independently, but only substance. And in definition also this is first; for in the definition of each term the definition of its substance must be present. And we think we know each thing most fully, when we know what it is, e.g. what man is or what fire is, rather than when we know its quality, its quantity, or its place; since we know each of these predicates also, only when we know what the quantity or the quality is.” (Aristotle, 2005, p. 92, VII, 35)

Unlike Plato's Ideas, Aristotle's Substance does not belong to a world outside physical reality; conversely, it coexists with the physical objects. According to Aristotle, Substance exists in two forms; he calls these forms the primary substances and the secondary substances; the primary substances correspond to individual objects. For instance, Çiğdem, Barış, the neighbor's cat Tekir are individual particulars ve they are the primary substances. The secondary substance is the genus and species in which individuals exist. The basis of secondary substance is always the primary substance. Therefore, primary substance always takes precedence. Individual beings, the primary substances for Aristotle, consisted of form and matter. Although Aristotle put forward different definitions about the concept of substance, he also stated that substance is used in at least four ways.

“The word 'substance' is applied, if not in more senses, still at least to four main objects; for both the essence and the universal and the genus, are thought to be the substance of each thing, and fourthly the substratum. Now the substratum is that of which everything else is predicated, while it is itself not predicated of anything else. And so we must first determine the nature of this; for that which underlies a thing primarily is thought to be in the truest sense its substance. And in one sense matter is said to be of the nature of substratum, in another, shape, and in a third, the compound of these.” (Aristotle, 2005, p. 93, 1029a)

According to Aristotle, substance, in the most literal sense of the word, is the substance in the primary sense and he speaks of it as a combination of matter and

form. The primary substance consists of the essence of an individual object, or of a class or species of objects. In Aristotle's view, for instance, bronze is a matter, the form is the shape that matter takes, and sculpture is the combination of both. The substance is not the predicate of a subject, the rest (nine categories) are its predicate but the substance itself is the predicate of matter. However, according to Aristotle, since the substance is primarily a composite being of matter and form, in this context, this composite being has the characteristics of being independent and individual. Substances in the primary sense allow us to talk about objects, but the secondary substances, which Aristotle determined as genera and species, are the carriers of the knowledge about substances in the primary sense observed in the external world; it is not possible to obtain information about objects without species and genus.

Object is known through its properties, and in the context of Aristotle, these properties are divided into essential and accidental properties. The distinction between essential and accidental properties is characterized in its most general form as follows: while an essential property of an object is a property that it must have, an accidental property of an object is not such a property. For this reason, change occurs in accidental properties, the essential property does not change, if it changes, the object disappears. This kind of essential change is called a substantial change.

“The properties whose changes do not involve the loss of substance are the accidental properties or the accidents of the object. The properties whose changes break the identity of substance are essential or necessary. It is impossible for an object to exist in the absence of essential properties. Being alive is a necessary attribute to be human. A person whose life has ended is no longer a human but a corpse.” (Denkel, 2011, p. 129)

Essential properties are necessary, accidental properties are contingent. Something is necessary means that its negation is not possible; on the other hand, something is possible implies that its negation is not necessary; to say that an object must have a

certain property is to say that it could not defect it, and to say that an object could have a certain property is to say that it is not the case that it must lack it. Since essential properties are independent of our senses, they can only be known through the mind; that is why they are necessary. So substantial change causes a substance to not exist; in such a change, that thing also disappears. The accidental properties, on the other hand, arise when the properties of something change.

According to Aristotle, in order to know an object, it is necessary to know its genus; the genus is the name of the class to which the object belongs, and the species are listed under it. For instance, humans, birds, horses are the species listed under the animal genus. Thus, by placing a horse, a bird, and a human into the animal genus, we declare that they are of the animal species. Therefore, it is essential to correctly determine the genus and species to which the objects belong, in order to obtain accurate knowledge. The certainty of an object's species or class to which it belongs determines what we have to say about the structure of that object. For instance, the separation of a living thing from the animal genus as an intelligent species enables us to define it as human, because the essential distinction that separates man from the animal species is the reason. In Aristotle's thought, the classification for all objects is done in this way.

For Aristotle, the universe consists of living and non-living matter, which constantly changes its form, acquires new forms, and changes according to a specific purpose. Everything that exists in the physical world is individual objects that emerge from the combination of matter and form. In Aristotle's thought, this composite entity consisting of matter and form provides the transition from an ambiguous state to an exact state. He uses the potentiality-actuality distinction to explain the process of being. In this context, he shows that a matter can reach reality only when combined

with form. However, also it is possible for a matter not to reach reality. Therefore, the matter is in a state of potentiality opposite to the actual form. The actuality is that mode of being in which a thing can bring other things about or be brought about by them, the realm of events and facts. On the contrary, potentiality is not a paradigm in which a thing exists, but instead the power to effect change, the capability of thinking to make transitions into different states.

“Our meaning can be seen in the particular cases by induction, and we must not seek a definition of everything but be content to grasp the analogy, that it is as that which is building is to that which is capable of building, and the waking to the sleeping, and that which is seeing to that which has its eyes shut but has sight, and that which has been shaped out of the matter to the matter, and that which has been wrought up to the unwrought. Let actuality be defined by one member of this antithesis, and the potential by the other.” (Aristotle, 2005, p. 131, 1048b)

For instance, a table can be made of metal or wood, but this is accidental to its quality of being a table; that is, it is still a table regardless of the material of which it is made. Thus an accident is a property which has no necessary connection to the essence of the thing being described. Wood and metal have the potential to be a table. Metal and wood are the material of the table; when they become a table, they are combined with a form, that is, they are potentially a table (something else can be made of them); but when they become a table, they become actuality. In the context of Aristotle, actuality has priority over potentiality; since the actual has a form, this gives the actual priority to the potential. When things become actual, they are known, and to become actual is the orientation of that thing to its final cause. Matter is infinite in terms of potentiality and form is finite in terms of being actual.

These descriptions outline Aristotle's system. Emphasis is placed on parts that are considered necessary in a discussion about the object. A detailed analysis is not

covered by this study. Since each concept of Aristotle is a subject on its own, it is thought that the discussion here is sufficient in the context of this study.

2.2.3. The Thing, which is Non-Thinking but Extended, Descartes

In the context of this study, it seems beneficial to look at Descartes's system in general, although it is Descartes's extended substance that will be discussed here. Descartes temporarily consider all the views he thought he knew before, unproved, provided that he used them after proving their correctness, in order to reach the certainty he sought in philosophy. Because, according to him, even logic, although it has precise principles, is blurred, because harmful and unnecessary information may have infiltrated into them. Thus, instead of the large number of rules that make up the logic, he suggests four rules, which he believes are sufficient.

“The first was never to accept anything for true which I did not clearly know to be such; that is to say, carefully to avoid precipitancy and prejudice, and to comprise nothing more in my judgment than what was presented to my mind so clearly and distinctly as to exclude all ground of doubt. The second, to divide each of the difficulties under examination into as many parts as possible, and as might be necessary for its adequate solution. The third, to conduct my thoughts in such order that, by commencing with objects the simplest and easiest to know, I might ascend by little and little, and, as it were, step by step, to the knowledge of the more complex; assigning in thought a certain order even to those objects which in their own nature do not stand in a relation of antecedence and sequence. And the last, in every case to make enumerations so complete, and reviews so general that I might be assured that nothing was omitted.” (Descartes, 2008, p.11)

Descartes says that, by applying this method, we can reach even knowledge that we thought could not be reached. In Descartes' view, not accepting anything true that we do not clearly know to be true, means suspecting all kinds of knowledge. To avoid the difficulties of doubt, the best thing to do is to divide each of these difficulties into as many parts as possible. Starting from the simplest and easiest to understand objects,

moving towards the unified one gradually can be used as a method to reach true knowledge. Doubt has an important place in Descartes' understanding of knowledge. He uses doubt as a method to obtain clear and distinct knowledge. He takes the direct intuition of thinking subject as the starting point; the senses are sometimes deceitful, so the senses are denied; also, logic is denied because some harmful principles that infiltrated into the correct principles of logic make us make mistakes. Thought, on the other hand, is still thought, even if it leads to false delusions, and it cannot be denied and thought requires the presence of the thinker.

“Accordingly, seeing that our senses sometimes deceive us, I was willing to suppose that there existed nothing really such as they presented to us; and because some men err in reasoning, and fall into paralogisms, even on the simplest matters of geometry, I, convinced that I was as open to error as any other, rejected as false all the reasonings I had hitherto taken for demonstrations; and finally, when I considered that the very same thoughts (presentations) which we experience when awake may also be experienced when we are asleep, while there is at that time not one of them true, I supposed that all the objects (presentations) that had ever entered into my mind when awake, had in them no more truth than the illusions of my dreams. But immediately upon this I observed that, whilst I thus wished to think that all was false, it was absolutely necessary that I, who thus thought, should be somewhat; and as I observed that this truth, I think, therefore I am (COGITO ERGO SUM), was so certain and of such evidence that no ground of doubt, however extravagant, could be alleged by the skeptics capable of shaking it, I concluded that I might, without scruple, accept it as the first principle of the philosophy of which I was in search.”
(Descartes, 2008, p. 18)

Descartes *deduces* that thought exists because of the fact that "he thinks he doubts the reality of other things" and concludes that, a body exists since thought needs a body, and establishes its thinking system based on this premise. The one who doubts everything cannot doubt that one who has that thought exists. Thus, "I think, therefore I am" (Cogito ergo sum) becomes the exact knowledge Descartes has been looking for. Descartes, while doubting everything, cannot doubt he exists, and so the

proposition "I am" is inevitably true. As a result, he places the "thinking self" at the center of his philosophy.

Another aspect of Descartes' approach is the distinction between body (material substance) and mind (thinking substance), which had a great impact on the philosophical debates after him. Within the framework of this view, Descartes argued that the body should be regarded as inherently separate from the thinking thing (*res cogitans*), i.e. mind, due to its spatiality (*res extensa*). Thus, the body is defined as something that takes up space but cannot think, and the mind as something that can think but does not take up space.

"Thus, extension in length, breadth, and depth, constitutes the nature of corporeal substance; and thought the nature of thinking substance. For every other thing that can be attributed to body, presupposes extension, and is only some mode of an extended thing; as all the properties we discover in the mind are only diverse modes of thinking. Thus, for example, we cannot conceive figure unless in something extended, nor motion unless in extended space, nor imagination, sensation, or will, unless in a thinking thing." (Descartes, 1901, p. 35)

These two substances are irreducible and have independent entities. Everything, which exists, is formed as a result of these two substances coming together in different ways. The substance in this context is something that needs nothing but itself in order to exist. Among the metaphysical theses, he asserts is that mind and body have completely distinct essences: the essence of a thinking substance is pure thought; the essence of the body is the pure extension. In the final analysis, Descartes thinks he shows that the occurrence of thought depends (ontologically) on the existence of a substantial self – to wit, on the existence of an infinite substance, namely God. Material substance is subject to certain laws in the universe. It is possible to explain all physical processes through these laws. The laws to which matter is subordinate that spread throughout the universe are basically simple mechanical laws. According

to Descartes, the world is a big machine that has a certain place. The system that can explain each part of this machine is geometry. Everything that takes up space is in order and a mechanical structure. Therefore, the movements of not only inanimate objects but also living beings can be explained in this way.

In Descartes' view, the reliability of knowledge is related to whether it has the characteristics of being clear and distinct. Clear and distinct perceptions are defined as those perceptions which are so self-evident that, while they are held in mind, they cannot logically be doubted. All knowledge, according to Descartes, is supposed to proceed from clear and distinct perceptions; no proposition is supposed to be judged as true unless it is perceived clearly and distinctly. Clarity refers to a quality that is immediately presented to the mind and which the mind can easily become conscious of. Things that affect man strongly enough are clear. Distinct is a quality that is sharp and separate from other information. Something can be clear without being distinct, but not distinct without being clear.

“For example, when any one feels intense pain, the knowledge which he has of this pain is very clear, but it is not always distinct; for men usually confound it with the obscure judgment they form regarding its nature, and think that there is in the suffering part something similar to the sensation of pain of which they are alone conscious” (Descartes, 1901, p. 32)

A sense experience or a thought is distinct when we are fully conscious of it. It is only clear when we are not sure about what its nature is. It is rare for us to make judgments about things that we do not know sufficiently clearly, because reason naturally tells us to make judgments upon what we know only distinctly before making judgments. Descartes argues that as long as a judgment is made on things that are clearly and distinctly conceived, nothing can be said wrong.

According to Descartes, when it comes to physical objects, their clearly and distinctly known aspects are thoughts that can be obtained through their mathematical properties. The thought which is clear and distinct about any object originates from the fact that that object has a certain shape and volume. We can only have thoughts about the mathematical properties of things belonging to the external world, but this knowledge does not give us an idea of whether things really exist. For Descartes, there are innate thoughts in the mind, even though they do not originate from perception. Every mind carries these common innate thoughts.

“The things that are termed simple (in relation to our understanding) are either purely intellectual, or purely material, or common “to both realm”. The purely intellectual objects are those that the understanding knows by means of an innate light, without the help of any corporeal image”. (Descartes, 1954, p. 15)

Descartes is of the opinion that there are some innate thoughts in the mind, because it is the presence of such information in the mind that brings us true knowledge. Innate thoughts are not evident in the mind at first; these thoughts become apparent over time, as the environment is perceived and turn into a conscious state.

An important part of Descartes' thoughts about the nature of objects is the distinction of qualities he made about the properties of objects. According to him, some of the qualities that are thought to exist in objects do not actually exist in those things themselves. These are qualities such as sound, taste, smell, color; these are subjective qualities that change depending on the state of senses, so it is not possible to say that they belong to objects. These qualities are related to our senses, and it can easily be observed that they change along with senses. It is clear that no clear and distinct knowledge can be attained on the basis of these subjective qualities.

Therefore, it is not possible for these sensory attributes to give the knowledge of objects.

The other qualities, which Descartes characterizes as belonging to the object itself, are not dependent on senses and are not affected by any change in them. These attributes belong to an object and cannot be considered separately from it, and are the qualities required to describe that object materially. Qualities such as color, sound, and smell, which are regarded only as properties belonging to senses, are not, for example, a form or style of extension. Subjective qualities consist of the effect an object creates on the senses. These sensations belonging to material objects are formed because of the effect of objective qualities on the senses.

Descartes' definition of qualities is almost the same as the definition of primary and secondary qualities of philosophers like Locke. Descartes states that the aspect of the physics world that is subject to human knowledge is only the mathematical properties of bodies or their primary qualities such as shape and motion. In this case, it is not possible to be sure of the accuracy of properties such as sound, color, and taste that are subject to senses, because these qualities do not provide information that is clear and distinct to man.

2.2.4. Locke and Primary Qualities and Secondary Qualities of Physical Objects

John Locke, one of the important philosophers of British empiricism, discusses the problem that emerged with Descartes' recognition of innate ideas, which is the fundamental element that distinguishes empiricism from idealism because the presupposition that there are some innate ideas in our minds belongs to the thought system of idealism. According to him, valid proof cannot be shown to accept that

some ideas are innate. Locke argues that ideas are the objects of thoughts, and while he acknowledges that ideas exist in the mind of man, he asserts that they arise from sensation or thinking rather than being innate. Therefore, knowledge is entirely derived from experiment. He thinks that the principles of Logic, such as *identity* or *non-contradiction*, are learned later on, so it is impossible to say anything definite about their innate nature, because, according to Locke, such general information cannot be found naturally in the mind. According to Locke, the principles of logic that are thought to be innate should also be questioned, such as "everything is the same as itself" and "it is impossible for the same thing to be and not to be." He argues that these universally considered principles are accepted without discussion, but we have no argument to justify them. If the principles of logic were innate, children should have known them too, which is not the case.

“Not on the mind naturally imprinted, because not known to children, idiots, &c. For, first, it is evident, that all children and idiots have not the least apprehension or thought of them.” (Locke, 1999, p. 29)

He rejects this, saying that it contradicts “the innate idea” conception. Because, in Locke's view, it is incomprehensible to him to say that something is in the mind before the mind perceives it. For him, the principles of logic are not innate in the mind, they are learned later. Since children and idiots cannot articulate the principles of logic, so there are neither innate principles nor ideas.

Locke argues that there is no innate knowledge in the mind and the mind only has the capacity to know the truth, and this cannot be denied. According to him, the capacity of the mind to know emerges when it transforms impressions gained from experiment into ideas because there is no statement in mind that has not been known

or discerned before. It is impossible for any notion to be imprinted in the mind in its first occurrence due to its nature.

“The senses at first let in particular ideas, and furnish the yet empty cabinet, and the mind by degrees growing familiar with some of them, they are lodged in the memory, and names got to them. Afterwards, the mind proceeding further, abstracts them, and by degrees learns the use of general names.” (Locke, 1999, p. 35)

As understood by Locke, the mind of an individual is like a blank slate (*tabula rasa*). He characterizes ideas as sensations or reflections; for him mind is like a white paper, devoid of all the characters, containing no idea. He shows that experiment is the only source for ideas, which he thinks, cannot be innate. According to Locke, experiment is divided into two as external sensation, which includes the processing of the impressions received from the outside world, and internal sensation, which includes some activities performed by human consciousness on perceptions or thoughts.

“Our observation employed either, about external sensible objects, or about the internal operations of our minds perceived and reflected on by ourselves, is that which supplies our understandings with all the materials of thinking. These two are the fountains of knowledge, from whence all the ideas we have, or can naturally have, do spring.” (Locke, 1999, p. 98)

The sensation attains information by converting the impressions it receives from the external world into ideas through a mental process. Thus, we reach ideas that we derive from the sensory qualities of objects and objects that are the subject of the experiment become the source of ideas. Sensations consist of the effects of things in the external world on us. However, it is wrong to think that, based on these effects, objects appear with all their features and exactly the way they are.

In Locke's philosophical system; qualities are the forces that produce ideas formed as a result of the impressions gained from the external world. We access

knowledge about objects through these qualities. According to him, two types of sensations can be mentioned: The first of these is the sensation that reflects reality as it is, which gives the primary qualities of objects. The mind finds them inseparable in every object. Primary qualities are inseparable from objects, do not undergo metamorphosis and change, and are closed to all influences from outside. Qualities such as solidity, extension, figure, and mobility are the primary qualities of object, and it is these primary qualities that make object itself.

“Take a grain of wheat, divide it into two parts; each part has still solidity, extension, figure, and mobility: divide it again, and it retains still the same qualities; and so divide it on, till the parts become insensible; they must retain still each of them all those qualities.” (Locke, 1999, p. 117)

No process of division can take away the primary qualities from object, because they are the basic properties of object. Since these qualities are inseparable from object, they provide true knowledge about object. Since the primary qualities are subject independent and immutable, they also provide the possibility to talk about objects in general.

The second kinds of sensations are subjective, they are attached to things accidentally, and they are sensations that give object secondary qualities. They are not found in objects themselves and are perceived by virtue of primary qualities. Colors, sounds, flavors, and similar sensations are secondary qualities of objects. Since the perception of these qualities depends on primary qualities, their elimination from an object does not eliminate the object.

“Secondly, such qualities which in truth are nothing in the objects themselves but power to produce various sensations in us by their primary qualities, i.e. by the bulk, figure, texture, and motion of their insensible parts, as colors, sounds, tastes, &c. These I call secondary qualities.”(Locke, 1999, p. 117)

Primary qualities belong to object; whether we perceive them or not, while secondary qualities emerge from their different states. Because of their unchanging properties, it is the primary qualities that enable us to know objects. Secondary qualities are mutable, so they are not the subject of knowledge.

As Locke defines it, secondary qualities such as color, smell, taste do not exist in objects themselves, so they create sensation through primary qualities, and therefore they depend on subject rather than object itself. In this context, secondary qualities may cause different sensations in different individuals and even vary according to the changes in the situation and conditions of the same individual. This is why the color of any object standing in front of us is perceived differently according to the light that illuminates it, the angle at which it is viewed, and the distance. Transformation depending on conditions is an attribute of secondary qualities and therefore secondary qualities depend on the perceiver. However, objects themselves are not affected by these changes so; it is the primary qualities that actually define objects. In Locke's thought, ideas are in the mind, qualities are in objects. Ideas are the direct objects of thought or mind. It is the qualities of objects, which provide the power to produce any idea in our mind. Locke wants each of us to use reason to search for truth rather than simply accept the opinion of authorities or be subject to superstition. Locke as an empiricist argues that all knowledge is born out by experiment, that the mind has the power to know anything, but that there is no previously perceived knowledge in mind, so all the arguments he put forward about an object should be evaluated in this context.

2.2.5. Berkeley's Denial of the External World, Which is Independent of Mind

George Berkeley is one of the most important philosophers of the early modern period. He is the strongest critic of the philosophers before him, especially Descartes and Locke. Berkeley, a true metaphysicist, defends idealism, which argues that reality consists only of minds and their ideas. Berkeley's radical empiricism is based on the argument that existence is something 'perceived'. This kind of empiricism reduces the whole experience to the act of perception. In an ontological context, Berkeley is an idealist and denies all kinds of material substances and reality independent of the mind. Berkeley's theory - he called "immaterialism"- was later named subjective realism. According to this theory, there is no question of the existence of a material substance; the ordinary objects we see around us are only the objects in the mind of the perceiver. In Berkeley's views, the presupposition that the external world exists by itself causes contradictions. Each of the elements that make up the external world exists because they are subjects of our perception and consciousness.

“For as to what is said of the absolute existence of unthinking things without any relation to their being perceived, that seems perfectly unintelligible. Their **Esse** is **Percipi**, nor is it possible they should have any existence, out of the minds or thinking things which perceive them.” (Berkeley, 2002, p. 19)

According to Berkeley, objects are things that we perceive through our senses and they cannot exist independent of the mind. To say that objects exist without being perceived is a contradiction. What can be seen and sensed such as color, light, hot, and cold are nothing but ideas or impressions on the senses, so they cannot be separated from perceptions even in thought. Object and sensation are the same and cannot be abstracted from each other in any way. In Berkeley's view, not all the objects that make up the world can be permanent without mind. The argument that to exist is to be perceived is obviously true to mind, and it is impossible for someone

who thinks carefully about this issue not to notice it. Naturally, Berkeley also opposes Locke's distinction between primary and secondary qualities, arguing that everything that is defined as an attribute also depends on the mind.

As mentioned before, Locke characterizes qualities such as size, shape, and state as the primary qualities of object and he treats the qualities appearing in sensations, such as color, smell, temperature as secondary qualities of object. He thinks that the primary qualities belong to object itself, and the secondary qualities to subject. Berkeley does not accept the idea that the primary qualities exist independently of the mind and argues that the primary qualities claimed to belong to object are unprovable assumptions.

“But it is evident from what we have already shown, that extension, figure and motion are only ideas existing in the mind, and that an idea can be like nothing but another idea, and that consequently neither they nor their archetypes can exist in an unperceiving substance. Hence it is plain, that that the very notion of what is called matter or corporeal substance, involves a contradiction in it.” (Berkeley, 2002, p. 20)

Berkeley, as opposed to Locke and other like-minded philosophers, thinks that primary qualities cannot exist independently of the perceiver, just like secondary qualities. Just as color exists for the one who sees, or taste only for the one who tastes, the extension, figure, and motion exist only for the perceiver. In this respect, according to Berkeley, everything we call qualities of objects can be traced back to the ideas we derive from experience and the connections between these ideas. For him, those that arise from sensation itself are only secondary qualities. We do not perceive objects in a certain size, shape, or distance; we create qualities such as size and figure by bringing together and combining the data we perceive in our thought. Hence, primary qualities do not originate from object itself, but from subject just like secondary qualities, because Berkeley claims that it is impossible to design an object

that extends or moves without adding color or another sensory quality that depends only on the perceiver, and according to him, form, space, and movement abstracted from other qualities are unthinkable.

“In short, extension, figure, and motion, abstracted from all other qualities, are inconceivable. Where therefore the other sensible qualities are, there must these be also, to wit, in the Mind and no where else.” (Berkeley, 2002, s. 20)

Berkeley thinks that the fact that an inference made based on the changeable properties of the secondary qualities depends on the perceiver is also valid for the qualities claimed as the primary qualities. To accept that objects have independent entities outside of our minds would be to accept that objects exist without being designed or thought by us. Qualities are nothing more than senses or ideas that exist in a mind that perceives them. Primary qualities, like secondary qualities, are also unproven assumptions, so it can be argued without contradiction that they do not belong to object, since primary qualities also appear differently to the same person looking from different places, or to a different person looking from the same place, so they cannot be the images of something determined outside the mind.

The basic argument that "to exist is to be perceived" (*Esse est percipi*) is the criterion for something to be real for Berkeley. Hence, to be able to say that something is real, it must be perceived. In this context, Berkeley reduced the completely external world to a subjective reality and eliminated the possibility of objective reality. If existence is perceived, if perception requires a perceiver, the external world will disappear when there is no perceiver. However, according to Berkeley, the external world continues to exist independently of the perceiver, and the reason for this is that God perceives it. The existence of a Perceiving God ensures the existence of objects, even if no one perceives them.

2.2.6. Kant and the Thing-in-Itself

Kant (1724–1804), one of the most important system-building philosophers, synthesizes the two great traditions of philosophy, rationalism, and empiricism, in the context of epistemology. As it is well known, rationalists defend reason, as the sole source of knowledge, and according to an empiricist, the source of knowledge is experiment. According to Kant, there is no innate knowledge; there are faculties that provide the possibility of knowledge. Kant defines these faculties as the faculty of understanding (*verstand*), the faculty of sensibility (*sinnlichkeit*), the faculty of imagination (*einbildungskraft*), and reason (*vernunft*). There is a distinction between the faculty of understanding and the notions of reason. Accordingly, the faculty of understanding is analytical, that is, it is inquiring and decomposes and grasps the particular. On the other hand, the reason is in principle synthesist and oriented towards the general. Sensibility (*Sinnlichkeit*) constitutes the first stage of perception, and mind (*Verstand*) the second stage. Sensory organs perceive objects directly through their sensory faculties. These immediate, sensory intuition (*Anschauung*) or sensations (*Empfindung*) received from objects through their sense organs are transmitted to the mind for processing, because the faculty of sensibility cannot make sense of these perceptions and sensations gained from objects and it does not have the ability to form notions. Therefore, the mind makes a 'unity of intuition' (*Einheit der Anschauung*) out of these data from the field of experience, thanks to the a priori principles "categories" it has. In Kant's system, knowledge becomes possible through these faculties. However, it is *experiment* that provides this possibility. In this respect, Kant cannot be considered as a completely rational philosopher because according to him, all knowledge starts with experience, and the faculty of knowledge only works when content comes from experience.

“Experience is without doubt the first product that our understanding brings forth as it works on the raw material of sensible sensations... For that very reason it gives us no true universality, and reason, which is so desirous of this kind of cognitions, is more stimulated than satisfied by it.” (Kant, 1998, p. 127)

In Kant's thought, experiment is the first condition of knowledge, but it is not the only condition because experiment cannot be a source of knowledge without reason. Experiment shows that something exists, but does not necessarily explain why it is the way it is rather than otherwise; because necessity is a property of reason and no information arising from experiment is necessarily true. Kant differs from the empiricist philosophers by arguing that the condition of knowledge is not simply experiment, since the human mind has the ability to process external data. He shows that the source of this information is both experiment and reason. Consequently, experiment creates the content of knowledge, and it is the mind that gives it its main form.

Besides the faculty of knowing in the context of Kant, another important point is his definitions of *a priori* and *a posteriori*. There is the knowledge that resides necessarily *a priori* at the origin of experiences and enables the mind to connect sensory representations to each other. In virtue of this knowledge that emerges *a priori* independent of experiences, it is possible to speak outside of experience. In Kant's view, knowledge is divided into two as *a priori* and *a posteriori*. For him, *a priori* knowledge is the knowledge that is independent of all experience, not mixed with experience; on the contrary, *a posteriori* knowledge is knowledge based on experience and possible through experience.

According to Kant, human knowledge emerges through judgments, and judgment is an act of the faculty of thinking. On the other hand, judgment is a combination of representations in consciousness. In this context, knowledge is

expressed through either analytical or synthetic judgments. Analytical judgments are *a priori* necessary, yet repetitive judgments of the known so, they do not add anything new to our knowledge, and they are merely explanatory. The judgments that give original knowledge about reality are synthetic judgments; they expand our knowledge by adding something new.

“In all judgments in which the relation of a subject to the predicate is thought (if consider only affirmative judgments, since the application to negative ones is easy), this relation is possible in two different ways. Either the predicate B belongs to the subject A as something that is (covertly) contained in this concept A; or B lies entirely outside the concept A, though to be sure it stands in connection with it. In the first case I call the judgment analytic, in the second synthetic.” (Kant, 1998, p. 130)

Analytical judgments in this context involve identity, that is, subject and predicate are connected by identity (A is A). However, synthetic judgments do not contain identity (A is B). Hence, analytical judgments are necessarily based on the principle of non-contradiction since the subject is included in the predicate. Synthetic judgments, on the other hand, are based on experiments, as they are amplificative, so they are not necessary. Kant gives the judgments "All bodies are extended" and "All bodies are heavy" as examples of these two types of judgments. According to him, the first one is an analytical judgment because the body and the extension contain each other, that is, the predicate has already been considered within the subject, and such a judgment is an analytical judgment since it is clarifying. The second judgment is a synthetic judgment since the predicate is entirely thought outside the subject. Synthetic judgments add a predicate to a subject that was not previously thought of in its concept and therefore synthetic judgments are amplifications of our knowledge.

Kant states that we express human knowledge that emerges through judgments through analytical and synthetic judgments. He classifies analytical judgments as

necessary and repetitive judgments and synthetic judgments as judgments that add something new to our knowledge. However, after classifying the judgments in this way, Kant asks the following question, which is very important in terms of philosophical history: Are there judgments that can both an amplification of our knowledge and are necessary? So can we speak of both synthetic and a priori judgments? In this context, the main question Kant seeks to answer is the question “How can synthetic *a priori* propositions be possible?”

“As indispensable as it is, however, to answer this question, at the same time it is just as difficult; and although the principal reason why the answer has not long since been sought rests in the fact that it had occurred to no one that such a thing could be asked, nonetheless a second reason is that a satisfactory answer to this one question requires more assiduous, deeper, and more painstaking reflection than the most prolix work of metaphysics ever did, which promised its author immortality on its first appearance.” (Kant, 2004, p. 29)

Kant's aim of talking about synthetic *a priori* judgments is to ground science. The causality criticism emphasized by Hume, in other words, his view that a necessary relationship cannot be established between the facts, showed that, contrary to what was thought, scientific statements were not necessary.⁹ Intuition is what is necessary to establish the concept of an object. Sensibility and intuition are concepts that are directly related to each other. Synthetic *a posteriori* judgments occur when intuition is formed on the basis of empirical facts. On the other hand, if the intuition is formed at the origin of pure reason, synthetic *a priori* judgments occur. Kant thinks that mathematics, natural sciences, even metaphysics are possible as synthetic *a priori*; for

⁹ David Hume criticized the principle of "causality", formulated as that every event has a cause and that under the same conditions the same causes will produce the same results, and argued that it cannot be taken as a presupposition. In his book, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, Hume stated that the course of events in nature can change and that a phenomenon similar to previously experienced phenomena can have different consequences, and this will not lead to any contradiction. For instance, the fact that the sun will rise tomorrow can be denied without getting a contradiction. Causality is based on the opinion that the future will be like the past. However, Hume said that no evidence to be obtained from experience can prove that the future will be like the past.

example, mathematical operations are synthetic, because there are predicates that are not included in the subject and give us new information, but they are *a priori* because the operation takes place thanks to pure intuition.

According to Kant, we perceive things in the external world as they appear in our experience through subjective conditions; but we cannot know what those things are in themselves. The first way we know about things is sensibility, and the second is the faculty of understanding. It is the fundamental form of our sensibility that allows us to know things. We can cognize things not as they are, but as they appear to our senses, and there are two basic subjective conditions of any experience and process of knowing. The first of these is the faculty of sensibility that receives data from the external world; the second is the faculty of understanding that takes these data and enables us to create meaningful objects from them. Pure intuition forms of sensibility are "space" and "time". Kant regards space and time as *a priori* forms in our mind predetermined by the laws of human sensibility; space and time secure the knowledge of objects, as they constitute pure (*a priori*) form of sensibility, independent of experience. However, this is not the knowledge of the thing-in-itself, but the knowledge that the subject imposes on nature. In this context, Kant states that pure *a priori* intuition and pure concepts constitute the founding elements of all our experience and knowledge. Kant defines space not as an experimental notion perceived, but an *a priori* intuition that is the source of intuition and he says that it is based on geometric judgments as a form of external sense. By combining senses with the space form, objects with properties such as shape, size, and occupation of space emerge. Space is not an experimental notion taken from external experience; hence, the design of space cannot be obtained through experience from the relations of external appearance.

“Space is a necessary representation, a priori, that is the ground of all outer intuitions. One can never represent that there is no space, though one can very well think that there are no objects to be encountered in it. It is therefore to be regarded as the condition of the possibility of appearances, not as a determination dependent on them, and is an a priori representation that necessarily grounds outer appearances.” (Kant, 1998, p.188)

In this context, Kant sees space as a condition of the possibility of objects, hence its determination does not depend on objects. The senses cannot constitute objects without the space form, and it is that enables the ability to see objects in three dimensions. Seeing space as a necessary condition dependent on subject, Kant does not discuss it independently of the mind. Like space, time is not a concept derived from any experience. Time underlying all intuition is found *a priori* in representation itself. If time were not an a priori intuition that allows the possibility of knowledge of objects, the concepts of "simultaneously" and "successively" would not be perceived, so simultaneously and successively are possible with the presupposition of time.

“Time is a necessary representation that grounds all intuitions. In regard to appearances in general one cannot remove time, though one can very well take the appearances away from time. Time is therefore given a priori. In it alone is all actuality of appearances possible. The latter could all disappear, but time itself (as the universal condition of their possibility) cannot be removed.” (Kant, 1998. p. 192)

According to Kant, time, like space, is not a concept, but a mere intuition, because it is not a concept acquired through experience, but an intuition that enables the possibility of experience. Intuition arises from the faculty of sensibility, but concepts are the products of the faculty of understanding. Time is the inner sense that makes intuition possible, but while Kant limits space to the outer sense, he thinks that time includes space; because according to him, all representations belong to the inner sense as momentary determinations, so time is determined as the *a priori* condition of all intuition. Indeed, things can be thought of simultaneously and successively thanks to

time. In general, all appearances, that is, all objects of the external world perceived by the senses, are in time, which is the *a priori* form of intuition.

In Kant's view, cognition arises from two basic sources of mind. The first one is the faculty of making representations, and the second one is to know objects through these representations. In the first one, the object is given to us, and in the second one, the object is considered in relation to representations. In this context, intuition and concepts constitute the elements of all our knowledge. No object can be perceived without our faculty of making representation, and none is unthinkable without a mind.

“Without sensibility no object would be given to us, and without understanding none would be thought. Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind. It is thus just as necessary to make the mind's concepts sensible (i.e., to add an object to them in intuition) as it is to make its intuitions understandable (i.e., to bring them under concepts).” (Kant, 1998, p. 207)

According to Kant, the sensory data automatically generates our senses and representations and causes us to compare them and establish a relationship between them. Knowledge starts with experiments, but does not just come out of experiments. To speak of knowledge, the unity of experiment and the mind is imperative. The source of knowledge is composed of intuition that emerges as a result of direct comprehension, and concepts that emerge by way of thinking. The source of intuition is sensation, and the source of concepts is the mind. It is the mind's job to make intuitions understandable. Since understanding is incapable of intuiting anything and the senses cannot think of anything, it is the combination of the two that allows knowledge. In Kant's thought, the two must be distinguished from one another, because this is necessary for cognition to arise. Therefore, the science of the rules of sensibility (aesthetics) in general must be carefully separated from the science of the rules of understanding (logic).

Kant divides object into two as *phenomena* and *noumena*. *Phenomena* are appearances that are the subject of experience, and *noumena* are things in themselves, far from experience and unknown, beyond appearance. Kant uses the term *phenomena* to refer to objects as they appear to sensibility, while the term *noumena* literally means "things as they are". *Noumena* are understood through pure thought. According to Kant, all of our intuition consists of representations of *phenomena*. Since these representations are about appearances, we cannot know whether the nature of what we perceive is the way we perceive them. It is only appearances that are given to us; they are not things in themselves, so no matter how clear the intuitions are, they cannot approach the nature of things in themselves, because, in any case, we can reach the knowledge of our own intuition, our own sensibility. This is only possible with the concepts of space and time, which are *a priori* conditions of sensibility. These concepts are subjective as stated before.

“Appearances, to the extent that as objects they are thought in accordance with the unity of the categories, are called phaenomena. If, however, I suppose there to be things that are merely objects of the understanding and that, nevertheless, can be given to an intuition, although not to sensible intuition (as coram intuitu intellectuali), then such things would be called noumena (intelligibilia).” (Kant, 1998, p. 361)

Noumenon is something, which is called unknowable thing-in-itself in Kantian philosophy, and it is only the object of logical intuition, but without *noumenon*, the unity of object cannot be grasped. Understanding and sensibility in combination can determine an object. When we separate them, we have non-conceptual intuition or non-intuitive concepts, but in either case, a situation arises that we cannot associate with any particular object. In order for *phenomena* to be understood, it is necessary to give them a structure through the categories of understanding. Something that does not fit into the categories of understanding cannot be known and grasped by the

human mind. All synthetic *a priori* knowledge are principles of possible experimentation, so they can never be put in relation to things-in-themselves (*noumena*). In other words, this knowledge has to be content with only appearances (*phenomena*). Kant emphasizes that our thoughts about an object and all our judgments about it are possible only through the conceptual framework provided by the categories in question. Kant claims that, as a natural consequence of this approach, the human mind can only give form to it through categories and comprehend *phenomena*; otherwise, such a conception is impossible. According to Kant, all synthetic *a priori* principles are nothing more than principles of a possible experiment. Therefore, they can form a unity of meaning with appearances (*phenomena*) as objects of experience, but never with things-in-themselves (*noumena*).

Kant argues that our mind is not determined by the external world, but the external world is constructed in our mind. Therefore, even a complete knowledge of *phenomena* does not provide us with the knowledge of things-in-themselves. The representation of an object includes only the appearance of the object and the way we are affected by it, not the nature of the object, that is, the thing-in-itself. Kant thinks that almost all of the metaphysicists before him thought that they could reach the knowledge of "thing-in-itself" or *noumena*, and therefore they dragged metaphysics into an inextricable crisis. According to Kant, although we can grasp the qualities of something correctly, we cannot grasp the thing-in-itself in any sensory or intellectual way, because these spheres of existence go beyond the limits of human knowledge.

There is a distinction between the reality of things-in-itself and our mental representation of the external world. In a sense, our mind dictates how the external

world should be. Because our senses do not provide us with the knowledge of objects under any circumstances, but they only present their appearances to our knowledge.

“There are things given to us as objects of our senses existing outside us, yet we know nothing of them as they may be in themselves, but are acquainted only with their appearances, that is, with the representations that they produce in us because they affect our senses. Accordingly, I by all means avow that there are bodies outside us, that is, things which, though completely unknown to us as to what they may be in themselves, we know through the representations which their influence on our sensibility provides for us, and to which we give the name of a body – which word therefore merely signifies the appearance of this object that is unknown to us but is nonetheless real.” (Kant, 2004, p. 85)

In addition to the qualities of object, such as color and smell, properties such as extension, continuity, and solidity also belong to the appearance of object. Object is only a representation formed by the synthesis of the forms of intuition (space and time) and categories of understanding. However, the answer to the question of what the objects in the external world and presented to our senses is beyond our knowledge.

As a result, according to Kant, our experiences of the external world are based on the data from objects and a structure that we attribute to these data. We represent these data according to certain categories. Our mind organizes the data it receives from objects in a temporal structure and gives them continuity. In addition, the imposing of a spatial structure on the experiences by mind also provides them with spatiality. We also put these experiences into causal relationships, because, in Kant's view, all *phenomena* are linked by causal relationships. Since time, space, and causation are *a priori* forms, this configuration is experimental but not arbitrary. According to Kant, all experiences about the outside world are determined by the laws of arithmetic, geometry, and mechanics, which correspond to time, space, and causality.

2.2.7. Logical Constructions Inferred from Patterns of Sense-Data

The philosophers discussed until this part of the treatise were composed of the philosophers who established their own systems and they were chosen to contribute to the content of the study. Since it is not a philosophical analysis that we are trying to do in the context of this thesis, it can be excused that some important philosophers are not included in the study, and those that are included are considered in a limited way. Since the aim is an analysis of the nature of art, selected philosophers in the context of this study were deemed sufficient. With regard to understanding the study, it is important to show the development of philosophical thought since antiquity and the analysis of some selected philosophers who have their own systems; because we are of the opinion that this kind of investigation is necessary in order to understand the relationship that art establishes with object.

In this part of the study, as can be understood from the title, we will focus on the philosophers who regard object as logical construction inferred from patterns of sense-data. Therefore, the way of thinking, which we will try to explain in this section, is logical positivism and approaches that define object as a logical deduction. It can be said that this approach is an analytical philosophy. Analytical philosophy began as a practice concentrating on logic, language, and treats philosophical problems as problems of the nature of language. The analytical approach does adopt the way of analyzing language through logic to solve philosophical problems. The main problem with this thought is that philosophy is not to put forward metaphysical statements on a field whose function is supposed to be independent of our senses; its main purpose is to reveal meaningful statements in the language. Analysis has always existed in a certain way throughout the history of philosophy. Dividing a concept into its parts, illuminating the meaning of these parts, revealing the relationship of the

parts with the whole is a method that has been applied since Plato. For instance, Aristotle made a philosophical analysis by evaluating any concept of thought in all aspects. However, these are not the approaches based on the view that the problems that arise in philosophy are caused by the wrong use of language so, essentially it is necessary to analyze language to solve them. Descartes' effort to reach unquestionably clear and distinct knowledge is also not research on the structure of language. The beginning of analytical philosophy as an approach to language started with the works of Frege, Russell, and Wittgenstein in the 19th century, and in this period, philosophy was seen as a critique of language.

According to this idea, which addresses object with an empirical approach, object is the logical construction of the senses. Sense-data are also the alleged mind-dependent objects that we are immediately aware of in perception, and that have exactly the properties they appear to have. Sense-data from physical objects is inferred by using reason. Sense-data are sensations such as color, odor, and solidity taken directly from the physical world. For instance, seeing a colorful surface means getting a sense of color. Object is a logical inference that follows experimentation.

2.2.7.1. To Construct the Real Shape From the Apparent Shape, Russell

In the study named *Principia Mathematica*, one of the greatest contributions to the literature of philosophy, logic, and mathematics, written by Russell with Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947), the authors tried to solve the problems of mathematics via logic by reducing mathematics to logic. One of Russell's basic assumptions is that there is some kind of reciprocity between the logical workings of the human mind and the external world. “How is it possible to know some objects and facts when they are not perceptible things?”, “Can we know of the existence of anything other than

ourselves and our states?”, “Can we know of the existence of anything independent of ourselves?” Focusing on such questions, Russell tried to reveal the differences between object, sense-data originating from object and sensation. He argued that thanks to that relationship, he thought, exists between the structure of mind and the objects of the external world, independent subjects are able to make similar judgments about certain objects, sometimes having the opportunity to generate knowledge without the need for experimentation.

According to Russell, sense-data obtained from objects are precise and accurate. All appearances of an object are real, but it is itself a logical structure. Object derives its permanence from this logical structure, not from a reality that lies behind its appearance, because Russell argues that the physical object itself, that is, its true nature, cannot be known, and that all knowledge about the object is an inference made from what is known directly by the sense-data, namely its appearance.

“All the aspects of a thing are real, whereas the thing is a merely logical construction. It has, however, the merit of being neutral as between different points of view, and of being visible to more than one person, in the only sense in which it can ever be visible, namely, in the sense that each sees one of its aspects.” (Russell, 1914, p. 97)

Russell thinks that objects are not constantly given to sensation and when they are not perceived, their existence can be doubted. Immediate data are sensations we acquire from objects, and direct data are not continuous and permanent. They become data only when they are experienced, and they disappear when they are not experienced. Those that are given to the senses, that is, those that cause sense-data, are only particulars. The constant association of all sense-data (color, solidity, etc.) creates the appearance of a physical object. In this context, physical object is defined as a series of appearances connected to each other with certain laws. The logical inference from

appearances that are thought to be linked by certain laws (the thought of always getting a sense of hardness when a table is touched) allows one to talk about physical objects.

“What this means is that, given any sensible appearance, there will usually be, if we watch, a continuous series of appearances connected with the given one, leading on by imperceptible gradations to the new appearances which common sense regards as those of the same thing. Thus, a thing may be defined as a certain series of appearances, connected with each other by continuity and by certain causal laws. In the case of slowly changing things, this is easily seen.” (Russell, 1914, p. 111)

Russell also thinks that there is a distinction between the appearance of an object and its reality. Appearance is deceptive and changes according to the eye that looks at it; people see different shapes even when looking at the same object. It is difficult to decide which of these appearances is right, but we still think we know the object itself. When looking at an object, we do not take into account the changes we see in its appearance (color, hardness, shape), because we think that what we see is real, but that is not the case; we cannot know directly what *objects* really are, we know them by the inference we make from the immediate appearances we know. Although the sense-data that we obtain immediately are precise and accurate, this precision and accuracy does not give general knowledge about the object as it is specific to the person who is experiencing it, so the knowledge generated by inference from these data is indirectly acquired. According to Russell, experiment taught us to deduce the real shape from the apparent shape and the real shape is not the apparent one, but it is the shape we infer from it. The sensations we acquire continuously and consecutively carry the opportunity to make this inference.

In Russell's view, sensory data we perceive are what we know directly. Knowledge about the source of sensory data is not the knowledge we obtain directly,

but the knowledge we find using logical inference. We make it possible to talk about any object by combining the sense-data we get from it, but this merging process is only possible logically.

“Let us give the name of 'sense-data' to the things that are immediately known in sensation: such things as colours, sounds, smells, hardnesses, roughnesses, and so on. We shall give the name 'sensation' to the experience of being immediately aware of these things. Thus, whenever we see a colour, we have a sensation of the colour, but the colour itself is a sense-datum, not a sensation. The colour is that of which we are immediately aware, and the awareness itself is the sensation. ” (Russell, 1994, p. 9)

In Russell's thought, the object that we consider to be known by the senses is not a truth about something that exists independently of us, but a truth about the sense-data that depends on the relations between that object and us. However, we still believe that there is a truth behind the appearances that cause sense-data. This belief is unfounded because such a belief belongs to the metaphysical field and we are not able to reach it with our senses. The reason why we cannot say that an object is sense-data or even sense-data are directly qualities of that object is that sense-data determine only the content of the object. All of our statements about that object are subjective, so these statements do not give any assurance that we have made an accurate statement about the object itself. Objects are not, after all, the same as sense-data, but their causes.

2.2.7.2. A Constituent of States of Affairs, Wittgenstein

Ludwig Wittgenstein, often considered one of the greatest philosophers of the 20th century, played a central role in 20th-century analytical philosophy. He particularly dealt with logic and language issues, which continue to influence philosophical thought. Wittgenstein argued that there is a kind of relationship between reality,

language, and thought, and he considered the world as the totality of facts, not objects. Defining a fact as a combination of objects (things), Wittgenstein said that the world is all that is the case and tried to analyze the form of the relationship that he thought to exist between language and the world. According to Wittgenstein, thought, which is the logical structure of the facts, is revealed by language, and this means that the structure of the world can be expressed in the structure of language. The world is determined by facts; object is the constitutive element of the context of the states of affairs and contains the possibility of all states of affairs. Each object resides in a space of a possible state of affairs; space can be thought without an object, but object cannot be thought without space.

“2.0131 A spatial object must be situated in infinite space. (A spatial point is an argument)

A speck in the visual field, thought it need not be red, must have some colour: it is, so to speak, surrounded by colour-space. Notes must have some pitch; objects of the sense of touch some degree of hardness, and so on.”
(Wittgenstein, 1990, p. 14)

Object is something that can be spoken about in terms of being visible, audible, and tactile. If spatial objects can only be conceived within a space and temporal objects can only be conceived within time, space and time must be the defining features of object, and if space is object's argument-place, space is located outside experience as something logical. Object can only be considered within the possibilities of connection with other objects, is something that can only be conceived within the possibilities of states of affairs, and its existence is necessary for states of affairs.

In Wittgenstein's view, objects, as simple elements, constitute the substance of the world and this substance makes a proposition meaningful because the initial propositions are formed because of the merger of simple objects. It is essential for an

object to be the constitutive element of a state of affairs. As it is understood, Wittgenstein's substance was not formed with a metaphysical understanding but was built on the object presented to the senses. He sees the object as a substance, necessary for a statement to be meaningful.

- “2.02 Objects are simple.
- 2.021 Objects make up the substance of the world. That is why they cannot be composite.
- 2.0211 If the world had no substance, then whether a proposition had sense would depend on whether another proposition was true.
- 2.0212 In that case we could not sketch any picture of the world (true or false).” (Wittgenstein, 1990, p. 13)

For him, a world that can be considered should have something in common with its reality, and that common thing is an object. Object and language are relational; if it were not, it would be impossible to check linguistic expressions, and the perceived connection between reality and language would disappear. However, object as a substance has an unidentified quality, even though it is included in the context of the states of affairs. Objects that make up the substance of the world cannot be expressed or one cannot talk about the nature of theirs, but they can be demonstrated. Space, time, and color are forms of objects, that is, objects must have space and a color field continuously. Objects determine the truth or falsehood of the propositions they correspond to in terms of being the constituent elements of states of affairs. The states of affairs that provide the possibility to establish the logical picture of the external world allow us to check the elementary propositions. This eliminates the statement that, Wittgenstein mentioned, whether a proposition is meaningful would depend on whether another proposition is true; because the truth of an elementary proposition does not depend on another proposition but depend on the facts themselves.

There is a reciprocal relationship between the simple elements of the world, the objects, and the words, which are the basic elements of language, in the context of the signifier and the signified. A name indicates an object and an object is its signifier. In Wittgenstein, while the world expresses a totality of facts, language expresses the totality of elementary propositions. A particular proposition corresponds to a particular state of affairs and object, as the constitutive element of the state of affairs, contains the possibility of being located within the states of affairs.

- | | |
|--------|--|
| 2.0272 | The configuration of objects produces states of affairs. |
| 2.03 | In a state of affairs objects fit into one another like the links of a chain. |
| 2.031 | In a state of affairs objects stand in a determinate relation to one another.
(Wittgenstein, 1990, p. 15) |

While object preserves its permanence in mutual configurations of objects, the state of affairs, which is stated as the configuration of objects, has a variable structure. It is an essential property of object that it can be thought of within the states of affairs in terms of being permanent. While the pictures of the facts are constructed in a logical plane, objects correspond to the elements of the picture. This can be expressed as follows: The picture is expressed in a logical form by a proposition, and the elements that make up the proposition indicate a state.

We make various judgments about the facts that make up the world, but they are not affected by these judgments, hence, the fact is all that is the case, and whatever one thinks about it, it has an unchangeable structure. The expression of the facts with a proposition belongs to thought, and only these propositions may have a true or false value because facts cannot be true and false. Names indicate objects; if

there is an object that the name points to, the name is real. If a proposition consists of nouns, the fact that the proposition corresponds to also consists of objects. So, according to Wittgenstein, there is some kind of relationship between the name, and the object, the elementary proposition and the state of affairs.

In the context of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*, his thoughts on object can be summarized as follows: facts are the existent states of affairs, and states of affairs are combinations of objects. The world is represented by thought, since the world, thought, and proposition share the same logical form. Hence, thought and proposition can be pictures of the facts. Objects combine with one another according to their logical, internal qualities. It means that an object's internal qualities determine its combination possibilities with other objects; this constitutes its logical form. Hence, states of affairs, being comprised of objects in combination, are inherently complex.

2.2.7.3. Material Thing, Ayer

Alfred Jules Ayer (1910-1989), who was influenced by the empiricism of Berkeley and Hume and the thoughts of Russell and Wittgenstein, has views aligned with the logical positivism, which is the approach of the Vienna Circle. Logical positivism adopts the argument that our knowledge is limited to experience and for them, only meaningful statements are the propositions of science. Based on the empirical understanding of knowledge, logical positivists start with experimental and observational facts, to exclude metaphysical elements from the field of science, completely rejecting all speculative elements, and thus accommodating scientific worldview or scientific understanding of philosophy. It is unquestionably accepted that what constitutes knowledge is generalizations reached by an inductive method

derived from sense-data. These generalizations constitute scientific laws, and these laws are necessary for positivist thought to explain a particular event or fact.

The logical positivists, who shaped the views of the 20th century, argued that metaphysics should be eliminated from philosophy because metaphysical propositions are meaningless. According to them, philosophy is an activity of analysis and this analysis can be done through logic. The approach that sees scientific propositions as propositions of philosophy in terms of having the possibility to be inspected gives philosophy a scientific quality.

Adopting all the principles of logical positivism, Ayer argues that meaningful propositions consist of tautologies and factual propositions. He says that the empiricist doctrine to which he is attached is a logical doctrine based on the distinction between analytical propositions, synthetic propositions, and metaphysical discourses. According to Ayer, people utter pseudo-propositions that lack meaning because they think they are talking about objects even though they are talking about words. Because talking about objects falls within the field of metaphysics, whereas talking about words is possible within language; metaphysics is a field that transcends experience, so it cannot say something in a meaningful way; all statements made about it are only assumptions. According to him, philosophy does not provide the knowledge of a truth that transcends the world of science and common sense. Propositions that transcend the world of science and common sense make inferences about the properties of something beyond experimentation, and they are based on the world of appearances, whereas an inference cannot be made from experimental premises as to what is beyond experimentation. The concept of substance, which metaphysicists claim that to be behind appearances, is actually the subject of sentences and is entirely related to language.

“The use of the term ‘substance’, to which we have already referred, provides us with a good example of the way in which metaphysics mostly comes to be written. It happens to be the case that we cannot, in our language, refer to the sensible properties of a thing without introducing a word or phrase, which appears to stand for the thing itself as opposed to anything, which may be said about it. And, as a result of this, those who are infected by the primitive superstition that to every name a single real entity must correspond assume that it is necessary to distinguish logically between the thing itself and any.” (Ayer, 2017, p. 12)

The belief that there must be a real being in return for every name creates the need to distinguish between itself and the appearance of something. This thought leads one to use the term substance to refer to the thing itself. In Ayer's opinion, believing that every name should correspond to a single being is a superstition, because using a single word to refer to the sensible properties of something does not prove that it is a simple being. Speaking of the appearances of something, even though we seem to divide the thing and its appearance, this is due to the use of language - Ayer calls this "an accident of linguistic usage." The fact that appearances are the appearances of the same object is not due to their relation to an entity behind the appearances, but due to the relations between the appearances themselves.

Ayer said that a philosopher is not directly concerned with the physical properties of things. He is concerned only with the way in which we speak about them, also it is the philosopher's objective to give a correct definition of material things in terms of sensations. In Ayer's thought, asking what the nature of a material thing is equivalent to asking for its definition, but he asks this question in terms of how propositions about physical objects are transformed into propositions about sensory contents. So, according to Ayer; to answer the question "what is the nature of an object?" it should be transformed into the following question: "what are the relationships that must exist between a person's two sensory contents to be the elements of the same material thing?" The material things are logical constructs made

of sense-contents, and talking about a material thing is talking about a sense-content. Material thing mentioned here is not a metaphysical object, but an object that has been deduced from experiment and emerged in language as a logical structure.

A material thing can only be defined in terms of sense-contents (taste, sound, smell). Ayer uses the term sense-content, instead of Locke's term "idea" to describe the direct data of inner and outer senses. We can talk about a material thing only when a sense-content arises, so material things are constructed from sense-contents. The reason why Ayer uses the term "material thing" instead of the word "object" is because the word "object" contains an ambiguity. He defines material thing as a logical inference constructed from sense-contents.

“It is true that writers on perception who set out to describe ‘the nature of a material thing’ believe themselves to be discussing a factual question. But, as we have already pointed out, this is a mistake. The question. ‘What is the nature of a material thing?’ is, like any other question of that form, a linguistic question, being a demand for a definition. And the propositions which are set forth in answer to it are linguistic propositions, even though they may be expressed in such a way that they seem to be factual. They are propositions about the relationship of symbols, and not about the properties of the things which the symbols denote.” (Ayer, 2017, p. 32)

In this context, the material thing is something that causes certain sense-contents, and since these sense-contents enable the possibility for making logical inference, the material thing constitutes the result of this inference, that is, it is a construction in the position of the subject of a sentence. What secures their existence is that they cause certain sense-contents. The emergence of a sense-content provides the opportunity to talk about the material thing. This is because material things constitute the content of our immediate experience. The answer to the question of what a material thing is can be given through the relation of the sense-contents acquired from it.

2.3. Science's Approach to Object

Science is an intellectual and practical discipline that has causes and purposes and involves the systematic research of the physical universe through observation, experiment, and thought. The most fundamental difference of science from all other disciplines is that it presents its arguments with concrete evidence, and this has divided science into many branches until today as the most reliable discipline. All branches of science choose a part of the universe as its subject and try to draw general laws based on experimental methods and reality. The method of science, which is one of the human activities aimed at understanding the universe, is observation and experiment. This activity tries to explain the structure and nature of the physically perceptible universe. The information obtained by science based on observation, experiment and thought is called scientific knowledge.

“In arriving at a scientific law there are three main stages: the first consists in observing the significant facts; the second in arriving at a hypothesis, which, if it is true, would account for these facts; the third in deducing from this hypothesis consequences which can be tested by observation. If the consequences are verified, the hypothesis is provisionally accepted as true, although it will usually require, modification later on as the result of the discovery of further facts.” (Russell, 1954, p .58)

Scientific knowledge includes factual statements, generalizations, hypotheses, and theories, and as an ultimate goal, general laws of science (etc. law of universal gravitation). Science begins with observing objects and facts. Scientists try to determine the properties of an object or a fact through sense organs. A classification is made on the basis of observable properties of objects or facts. The purpose of this classification is to define the object based on similar properties. Scientific knowledge strives to be systematic and consistent.

One of the properties of physical objects that can be determined by simple observations is that they are constantly changing. All kinds of objects transform over time and undergo a change in some way. Again, simple observations show that all kinds of changes occur in regularity. A tree always blooms the same way and produces the same fruits. Living things always go through the same stages after they are born. Water is always a compound of hydrogen and oxygen. Each water molecule contains two hydrogen atoms and one oxygen atom. Non-living objects such as water, air, and stones generally experience the same changes in the face of the same effects. Therefore, change, which is one of the basic properties of physical objects, shows continuity, and regularity. Based on these data, science tries to establish cause-effect relationships, analyze objects and facts based on experimental methods, and reach generalizations.

According to Aristotle, doing science is knowing the reasons, i.e., reaching the knowledge of the reason from the knowledge of the appearance. If the reason for the existence of an object is not known, scientific information cannot be reached. Likewise, "why" is subject to a higher science to which predicates belong by their very essence. Aristotle sees the "how" question regarding the concept of "why" as the fundamental question of science.¹⁰ This question was asked in this form until the 17th century. Modern science, on the other hand, is based on the argument that "the causes of the facts are not always known, but how they are can be explained". In this context, the main question of modern science has been determined as "how". The mind defined by modernism proceeds with the question of "how", because any answer to the question of "why" is not verified, so it has been accepted as metaphysical. However, the facts that can be verified constitute the subject of modern science.

¹⁰ Aristotle Physics, Book I

When modern science describes a physical object, it does not deal with the question of whether it exists or not. It acknowledges that there is an external world independent of mind and that this world has a reciprocity relationship with observation and experiment. It uses induction as its inference method. Induction is the reasoning in which we start with particular experiments to infer general truths. This way of reasoning (as Hume has shown) is not of precise nature. Inductive propositions involve probability, because it is impossible to consume all of the respective field by induction, and this form of reasoning does not guarantee that the same causes always carry the same effects. The proposition "all swans are white" is not a result of the observation of all swans in the world, because one can observe that swans of other colors exist. This is a generalization that assumes that other swans will be white as a result of observing a certain number of swans. Therefore, the result is not necessary but maybe true. The induction method is a generalization that is not precise but thought to be getting closer and closer to certainty (if we decide to expand our sample). Its accuracy is demonstrated not by logical necessity, but by assumption. The logical validity of something requires the cause-effect relationship to be based on inference. The reason for the correctness of the proposition "all swans are white" is that a certain number of samples are observed, i.e. a result obtained experimentally from the physical world. All of the inductive propositions are based on a certain number of experiments; hence, all inductive propositions are incomplete. The method of induction, which is not necessarily verified, is the method of modern science, not logic, and as such, is imprecise. Modern science therefore includes possible accuracy, not precision.

2.3.1. Acknowledgement of an External World

While science tends towards understanding the universe with a systematic method, it acts with a number of presuppositions. One of these presuppositions is that there is a physical external world independent of subject and that any subject can know this world. Therefore, it is possible for science to know a physical external world. The external world is made up of objects. An object is a concrete and real thing that occupies space and time, exists independently of the mind. An object occupying space and time has measurable properties. This object is scientifically the answer to the "how" question. That is, science is concerned with the problem of how the object looks, not what it is. Therefore, in common sense, unlike philosophy, one can speak about science's definition of object more understandably, because science includes experiments on the appearance of objects, and the results are observable, measurable, and countable. In this context, an object is something that takes up space. It has a width, a length, and a depth. It is continuous in time and all of these are properties belonging to the object, independent of the subject observing it.

Physical events could be explained through laws expressed in a quantitative language. Quantitative language is formed as a result of observation and experiment involving a measurement process and establishing general correlations between the results obtained through a mathematical language. For example, to say that a pencil is colored means revealing information about this object using a qualitative language. However, the same object can also be expressed using a mathematical language, that is, by specifying its weight, density, and length.

Science consists of cumulative knowledge; in each period, new questions and new answers to these questions are added to this cumulative knowledge. When the

answers are accepted and gain generality, they become laws. These principles reflect a worldview and understanding of the world; that is, it creates a paradigm.

“Attempting to discover the source of that difference led me to recognize the role in scientific research of what I have since called “paradigms.” These I take to be universally recognized scientific achievements that for a time provide model problems and solutions to a community of practitioners.” (Kuhn, 1970, p. 8)

In other words, a paradigm is a set of principles used to explain and even make sense of different facts. Having a conceptual model on a scientific branch means having a paradigm on that branch. It is the paradigms -scientists have on their minds- that determine which problems they will prioritize and which experiments they will do and how they will exercise them. Scientific development should not be considered as a simple succession of scientific questions and answers, because the questions addressed, the goals to be reached, and the qualities of the answers to be given do not follow a linear course across societies and ages.

2.3.2. The Correspondence between Thoughts and Facts

Facts are the realities of the objective world. They form independently of our thoughts and can be tested by experiment. Science consists of true propositions inferred from facts, as such it tries to determine the structure of reality. Facts and thoughts are evaluated in a mutual relationship, so there must be a correspondence relationship between thoughts and facts. The contents of facts are objects and it is impossible to talk about facts without objects. Facts are proven, objective and concrete events. The fact that the sun will rise every day is an example of such concrete events. The determinant of these concrete events is object. Facts are the concrete realities accepted by everyone and they occur as a result of natural events that develop outside human

will. Facts are revealed through scientific studies or are certain facts, such as events that have happened in human history and the existence of which is indisputable.

“An object is an ingredient in the character of some event. In fact the character of an event is nothing but the objects which are ingredient in it and the ways in which those objects make their ingression into the event. Thus the theory of objects is the theory of the comparison of events. Events are only comparable because they body forth permanences. We are comparing objects in events whenever we can say, 'There it is again.' Objects are the elements in nature which can 'be again.'” (Whitehead, 1920, p. 60)

Objects exist as components within events. When an object is the content of an event, a time dimension is added to the object, because the event occurs over a certain period. Objects are what they are, also events are what they are, since events are real, and no event or object can be without objects getting into events. Events that occur via a combination of objects have a certain beginning and an end, that is, events exist in time. Fact is more abstract and general than the event, and shows continuity in time, for example, the speed of light is a fact, but the speed of light in a given second is an event. When the statements corresponding to the facts are expressed correctly, the thought is appropriate to the facts.

Science is a branch of knowledge that studies facts and the relationships between facts. A fact is expressed by a proposition. If the proposition expressing the fact is in correspondence with the fact, the proposition is correct. Thus, it is determined that the thought is concordant with the fact. All the propositions of science are factual, that is, they are imprecise propositions because their verification depends on experiment. Facts cannot be true or false, because they are what they are and exist independently of the mind. Truth and falsehood are the characteristics of statements about facts.

“It is obvious that there is not a dualism of true and false facts; there are only just facts. It would be a mistake, of course, to say that all facts are true. That would be a mistake because true and false are correlatives, and you would only say of a thing that it was true if it was the sort of thing that might be false. A fact cannot be either true or false. That brings us on to the question of statements or propositions or judgments, all those things that do have the quality of truth and falsehood.” (Russell, 2010, p. 52)

Hence, it is necessary to focus on propositions for truth and falsehood. Facts are what they are. Some kind of reciprocity is supposed to exist between thoughts and facts. A statement is true when the thought is in accordance with the fact, when it is not, the statement is false. The concordance of the thought with the fact is possible by expressing the fact correctly in a relation of reciprocity. Consequently, objects in the world have various qualities and stand in various relations to each other. That they have these qualities and relations determine the facts, and objects and their qualities or relations, are, in some sense the components of the facts, which have those qualities or relations. Objects and their relationships make up facts, and the conformity of thought to facts determines the correct propositions of science.

2.3.3. Sensation in the Context of Being the Determinant of Object

When knowledge is defined as a relationship between object and subject, sensation resulting from the sense-data the subject receives from the object is the determinant of the object. Our senses give us direct information about the object's appearance; this information is immediate; the sensations obtained from the sensory data allow us to talk about an object. We can describe any object with the inferences we derive from sensations.

“To know the external world is to know the order of our sensations. Objects are the definitions we make based on our sensations. Objects cannot have a “thing in itself” type of an element other than the sensations they evoke in us. “Do our senses tell us the truth?” There cannot be such question. Because all

of our knowledge consists of definitions of the relations between our sensations made according to certain rules.” (Hacıkadiroğlu, 2002, p. 107)

Although science strives to be objective by acting on the data obtained from the appearances of objects, it is basically based on the sensations obtained by the subject. This is about not the "whatness" of an object, but about what the subject perceives, so the determining factor is subject. However, it does not follow from these explanations that science has an arbitrary attitude, because science systematically organizes the data it receives from the external world and does not deal with reality except the data it receives.

Whether physical objects are the same as what we perceive is ambiguous; however, it is generally accepted that they cause our sensations. We believe, based on common sense, that there is a similarity between them. Since science is a field that seeks precise knowledge, it sometimes imposes truth on objects and events, hence this is the reason why some believe in the argument that science manipulates nature. Science, which operates with the method of induction, establishes its discourses on an object or the fact through this method. The fact, which is tested by the necessary number of observations and experiments, allows making a general statement. Although its beginning is observation and experiment, the general propositions established are obtained with the help of reason. These general propositions are believed to be true.

It is considered that the data obtained from objects are direct and these immediate data are precise. Immediate data are discontinuous; for example, when I do not touch an object, we do not feel a hardness. However, we maintain the belief that the object is hard when we do not touch it. Science tries to explain the physical world from the certainty of these experiences obtained from immediate data. However,

according to Russell, this situation causes a gap between the physical world and the world of the senses, and this is a serious problem that needs to be overcome. According to him, we can start the solution to this problem with a logical inference based on sense-data.

“Men of science, for the most part, are willing to condemn immediate data as "merely subjective," while yet maintaining the truth of the physics inferred from those data. But such an attitude, though it may be capable of justification, obviously stands in need of it; and the only justification possible must be one which exhibits matter as a logical construction from sense-data unless, indeed, there were some wholly a priori principle by which unknown entities could be inferred from such as are known.” (Russell, 1914, p. 110)

It is possible to bridge the gap between the physical world and the sensory world through a mental process; hence, the process works in full when experiment and reason go together. Facts perceived immediately with sense-data need not be proven by inference; they are considered to be obviously correct, there is little margin of error about them, as they directly enter the experience. However, immediate data is subjective and its verification depends on subject. Sense-data from physical objects is inferred by using reason. Sense-data are sensations such as color, odor, and solidity taken directly from the physical world. The emergence of expected sense-data provides the verification of the fact. When the object, the content of the fact, is a logical inference established from the sense-data, it is secured against the fallibility of perception.

2.3.4. Object Determined by Observations

Most of the ancient philosophers we addressed in the part of the discussion of the object in terms of philosophy were also scientists and the distinction between philosophy and science was not clear at that time. When it comes to the middle ages,

Aristotle's conception of nature was adopted, influenced by Neo-Platonism and Hellenistic culture, and integrated with Christianity. In the Renaissance period, a human-centered conception of nature that tried to get rid of this view was attempted. Until the 16th and 17th centuries, it was not possible to destroy Aristotle's understanding of nature. The reason for it was the view that this philosophy was thought to give systematic and consistent answers to the questions related to nature. However, in the 17th century the work of Kepler, Galileo, and Newton would build on the heliocentric universe of Copernicus and would replace the ideas of Aristotle with the modern view of astronomy and natural science. Kepler expanded this system with laws that bear his name and describe the motions of the planets. Galileo first explained the law of inertia, and Newton formulated a system implicitly expressed by Galileo.

Being a radical change in science, this paradigm shift enables a reinterpretation of nature. Matter ceases to be a causal thing consisting of four elements but turns into a mathematical structure whose motion is measured and changes because of certain rules. After accepting the laws of motion of matter, Newton suggests that the attraction force between two bodies is directly proportional to their masses and inversely proportional to the square of the distance between them. By the 19th century, the matter is defined as a structure composed of atoms, conserving momentum and energy, having mass and volume. The basis of the matter is no longer one of the four elements; everything consists of more than a hundred elements at the atomic level and at least dozens of particles at the subatomic level. Democritus, one of the ancient philosophers, introduced the first opinion about the atom. According to him, the ultimate elements of objects that cannot be divided are atoms. Atoms are solid, amorphous, and colorless; they do not change and come

together in various ways to form objects. Democritus argued his views on the atom according to assumptions, not experiments. In his system of thought, when matter breaks into pieces, a particle that cannot be divided is finally obtained and this particle is an atom. The reason why there are different types of matter is that the number and arrangement of the atoms that make up matter are different.

“While the coming together and clamping of atoms is the arrival of the object at the appearance level, the disappearance of such an object is determined by the dispersion of the atoms at the level of basic reality. All these formations take place only according to the laws of mechanics, that is, when moving atoms touch, push and strike each other.” (Denkel, 2011, p. 81)

Democritus' atoms come together and separate randomly; objects are formed by virtue of the basic properties of the atoms, and these atoms behind the appearances are determinants of the object in terms of their indivisibility and immutability. The combination and separation of atoms, even if they do not change in itself, cause the objects to change. According to Democritus, who explains the change in the universe with the movement of atoms, an empty space must exist for the movement of atoms, because atoms can only move into an empty space. There are empty and non-empty things in the universe from the beginning, and the non-empty ones are atoms and the empty ones form space.

Newtonian physics, which describes nature with mechanical laws at the end of the 19th century, failed to explain new developments in science. The universe was no longer seen as composed of independent objects but as a network of relations with the observer at the center. Classical physics was not enough to explain the behavior of subatomic particles. New developments led to general relativity and quantum theories.

“Today scientists describe the universe in terms of two basic partial theories—the general theory of relativity and quantum mechanics. They are the great intellectual achievements of the first half of this century. The general theory of

relativity describes the force of gravity and the large-scale structure of the universe, that is, the structure on scales from only a few miles to as large as a million million million million (1 with twenty-four zeros after it) miles, the size of the observable universe. Quantum mechanics, on the other hand, deals with phenomena on extremely small scales, such as a millionth of a millionth of an inch.” (Hawking, 1988, p. 19)

These theories express a radical change in thinking about the universe. Generally speaking, space and time are absolute in classical physics, but after Einstein, space and time are not absolute and are interrelated. This approach provided a much more accurate perspective in the process of understanding the universe. On the other hand, if you know the linear velocity and position of an object according to Newtonian physics, you will know at what speed and position it was in the future. Nevertheless, according to quantum theory, uncertainty prevails in the universe. Even if the position of the particles is precisely determined by making the perfect measurements possible, the velocity cannot be known precisely, and when the velocity is known, its position cannot be known precisely. In the context of this thesis, a detailed explanation of general relativity is not required, but its most important result can be mentioned: mass is actually energy, in other words, the matter can be thought of as a kind of energy.

At the beginning of the 20th century, with quantum physics, there has been another change in the understanding of nature. This theory studies subatomic particles and their behavior. Max Planck, one of the pioneers of quantum physics, argues that this theory not only contradicts the views so far but also negates some of the basic assumptions required by the classical theory and this argument shakes the classical theory. One of the important points where quantum physics differs from classical physics is the empirical proof that physical objects have a structurally dual character (wave and particle). With quantum physics, the physical universe is divided into a macro- and a micro-universe, each of which is operated by different physical laws.

Considered as two separate concepts in classical physics, force and matter are seen as unified in quantum physics and are considered as units with common origin called particles.

One of the important facts in quantum physics in the context of this part of our study is the fact that nothing at the subatomic level can be measured without alteration. Something not observed at the quantum level and the same thing observed is different, and this does not constitute a contradiction. Heisenberg says that observation plays a definite role in the fact, that the object will change depending on whether we observe or not. In quantum physics, the matter is both a wave and a particle, and these properties only exist together. Trying to perceive matter only as a particle or just think of it as a wave leads to contradictions because matter sometimes moves like a particle and sometimes like a wave. Observing something affects all of the physical processes that will take place. That is, the observation itself decides what the object will be, so the subject is a determinant of the object. According to quantum physics, the universe consists of a series of possibilities. The reality is uncertain until measured.

2.4. Object in the Context of Art

Like philosophy and science, art is also a human activity in an effort to understand the universe. If anything is to be said about object, an investigation into the similarities or differences of the definitions, which these three disciplines deal with in terms of their premises, seems necessary. After introducing the analysis of philosophy and science on object, how object is addressed in the context of art will form the conceptual framework of this chapter of the study, because art, as seen throughout its history, somehow intersects with science and philosophy. Does art treat object in a

philosophical context, that is, as a reality that lies behind appearances? Does it approach object as a form of appearances presented to experiment, as science says? If not, is there an artistic definition of object in the context of art's own approach? When the answers to these questions are answered with the presuppositions that the external world has an existence of its own, independent of mind, this world is made up of objects and these objects correspond to our perceptions, an opportunity to talk about object arises.

When it is said that our perceptions correspond to an object, we accept qualities such as shape, hardness, and color, which we consider as the qualities of the object, as qualities that define object. Because when it is said that an object is perceived by looking at it, a color field is mentioned, that has width, length, and depth and has a hardness feature and these qualities give the object its appearance. When the artist attempts to analyze the object through its appearances, he has to start from these qualities. According to Plato, art is an area that is three degrees away from reality because it makes copies of appearances, which are pale copies of Ideas. For him, art is the imitation of the appearance, not the reality, so it is unnecessary. In his opinion, this inference is correct because we look for a pattern that includes different objects that we call the same. According to him, tables and similar objects are individual examples under a general Idea. An artisan is the one who makes these individual examples that are copies of Ideas, and an artist is the one who copies the copies made by the artisan, so a mirror is more useful than the artist is.

Plato criticized art because art often presents images and depictions that evoke misleading ideas in the audience. The world that appears to our senses is in some way defective and filled with error; in other words, if people only knew these images and depictions, they would have adopted the defective and distorted view of the world,

different from what it really is. The purpose here is not to discuss Plato's view of art, but to show the effect of the way he defines object on how he perceives art and to explain the difference between art doing an analysis through the appearances of objects and art doing an analysis through the object itself, in the context of art being a human activity in an effort to understand the universe.

2.4.1. Acceptance of the Agreed Definition of Object

Although a title such as the acceptance of the agreed definition of object seems very ambitious, it seems necessary to explain the approach of formalist art. Like the way the object of experience is perceived by the senses, formal art looks at the shape or appearance of a perceived object rather than the content or narrative. Formal approaches emphasize the visual qualities of an artwork. In this context, we can define formalism as an evaluation of the perceptible properties of objects of experience. In formalist art, features such as color, shape, lines, sound, and structure are especially emphasized, as they are also the subject of perception. In the context of this study, whenever we say formalist art, we consider it in the context of the relationship art establishes with the object of experience, rather than the understanding of a period, so this relationship will be classified as formalist art whether it is established with an aesthetic pursuit, representation or an abstract attitude because art in this approach accepts such a definition implicitly. That is, it has a relation with object in the context of representation, not the definition. This relationship is constructed through appearances. In terms of art history, when we look at the period until modern art, it can be seen that art consists of imitation, so, expressed appearances. When we define an object such and such, the answer to the question 'what an object is' is now that definition. Our language is consensual and

when the work of art is produced over these consensual definitions, it is considered with regard to its similarity with that definition.

“No one, really, denies that things that are not visible do not pertain to the painter. The painter, in fact, strives to represent only things that are visible under light.” (Alberti, 2011, p. 23)

The things that can be seen are the subject of experience, and if the artist is to act on appearances, he accepts the relationship of reciprocity between appearances and perception. As Alberti emphasizes, if the artist is only interested in showing what can be seen, he has to make an analysis through appearances. Such an approach takes us to the representation of a reality perceived through the senses. Art addressing the senses is based on seeing the object, so the artist aims to show what he sees. In this context, it emphasizes a formal attitude toward similarity.

Formalist art tends to display objects as accurately and as true to their nature as possible. In this context, it is said that the things seen take up space, have a width, length, depth and, color field. Thus object comes to a position such that it can be experienced, measured, and transferred to an artwork. The relation of formalist art with object begins with the acceptance of these appearances and continues through the similarity of those appearances; hence, the form of an object presented to the senses is adopted. On the other hand, formal analysis is an analytical way of approaching and discussing an artwork. It includes an explanation of the work in terms of various design elements such as color, shape, texture, line, lighting, mass, and space, as well as a discussion of how these elements are used. However, in any case, the emphasis is placed on perceptible forms for the senses.

“I think that the arts of those who wish to express and portray in their work a likeness, and the resemblances of subjects created by nature, originated from this: that they by chance happened to see in some tree stumps, or in clay, or in

various other materials, some features which could, with a little work, be transformed into something similar to faces made by nature. They began therefore to ponder upon this, and exerted all diligence, and strove to see what they could add or remove, as they saw fit, so as to ensure there would not seem to be anything missing, and would appear almost real -a true likeness- and finish it to perfection.” (Alberti, 2013, p. 9)

An artist with this approach grasps all the objects he sees in nature as they are presented to the senses, which is, in a way that can be seen, measured, and described. He is not concerned with the existence of a reality that is thought to be behind the object, so he acts more like a scientist than a philosopher. In the context of these explanations, it can be said that formalist art analyzes object through the approach of science to object. Artist is a describer of nature and establishes a similarity relationship between his material and the real objects of nature, so nature is a guide for the artist understood through the senses. An approach whose starting point is to reflect and symbolize objects in their distinctive form relies primarily on the senses, because the sensory properties of the object, which are open to perception, enable this kind of analysis. For example, the object reflected in a work has an appearance that the viewer knows and recognizes, and the artist presents the external world, which he perceives with his sense-data, to the senses of once again himself and the viewer.

What is meant here is how the formalist art that includes representation analyzes the object by starting with the appearances, which are thought to be presented to the senses. The similarity of its approach to science's approach to object lies in its acceptance of the reality of appearances. Therefore, it should not be forgotten that artists such as Leonardo studied objects with the meticulousness of a scientist before turning them into an artwork. Defining an object in the context of formal art is important for understanding the process leading to conceptual art. Because to say that the way of addressing an object determines these two different

artistic approaches does not seem like an assertive argument. There is an important difference between determining the source of the statements put forward on a subject as sensation and as reason. Starting with the senses, the presentation of an artwork to the senses again determines the formalist art; but an artwork giving priority to mind defines conceptual art.

2.4.2. Analyzing Object in the Context of Representation

Emulation or imitation of nature, or according to the ancient philosophers, mimesis became a part of the definition of art with Plato and Aristotle and maintained its importance until the nineteenth century. Since this theory defines art as a reflection of nature, it is also referred to as a representation theory in terms of the representation of objects. According to Aristotle, emulation is a natural behavior observed in all humans since childhood; in fact, one of the differences that distinguish humans from animals is this emulating side. In this context, the artist imitates nature and adheres to real objects while creating his work.

“The mind of a painter should be like a mirror, which always takes the colour of the object it reflects and is filled by the images of as many objects as are in front of it. Therefore, you must know that you cannot be a good painter unless you are universal master to represent by your art every kind of form produced by nature. And this you will not know how to do unless you see them and retain them in your mind.” (Da Vinci, 2008, p. 247)

In this context, analyzing the object is a necessary condition to reflect it. Leonardo Da Vinci expresses this saying; the painting that most closely resembles the object being imitated is the most laudable one. He sees the painter, who paints with the judgment of the senses without using reason, as a mirror copying everything before him without understanding. The practice must always be based on a solid theory, without which no painting can be done well in any way. Here the function of the mind is concerned with

analyzing the appearances of objects presented to the senses; the mind is concerned with what is seen, not what is behind the visible. This requires the objects in the external world to be analyzed in the picture plane. Artist is in a position to evaluate the products of nature through their appearances and with their formal changes.

In formal art, simulating reality and obtaining a form is accepted as basic propositions, and space is perceived in a three-dimensional continuum. The external appearance of objects is important and the aim is to convey this in the most appropriate way. In this context, the artist is also in the position of a viewer in a sense, he watches the objects and tries to show them in the best possible way. The expectation of the art audience is to see the objects, which, by recognition, they know and name. Hence, there is an object based on every work produced, and the artist is also a mediator who sees, grasps, and conveys the object that he chooses. This transference is done through similarity, and an artwork becomes a real artwork only if it imitates an object.

“x is an artwork only if it is an imitation.

In this formulation, the phrase “only if” signals that imitation is a necessary condition for art status. If a candidate for art status lacks the property of being an imitation of something, then it is not an artwork” (Carroll, 1999, p. 21)

Therefore, being an imitation of anything characterizes a general feature that an artwork should have. This inference, now not considered the sole truth, had been used in western art until almost the nineteenth century. Therefore, when talking about the relationship between object and art, it seems necessary to consider this theory as it establishes a direct relationship with object. The relationship of art with the object also determines the role of the artist, so in this context, the artist has to be a good imitator.

The word ‘art’ in the theory mentioned above is not yet used in the sense we use, but it is used as in Plato and Aristotle; it has a structure that includes the fields such as medicine and military service and includes all kinds of actions that require a skill. However, by the eighteenth century, art became an activity that includes fields such as painting and sculpture; but still, artwork maintains its imitation feature.

“Today this way of grouping the arts seems natural to us. But it was not always so. It is not until the eighteenth century that this way of classifying the relevant activities became more or less fixed. A particularly important text in bringing this about was *The Fine Arts Reduced to a Single Principle*, which was written by the Frenchman Charles Batteux in 1747.” (Carroll, 1999, p. 22)

In the text above, in which the concept of *Fine Arts* was expressed for the first time, it is used to distinguish arts such as painting and sculpture from the others. According to Carroll, the only principle on which the practices of the group called fine arts are based is still imitation. In the text, *fine arts* are defined as imitating the beauty of nature. This approach continued until the end of the nineteenth century, and it was generally accepted that the greatest skill of the artist was to imitate something he sees as good as possible.

Art is a field of activity determined by its own history, but the purpose here is not to make a historical account of art but to show the relationship between art and object in general. The factor of imitation emphasized here is particularly important because the difference between imitating the object and not imitating it is important in the context of art history; significant breakthroughs in art discipline were realized through the analysis of object. When art ceased to be an imitation activity, it started to be considered ‘art in terms of being art’. What does considering art in terms of being art include? Since the answer to this question will be given in the conceptual art section, it seems sufficient for now to consider the following explanation: art, in terms

of being art, excludes the concepts such as imitation, emulation from the definition of art by accepting them as the qualities of art. Qualities have a mutable nature, and when they disappear, the things to which they are added continue to exist; for this reason, art continued to exist when it lost its imitation quality. In our opinion, it is not possible for art itself to disappear or vanish as long as man exists.

The late nineteenth century was the period when the practice of showing nature as it is, was beginning to be questioned. Since we are not trying to make an inventory of the approaches in the context of art history, it should be noted that we gave priority to the attitudes that distinguish between appearance and reality, because, basically, striving to reflect nature as it requires analysis through appearances, even if this is light, color and movement. The change of language and subjects in the artistic context does not mean that sensations are not used, because formal art formalizes the elements of the external sensation as well as the elements of the internal sensation; the abstraction is the formalization of the internal sensation. On the other hand, it should be especially emphasized that in this study, we do not ignore the very important movements seen throughout the history of art; of course, there are important differences in the artistic context throughout the history. However, it should be taken into consideration that the main purpose of this study is to question the nature of conceptual art, that analyzing something includes talking about similarities and differences, and that talking about the difference between formal art and conceptual art is necessary with regard to understanding the nature of conceptual art.

“Some people may consider the Impressionists the first of the moderns, because they defied certain rules of painting as taught in the academies. But it is well to remember that the Impressionists did not differ in their aims from the traditions of art that had developed since the discovery of nature in the Renaissance. They, too, wanted to paint nature as we see it, and their quarrel with the conservative masters was not so much over the aim as over the means of achieving it.” (Gombrich, 1951, p. 596)

As it is understood, in the context of art history, it was not easy to disengage from nature. This attitude, which includes judgments about the external world through appearances, tries to show reality as it appears and focuses on the observation of nature. Therefore, it does not seek answers to the questions regarding the distinction that is thought to be between appearance and reality, which is important for our study. Asking these questions begins with Cézanne, and an explanation that he addresses nature through geometric forms takes us back to Plato.

“May I repeat what I told you here: treat nature by means of the cylinder, the sphere, the cone, everything brought into proper perspective so that each side of an object or a plane is directed towards a central point.”¹¹ (Harrison, Wood. 1993, p. 37)

Geometric shapes do not exist in nature, so we do not address the external world through cylinders, spheres, or cones. This is a definition belonging to the domain of thought because geometric shapes are the objects of the mind. They are forms that the mind finds by inference, hence, addressing nature in this way means making an inference from appearances, and that is, just looking at nature is not enough, it is also necessary to contemplate it. Since inference is a logical operation, it is a construct of reason, not an observation. Cézanne expresses an opinion that the artist should use logic and in this context, he suggests that the artist should reach an essence that is thought to be behind observable nature.

“Get to the heart of what is before you and continue to express yourself as logically as possible.” (Harrison, Wood. 1993, p. 38)

Reaching the essence of something is a process involving thought, and it requires the use of reason regardless of the tool the artist uses. When the priority is given to

¹¹ Paul Cézanne (1839-1906) Letters to Emile Bernard.

thought, all of the artist's technical problems such as form and color become the instrument of thought, not perception. It should be noted that we are not saying that artist does not think while representing the physical world (and our entire claim is that art is primarily intellectual), we are only saying that he does not give priority to thought, because man is necessarily reasonable by his own very nature, i.e., reason. Therefore, the point underlined here especially is not that the processes experienced throughout the history of art do not include thought because, as emphasized from the beginning of the study, all human activities are inherently related to thought. However, an artist who seeks the essence behind the objects of the external world has to start his work with thought.

The fact that thought gains importance in the face of nature makes us question the effort of reflecting nature as it is. With this regard, it can be thought that an object, which is not imitated, can also be a work of art, and the assumption that the principle of art is imitation is negated. However, in this case, it cannot be said that an effort to analyze objects has been completely eliminated. We see that the formal language of this effort has disappeared. The difference between making an object a work of art through imitation and through deforming it is a procedural difference. This does not mean that there is a departure from nature, but another kind of relationship has been established with it.

While analyzing object in the context of representation, it is necessary to look at what this analysis includes. When an object is addressed in this context, we talk about the position of the object in the field of art; for example, in the context of representation, it is necessary to determine what conditions it requires to display an object on a surface. This necessitates the analysis of the concept of representation. Representation means, by definition, the reflection of something with its distinctive

features, and this definition can be expanded by including meanings such as symbolizing something, showing something. Therefore, representation must fulfill the conditions such as reflection and symbolization. If an object is represented within the context of the discourse above, it means that certain properties of an object are projected onto a certain plane in a certain way. Hence, it is a reflection of something that we see on the plane, we look at, of which we know certain properties; this is why we know it when we see it. In this chapter, when we say that an object is analyzed in the context of representation, we are not saying that the object cannot be resolved without the context of representation. We say that the concept of representation is included in the definition of art that has been around since Plato and Aristotle. All these explanations are correct only within the scope of a statement like “art is representation.”

2.4.3. Reduction of Three-Dimensional Space to Two-Dimensional Space in the Context of Art

We mentioned that formalist art tackles object in terms of its appearances. When objects are resolved by removing their appearances, whether they are natural or artificial, it means that we are talking about something that has qualities such as shape, hardness, and color within a space. Transferring the object to a surface in the painting area –this reduction is analyzed through painting- means to analyze features such as space and three-dimensionality in two dimensions. Reducing three-dimensions to two-dimensions is basically a mathematical operation. This analysis, done with a method called perspective, is used to create the depth feature that two-dimensional space does not have. Perspective is a method of representing three-dimensional objects on a two-dimensional surface so as to give the right impression of

their height, width, depth, and positions in relation to each other. The representation of object had been provided in this way until the era of modern painting. In Renaissance painting, perspective was determined according to the viewpoint of the viewer, and this angle of view was the center of the visible objects. All the rules were based on this fixed, stationary eye.

“Only since the Renaissance has painting been based on the assumption that the space in which things exist is an infinite, continuous and homogeneous element, and that we usually see things uniformly, that is to say, with a single and motionless eye. But what we actually perceive is a limited, discontinuous and heterogeneously compacted space.” (Hauser, 1989, p. 69)

Thus, objects were presented to the viewer as they actually appeared, but what was done is to create an illusion with the help of perspective rules, because a three-dimensional object cannot be represented on a two-dimensional surface without such an illusion. Perspective is a mathematical system used to create the illusion of space and distance on a flat surface and a painter uses perspective to imagine the canvas as an "open window" through which he sees the subject of the painting.

Since art is a form of human understanding of the world, it changes depending on scientific and social developments. Translation of change and development in one field into another lies in the relationship of man with the universe. For this reason, in the process of reducing three-dimensional space to two-dimensional space, the way man understood the world at that time played an important role. Along with the Greek philosophy rediscovered during the Renaissance, artists' desire to depict the natural world realistically led artists to study mathematics. The general opinion of the period was that a painter who did not know geometry could not paint well.

“The Renaissance painter was portraying figures in a scene, in representative unity, through perspective based on Euklides Geometry, assuming an

immobile observer, looking with only one eye.” (The Definition of Art Group, 1995, p. 29)

Thus, the illusion on the painting surface is achieved through a perspective based on mathematical principles. The surface of the painting is a tool that shows the external world. The methodological goal is completed by reducing a three-dimensional object to a two-dimensional surface. Artists, especially those of the Italian Renaissance, used the principles of Euclid’s geometry to create astoundingly realistic paintings. Almost all of the artists knew these principles very well. The revival of interest in ancient cultures during the Renaissance naturally sparked an interest in geometry.

The reduction relationship between three-dimensional and two-dimensional preserved this form until the nineteenth century. The importance of modern painting lies in the elimination of this relationship. In modern painting, objects are not presented in an illusory way; the painting surface is not used to search for three-dimensions and is reduced to a two-dimensional surface.

“Much modern painting has been overtly flat precisely for the purpose of asserting the idea that, in reality, paintings are flat, two-dimensional things, not the illusions of three-dimensional objects they were often said to be.” (Carroll, 2012, p. 373)

This questioning of the surface of the painting is important in terms of the relationship between three-dimensional and two-dimensional. Henceforth, the painting surface is not the reflection area of the external world, but the questioning area of a two-dimensional surface in terms of being two-dimensional; the relationship it establishes with objects is not about reflecting them but analyzing them. Objects are not reflected as they are, but presented with their distinctive features; in a sense, this is to reject the statement that the painter should serve as a mirror. In the artistic context, making the painting surface a problem is a search for the nature of the painting, not object.

Art, which is an activity aimed at reflecting the reality presented to the senses, finds new ways when it gets rid of this approach. Artist is no longer concerned with an analysis of object through its sensory qualities, but with its intellectual dimension. In the words of Paul Klee, "Art does not reproduce the visible; it makes visible." What does it involve making something visible? Here, the personal choices of the artist are important now; he decides what to make visible. Thus, object is comprehended with its conceptual structure rather than its perceivable properties. Art is no longer nature; it is a field that grasps nature with its own premises; the painting surface is not an illusion field but a tool of the artist's individual attitude. Artist, on the other hand, no longer accepts the idea that the painting surface is a window to nature, and reduces it to a two-dimensional surface.

The developments in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries parallel to the scientific, mathematical, and social changes naturally affected art. Renaissance painting surface was reconstructed with a new understanding. Objects are no longer of primary importance, it is their internal relationships that matter the most, so they are reinterpreted in the context of these relationships. The way this relationship is displayed distorts the familiar appearance of object; the sensible qualities of object are modified. Cubism determines the beginning of this attitude. Artist is no longer only interested in the display of visible things, he also deals with the narration of unseen things (such as relationships). Georges Braque¹² expressed this approach as follows:

“I do not believe in things; I believe only in their relationship. For things to exist, there must first come into being a relationship between you and the things, or between the things themselves.” (Georges Braque, 1882-1963)

¹² Georges Braque (1882-1963) was a 20th-century French painter who invented Cubism with Pablo Picasso. Along with Cubism, Braque used the styles of Impressionism, Fauvism, and collage. He never strayed far from Cubism, as there were always aspects of it in his works. His most important contributions to the history of art were in his alliance with Fauvism from 1905, and the role he played in the development of Cubism.

The relation is between at least two things, and what matters in this context is the relation itself. The relationship that the artist establishes with object or the relationship between the objects themselves becomes something that needs to be analyzed first. But it's only relations that matter. Relations, on the other hand, do not exist in nature, they do not have an objective counterpart in nature, and they appear only in thought. Addressing the invisible parts of objects, not just the visible sides, means giving priority to thoughts, not the senses. In this process, painting is not constructed according to an observer looking from a single point of view. Object is displayed simultaneously from all angles, so it is a design rather than a reflection, seen on the painting surface. Design is a mental process and it can be said that cubism approaches conceptuality, because the analysis of an object in the context of its own relations necessarily requires thought. Within the scope of this study, our point of interest is this intellectual dimension.

3. MEANING

3.1. What is Meaning?

The concept of meaning itself is a problematic and ambiguous concept. The problems associated with meaning are closely related to the fields such as science, logic, psychology, sociology as well as philosophy. Since the answer to a question about the “whatness” of something is must be inclusive, it seems imperative to start with definitions. In its most general definition, the meaning is the set of thoughts that make language and reality correspond to each other. What is understood from a word, a sentence, a behavior, or a fact, and the thought or object to which these correspond form the meaning. A sentence expressed linguistically is meaningful only if there is a

state of affairs that makes it meaningful in return. The meaning of the names occurs in the existence of an object.

Meaning has been defined in various ways in terms of different approaches. The behaviorist theory of meaning identifies meaning with behavioral responses to stimuli in the form of symbols, sounds, gestures, and bodily situations, explains the meaning of a word or phrase by its effect on the listener. The empiricist theory of meaning argues that words or sentences derive their true meanings from indirect or direct reference to concrete experiences, that words or sentences are meaningful only if the rules about their application or verifiability can be derived from experience. The referential theory of meaning suggests that words are meaningful only if they refer to something, an object that makes up their meanings. The communicative theory of meaning states that meaning consists of using symbols to convey our thoughts to others. On the other hand, according to the operational theory of meaning, the meaning of a word is the sum of the operations or activities that must be performed while trying to understand that word. The causal theory of meaning states that words in a language gain their meaning through the states of mind that cause them and the states of mind they cause. The theory of meaning, based on the principle of correspondence, suggests that words symbolically represent something in the external world or correspond to something in the external world and derive their meanings from this correspondence relationship.

The term "theory of meaning" has been involved in many philosophical debates in one way or another over the past century, but the concept of meaning has not been fully resolved; the polymorphism of meaning is the cause of this problem. Although different theories of meaning have been proposed in different fields, the concept of meaning will be analyzed in terms of philosophy, science, and art within

the scope of this text. The meaning of a statement is related to what that statement refers to. Thus, a relationship is established between at least two items of any kind. In general, theories of meaning answer the question, “what is the meaning of this or that expression?”

“In determining the meaning of an expression, it is necessary to take into account the relationship between language and reality, the relationship between meaning and psychological states, and finally the relationship between meaning and semantic concepts such as truth and reference.” (Cevizci, 2017, p. 31)

Therefore, meaning is analyzed through a relationship. A relationship is a bond established between at least two things. The smallest meaningful units in linguistics are words. A word is meaningful if there is something to which it corresponds; for instance, the word table makes sense only in the presence of an object such as a table. In this context, the meaning is deduced from the relation of the word and its corresponding object.

After determining that the concept of meaning basically includes a principle of reciprocity, considering the analysis of meaning in a philosophical context will make the analysis systematic in terms of being a field where a question like "what is" is answered. Philosophy also includes the effort to enlighten the meanings of the concepts. In this regard, the concept of meaning itself becomes a subject of discussion. Seeking the definitional counterpart of "meaning" as a word, term, or concept is a linguistic process. Today it is generally accepted that philosophy is an activity involving language analysis. This kind of analysis can be done by investigating the relationship between language and non-language objects. In this context, it can be mentioned that only linguistic expressions are meaningful.

Therefore, in this study, the concept of meaning will be clarified starting with linguistic expressions, not through elements such as objects and words.

3.2. The Problem of Meaning in Philosophy

The problem of meaning in philosophy can be taken back to the beginning of philosophy, and it is a problem that has not been solved yet until now, however, the generally accepted view in the philosophical context is that the way to understand the external world is to use language and thought. Philosophy, which is an effort to understand the universe, also explores the nature of the efforts of making sense. In the context of the present study, since this effort will be analyzed through the relationship between language and reality, so it is important to determine the conditions that make the sentences about the external world meaningful. The answers given to such questions as “whether the relationship between the structure of language and the structure of the external world, the nature of words and the nature of objects, are conventional or based on a mandatory relationship”, which have been asked since the ancient times, characterizes important philosophical approaches. When the answer to this question is “conventional”, meaning is sought in language; that is, meaning emerges in use depending on the mental designs. When the answer is “mandatory”, the meaning is sought in the external world; that is, there is a natural relationship between reality and language, and meaning arises in this relationship.

Although the concept of meaning was not addressed by doing an analysis through meaning itself in ancient philosophers, the conclusions drawn from their approaches seem necessary in terms of explaining the concept of meaning; for example, according to Protagoras, who defends the view that there is no need for an object that names distinctly indicate, man is the measure of all things. According to

him, even if the name refers to a particular object, the representation of the object on each person's mind will be different, so naming the object will not have a distinct meaning. The conclusion, which is relevant for this study, is the fact that two people cannot talk about the same object in a meaningful way when man is the measure of all things. Protagoras constitutes convention or general agreement not between names and objects, but between objects and individual representations. The correctness of the names of things may thus be a kind of convention rather than the nature of those things. According to the convention, names, which are not like the things to which they correspond, may be as correct as names, which are like the things to which they correspond. Thus, two propositions made about the same object are accepted as true even though they are contradictory to each other. When every proposition is true, falsity disappears. Because of this inference, the meaning is reduced to the representations of individuals.

According to Plato, there is an indirect and conventional relationship between noun and meaning. However, this convention depends on the natural division and classification of reality and it is not arbitrary. Hence, the nomenclature finds its counterpart in the truth itself. Names are structured in accordance with the structure of reality.

“But if a name is indeed to be like a thing, mustn't the letters or elements out of which primary names are composed be naturally like things? Let me explain by returning to our earlier analogy with painting. Could a painting ever be made like any of the things that are, if it were not composed of pigments that were by nature like the things that the art of painting imitates? Isn't that impossible?” (Plato, 2000. 434b, p. 228)

Those who know a particular object in accordance with the nature of the object give nouns to it, however, in Plato's thought; it is the world of ideas attained through thought that provides the possibility of meaningful speech. Since ideas are general

nouns, they can be applied to all objects with the same characteristics. Thought and language become a meaningful whole through ideas. For Plato, the meaning is an extra-linguistic reference of an object, whether a general noun or a specific noun. For example, the noun square means the idea of a square. The word square is the group of phoneme that represents this idea. In this context, if there is no object that is the carrier of the noun, the noun has no meaning. Nouns given to objects based on convention may vary, but the nature of objects does not.

According to Aristotle, although some living things express their feelings such as pain and pleasure through sound, only human beings can make sounds he utters into a meaningful whole. For him, nouns are the first meaningful wholes and their meanings are obtained as a result of the convention.

“The limitation ‘by convention’ was introduced because nothing is by nature a noun or name – it is only so when it becomes a symbol; inarticulate sounds, such as those which brute produce, are significant, yet none of these constitutes a noun.” (Aristotle, 1996, p. 48)

So when nouns are divided into syllables, these parts are meaningless on their own, they must come together to form a meaningful whole. According to Aristotle, for example, a single syllable of the word “human” has no meaning, and a single syllable is nothing more than a nonsense sound. As mentioned above, with these thoughts the meaning itself is not a problem. The meaning of reality, objects, and words is the subject of research. Therefore, no question as to what is the meaning itself was asked. The question, in this form, is posed by the approaches that see philosophy as an activity involving language analysis. This problem was addressed within language itself by the analytical philosophy movement, which treated the problem of meaning as a philosophical problem. Therefore, terms and propositions constitute the focal point of the analysis of meaning.

In this section, the investigation of the question ‘what the concept of meaning is?’ was conducted in the context of the philosophers who see philosophy as linguistic analysis. Therefore, how the concept of meaning is analyzed by logical positivism, will form the conceptual framework of this chapter. Meaning is a concept that has not been agreed upon today; on the one hand, there are approaches that argue that the smallest meaningful unit of language is the object; on the other hand, there are approaches that argue that the smallest meaningful unit of language is the sentence. The view that we will focus on here will be the argument that the smallest meaningful unit of language is the sentence, that these sentences correspond to a state of affairs in the external world, and that this reciprocity constitutes meaning. According to this argument, which aims to explain factual statements, the meaning is considered in the context of the relation of a linguistic sentence with its factual counterpart in the extra-linguistic world.

Words name objects in the external world and when we construct sentences with words in accordance with the rules of language, we obtain meanings that associate these names with the objects corresponding to these names. As a result, the content of thought in one's mind is formed in another's mind and this thought is transported there, but the things that act as carriers in this process are not mental entities. Here, it is the objects with which the words are related, that is, the words named that do the main task. Therefore, the meaning is nothing but the object named by a word. For this reason, we can describe something to someone who is in front of us with a single word - a situation that nobody can deny. For example, the word table reminds us of a particular object, and we can all describe it in almost similar ways. Therefore, it can be expressed in a definitional manner that the correspondence relation of a name to an object constitutes meaning.

3.2.1. The Correspondence Theory

Firstly, it is necessary to distinguish between "object-based" and "fact-based" versions of the correspondence theories, depending on whether they correspond to an object or a fact. Correspondence, that is, the argument that there is a similarity between what is said to be true and reality, has been intuitively accepted since the time of ancient philosophy. Of course in the past, many philosophers argued that a comparison with reality could not be made, but the approach we will consider here is the notion that there is some kind of correspondence between what is said and reality. In the relationship of correspondence, the meaning is inferred from the relationship of the objects named with the words in our language and the determinant of this relationship is the object. Although language and writing vary from society to society, objects in the external world are the same for everyone.

“Just as the writing is not the same in all people, spoken words are not the same, whereas the mental contents that they directly signify and the real things that these mental contents resemble (imagine) are one for everyone. A name is a sound that gains its meaning by convention independent of a specific time.” (Denkel, 1996, p. 10)

Natural objects and artifacts have names given by convention, and they cannot be referred to by any other name other than those given names. Although an object is represented by other words in other languages, basically the words represent the same thing. For instance, the word "table" should signify an artificial object called table for those using this word so that the person using this word can convey his opinion about the table to someone else. Meaning is something that emerges from the relationship between the “word” table and the “object” table. This relationship also allows communication between individuals.

In this study, we mentioned that we would discuss the theory of correspondence in terms of approaches that claim that it is between sentence-state of affairs, not between object-word; so while illuminating the concept of meaning, questions such as "what is the meaning of this sentence?" will be considered. In this approach, object is only the constituent element of the sentence due to the ambiguous concepts it contains. A generally accepted opinion is as follows: it is not possible to talk about an object meaningfully without accepting an unchanged property of the object. Hence, searching for meaning in a sentence and the state of affairs that it is about, seems to be a safer way. In philosophy, a state of affairs is a situation the physical world must be in order to make some given proposition about the physical world true; in other words, a state of affairs is a truth-maker, whereas a proposition is a truth-bearer. Whereas states of affairs either occurs or not, propositions are either true or false.

“Meaning is important because it provides the narration of events, and the smallest verbal units that refer to the events are sentences. However, we usually do not think of something to which sentences point. For this reason, some philosophers argued that it refers to what makes it right or wrong.” (Hacıadiroğlu, 2002, p. 222)

In this context, a statement expressing a state of affairs has the value true or false depending on whether it corresponds with the fact it refers to. The priority of the fact over the statement enables it to constitute the content of the meaning. Neither the statement, which is the form of the meaning, nor a single word of the object alone is sufficient to constitute meaning. The fact that allows simple propositions to have a truth-value also assures that the meaning is conveyed since it does not change depending on the thought.

Philosophers, who thought that only linguistic statements have meaning, argued that there can be no particular being or universal concepts. Therefore, the question of “what is meaning?” is translated into “what are the conditions that make a proposition meaningful?” The application of the term meaning to linguistic expressions is the consensus of many philosophers, since, for them, objects are things about which a lot of speculative knowledge can be produced. Therefore, they argue that the application of the term meaning to linguistic expressions should be a condition.

“However, if concepts had meanings (essences), the concept that has the meaning of the term in question would also have a meaning. Hence, the use of the term ‘meanings of concepts’ have to be avoided not to allow such an infinite descent. With this in mind, from now on we will apply the word ‘meaning’ only to ‘linguistic statements’.” (Grünberg, 2006, p. 59)

The term ‘concept’ refers to universals in a general sense; here we will consider concepts as the general terms necessary to be able to speak without addressing the question of whether universals exist (this is one of the most important problems in philosophy). Terms belong to language, not to a non-linguistic world, so their analysis is done within the language. An analysis of language requires using only a metalanguage, and this metalanguage is logic. In logic and linguistics, a metalanguage is a language used to analyze another language, often called the object language. The statements in a metalanguage are often distinguished from those in the object language by the use of quotation marks. The language we will consider here is the language used by logic, because logic means analyzing linguistic statements. Therefore, logic is necessary to explain meaning in terms of sentences.

When meaning is addressed at the language level, we come across two types of meanings: categorematic terms and syncategorematic terms. In traditional logic,

categorematic terms are words having an independent meaning so that it can be used as a term in a proposition. As for contemporary logic, these terms are words or symbols having an independent meaning apart from the context of other words or symbols. Statements that have meaning on their own are categorematic expressions; terms and propositions fall into this class. In traditional logic, syncategorematic terms are words that cannot be the subject or the predicate of a proposition but can be used with other terms to form a proposition. Words such as 'all', 'if' and logical connectives such as "and", "or", "imply" are examples of such terms. A syncategorematic term is a term that has no individual meaning, so they cannot use this term. Therefore, what determines the meaning of a categorematic term or proposition is the assumed correspondence relation with non-linguistic objects. The reason why syncategorematic terms do not have meanings on their own is that they do not have such correspondence. Hence, a syncategorematic term cannot be a subject or predicate. It is the relationship of correspondence, which determines the criterion for meaningfulness. When meaning is addressed in this way, according to Teo Grünberg, the following expressions can be stated:

- “(a) Some statements are meaningful, some are meaningless.
- (b) In order to distinguish meaningful statements from meaningless ones, there must be a special factor (a "meaning" that can serve as a meaningfulness factor) that the first one possesses and the other lack.
- (c) Such a factor can only be a particular non-linguistic object.

CONCLUSION: Hence, for every meaningful statement, there must be a particular non-linguistic object that can be considered the "meaning" of that statement (that is, that can make the statement meaningful).” (Grünberg, 2006, p. 65)

In this context, Grünberg suggests using the term "meaningful" instead of the term "meaning". According to him, the word "meaning" can be interpreted as both categorematic and syncategorematic. If the meaning of a given statement is considered to be a non-linguistic object, the word meaning is interpreted as "categorematic". "Meaning" is a syncategorematic term unless a non-linguistic object is considered for the given statement. In this regard, the non-linguistic meaning of statements that are categorematic arises in syncategorematic statements within the language. However, since we are trying to analyze the forms that interpret meaning in a relation of reciprocity, that is, in a categorematic manner -although Grünberg interprets the meaning as syncategorematic- we have not put emphasis on the other approach (syncategorematic).

3.2.2. The Distinction between Sense and Reference, Frege

Gottlob Frege, who is thought to be the founder of modern logic and analytical philosophy, provided the first comprehensive theory on language with the distinction he made between meaning and reference. Frege, who was a German mathematician and logician, to justify his views about the connection of logic and mathematics, devised a comprehensive theory of language. However, his ambitious project, of proving that mathematics could be reduced to logic, was not successful. The reference of a proper noun is the object it indicates; on the other hand, its sense is what the noun expresses. The reference of a sentence is its truth-value, while its sense is the thought that it expresses. In the most general sense, Frege's distinction between sense and reference determines that knowing the sense of a word does not require knowing its reference. He gives an example of the identity between "The Evening Star" and "The Morning Star" while explaining his analysis of the distinction between sense and

reference. Both of the expressions mentioned above refer to the planet Venus, yet they denote Venus by stating different properties that it has. Thus, Frege argues that these two expressions have the same reference but different senses.

“If we say 'The Evening Star is a planet with a shorter period of revolution than the Earth', the thought we express is other than in the sentence 'The Morning Star is a planet with a shorter period of revolution than the Earth'; for somebody who does not know that the Morning Star is the Evening Star might regard one as true and the other as false. And yet the *Bedeutung* of both sentences must be the same; for it is just a matter of interchange of the words 'Evening Star' and 'Morning Star', which have the same *Bedeutung*, i.e. are proper names of the same heavenly body.”¹³ (Frege. 1997. p. 138)

In ancient times, peoples looking at the night sky noticed two bright stars. One used to come up shortly after the sun went down, and was brighter than any other star around it; the other star used to come up shortly before the sun came up in the morning and was also very bright. They named these two stars: “The Morning Star” and “The Evening Star”. Since the Babylonians, it has been discovered that "The Morning Star" and "The Evening Star", which were thought to be two separate celestial bodies, were the same body, the Planet Venus. If the people of that time had known the references of these two designations - the designations "Morning Star" and "Evening Star" indicate Venus, one and the same celestial body -, they would also know that these designations refer to one and the same object. Therefore, it has been seen that knowing the meaning is not knowing the reference. In this context, although the proposition "The Evening Star is The Morning Star." seems contradictory, it is correct because its references are the same.

¹³ Frege's article "Über Sinn und Bedeutung" was translated into English as "On Sense and Reference", and the English equivalent of "Bedeutung" was determined as "Reference". However, some prefer to use the German word. According to Ernst Tugendhat (1930- He is a Czech-born German philosopher.), the rendering in English of Frege's term 'Bedeutung' as 'reference', which has become popular since the translation of Geach and Black, is quite as misleading as the earlier renderings "denotation" and "nominatum". They all suggest that what Frege meant by the *bedeutung* not only of names but also predicates.

Meaning constitutes one of the basic concepts of Frege's philosophy of language. Frege tried to solve the meaning problem with a logical language that he tried to develop. According to him, sense and reference are two different aspects that are decisive in an expression's way of pointing. Although in the early stages of his thought, he mentioned proper nouns along the lines that object itself constitutes the reference to the noun, he later used the reference for linguistic expressions. Because, according to him, it is insufficient for proper names to have meaning. Words have references only in the context of sentences.

“In the enquiry that follows, I have kept to three fundamental principles: always to separate sharply the psychological from the logical, the subjective from the objective; never to ask for the meaning of a word in isolation, but only in the context of a proposition; never to lose sight of the distinction between concept and object.” (Frege, 1953. p. 21)

According to Frege, subjective representations are separate from concepts and objects. A subjective representation concerns the field of psychology and has a sensory structure, but an objective representation is logical and not sensory in nature. Although subjective representations are different from each other in different people, the representations that are objective are the same in all people. In Frege's view, statements are the main bearers of meaning. The reference of a statement is the truth-value of that statement. The meaning of the statement is the thought expressed by the statement in question. In Frege's terminology, it is important to express content, but it is not possible to do it in natural language. The means of expression of content is judgment and judgment is basically a true statement. According to Frege, there is a "fall under" relationship between concepts and objects, thus every object falls under at least one concept. The simplest explanation for this relationship is as follows: When

an object falls under a concept, it creates a possible content of thought; the form of that content is judgment.

For Frege, the most basic linguistic statement is the sentence that can be “true” or “false”; truth can be attributed to thought, which is the carrier of truth. Therefore, truth is the main concept that makes linguistic statements meaningful. The acceptance that linguistic expressions, which are the basic elements of logic, can be either “true” or “false” depending on their compatibility with events or facts, that is, they can only bear one of two truth-values, is based on the principles of logic.

“We shall not stop at equations [Gleichungen] and inequalities (Ungleichungen). The linguistic form of equations is a statement. A statement contains (or at least purports to contain) a thought as its sense; and this thought is in general true or false; i.e. it has in general a truth-value, which must be regarded as the Bedeutung [Reference] of the sentence, just as, say, the number 4 is the Bedeutung of the expression '2 + 2' or London the Bedeutung of the expression 'the capital of England.'” (Frege, 1997, p. 139)

The distinction between sense and reference is also determined by the concept of truth. The fact that everyday language is not logically sufficient, renders it flawed, hence priority should be given to analyzing language. Thoughts are conveyed through language. According to Frege, understanding a thought involves first grasping it, recognizing its truth, and expressing it linguistically by making a judgment. In this context, thought, judgment, and linguistic statements are separated. A sentence can only be meaningful in this way.

According to Frege, if others understand a thought, that thought cannot belong to the consciousness content of a single person. Therefore, language belongs to an objective field. This objective field allows for a common understanding independent of subjective representations. While Frege claims that sense has a subject-independent side, he also specifically distinguishes sense from the idea. In this case, sense lies

somewhere between the referent, which is an object, and the idea, which is a representation in mind. Otherwise, according to Frege, if sense were the representation of what the word represents, then everyone would speak a different language, and we would never understand each other because the thought in a person's mind is not the same as that in another person's mind.

“The word "white" ordinarily makes us think of a certain sensation, which is, of course, entirely subjective; but even in ordinary everyday speech, it often bears, I think, an objective sense... It is in this way that I understand objective to mean what is independent of our sensation, intuition and imagination, and of all construction of mental pictures out of memories of earlier sensations, but not what is independent of the reason...” (Frege. 1953, p. 36)

Although sensation is subjective, it is the objectivity that ensures us to transmit this sensation to others. The words expressing sensation have an objective aspect that enables understanding of everyday language. Thus, a word of color does not generally indicate a subjective situation, although it is not known whether it is similar to the sensation of another person. Designating objects, in the same way, is not enough for this. According to him, the objective expression of thoughts is necessary in order to talk about the sense, which is common for everyone. Subjective representations differ in everybody, but objective representations are the same in all people.

It is very important to emphasize that, for Frege, the basic unit of language that carries sense is the sentence rather than the word. While he asserts that the meaning of a word is something objective that the word contains, he explains the meaning of a sentence as the thought contained in that sentence. For him, thought is an objective content that can be the common property of several thinkers rather than the emergence of thought subjectively. In Frege's terms, the subject in a sentence refers to an object that is its sense, while the predicate refers to a universal, which is the sense of the predicate. What should be emphasized at this point is that, although

the subject expresses something completed, the concept is something incomplete. Therefore, for Frege, the predicate constantly needs to be filled, like a function in mathematics. Consequently, Frege, who determines the sense of the sentence as thought, argues that the referent of the sentence or proposition as a logical term is the truth-value of that sentence or proposition. The truth-value is the conditions of the sentence to be true or false. In this case, a sentence refers to either something true or something false. The main issue here is that thought can only reveal knowledge with its own truth-value.

As a result, according to Frege, it is necessary to understand the sentence, to grasp the thought expressed in the sentence, and to have an objective representation of the meaning of the words, which are the constituent elements of the sentence, in order to talk about the truth of a sentence. Only then we can say that the sentence is true. However, truth is not a relation between facts and linguistic statements; it belongs to the field of logic. There is no object or fact that can be expressed with the word truth. One can speak of the truth or falsity of a linguistic statement. In order to verify such a statement, it is necessary to know the senses and references of the terms that make up this statement.

3.2.3. Russell's Analysis of Meaning

Bertrand Russell, seen as one of the founders of analytic philosophy, argues that the main job of philosophy is to illuminate the meanings of sentences expressed about the world. Russell's most important works are on logic, mathematical philosophy, and analytic philosophy. Emphasizing the importance of relations, Russell thinks that a proposition such as "this thing is to the left of the other" does not only indicate the quality of "this", but also establishes a relation between "this" and "the other".

Therefore, the propositions that state the relation between two things express a different meaning than the relation between subject and predicate. However, while the subject-predicate proposition, which establishes the basis of Aristotle's philosophy, makes it possible for Aristotle to express certain views about his own philosophy, with the development of mathematics, geometry, and many different sciences, it has become necessary to express the relations. Another issue highlighted by Russell is that syllogisms, which are accepted as the basis of classical logic and therefore deductive inferences, are actually empirical generalizations and these inferences are actually derived from the assumption of individual units.

In Russell's terminology, philosophy explores the relationship between language and the world. Russell associates philosophical problems with the misunderstanding of the logical structure of language and argues that philosophy can be cleansed of such problems through studying the language. He calls this approach logical atomism. What Russell, an empiricist, calls indivisible in logical context are primarily particulars.

“The reason that I call my doctrine logical atomism is because the atoms that I wish to arrive at as the sort of last residue in analysis are logical atoms and not physical atoms. Some of them will be what I call “particulars”—such things as little patches of colour or sounds, momentary things—and some of them will be predicates or relations and so on. The point is that the atom I wish to arrive at is the atom of logical analysis, not the atom of physical analysis.” (Russell, 2010, p. 46)

After Russell determines the point he wants to arrive at as the atom of the logical analysis, not the atom of the physical analysis, he says that these atoms are things like the particulars and the relations between them that are the subject of our experience. They are referred to as atoms since they are considered the smallest unit. Logical atomism is based on the argument that there is some kind of correspondence between

the structure of language and the structure of the physical world. Russell's opinion is, which this method will be more explanatory and lead to more robust results when applied to language rather than thought. Thinking that philosophy needs an ideal language, Russell determines that this language is logic. Language has become an independent domain of analysis, especially thanks to thinkers such as Frege, Russell, and Wittgenstein. It is possible to characterize language-based discussions as "the problem of meaning". Generally, it seems that this problem can be viewed as the space between the physical world, which is the subject of perceptions, and the sentences expressed about this physical world.

Addressing a philosophical problem at the language level also excludes some problems such as the existence of physical objects; also, some traditional questions that have managed to survive, are resolved within the language. Although Russell was influenced by empiricism, he argued that neither empiricism nor idealism alone could find solutions to philosophical problems, and in this context, he tried to base philosophy on a logical scaffold. According to Russell, language is a structure that does not reflect reality as it is but constitutes reality. Although it is accepted that there is some kind of correspondence between the structure of language and the structure of reality, this cannot be known with certainty. As a result of this claim, the analysis has inclined to statements about the external world, namely language.

According to Russell, words differ from bodily movements, sounds, or shapes in terms of being meaningful. In other words, when a word corresponds to an object and the object, and word are recognized, a meaningful whole is formed. Russell argued that, in order to explain the meaning, one must begin to think with the words that do not require other words. Words that do not require other words are words that

can be used alone, such as the names of animal classes and color names that have been learned through recognition.

“Words, spoken, heard, or written, differ from other classes of bodily movements, noises, or shapes, by having "meaning". Many words only have meaning in a suitable verbal context such words as "than", "or", "however", cannot stand-alone. We cannot begin the explanation of meaning with such words, since they presuppose other words.” (Russell, 1956, p. 25)

There are words that make sense even when used alone, containing everything a child first learns, which Russell calls "object-words" such as proper names, the names of colors, the class names of animal species, etc., and these make up the "object language". An object-word is learned in the presence of the object. These words are used alone to express a sentence. In Russell's example, when shouted, "fire", it can replace a sentence, and anyone who heard that, can understand what we mean. On the other hand, words of relation type and logical connectives do not have meanings on their own because they require other words. When a word requires another word to be meaningful, that word is meaningful only in a sentence. According to Russell, the only way to describe object-words is to show something corresponding to that word. When a child makes a connection between the word he hears and the object he sees, a meaning emerges; the first meaning relation between the object and the word is established in this way. Although Russell states that sentences have the intended effect, he does not limit the meaning to sentences only. According to him, the object-words have a meaning that does not depend on their presence in sentences. If a sentence contains the object-words, the meaning of that sentence also depends on the object.

Russell also characterizes words that correspond to objects and sentences expressing feelings such as belief and desire as meaningful. However, we are not

dealing with such sentences here. Russell's approach that is important in the context of this study is linguistic forms, which he calls the basic or atomic propositions. These linguistic forms can only be accepted or denied through experiment. Atomic propositions are propositions consisting of a name, a predicate, and a relation, and they correspond to an atomic fact in the external world. The main approach of Russell's logical theory of meaning based on the language-world correspondence is as follows: Every word in language refers to a particular, and every atomic proposition refers to a particular atomic fact. Russell argues that in logical atomism, atomic propositions are propositions that cannot be reduced to any other propositions but are based on facts directly corresponding to them. According to him, the propositions that correspond to the facts and to which we can give a truth-value are meaningful.

“It is obvious that there is not a dualism of true and false facts; there are only just facts. It would be a mistake, of course, to say that all facts are true. That would be a mistake because true and false are correlatives, and you would only say of a thing that it was true if it was the sort of thing that might be false. A fact cannot be either true or false.” (Russell, 2010, p. 52)

Facts determine whether atomic propositions are true or false. Facts cannot be true or false, they are as they are; these concepts belong to language. A fact is what is described with a sentence. The particulars are not called facts because the particular itself cannot determine the truth or falsity of a proposition. When it is explained that a certain particular has a certain property or that a particular has a certain relation with another particular, it means that a certain fact is mentioned. There are general facts as well as particular facts. A proposition is a symbol of a fact. The symbol showing something other than itself is a logical fiction. According to Russell, when atomic propositions are brought together by logical connectives (if, and, or, etc.), molecular propositions occur. Atomic propositions contain a single verb, but molecular

propositions are propositions with two or more verbs. Since the truth or falsity of a molecular proposition depends only on the truth or falsity of the propositions that make it up, these are referred to as truth functions of the propositions. Since these propositions are compound propositions containing logical connectives, they have no empirical side, they are only logical. To check the truth of the molecular propositions, it is necessary to look at their truth table.

Atomic propositions are the simplest propositions and express a property or relation carried by a particular. The knowledge of the proposition "this table is white", which is in the form of an atomic proposition because it mentions a particular, single thing, is of the kind that can be obtained immediately by experiment; indeed, such propositions express true knowledge. The truth of molecular propositions is related to what logical connectives unite the propositions that make them up. For example, the propositions "This table is white", "This table is not white." will logically take the value "false" when combined with the connective "and", and "true" when combined with the connective "or". The truth-values of atomic propositions are determined by the facts in the external world; on the other hand, in molecular propositions, the truth-value is based on the truth table formed by logical connectives.

According to Russell, facts are not simple things found in the external world, but they are particular things that have particular characteristics or particular things in a particular relation. Stating that there are many different types of facts, Russell points out that the distinction between particular facts and general facts is important.

“There are particular facts, such as “This is white”; then there are general facts, such as “All men are mortal”. Of course, the distinction between particular and general facts is one of the most important. There again it would be a very great mistake to suppose that you could describe the world completely by means of particular facts alone.” (Russell, 2010, p. 51)

Therefore, the world can be fully explained not only with particular facts but also with general facts. According to Russell, facts come before propositions, that is, we go from facts to propositions. A complete description of a fact is possible with a proposition. Facts belong to the external world (except the psychological ones) and are perceived immediately. It is atomic facts that determine the truth and falsity of atomic propositions. An atomic fact corresponds to two atomic propositions, i.e. true and false. This means that when the proposition is true, the fact exists, and when it is false, the fact does not exist.

According to Russell, if the logical atoms in a proposition correspond to a logical fact in the external world, that proposition is meaningful. Meaningfulness should be sought in propositions, not in names. That a proposition is meaningful means that, there is an atomic fact that corresponds to the proposition, which can be true or false. When we see a table with a white color space before us, the proposition "This table is white" is true, because there is such an atomic fact. However, the proposition "This table is not white" is false. Nevertheless, both propositions are meaningful since, in Russell's terminology, true and false constitute a whole versus meaningless.

3.2.4. Meaning is Use, Wittgenstein

Ludwig Wittgenstein, one of the important philosophers of the 20th century, influenced many philosophers with his suggestions for the relationship of language with the world and the problems of meaning. The generally accepted view is that Wittgenstein's philosophy is divided into two periods. *Tractatus-Logico-Philosophicus*, considered as his first-period study, is a work that forms the basis for logical positivism. In the period of *Philosophical Investigations*, he studied the use of everyday language and focused on the relationship between individual and language.

While Wittgenstein's thoughts in *Tractatus* express an objective approach that questions the relationship between language and the world in general, his more recent thoughts have a subjective attitude. What is meant by objective attitude here can be explained as considering the relationship that is thought to be established between language and the world in a logical and independent manner from individuals. These two different attitudes also determine the content of his approach to the problem of "meaning." According to Wittgenstein, there is a kind of relationship between language, thought, and the world, and the world consists of facts.

Tractatus discusses the problems of the world, thought, and language and proposes a solution to these problems that is based on logic and on the nature of representation. The structure of *Tractatus* is built on seven basic propositions numbered with natural numbers from 1 to 7, and all other paragraphs in the text are numbered with decimal numbers. The sentences numbered with natural numbers constitute the main part of the study, while the parts numbered with decimal numbers express the emphasis on the main sentences. According to Wittgenstein, the world, thought, and proposition share the same logical form, and therefore the world can be represented with a thought expressed by a meaningful proposition. In this context, thoughts and statements can be pictures of reality. In his views, the purpose of philosophical analysis is to reveal the difference between meaningful and meaningless propositions through the explanation of the truth-function. Things have particular names in language, and when things correspond with these names, meaning is formed. Facts are divided into objects, and propositions into nouns. To picture a fact logically is to make a meaningful statement. In Wittgenstein's terminology, thoughts and propositions are pictures, thought is a picture of reality, and the proposition is a picture of thought. A picture creates a model of reality. Pictures, on the other hand,

consist of the elements that make up the picture, each element represents an object, and the combination of elements in the picture represents the combination of objects in a state of affairs. The logical structure of a picture, be it in thought or in a language, is formally the same as the logical structure of the state of affairs it pictures. The states of affairs are as they are.

- “1 The world is all that is the case.
- 2 What is the case -a fact- is the existence of states of affairs.”
(Wittgenstein, 1990, p. 11)

Wittgenstein says that the world is determined by the facts and that the totality of facts is the world. The fact that the world is the totality of facts indicates that it is the fact that determines the meaning. In this context, objects are constituent elements of the states of affairs and it gets its definition from here. For Wittgenstein, the meaning is a picture of a state of affairs; the meaning being clear and obvious is the determination of what the elements constituting a sentence refer to. As mentioned before, according to Wittgenstein, objects constitute the substance of the world. This means that we cannot talk about objects and it is impossible to know them immediately; objects can only be named, but also their existence is why sentences are meaningful. If there were no objects, the meaning of a sentence would depend on the truth of another sentence. This would constitute a language independent of the physical world, whereas, according to Wittgenstein, for a sentence to be meaningful, the correspondence between the facts and the physical world is necessary.

Wittgenstein proposes the picture theory to show the relationship between the world and its logical structure. According to the picture theory, when there is a correspondence between the meaning of a sentence describing the state of affairs and its symbol, that sentence becomes true, so a meaningful proposition pictures a state of

affairs. The relationship between the world and its logical structure occurs in language. The main arguments of the *Tractatus* are the relationship of thought and language, facts, and the elementary propositions that are thought to correspond to these facts.

“3 A logical picture of facts is a thought.

4 A thought is a proposition with a sense.” (Wittgenstein, 1990, p. 19)

Wittgenstein's understanding of the world is like the language he treats as the totality of sentences. Sentences consist of simple nouns and the world consists of facts. According to him, the limit of language is also the limit of the world, but this limit can be drawn within the language. The world, thought and language are addressed in a kind of correspondence relationship. The fact that a state of affair can be thought means that a logical picture of it can be drawn. All thoughts are a logical picture of the world. By revealing the relationship between the structure of language and the world, Wittgenstein tries to explain the semantic connection of propositions with the facts. Meaning occurs in the language in the context of the relation of thoughts to the facts.

“3.11 We use the perceptible sign of a proposition (spoken or written, etc.) as a projection of a possible situation.
The method of projection is to think of the sense of the proposition.

3.12 I call the sign with which we express a thought a propositional sign. And a proposition is a propositional sign in its projective relation to the world.” (Wittgenstein, 1990, p. 20)

In this context, a sentence indicates a possible situation of fact. Whatever belongs to the appearance, not the fact itself, belongs to the sentence. There is not a one-to-one correspondence between the state of affairs and the sentence, but a projective relationship, because thought is expressed through propositions, which are symbols

and propositions can only form the picture of a situation. According to Wittgenstein, only the facts can reveal a meaning, the class of nouns cannot. A sentence can tell how a fact is, not what it is. A sentence spoken or written is a sign that indicates a possible situation of fact. The written or verbal sign expressed because of reducing a state of affairs to a thought form the meaning of the thought as a picture. A state of affair is first transferred to thought and then to language.

Wittgenstein says that what indicates meaning is a sentence, and he states that understanding a sentence is to recognize the state of affairs. In this context, understanding a sentence means knowing what is as it is, when it is true, and what is not as it is, when it is false. Words in a language need to be explained in order to be understood, but man can understand the structure of sentences without knowing the meaning of the words. The essence of the sentence is that it can convey meaning. The state of affair provides this transmission. Sentences are communicated through language, but they are dependent on a thought.

According to Wittgenstein, metaphysics is not a field about which we can talk in a meaningful or meaningless way, and it is not within the boundaries of language because everything outside the boundaries of language is nonsense. Wittgenstein draws the boundary of the thinkable and the boundary of the meaningful sentence within the language. According to him, analyzing language in the context of meaning is to reveal what can be said, what cannot be said, what can be thought, and what is unthinkable. The limit of language drawn by Wittgenstein is the limit of the language that expresses facts. The way of speaking meaningfully is determined within these limits. According to Wittgenstein, the truth of the sentence is understood through the correspondence of the sentence with those which are the case. The question “What is meaning?” is analyzed using logic and mathematics. The correspondence of facts and

language is necessary for meaning. Meaning is limited in this way in the context of the elementary sentence. The logical form of the words that make up a sentence must match its factual form. All factual forms expressed as pictures must be a true or false sketch of reality. When a general inference is made in the context of the *Tractatus*, a state of things consist of objects, facts correspond to states of things, and the world to facts; on the other hand, the elementary sentences consist of nouns, sentences consist of elementary sentences, and language consists of the totality of sentences. According to Wittgenstein, everything other than these correspondences is non-sense.

In the context of *Philosophical Investigations*, which is called the second period, Wittgenstein argues that the structure of the language determines the way of thinking about the external world. This means that, in its most general form, the problem of meaning would be solved within the language itself. In his first period, he defines the meaning of a sentence as the state of affairs and later determines the meaning of a sentence as the usage that can be included in various language-games. The meaning of a word is defined as the use of the word in a linguistic system. So understanding a word depends on knowing how to use it. In other words, there are no starting points except human thought and language, and meaning only manifests itself in linguistic practice. Wittgenstein says that the words in a language name the objects, each word has an external objective counterpart, and the view that words correspond to objects obscures the functioning of the language, therefore an education in which words are learned in a primitive way should be studied. Learning in a primitive way will consist of pointing at an object and saying a word. Thus, instead of looking for correspondence in the non-linguistic world, the meaning would be formed by the relationship established between object and vocalization.

“This ostensive teaching of words can be said to establish an association between the word and the thing. But what does this mean? Well, it may mean various things; but one very likely thinks first of all that a picture of the object comes before the child's mind when it hears the word.” (Wittgenstein, 1958, p. 6)

The word shown by pointing, repeated, and learned in this way takes a meaningful form depending on how it is used. As a result, the use of a word is fully understood when its usage is learned. Naming something is like attaching a label with a name on it, and that label matches the object. To be able to talk about objects, they must be named in this way.

Wittgenstein criticizes the argument that if there is nothing corresponding to it, the word has no meaning, because of the misuse of the word "meaning". According to him, the confusion of the bearer of a name with the meaning of that name causes this ambiguity. He says that, when someone dies, the bearer of that name is dead, not the correspondence, but if the opposite were the case, it would be pointless to mention that person after he died. Hence, the meaning of a word depends on its usage in the language, not its bearer.

“For a large class of cases—though not for all—in which we employ the word "meaning" it can be defined thus: the meaning of a word is its use in the language. And the meaning of a name is sometimes explained by pointing to its bearer.” (Wittgenstein, 1958, p. 14)

This is what ensures that a sentence is meaningful even in the absence of the name's bearer. The fundamental expression, “meaning is use” is the most characteristic of the next stage of Wittgenstein's thought. He passes from the understanding of ‘meaning as a picture’ to the thought of ‘meaning as use’ that he determines as the basis of his investigation. Traditional theories of meaning in the history of philosophy express meaning with a proposition that points to something external. However, in

Wittgenstein's new analysis of meaning, it is the various and different uses of the words to be considered. Wittgenstein mentions the concept of 'language-game' to emphasize that there are numerous types of uses that make up the meaning, that these uses have a variable structure, and that they are part of an activity. However, unlike the picture theory, this new concept does not deliberately define it in an explicit way, as it includes a more fluent, more diverse, and more activity-oriented approach to language.

When something is said, it is not only important what is said but how it is said and also in what context it is said. Words, gestures, etc. can change the meaning, so it is difficult to make a general definition of meaning. For this reason, it is the usage forms that contain all these that determine the meaning. On the other hand, the argument that meaning emerges in use excludes metaphysical questioning about the nature of the objects or discussions of what kind of correspondence objects have with words and allows the use of words that do not have their objective counterparts in a meaningful way. For example, logical connectives 'and, or, implication, etc.', words like 'but, here, now' are such words. The meaning of these words is revealed in usage. They consist of meaningless sounds when they are not used in a sentence.

3.2.5 Meaningful Statements According to Ayer

Saying that his thoughts were derived from the views of Berkeley, Hume, Russell, and Wittgenstein, Alfred Jules Ayer has views that fall within the scope of logical positivism as stated before. His approach, which he defines as a form of empiricism, is that the purpose of philosophy is not to reveal fictional thoughts. For the empiricists, factual statements are only hypothetical, and their accuracy is not mandatory. Ayer states the function of philosophy is to show the logical relations

between scientific propositions and to enlighten their meanings by defining the symbols used in these propositions.

Firstly, he begins by criticizing metaphysical discourses that he considers inefficient. He states that the argument that metaphysics provides the knowledge of a reality that transcends the world of science and common sense is false. He argues that, even if metaphysical arguments start with sensory reality, they cannot speak of a transcendent reality because anything non-experimental cannot be deduced from experimental premises. However, he also suggests that such an inference does not destroy metaphysics because the failure to deduce a conclusion from its arbitrary premises is not enough to show that it is false, so a complete analysis of metaphysical propositions must be sought.

“Consequently one cannot overthrow a system of transcendent metaphysics merely by criticizing the way in which it comes into being. What is required is rather a criticism of the nature of the actual statements which comprise it. And this is the line of argument which we shall, in fact, pursue. For we shall maintain that no statement which refers to a ‘reality’ transcending the limits of all of sense-experience can possibly have any literal significance; from which it must follow that the labours of those who have striven to describe such a reality have all been devoted to the production of nonsense.” (Ayer, 2017, p. 5)

According to Ayer, it is only possible to know things within the limits of sense-experience. In order to speak of a transcendent reality, this limit must be crossed, but this is impossible. However, Ayer makes this kind of criticism within the language. According to him, metaphysical discourses lack the necessary criteria to be meaningful. This criterion, on the other hand, is the criterion that allows us to test whether a sentence expresses a genuine proposition about particular facts. According to Ayer, the truth of a statement should be determined through logical reasoning or observation known as the verification criterion. Ayer suggests that only empirical,

tautological, or mathematical expressions are meaningful, that is, statements that we can only show that such statements are true or false using the scientific method or logic.

According to Ayer, the criterion for a linguistic expression to be considered meaningful is that it can be verified by experiment. Propositions that can be verified are also genuine propositions. Unlike a proposition being “true”, a proposition being “verifiable” indicates that the proposition is a possible but not necessarily certain statement. According to the verifiability criterion, a sentence is meaningful only if it is related to observation and experiment. However, if we try to determine the meaning of a sentence by associating it with some observation sentences, there is no need for actual observations corresponding to these observation sentences; all that is required is that these observations can in principle be made.

“The criterion which we use to test the genuineness of apparent statements of fact is the criterion of verifiability. We say that a sentence is factually significant to any given person, if, and only if, he knows how to verify the proposition which it purports to express—that is, if he knows what observations would lead him, under certain conditions, to accept the proposition as being true, or reject it as being false.” (Ayer, 2017, p. 6)

Verification of a statement about facts requires knowing from which experiments and observations that statement is derived. A sentence of any type cannot be a genuine sentence if it cannot be tested by observation and experiment, even if it conforms to rules of syntax. However, although verification is generally based on observation, Ayer practically makes a distinction between verifiability and verifiability in principle. Verifiability in principle involves designing an experiment about a factual situation. Even if this experiment cannot be practically performed, the proposition is verifiable in principle, if the experiment can be done when the appropriate conditions are provided and therefore the proposition is meaningful. In this context, theoretical

propositions of science that have not yet been verified by experiment are also meaningful. Another distinction made by Ayer is the distinction that must be made between the strong and weak meanings of the verifiability principle. A proposition is, in the strong sense, verifiable if its truth is proven definitively by experiment; but if experiment only makes it possible, it can be said that it is verifiable in the weak sense. According to Ayer, if the principle of verification is to be considered as a serious criterion of meaning, it should be interpreted as including the acceptance of statements that cannot be verified as strong as necessary.

The sentence types, which are meaningful according to Ayer, are genuine factual propositions and tautologies. A proposition other than tautology is nothing but a possible presumption. Since tautologies are propositions that are always considered true in their logical form, their meaning is in their own form. Ayer does not treat the criterion of meaningfulness as an exact verifiability principle like some logical positivists do, because, by their own nature, general law propositions are propositions designed to encompass an infinite number of cases but whose exact accuracy cannot be determined by a finite number of observations. It must therefore be admitted that they cannot be confirmed with certainty. When exact verifiability is accepted as the criterion of meaningfulness, general law propositions should be handled like metaphysical assertions.

Ayer argues that, according to his own criterion of meaning, philosophy and metaphysics should be separated from each other, because philosophy is a true branch of knowledge. Metaphysical assertions are non-sense.

“We may accordingly define a metaphysical sentence as a sentence which purports to express a genuine proposition, but does, in fact, express neither a tautology nor an empirical hypothesis. And as tautologies and empirical hypotheses form the entire class of significant propositions, we are justified in

concluding that all metaphysical assertions are nonsensical.” (Ayer, 2017, p. 12)

According to Ayer, a metaphysical assertion is a sentence, which aims to explain a genuine proposition, but can be neither an experimental assumption nor a tautology, therefore it is meaningless. Philosophy is a language analysis activity and this analysis is done by determining the meaningful sentence types in the language and then by explaining the relations of equivalence between sentences of different types. Ayer does not accept the argument that the business of the philosopher is to construct a deductive system. Philosophers do not have the right to determine the first principles within this system and present them as a picture of reality with their consequences. Because the first principles of this kind cannot be found, it is meaningless to construct such a system. In Ayer’s context, being meaningful is characteristic of analytically or empirically verifiable statements and the first principles have not such a property.

3.3. Meaningful Statements According to Science

Science uses the data of the external world consisting of facts, so all approaches to the problem of meaning are handled in this context. Since a scientific attitude sets out with a presupposition that the external world cannot be talked about without observation and experiment, a theory of meaning is formed in science on the facts that are the subject of observations. The role of experiment and observation is very important in science, so arguments that cannot be based on the experiment are not meaningful in terms of science. As is known, any information that cannot be based on experiment points to a situation based on reason. However, no meaningful scientific statement, including general law propositions, is a necessary truth, because it is the nature of the experiment that no matter how close to the certainty it is, it does not

have the necessity. Necessity is a property of logic, and the experiment can never justify necessary truths. For this reason, the propositions of science should be evaluated as close to certainty, not certain. But the arguments that have not been proved by experiment until now are important for science; these arguments are not yet confirmed, but are predicted to be confirmed; however, they will not be considered in the context of this study.

Science is a series of methods aimed at identifying observed facts and establishing a set of testable knowledge open to rejection or approval, and the information obtained is expected to be true. According to Ayer, when we talk about knowledge, this discussion involves the field of science, because knowledge is only produced by science.

“There is no field of experience which cannot, in principle, be brought under some form of scientific law, and no type of speculative knowledge about the world which it is, in principle, beyond the power of science to give.” (Ayer, 2017, p. 26)

According to Ayer, the knowledge that can form a basis for science should be based on facts. The propositions corresponding to the facts are also meaningful to the extent that they can be verified. Any meaningful proposition should be directly or indirectly related to experiment. In Ayer’s views, any claims on which we have the opportunity to design an experiment, but have not been observed yet are also considered scientific, because any statement that can be logically or empirically verified makes sense.

3.3.1. Synthetic Propositions

Certainty is a conclusion which humanity has always wanted to achieve. It has been known since antiquity that we cannot get the exact knowledge about the ever-changing external world. The uncertainty of nature-oriented statements has always

been seen as a problem to be solved. It is also because of this problem of certainty that Kant suggested the propositions of the synthetic *a priori* type. Before defining factual propositions, it seems necessary to look again at Kant's classification of propositions. According to Kant, every piece of information is expressed with a proposition. As mentioned before, Kant states that the information that can be the basis of scientific knowledge should be based on the senses, but the source of the obtained information is not only the senses. Knowledge becomes possible provided that judgments derived from the senses are brought together through the mind. In evaluating this form of knowledge scientifically, Kant classifies them as synthetic *a priori* propositions.

“Fortunately, it happens that, even though we cannot assume that metaphysics as science is actual, we can confidently say that some pure synthetic cognition *a priori* is actual and given, namely, pure mathematics and pure natural science; for both contain propositions that are fully acknowledged, some as apodictically certain through bare reason, some from universal agreement with experience (though these are still recognized as independent of experience).” (Kant, *Prolegomena*, 2000, p. 23)

Kant thinks that it is not necessary to talk about whether synthetic *a priori* cognition is possible, as Kant argues that we have some undeniable synthetic *a priori* cognition and that they are actual. Therefore, the propositions that are meaningful in terms of science are synthetic *a priori* propositions that originate from both reason and experiment. He evaluates also the causality principle in this context, and if this principle is not present, science will disappear. According to him, science is based on a number of assumptions of the synthetic *a priori* type, because synthetic propositions based on experimentation are not mandatory; that is, its negation does not lead to a contradiction; on the other hand, putting them together with an *a priori* condition provides a necessity. Thus, scientific propositions are given a meaning that both expands knowledge and has certainty. Kant tries to prove that synthetic *a priori*

propositions make it possible to reach certainty. However, when non-Euclidean geometries were developed, it was observed that synthetic a priori propositions were not valid. There is no longer a precise and necessary model for perceiving the physical world, but self-consistent models. The nature of scientific propositions is therefore not that they are precise, but that they give the same result in as many experiments as possible.

Since facts are the realities determined by direct observation and thought to be observed in the same way by everyone, the linguistic form of a fact determined as a result of an observation is also a factual proposition. Every proposition that has the opportunity to be verified by observation and experiment is factual. Factual propositions are expected to give the same result whenever certain conditions occurred or are established. Therefore, science creates scientific knowledge based on these propositions. The propositions of science correspond to the facts, so what matters to science are the facts in the external world. Nevertheless, the definition of factual propositions is the job of logic and philosophy. Science is not concerned with the structure of propositions.

“Science is a regular or organized whole of knowledge. Since our knowledge is included in linguistic forms of expression called “proposition”, understanding science in a way means examining, criticizing and analyzing these propositions according to this approach. Clarifying the terms or concepts that make up the propositions, determining the relationships between these concepts, proposing, and clarifying the theory or similar systems that encompass the concepts in a logical relationship order are the processes that determine the main feature of this approach.” (Yıldırım, 2012, p. 13)

The fields mentioned here are logic and philosophy, so the business of enlightening scientific propositions falls within the scope of philosophy. Science is not concerned with the structure of its propositions, and uses them, and makes predictions about future events based on the factual propositions with the presupposition that there is a

regularity in the universe. Scientific explanations are causal explanations because it is the thought that the same causes will yield the same results, which ensures predictions about future events.

Facts are situations that were assumed to exist or take place, and the reality consists of the whole of the facts. The most common way to test the existence of a fact is whether it can be demonstrated by experiment. What we call scientific facts are the propositions confirmed by observation or experiment. Since the facts are things that exist in the external world and they are however they are, science, which is an activity in the effort to understand the universe, creates theories directly or indirectly with verifiable propositions about the facts.

“It is a valid information that the earth is round. The proposition "the world is round" expresses this fact. Moreover, we have various evidence or documents showing the accuracy of the proposition. Moreover, most of us accept the correctness of the proposition. On the other hand, the proposition "the world is round" is not just any proposition; it is a factual proposition.” (Yıldırım, 2012, p. 22)

The factuality of a proposition requires experimentation and observation to verify that proposition. What provides knowledge is the attempt to prove the realities of the external world in this way. Knowledge obtained as a result of experimentation and observation of the facts is used to find general laws that are thought to link these facts. Science is an activity based on the interaction of sense-data and theoretical thinking. Since the explanation of the facts is possible with logical reasoning, the interaction between observation and theory is continuous.

3.3.2. General Propositions of Law

Science differs from fields such as logic and mathematics in its factuality. All scientific propositions are about the facts that can be observed directly or indirectly.

Whether a statement about a fact is true or false depends on the existence of the fact it expresses. The verification process is not a logical verification in language, but a verification based on the results of observations and experiments because a verification within language is logical and it is sufficient to know the meaning of the words in a proposition. For scientific verification, it is necessary to look at the physical world. However, since science does not accept contradictory propositions and uses logical methods to construct its theories also shows that it is logical.

Science does not consider the existence of a single fact sufficient to reach a generalization. It tries to create a collection of observations and experiments about particular facts. The facts in these collections should always give the same result with certain observations and experiments carried out under similar conditions. General propositions of law hold a quality of generalization; this generalization is based on the assumption that a feature or a state of the relationship is relevant for all objects of a certain collection.

“What we mean by explaining an observed fact is incorporating that fact into general law. We observe that as the day progresses a wind begins to blow from the sea to the land; we explain this fact by incorporating it into general law that heated bodies expand and thus become lighter with respect to equal volumes.” (Reichenbach, 1951, p. 6)

In addition to trying to generalize facts in order to create theories, science also has a number of basic beliefs. It makes assumptions based on these beliefs. Although assumptions are not proven by experiment, they are theoretical ideas that are believed to be true and they are put forward as a preliminary to draw logical conclusions. However, these assumptions are not arbitrary but are appropriate and explanatory to *the problems* in question. Scientific assumptions allow the explanation of unknown facts or offer solutions to existing problems. When a scientific hypothesis is directly

proven and validated, it becomes actual, not an assumption. Science tries to analyze the basic relations of nature with the presupposition that facts are in regular relations with one another. Scientific theories are supposed to give a consistent interpretation of reality. Every theory can lead to designing new experiments, observing new facts, and finding new laws.

“There are no eternal theories in science. It always happens that some of the facts predicted by a theory are disproved by experiment. Every theory has its period of gradual development and triumph, after which it may experience a rapid decline. The rise and fall of the substance theory of heat, already discussed here, is one of many possible examples. Others, more profound and important, will be discussed later. Nearly every great advance in science arises from a crisis in the old theory, through an endeavour to find a way out of the difficulties created.” (Einstein, Infeld, 1938, p. 77)

The way to object theories that are supposed to explain some facts involves a complete analysis of that theory. To object to a theory explaining a group of facts is to show that the propositions expressing that group of facts are false. After their falsity is shown, the theory loses its validity. The strength of a theory is related to the understandability of the situations it can explain. When new scientific evidence is available, a scientific theory may be rejected or modified if it does not conform to new findings. In such cases, a more encompassing theory is adopted. On the other hand, the older and simpler versions of a theory can continue to be used for practical reasons, even if it has been advanced or expanded. For example, when we build a house, we use Newtonian physics; not Einstein physics, which is its extended version.

General law propositions are statements that are supposed to explain the natural facts. The natural facts, on the other hand, are independent of the human mind. Since ancient times it has been foreseen that there was an order in nature and a basic, mandatory and consistent whole of relations should exist for the realization of this

order. This prediction arising from the infallible and harmonious order observed in nature is expressed in consistent propositions known as the laws of nature.

“One starting point for understanding scientific explanation focuses on the role of laws of nature. Scientific laws have explanatory force presumably because they describe the way things have to be. But the way things have to be, the necessity of laws of nature is very difficult to understand from the scientific point of view. For scientific observation and experiment never show how things have to be, only how things are.” (Rosenberg, 2005, p. 32)

To say how something should be is to say that it cannot be otherwise. Science has no such power in the face of the external world. The facts of nature, unlike scientific laws, are states that are as they are, whether be discovered or not. Scientific laws or general law propositions are the totality of propositions put forward about how natural phenomena work. Therefore, they make assertions about how the phenomena found in nature are and they are generally accepted as long as they can explain the facts. However, an assertion that scientific laws fully correspond to the facts of nature cannot be accurately confirmed.

By re-emphasizing that science is not absolute and precise, these laws can be explained descriptively. These definitions can be classified as follows: the laws which are valid for certain facts and only specific to those facts, general laws which are valid for a large number of facts, and universal laws which are valid for all facts. The primary effort of science is to find relationships between classes of facts in question and to explain these relationships using some theoretical concepts. Generalizing the relations found leads scientists to factual laws, and expressing the theoretical relations designed to explain these relationships leads scientists to theoretical laws that have a high level of explanatory power.

The purpose of general laws is to bring together many and seemingly irregular facts in an orderly manner and express them with a single proposition. General law

propositions try to gather different facts under the same principle and concept and explain these facts. For example, the force of gravity, proposed by Newton and expanded by Einstein, is a universal law proposition that is thought to be valid throughout the universe, and the electromagnetic force, alongside the weak force and the strong force, is one of the four fundamental universal laws in nature.

“Science is not just a collection of laws, a catalogue of unrelated facts. It is a creation of the human mind, with its freely invented ideas and concepts. Physical theories try to form a picture of reality and to establish its connection with the wide world of sense impressions. Thus the only justification for our mental structures is whether and in what way our theories form such a link.” (Einstein, Infeld, 1938, p. 310)

Science tries to prove its theories about reality on a sensory ground, while theories are formed on an intellectual ground. When the truth of a theory is shown, that is, when the theory corresponds to the factual situations, meaningful propositions can be constructed. Science tries to analyze facts containing constantly evolving and changing findings. Since the aim of science is to explain the universe, it seeks a general law that can explain all phenomena. Science as a human activity field aims to produce more and more accurate, natural explanations of how the natural world works, what its components are, and how the world has to be the way it is now.

3.4. Meaning Problem of Art

What does “talking about the meaning of an artwork” involve? This question can be answered based on the definitions of meaning and the definition we use can determine the period in which that artwork is located. Since meaning is a concept that may include subjective evaluations, starting with its definitions will carry the discussion to a more objective level. Therefore, while investigating the problem of the meaning of

art, we considered it appropriate to discuss this concept in the context of the sharp distinction we think exists between formal art and conceptual art. In this study, we tried to stay away from individual evaluations as much as possible, we formed the conceptual framework based on definitions, starting with the thought that agreement can only be ensured with agreed definitions, but we determined the relationships established within the scope of these definitions. We applied two different definitions of meaning (meaning in a correspondence relation and meaning as use), to two approaches in art, i.e., art for the senses (formal art) and art for thought (conceptual art). Because, as formal art does, if the work of art is presented in certain appearances and has a narrative towards the external or internal world, the meaning is sought in its relation to what these appearances are about. For instance, the meaning of a formalist artwork is related to a thing, which it is about; that is, it depends on a sensation - whether it is an external sense or an internal sense. In this context, the meaning is determined based on a definition of art that considers formal criteria. Formal criteria determine the language of art, on the other hand, their relationship to object determines the meaning of art. Since this approach includes an analysis through the appearances of objects in the external world, the meaning is established on the similarity to these objects. When an artist considers the internal sense, the result does not change in terms of being sensual; the internal sensation is subjective and this subjectivity requires a one-to-one relationship with the artist because meaning cannot be understood without such a relationship with the artist. However, in both cases, the artist uses the same artistic language. For this reason, when such artworks are seen, a conceptual analysis cannot be made on their meaning, because meaning appears in their relations to the things they are about.

In order to explain the concept of meaning in art, it is necessary to look at the premises of an artwork. The approach of a work to its subject determines its semantic content. If an object is considered in the context of representation, the meaning of the artwork is sought in the similarity relationship determined by the object it represents, and its specific features. The definitions of meaning we discussed earlier can be used to make this analysis because it seems possible that meaning, which is a problematic concept in itself, becomes more complex within art. For this reason, the concept of meaning defined in a correspondence relationship can be used to talk about the meaning of an artwork in the context of representation, because representation is basically the form of the relationship established. Representation is shaped by the mutual relationship between the object and the artwork. The object determines the semantic content of an artwork in this approach.

“x is an artwork only if it is about something.

This theory can be expanded by being more explicit about what is involved in being “about something.”

x is an artwork only if x has a subject about which it makes some comment (about which it says something, or expresses some observation). This notion might also be stated by alleging that in order to count as art, a candidate must have some semantic content... The concept of semantics and that of representation are intimately connected.” (Carroll, 1999, p. 27)

The semantic content of a work of art is inferred from its relation to the thing it is about, and if the work is considered in the context of representation, the relation is established on its resemblance to the thing it is about because the artwork is basically about something and wants to 'show' the thing it is about. Since the premise determines the result, the definition of art is deduced from this premise if the premise “the artwork addresses the object in the context of representation” is asserted. In this context, the artwork uses a kind of language that describes the object and the meaning comes out when there is a similarity between this language and the object. Since these

kinds of works are descriptive, there is no need to establish a relationship with the artist in order to understand them; the works that require a relationship with the artist are those that belong to the internal sense. Therefore, a descriptive work is relatively easy to understand by the viewer. Because the more similar the artwork to the thing it represents, the more successful it is assumed to be.

For the meaning of conceptual art, such an analysis is not possible. The fact that conceptual art is related to mental processes makes it an intellectual activity. Its relation to the object is about analyzing it in an artistic context, and this analysis is not made through the object itself and its states, but through linguistic statements expressing the object. Since conceptual art focuses on the conditions that make something art, it tends towards the states that provide these conditions. Since we have established the relation of formal art with meaning - in the context of representation - based on correspondence, we can establish the relationship between conceptual art and meaning based on Wittgenstein's definition, i.e. meaning is use. When we take the object out of the equation of meaning as we know it (we give it a name based on the idea that the object, which is the subject of our perception, corresponds to our senses), this expression, which means that we determine it according to its use, finds its purest example in Marcel Duchamp. His 1915 work "In Advance of the Broken Arm" questions the state of the object taken into artistic context and establishes the meaning not with the object itself, but with the thought of the artist. This object, which is a tool produced for the purpose of clearing the snow accumulated in front of doors or on roads, is turned into a work of art by the artist. The object is presented with its artistic function, not its own function. The function of the object itself is related to what that object does, but the artistic function is what makes that object a work of art, and in this context, it is this function that determines the meaning. Marcel Duchamp's ready-

made works, instead of following a tradition, set out to dismantle the traditional understanding of what material an art object should be made of and what it should look like. The artwork is a process rather than a material thing, and therefore it is no longer something that can be grasped by simply seeing, hearing, or touching the final product of that process. The concept of agency in art-making is therefore particularly emphasized.

“In short, Duchamp’s ready-mades warrant interpretations. It makes sense to ask what they are about...On the other hand, it does not make sense to ask what ordinary urinals and snow shovels are about. Ordinary urinals and snow shovels are not about anything; they have no semantic content; they are mute—meaningless.” (Carroll, 1999, p. 28)

We do not think about the meanings of ordinary objects because we know their meanings by their names. All objects named according to their functions are meaningful, so meaning emerges from the relationship between the object itself and the name given to it. Marcel Duchamp's work is meaningless in this context because the function of the ordinary object does not determine the meaning of the artwork. Therefore, the artistic meaning of ordinary objects that are not produced by the artist begins to be considered when that object is presented as a work of art. An ordinary object is chosen by the artist and presented as a work of art; it is not the object that determines the meaning - the silence and meaninglessness that Danto speaks of - the artist himself. The object presented in this way is open to thinking, not experiencing. Duchamp's art, in his own words, appeals to thought, not eyes. Therefore, the meaning is sought not in the form of the object, but in its artistic function. An ordinary object that has not been chosen for any of its features, has been transformed into an artwork by the artist.

Conceptual works of art do not express anything other than thoughts; all semantic relationships are constructed by the artist. The artwork does not refer to anything other than itself, so it is the artist who reveals a meaning. In other words, a conceptual artist constitutes meaning and formulates it. Since all these expressions are related to an intellectual process, the final result alone is not enough to grasp the meaning, so the relationship constructed with a conceptual work is not a perceptual relationship, because meaning is not determined through the experienceable properties of something. Conceptual art has been associated with thought processes and often addresses the issues of the mind. Therefore, in a conceptual artwork, the meaning is not embodied in a physical object or event but is determined by the artist intellectually.

3.4.1. Formal Art and Meaning

First of all, it is necessary to determine what we understand from formalist art. Formal art includes artworks that are seen as a reflection of the external or internal world and produced for the senses. The relationship established with the external world is a relationship of similarity. According to formal art, the meaning of a work of art is established through appearances. The relation of the formal elements that make up the work of art is created in a way that it corresponds to the external world. The world reflected with its explicit properties is reconstructed on a two-dimensional plane with the artist's perspective. Basically, the relationship established with objects is a relation of representation and this relation has been preserved in one form or another until the era of conceptual art.

Even in the period when the similarity relationship was questioned, the relationship between artworks and objects was through the senses. Art does not

appear as a mirror of nature but still starts with it. Artist is interested in an essence that is thought to be behind the appearance of objects and tries to shape it by looking at it from his inner world. The surface, color spaces, and lines come together in different ways to create new forms and these new forms are also presented to the perception of the viewer, so all these processes cause artistic forms to change but do not completely eliminate them. The senses are still important, although there is some thought in the context of the truth behind the appearance. It is conceptual art that eliminates the art for the senses, and that is why we put the distinction in this way.

“It is not in principle that Modernist painting in its latest phase has abandoned the representation of recognizable objects. What it has abandoned in principle is the representation of the kind of space that recognizable, three-dimensional objects can inhabit. Abstractness, or the non-figurative, has in itself still not proved to be an altogether necessary moment in the self-criticism of pictorial art, even though artists as eminent as Kandinsky and Mondrian have thought so. Representation, or illustration, as such does not abate the uniqueness of pictorial art; what does do so are the associations of the things represented. All recognizable entities (including pictures themselves) exist in three-dimensional space, and the barest suggestion of a recognizable entity suffices to call up associations of that kind of space.”¹⁴ (Harrison, Wood, 1993, p. 756)

Illustration, which means the reconstruction of the elements for the senses by the artist's interpretation, settles in the space of the painting. The relationship established with the objects is not of representation type, but of explanation and interpretation type. Since it includes subjective interpretations, formal analyses differ, but regardless of how the work is handled, it starts from the senses in terms of using the space (two-dimensional surface) of the painting and is presented to the senses again. In any case, the form of the relationship which an artwork establishes with the outside world is also observed among other artworks. When we mention formal art, naturally, we talk

¹⁴ This paper, "Modernist Painting" by Clement Greenberg, was accessed from the book titled Art in Theory by Charles Harrison and Paul Wood.

about the art of painting and its tradition. Because painting stands at the center of all visual arts as one of the oldest branches of art, it is the area where we can see the purest examples of concepts such as representation, illusion, two dimensions, and aesthetics. In this context, it is the area where the meaning problem of art can be analyzed in an understandable way.

“For centuries, representation was taken to be the central, defining feature of art. Where representation was understood in terms of imitation, the role of the artist could be analogized to holding a mirror up to nature. Speaking very broadly, the emphasis in imitation theories of art was on the outward aspects of things—the look of objects and the actions of humans. In a loose sense of the word, art was characterized in terms of primary concern with the objective features of the “external” world—with nature and observable behavior. (Carroll, 1991, p. 59)

In this context, the meaning is deduced from the relationship between what the artist wants to show and the thing experienced by the artist with its external properties. In language, thoughts are explained through concepts in a meaningful way. Concepts, on the other hand, point to an external or internal reality, and what constitutes meaning in formal artworks is not the spoken language but the artwork’s own language. The similarity is the state in which an internal or external reality corresponds to the language of the artwork. In a formal artwork, meaning is formed from the appearance of an object in the external world, because it is the content that determines the meaning, and the content is the object.

Every artwork points towards objects in some way. Whether object is considered to be continuous and spatial in time, whether it is seen as a combination of the senses or any of the definitions of object that we have explained before, it is the object itself that the work of art tends to analyze. Therefore, the relationship between art and meaning should be addressed within this framework.

“The artist paints an object he paints in the same way he grasps it as a knowledge object. For example, when the impressionist artist looks at the universe, since he perceives the objects he sees as sensation complexes and actually sees them as such, grasps them as such knowledge objects, so he paints the aesthetic object as a complex of sensations. The object painted by the artist is actually the knowledge object he grasps when he looks at the universe.” (Tunali, 1989, p. 143)

Grasping an object is a mental process. If the artist primarily grasps the object, whatever the outcome is, it is the thought that determines the beginning. If the artist's grasp of the object determines his presentation style, conceptuality constitutes the beginning of an artistic approach. In this context, when the object is considered as a combination of sensations, its display form is determined by its external properties, but to say that the object is a combination of sensations is a definition involving what it is. So what the artist primarily does is to define what he shows. Understanding an artwork requires knowing the way of grasping the subject of that artwork. When the subject of the work is directed to the object, the content of the analysis made about that object constitutes the meaning.

Formal artworks objectify content and convey this content. The communicative function of such an artwork reveals that the work is not only an aesthetic object but also an indicator. The sign indicates the meaning. In this context, a formal artwork has both meaning and form aspects.

“We infer meanings, or grasp meanings, but meanings are not at all material. I then thought that, unlike sentences with subjects and predicates, the meanings are embodied in the object that had them. I then declared that works of art are embodied meanings. Most philosophers of language are fixed on semantics, analyzing sentences in such a way that the subject falls within the scope of the predicate.” (Danto, 2013, p. 37)

Danto says that a work of art itself is a material object, and some of the properties of the object belong to meaning. For him, the work of art is about something and it has

meaning accordingly. In this context, meaning arises in relation to what the artwork is about and is intertwined with it. However, the meaning emerging in the object relation constitutes its own meaning in the materiality of the artwork. In this way, the embodiment is a definition of the inner integrity of the work that emerges rather than the relation it establishes with the object and allows the work of art to be integrated with its meaning. Whatever the artwork is about, the meaning relation between it and what it is about cannot be established only in the context of that thing. The meaning of the work includes its relation to itself as it is also to an object, so one should not be contented with the meaning relation established with what thing is about. A linguistic statement, that is, sentences with a subject and a predicate are also about something and form a picture of what they are about. What determines the meaning in language is that the constructed representation points to something. However, the meaning of an artwork cannot be analyzed solely through such a relationship, even if it is a picture of external or internal reality. Whatever the purpose is, the work cannot establish its own unity of meaning only on what it is about (although not completely independent from it).

Formalist art often includes an analysis of the perceptible properties of objects. When an artist deals with natural or artificial objects, he creates meaning through the features that define the object. Object words name objects. For example, a word like "pipe" describes an object with specific properties. Such words are learned in the presence of objects, and once learned, one can talk about the object even if the object is not seen because the word replaces the object in the language. The relationship of formal art with an object such as a pipe is established through similarity. Similarity shows something, so one should expect formal art to show the object pipe. When we see a pipe, we recognize it as we learned the meaning of this object through the direct

relationship we constructed between the word pipe and the object pipe. When we hear the word pipe, the object pipe comes to life in our minds. The unity constructed through learning between the word and its meaning enables the word to be understood even when there is no object. When someone shows us a pipe and says, “This is not a pipe,” we say to him/her, “No, that object you hold is a pipe that I have learned through experience.” The statement “This is not a pipe” is true for all pointed objects except the pipe. In this context, our expectation from a picture showing an object like a pipe is its similarity with the object we know by recognition. The artist, who wants to establish a relationship through similarity, also wants to show the object he chooses with its specific features and implicitly says to the spectator that this is that object; meaning emerges from this similarity. These explanations are for the approaches that see the painting surface like a window to nature. When this is the aim of the artist, he wants the expression of the object he chooses to be verifiable for everyone. He does not evaluate the difference in meaning between a statement made about the object and a statement made about an object on the painting surface. Because the purpose is to show something. He wants to say that his work is what it is about. Therefore, he does not write “this is not a pipe” in a painting of a pipe he made.

Since the previous discussion, which contains an implicit inference on René Magritte's artwork that has been discussed a lot already, is not about the artist's work itself, information about the artwork can be learned from other sources. Here, in the context of formal art, what we concern is the conditions that ensure the truth of the proposition “this is not a pipe.” Because, in our opinion, this proposition cannot be true in the context of such an approach. In other words, this proposition is not meaningful for formal art considered in the context of representation. Therefore, the

spectator is obligated to think rather than look in front of such a work, because the artwork contains an analysis of the nature of painting.

3.4.2. Conceptual Art and Meaning

Conceptual art is an activity that asks questions about the nature of art and tries to answer these questions. Such thinking does not allow for a formal analysis; therefore, the problem of meaning in conceptual art cannot be solved on the basis of a formal understanding. Since conceptual art completely denies a formal approach towards the senses, the artwork exists with its intellectual background. This activity, which considers the nature of art a problem, necessarily includes a philosophical attitude. Conceptual art activities distinguish the factual from the logical and place itself on an intellectual ground. Since language is a means of expression of thought, conceptual art activities are directly related to language. Conceptual art should be seen as an attempt to analyze the world, language and, the relationships between language and the world, its own structure, and its own language. Comprehension is possible by recognizing the universals in Russell's context, so art, like philosophy and science, is one of the means to grasp the world. The most characteristic feature of conceptual art is the way it declares itself as the art of mind rather than the senses: it rejects the forms of traditional art because it positions the work of art at the level of thoughts rather than objects. The thought process is given more weight than a physical material, and art is considered to be a mental activity rather than beauty and aesthetic pleasure.

“And conceptual art demonstrated that there need not even be a palpable visual object for something to be a work of visual art. That meant that you could no longer teach the meaning of art by example. It meant that as far as appearances were concerned, anything could be a work of art, and it meant that if you were going to find out what art was, you had to turn from sense

experience to thought. You had, in brief, to turn to philosophy.” (Danto, 1995, p. 13)

It is possible for something to be called art on an intellectual basis. The sensory experience is far from the nature of conceptual art. First of all, for conceptual art, ‘what can be considered as a work of art’ and ‘the act of doing and making by an artist’ are real problems. In conceptual art, determining when the art object becomes an artwork is not related to the perceptible qualities of that object. In this context, the meaning is based not on a sensual property, but on understanding the conceptual structure of the object or its relations. Since an investigation into the conceptual structure of the object belongs to the domain of philosophy, the relationship between conceptual art and philosophy is inevitable. However, art addresses the concepts in its own way. Conceptual art makes art the language of thoughts by considering the "concept" as the main object of art. The thought language of art here establishes a set of relations with philosophical approaches. When “language”, which is the indicator of the need to form thoughts, is considered as a conceptual reality, it designs the relations between meaning and concept as “signifier” and “signified”. Language shows concepts because language is heard as sound and seen as writing. Based on semiotics, the spoken language is represented as the signified and the written language as the signifier. In this context, conceptual art is usually presented in the form of language that expresses the thoughts and in the form of writing that shows language. Therefore, the meaning of conceptual art appears between thought and language.

“Conceptual Art does not have a non-material quality. The thought behind an artwork does not replace the object. The concept is "made visible" under a changeable presentation style. However, the basis of Conceptual Art is a textual content, not a formal appearance. In other words, 'making visible' is not a basic element, but a complementary and necessary element to the work.

Thus, to resort to a formal analysis to understand conceptual work is not only unnecessary but also false.¹⁵
<http://www.sanattanimitoplulugu.org>, Accessed 17.12.2019)

Making a concept visible under a changeable presentation is important not in the context of the appearance of what is made visible, but as an element of the study. The appearance is changeable and the concept is permanent and unchanging. Therefore, thought processes form the basis of the study. What determines the meaning is textual content or a linguistic expression that depends on thought. Thought is conveyed through language, language is made visible through writing. The importance of the texts in the context of conceptual art allows such an inference. The presentation style of the texts shows the shape of conceptual art, but this shape is closed to a formal analysis because it is only an element that complements the artwork. This element serves more thinking than seeing.

The fact that a conceptual artwork is an analysis on art determines the purpose of the exhibition of a text. The text is taken to artistic context, its content can be seen as a theoretical analysis, and its form as the shape of the text; of note, the text is displayed somewhere, in no case is there any formal concern. The way conceptual artists use linguistic signifiers is apparent. This means that they use the possibilities of language in their work. The formation process of the artwork is deemed necessary to understand it. After the work of art ceases to be an aesthetic object to be looked at, the process gradually becomes analyzing the object in a conceptual context.

Thought is at the forefront in conceptual art and the way this thought is conveyed is the artist's choice. This can be a linguistic signified or a visual signifier. The linguistic signifier, that is, writing, allows the work to be read in a real sense.

¹⁵ This quote from "Text as Art" published by the "The Definition of Art Group" in 1980 is by Alfred Pacquement.

When a work of art evolves from looking to reading, meaning is constituted between what is read (text) and thought (concept). A signifier chosen by the artist, on the other hand, is not chosen according to its formal features, so the meaning is related to its conceptual dimension, not its formal features. Conceptual art deals with the meanings of certain words and phrases. Therefore, when these words and phrases are used, the objects to be explained, and their states are excluded. In the context of conceptual art, meaning emerges in language via thought, so its main issue is how to analyze the relationship between language and the world in an artistic context.

Since there is no formal analysis that creates meaning in a conceptual work, the meaning is determined by thought. As mentioned before, a formal analysis is based on the sensible properties of objects. In this context, it is the representation of these properties of the object that constitutes the meaning of the artwork. Meaning depends on the subject and is presented in a relationship of correspondence. However, the meaning of a conceptual work cannot be understood in this way. The artist can take any object in an artistic context and the artist's choice is decisive here. In this case, its usage determines the meaning. According to Wittgenstein, the meaning of a word is formed within the context in which it is used, so it is their usage that determines the meaning of concepts or words. The word gains meaning or meanings in a language-game. If the language-game changes, this affects the meaning of the concepts and naturally the words. The meaning of a word is formed within a certain language-game and is determined by the people involved in that language-game. The usage and therefore the meanings of the words may change over time. The function of an ordinary object, for example, a table is obvious and its meaning is revealed according to its function, so the table is a member of a class, which is called 'table', with a certain form and a specific function. Nevertheless, when the table loses all of

its functions and is placed in a gallery by an artist or presented as a work of art, he ceases to be a member of its own class. Here it is the artist and his choice that determines the meaning; the artist has changed the meaning by changing the context. The meaning changes again when the same table is restored to its former function. In this respect, an analysis can be made based on the view 'the meaning is determined by the way it is used'.

“While knowing the formal meaning, which is the first-level of the meaning of the work of art, loses the reason for its existence, in order to understand the conceptual work, the second- and third-level questions should be asked directly:

-What is the point of presenting a text as an artwork on the wall?

-What is the meaning of this text as art¹⁶?

(<http://www.sanattanimitoplulugu.org>, Accessed: 17.12.2019)

The meaning of an ordinary object that the artist considers in artistic context does not create a correspondence with the function of that object. This aspect is important for understanding the conceptual artwork. The presentation of an ordinary object as a work of art is an investigation into the nature of art, and in this context, the meaning is determined by the artistic function of the object chosen by the artist, not the state of its own formal features. Taking the object in an artistic context requires stripping an ordinary object from all its functions and giving it an artistic status. This approach, which includes all of the inquiries towards art itself, opens up a discussion about the possibilities of producing and exhibiting the work, as we know it. Getting away from the object completely, the transition to texts in terms of being art, that is, text-based works started in the mid-1960s. As a matter of fact, what is important when considering artworks is the general shift of this period from the concept of art as an object to the concept of art as a thought, and how this situation emerges in practice. In

¹⁶ This quote from "Text as Art" published by the "The Definition of Art Group" in 1980 is by Alfred Pacquement.

this context, thought can be applied not perceptually through the senses, but conceptually through language. Thus, when it comes to those text-based works, what is presented is a context in which the viewer can encounter an active reading process rather than any sensory contact with the artwork. What is expected of the spectator is not looking at a work, but reading it.

In this study, it should not be thought that the process until conceptual art is addressed under a single view. Art, like science and philosophy, is a structure that grows in an articulated manner, and every attitude added is the preparation of the next process. Each period produces its own important discourses and contributed to this articulated structure. All of these contributions can be learned sequentially from many sources in the context of art history. The claim of this study is that there was a complete break in terms of object and meaning concepts in the context of conceptual art. Of course, to some degree, the approaches in art history differ from each other in terms of form and language, and all of the important transformations have a conceptual dimension. However, the artistic approach - in the context of classical or modern art - maintains a kind of tradition, which means, it depends on its own formal appearance. This situation also allows us to classify the works within a certain period. However, conceptual art includes questioning of the entire history of art (form, language, meaning, exhibition, and artwork) and makes this possible on an intellectual ground.

There is a principle in philosophy that “*plurality should not be posited without necessity.*”¹⁷ In the context of this principle, the existence of canvas and pedestal seems to be a problem that needs to be questioned. Because, if the canvas is used only

¹⁷ The principle expressed by William of Occam and known as Occam's Razor and what can be called the principle of simplicity, can be expressed as follows: The explanation of a fact should be based on the least possible assumption. The principle gives precedence to simplicity: of two competing theories, the simpler explanation of an entity is to be preferred. The principle is also expressed as “**Entities are not to be multiplied beyond necessity.**”

as a surface, it reproduces the surfaces surrounding us. The same applies to the pedestal, which is only a carrier, does not add anything to the statue. When such questions are asked, the problems in the fields (painting, sculpture, etc.) are addressed in a conceptual plane. These inquiries are the duty of the artist. The importance of artistic approaches is related to their own thoughts, not to the visual and physical qualities of a painting or to the change of some form and color, because form and color constitute the language of art, not its meaning. All of the approaches seen as important breaks in the context of art history started with questioning art. We mean this, in a sense, when we say that art is conceptual due to its nature. That object is considered art when placed in an artistic context, is the result of this type of thinking. In this context, canvas and pedestal themselves can be taken to the artistic context with an intellectual analysis. If this kind of analysis is not made, it will be possible to make an inference that they have no function other than multiplying the entities.

4. LANGUAGE

Although problems related to language has constituted an important philosophical field since ancient philosophy, with the establishment of modern linguistics, the main analytical period was in the 20th century. Since language is a form of expression of thought, it stands at the center of philosophical expressions, but the main research on language itself has been made by approaches that see philosophy as an activity of language analysis. Although it is generally accepted that language is conventional, the issue of whether it expresses facts is one of the most important philosophical problems related to language. As stated before, analytical philosophy analyzing semantic studies through language will determine the general approach of this

chapter. What is being investigated is the relationship between language and non-language.

First of all, it seems important to investigate the contexts in which language is analyzed. Morphology is considered when language is examined based on roots and suffixes used to arrange the words in order to form sentences according to certain rules. Words are formed by the combination of sounds, and the study of sounds that make up words and the ways they come together is the subject of phonology. The syntax is the area that examines the rules of combining words that are accepted as the smallest meaningful linguistic unit to form sentences. When language is considered in terms of being a conventional tool used to communicate and convey meanings, how words and sentences correspond to certain meanings as elements of language is the subject of semantics. The meanings of words or sentences cannot be determined just by considering the words and what they correspond to. A word can have a certain meaning in a certain context and another meaning in another context. Examining the language in this context is called pragmatics. Each of these approaches is important in understanding and analyzing the structure of language.

The relationship between language and thought, how languages emerge, how the elements of language relate to reality are among the research topics of philosophy. When philosophy is considered as an activity whose subject is language, not the world, the analysis of language becomes necessary. The relationship between language and philosophy begins with philosophers who study philosophical topics using language. Under the title of the philosophy of language, language is questioned in terms of its structure, origin, and meaning. In this section, we discussed the thoughts that determine its subject as language and consider philosophy as an activity of language analysis. These approaches will be investigated after trying to answer the

question “What is language?” Due to the relationship of conceptual art with analytical philosophy, conceptual art put language at the center of his studies. Therefore, this form of analysis of language has been deemed necessary to understand conceptual art.

4.1. What is Language?

A language is a communication tool that has its own rules and ensures agreement. Although its origin is unknown, it can be said that it has a constantly evolving and changing structure. A language consists of words that are accepted as the smallest meaningful unit, and syntax, that is, the set of rules regarding the construction of sentences. These rules show how sentences are constructed with different kinds of words. Each field has its own language system. Language is unique to each field in terms of being the transmitter of thought.

“We use the word “language” here in the broadest sense, not only as a daily-language (natural language, historical language) in a narrow sense, but covering all scientific and technical languages and generally all kinds of natural or artificial symbol-systems. For example, the symbol “C” should be regarded as a term of the chemistry language and the symbol sequence “C + O₂ → CO₂” should be regarded as a statement of the same language. We will call “language” specific to each specific field of occupation (sciences, fine arts, morality, law, metaphysics, etc.) a “language system.” (Grünberg, 2006, p. 23)

Each language system has its own specific terminology besides its daily use. This terminology covers all of the terms specific to the field. Language is the most useful, most advanced, and most important means of communication, understanding, and expression that enable people to communicate with each other. Without communication and agreement, people cannot come together and form a society. Hand, arm, face, and body movements used in relationships between people are also simple statement tools, despite the differences in expression that can vary from

society to society. Human is the only living creature capable of learning a language. The ability to think is a human distinction, and language is the tool of this distinction, so there is a kind of relationship between language and thought.

Human is by nature a social being. The primary purpose of language is to enable communication between people. Therefore, human beings, by their nature, have organs that can produce sequential sounds that we call words. Language and communication require not only articulating sounds but also bringing those sounds into a meaningful whole. The ability to create meaningful wholes with sounds, which is one of the features that distinguish human beings from the animal species, enables man to speak and to turn meaningful sounds into meaningful wholes and convey thoughts to other people. In this way, human beings, by their very nature, have the opportunity to think on each area determined as human activities and to express their understanding.

The main distinction that separates human beings from other living things is reason. To have reason requires thinking and being able to express it; this is how the relationship between language and thought occurs. Expressing a thought requires language. The thought expressed by language is the most important factor in the conceptualization of the reality outside of a person himself and in establishing a relationship with the environment. Expressing reality is possible through language. Without language, human beings cannot transfer knowledge, do science, art, and philosophy. A language is a living tool; it has been created by humans, but it does not depend on humanity. People cannot put the language into whatever form they want, and every individual has to obey the rules of the language they use. It is this necessity that enables the communication between people. The rules of the language show the form of the language's structure. These rules arise by convention in society.

The relationship between language and thought has been discussed since antiquity. The word *Logos* means both thought and, language and word. The generally accepted view is that there is a relationship between language, thought, and reality. Philosophy is a set of propositions, and since this set of propositions is expressed with language, a system of symbols, there is a close relationship between philosophy and language. Language, namely words and sentences, the intellectual symbols of the concepts formed in the human mind; meaning is the mind contents symbolized by words and sentences. Language is a symbolic system necessary for conveying thoughts to others. Its difference from other symbolizations (e.g., mathematics, logic) is that it is a result of the natural ability of man. Because words and sentences have a meaning, they enable common understanding and communication.

Philosophers try to express their thoughts and use language in a proper way while putting forward their arguments. Logic is used as a tool because it contains the rules for valid reasoning. The thoughts expressed by a philosopher in language can be verified or falsified with the help of logic. In this context, philosophy is an activity that tries to use language in a proper way in the intellectual process and in the expression of thoughts. When philosophers explain their thoughts, sometimes concepts are insufficient, in this case, they redefine concepts or produce new concepts. Thus language experiences its most consistent development in philosophy. Philosophy, questioning thought and language, gives the most accurate examples of the relationship between language and thought in its own field. This is because philosophical texts claim to be consistent.

Although the discussions on language contain different explanations, the generally accepted opinion is that the structure of language is arranged in accordance with the structure of reality. Language has been produced by man and has emerged as

a human activity. Questions about language require a philosophical discussion on language; in this context, language, which constitutes the possibility of creating philosophy, becomes the subject of the philosophical analysis. The philosophy of language involves the study of what is common to all languages, not the characteristics of individual languages. So, philosophy is an area where problems on the structure of language, the meanings of words and sentences, and the relationship of language with the external world and thought are discussed. Although the language is very important throughout the history of philosophy, the main period of debate on language itself is the late nineteenth century. Therefore, the philosophers whose thoughts are the subject of this section were mainly chosen from this period.

4.1.1. The Relationship between Language and Non-Language

The relationship between language and non-language, namely the world, is one of the most important problems of philosophy. It is generally accepted that man establishes a relationship with the external world through thought and expresses his thoughts through language, but the issue of the correctness of a lingual statement about the external world is still a problem that has not been solved yet. One of the opinions put forward on this issue is that there is a correspondence relationship between language and the world and that language represents the world. For instance, the meaning of a word object is known provided that there is an object in front of it when the word is said. A sentence is verified by the presence of a factual state. In this context, the relationship is a relationship of correspondence. As will be seen in more detail later, according to Russell, philosophy is an activity that explores the relationship between language and the world.

The answer to a question such as what is language is sought within the philosophy of language, which treats language as an object. As stated before, although the main subject is meaning, philosophy of language is divided into three fields of study in terms of its fundamental problems; syntax, which focuses on the structure of language; semantics that deals with the meanings of terms; pragmatics, which investigates philosophical problems related to the use of language. Among these problems, one of the most fundamental topics of semantics is the relationship between language and the world. It was Frege, as previously noted, who first addressed and discussed this problem. Frege's view of how it is possible to revive, think about, and make judgments about an object to which a term refers, through the meaning of that term, has been accepted by many philosophers. In addition, the analysis method developed by Frege about how the meanings of the terms that make up a sentence constitute the meaning of that sentence is still important in studies on language today. Frege's thoughts on language are directed towards a formal language independent of everyday language. According to Frege, because everyday language is ambiguous and inconsistent, it cannot make correct statements about the world. Therefore, the condition of language saying something about the world depends on having a logical form.

“As a logician, what bothered Frege the most in everyday language was that the grammatical form of language concealed its logical form. For instance, there are many grammatically different predicates, but logically there is one. Another problem caused by everyday language is that it is multifunctional. Everyday language does not only make claims and state judgments that can be true and false, but also it is used to suggest, give orders, ask permission, deceive others, etc. As a cognitive philosopher, Frege is concerned with a language capable of conveying knowledge about the world, rather than a language that serves the social purposes of a speaker.” (Cevizci, 2018, p. 1040)

The logical form of the language is a proposition consisting of a subject, a predicate and, a conjunction. This form has a truth-value, which can be true or false. Statements that are suitable for talking about the world are linguistic expressions that can be true or false. According to Frege, the relationship between language and the world can be constructed through a formal language. Logic, which is the basis of arithmetic, also lies at the basis of natural languages. The analysis of a sentence in the subject-predicate form is as in natural language as it is in mathematical language, so logic forms the basis of formal and natural languages.

To be able to think about an object, to name it, and talk about it through language, the properties of that object must be perceived. The object is given a name based on the sensible properties of the object, and the sense data received from the object, which is the cause of perceptions, constitute the meaning of that name. It is only possible to talk about objects and refer to them through meanings. Therefore, the relationship between language and the world cannot be a direct relationship according to Frege's theory. Words always make references through their meanings. Although the relationship between the name given to the object and the object may be arbitrary, the relationship between meaning and object is not like this. The fact that the relationship between meaning and object is not arbitrary provides the opportunity to communicate through language. Because, based on the specific properties of the objects, the names given to them can be talked about in a meaningful way.

4.1.2. The Distinction between Language and Speaking

Saussure, one of the important linguists of the twentieth century, treats linguistics as the classification and explanation of the facts and he tries to define what kind of object language is. The thought that terms in linguistics are insufficient leads him to

analyze the language. First of all, Saussure, who thinks that the tasks of linguistics should be clarified, determines that all aspects of human language constitute the material of linguistics. He defines the task of the linguist as dealing with not only perfect language but also all forms of expression. According to him, the task of linguistics is to describe all the languages it can reach and to show the evolution of language by examining the history of these languages.

“But it is evident, for instance, that linguistic questions interest all who work with texts-historians, philologists, etc. Still more obvious is the importance of linguistics to general culture: in the lives of individuals and societies, speech is more important than anything else.” (Saussure, 1966, p. 7)

In the context of the study of language, Saussure distinguishes between synchronic linguistics and diachronic linguistics. Synchronic linguistics is the analysis of language at a specific time. Diachronic linguistics is the analysis of the history or evolution of language. Diachronic changes in language originate from the social aspect of speech. These changes occur in individual speech patterns before they are more widely accepted as part of the language. Speaking is an activity that includes verbal and auditory communication between individuals, so language is a set of rules by which individuals can understand each other. According to him, problems that arise in language should be revealed and resolved. Those who will do this analysis are also linguists. Language is a social fact and it constitutes the subject of linguistic.

According to Saussure, language is a whole that is the product of an agreement. It is a contract and a form of convention. Man has an innate language ability and, by constructing a language, he can create a system with signs corresponding to concepts. While language ability is a natural feature of individuals, language is a social system independent of individuals. The individual alone cannot interfere with language and change it. According to Saussure, language owes its

existence to an agreement. Since language is a structured system of arbitrary signs, it has invariant properties as well as some changeable features. The various signs that make up the language are changeable due to their arbitrary nature. But the symbols are not arbitrary. A symbol may be a signifier, but unlike a sign, a symbol is never completely arbitrary. There is a rational relationship between the symbol and the signified. However, the reason for any changes that may occur in the language is never due to a specific individual.

“Language is a well-defined object in the heterogeneous mass of speech facts. It can be localized in the limited segment of the speaking-circuit where an auditory image becomes associated with a concept. It is the social side of speech, outside the individual who can never create nor modify it by himself; it exists only by virtue of a sort of contract signed by the members of a community.” (Saussure, 1966, p. 44)

Language is gradually assimilated beginning with childhood. Language acquired by a child is a string of signs that express concepts. Once the rules are learned, they will not be lost again. This feature enables a mutual understanding between individuals. According to Saussure, there is a distinction between language and speaking activity. Speaking is an activity of the individual; language is the social manifestation of speech; that is, speaking is individual, language is social. For this reason, language is a system of signs that develops as a result of speaking. For the formation of language, thoughts must be sorted and expressed with sounds. Language is a boundary where thought and sound combine to communicate. Spoken language involves the transmission of concepts from the speaker to the listener via sound-images (signifier). Language is a product of the speaker communicating signs to the listener. Saussure argues that a linguistic sign is a combination of a concept (signified) and a sound-image (signifier). The concept is signified, the sound-image is the signifier. The

combination of signifier and signified is arbitrary, so any sound-image can reasonably be used to denote a particular concept.

Saussure also is credited as one of the founders of semiology. Starting from the fact that language is a system of signs indicating concepts, he drew attention to the necessity of questioning what these signs are. According to him, we can design a field of science via examining signs and it is necessary.

“Semiology would show what constitutes signs, what laws govern them. Since the science does not yet exist, no one can say what it would be; but it has a right to existence, a place staked out in advance. Linguistics is only a part of the general science of semiology; the laws discovered by semiology will be applicable to linguistics, and the latter will circumscribe a well-defined area within the mass of anthropological facts.” (Saussure, 1966, p. 16)

According to Saussure, the field that will enable the determination of the place of semiotics is the field of psychology, because the task of the linguist is to reveal what makes language a special system within the body of semiotics. According to Saussure, the language problem is first of all a problem of the sign, so the necessity of the semiotics stems from this problem. Words are signs, language is a system of signs. The nature of the sign problem is revealed in the language. A correct study of this question requires the study of language itself, but Saussure thinks that language has always been dealt with in different ways and in relation to other things, whereas this is wrong.

Saussure's distinction between language and speech lies at the center of his theory. Language represents a social fact, and speech represents an individual fact. The individual passively transfers the language to his memory, but the speech is individual. However, speech and language are concepts that necessitate each other and are necessary for each other, but in the context of Saussure, speaking always has priority, and it is it that enables the language to be learned.

“Language is necessary if speaking is to be intelligible and produce all its effects; but speaking is necessary for the establishment of language, and historically its actuality always comes first. How would a speaker take it upon himself to associate an idea with a word-image if he had not first come across the association in an act of speaking?” (Saussure, 1966, p. 18)

According to Saussure, language is a fact that is learned by hearing from others through countless trials. Therefore, speech comes first, and it is the speech that drives the evolution of language. There is a mutual dependence between them in terms of language being the tool and product of speech. However, this addition does not prevent the distinction between language and speech. Because speaking depends on the individual as the sum of what the individual says. However, language is a social whole and does not contain individuality. Speech is individual combinations that depend on the will of the speakers as the sum of what they say. In this context speech cannot be collective, it can be individual and momentary.

Saussure argues that language and writing are different systems of signs from each other. According to him, writing is a fact whose purpose is to show language. However, speech is before writing and is more important. Based on the fact that writing is immutable, he sees, giving importance to it is like looking at the picture of reality. Speech is real and its picture is writing. Seeing the importance given to writing as an illusion, Saussure does not deny the importance of writing, because languages that are now dead are known through writing, but still argues that it should come after the speech because it is closed to change just like pictures.

“This illusion, which has always existed, is reflected in many of the notions that are currently bandied about on the subject of language. Take the, notion that an idiom changes more rapidly when writing does not exist. Nothing could be further from the truth. Writing may retard the process of change under certain conditions, but its absence in no way jeopardizes the preservation of language.” (Saussure, 1966, p. 24)

According to Saussure, some language phenomena continued without any written text, because the language has vocal traditions independent of writing. According to him, while writing is a definite, static, and unchangeable phenomenon, language is constantly evolving, changing, and organic. The purpose of the written language is to represent the spoken language; written words are images of sound signs. Saussure says that writing obscures language and that it is like a disguise rather than a guise. Guise is not an item that completely hides the contours; it is made according to the shape of the body, but the disguise is not like that; it is made to cover things up and change it. For this reason, although the purpose of writing is to show language, writing and language do not always match since they are a system of separate signs.

A language system is based on units of signs, so the most important concepts that stand at the center of Saussure's thought are the sign, the signified, and the signifier. Criticizing the notion that language consists of nouns and that a noun corresponds to some object, Saussure says that this includes the assumption that there are ready-made concepts that precede words. According to him, the object and the noun are not mutual in language signs.

“The linguistic sign unites, not a thing and a name, but a concept and a sound-image.’ The latter is not the material sound, a purely physical thing, but the psychological imprint of the sound, the impression that it makes on our senses.” (Saussure, 1966, p. 66)

According to Saussure, words in a language are sound-images and they are connected with a concept. In addition to the perceptible property of sound-images, there is also a mental aspect, and this mental aspect allows the creation of representations that begin with sensation. In this context, the sign consists of the combination of the concept and the sound-image. In order to avoid ambiguity, he suggests using the term sign to

denote the whole, the term signified instead of concept, and the term signifier instead of sound-image.

Comparing language to a piece of paper, Saussure defines thought as the front side of the paper and the sound as the backside. When the front side of the paper is cut, the backside is also cut off, and the same is true for language. Sound cannot be separated from thought and thought from sound. In this context, Saussure considered the two elements of the sign as inseparable from each other. Language, which is a system of signs, *builds* on the two elements of the sign system, sound-image, and concept. The concept is signified by the sound-image. The language that provides agreement in this way is a fact that is found in society, not in the individual. Language exists in individuals only as a grammatical system, so language is not a function of the individual, but a product that the individual transfers to his memory. It is a set of conventions used by individuals. Language is always a changing fact, but this happens independently of individuals; on the other hand, each individual learns to adapt to the changing character of the language without realizing it. This learning process is a human-specific ability that develops starting with childhood.

4.1.3. The Object-Language and Languages of Higher Order

Frege's distinction between sense and reference maintains its importance in modern linguistics and the philosophy of language. However, there are also theories of language that reject this distinction. The most important of these approaches is Bertrand Russell's theory of language. According to Russell, the sense of a term is the same as the reference of that term. As in Frege's theory, a term does not refer to an object whose sense and reference are separate. In this case, it is necessary to be directly acquainted with its reference to understand a term. This approach, which

includes analyzing the language, also has arguments for the concept of knowledge. Because any argument put forward throughout the history of philosophy also requires an analysis of direct or indirect knowledge. The premises chosen for the source of knowledge also determine the content of the analysis about a concept. Russell bases his thoughts on language largely on his own theory of knowledge. Therefore, his empiricist view that the source of knowledge is experiment directly affects his theory of language.

The foundation of Russell's theory of meaning is based on his understanding of knowledge. In other words, to understand a sentence, we must know the parts that make up that sentence. According to Russell, there are two types of knowledge: knowledge of truths and knowledge of things. Knowledge of truths apply to judgments and beliefs, and when these beliefs and judgments are verified, expression becomes knowledge. The knowledge of things is knowing by acquaintance through sense-data. According to Russell, in order to have knowledge of truths, one must first have knowledge of things; otherwise, it will not be possible to understand a sentence. Russell defines two types of knowledge: knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge by description. Knowledge by acquaintance is a relationship established directly with the sense-data that form the appearance of an object.

“We shall say that we have acquaintance with anything of which we are directly aware, without the intermediary of any process of inference or any knowledge of truths. Thus in the presence of my table I am acquainted with the sense-data that make up the appearance of my table -its colour, shape, hardness, smoothness, etc.; all these are things of which I am immediately conscious when I am seeing and touching my table.” (Russell, 1943, p. 25)

The knowledge that is obtained immediately by acquaintance is the knowledge whose accuracy cannot be doubted. However, knowledge by acquaintance is directed

towards the appearance of objects, not themselves, and knowing objects themselves through immediate acquaintance is impossible. The knowledge we learn by acquaintance is the first knowledge we obtain from an object and does not contain any inference. Russell characterizes acquaintance as a relation of immediate awareness, that is, a relationship in which something is presented to the subject or simply given. The distinctive feature of knowing by acquaintance is that it is a non-judgmental and non-conceptual form of awareness. Judgments, thoughts, and concepts are by their nature about other things or they represent other things. Immediate acquaintance is not enough to form any judgment or opinion about something or to have any concept or representation of it.

The objects of the external world, which cannot be known directly, can only be known "indirectly" and language provides a basis for this. According to Russell, another way to reach the knowledge of objects is knowledge by description. Russell's definition of knowledge by description involves knowing a thing or an object with a certain description, that is, to express it exactly as "something is such-and-such". Therefore, it is possible to talk about descriptions through language. All knowledge about objects is obtained this way. An object does not have a state of mind that we are immediately aware of, so we cannot know exactly what it is. It can only be known what sense-data it causes. While there is no possibility to suspect the existence of the sense-data obtained from any object, one can doubt whether the same object exists.

“My knowledge of the table is of the kind which we shall call 'knowledge by description'. The table is 'the physical object which causes such-and-such sense-data'. This describes the table by means of the sense-data. In order to know anything at all about the table, we must know truths connecting it with things with which we have acquaintance: we must know that 'such-and-such sense-data are caused by a physical object'.” (Russell, 1943, p. 25)

According to Russell, knowledge of objects is knowledge of the truth, and knowledge of truth is logical. He thinks that a description is known and there is only one object that this description can be applied to, and this single object is not something known immediately. Physical objects cannot be known by acquaintance. Knowledge by description is the only way to know physical objects. But, although for Russell, the expression of knowledge by description exceeds what the subject immediately knows, the content of the proposition must consist of what the subject directly knows. Knowledge by description also provides the opportunity to expand knowledge, because a limited amount of knowledge is obtained from the sense-data. To be able to talk about the past and the future, knowledge by acquaintance is not enough. The past and the future cannot be the subject of our immediate experience, but consist of statements that we can only express through inference.

In order to obtain knowledge about the objects of the external world by description, one must first be acquainted with some things. By this direct acquaintance with what is known, firstly, a language is acquired and then the knowledge of the external world is obtained by using that language. In Russell's terminology, one can be immediately acquainted with not the objects of the external world, but with the "traces" left by those objects in the mind through perception. It is the sense-data that provide these traces. When perceiving an object standing in front of us, we perceive not the object directly, but the sense-data that the object created in our mind (color, shape, hardness, etc.). Sense-data is a particular that is personal, in this regard completely subjective, and loses its existence in a very short time. This particular sense-data is the basis of the knowledge acquired about the external world.

The objects of the external world that cannot be known by immediate acquaintance are known only indirectly. The language provides a basis for this. Based

on this, Russell suggests knowledge by description as the second way of reaching the knowledge of things. Knowledge by description requires language. The particulars, which are the cause of sense-data, cannot construct knowledge by description because particulars alone are not enough to learn a language. It is necessary to move from particulars to general concepts (universal). General concepts are abstractions made from particulars through similarity. According to Russell, abstraction is one of the most important functions of the mind.

“Let us consider first the knowledge of universals by acquaintance. It is obvious, to begin with, that we are acquainted with such universals as white, red, black, sweet, sour, loud, hard, etc., i.e. with qualities which are exemplified in sense-data. When we see a white patch, we are acquainted, in the first instance, with the particular patch; but by seeing many white patches, we easily learn to abstract the whiteness which they all have in common, and in learning to do this we are learning to be acquainted with whiteness.”
(Russell, 1943, p.53)

We become acquainted with such general concepts at an early age. Understanding and speaking a language is possible in this way. Therefore, in order to understand and speak a language, it is necessary to know two things: sense-data and general concepts. We can divide Russell's way of analyzing language into two periods: these are approaches that complement each other rather than falsify. In addition, we make this distinction in order to better investigate their claims, because the relationship of language with the external world and the relationship of language with itself are different approaches. The approach in the period we express as the first period focuses on the relationship between language and non-language. The other tries to analyze language by treating language itself as an object.

The problems that Russell focused on in his early period are the form of the relationship between language and non-language. According to him, the relationship between language and non-language is a mutual relationship, and the subject of this

relationship is determined by the facts and the form of it is determined by the propositions. The external world consists of the facts, language consists of the expressions of these facts. There are two propositions, one true and one false, corresponding to a fact in language. These propositions, which Russell calls "Atomic Propositions", allow the external world to be talked about and directly convey information. Language consists of propositions and comes after facts, that is, we arrive at the language starting with facts.

“When you take an atomic proposition, or one of these propositions like “believing”, when you take any proposition of that sort, there is just one fact which is pointed to by the proposition, pointed to either truly or falsely. The essence of a proposition is that it can correspond in two ways with a fact, in what one may call the true way or the false way.” (Russell, 2010, p. 38)

According to Russell, knowledge of truth is expressed in this way. In this context, the fact is before language. Language is the expression of thoughts in the form of beliefs and judgments about facts. There is a discernible relationship between the structure of language and the structure of the fact that language is about, so language can help understand the world.

Language, which one considers objective and tries to analyze, is accepted as a fact in the relationship between language and its objectivity. According to Russell, the way to analyze language in this context is to accept words and sentences as perceptible facts. If the meanings and syntax rules of the words in a sentence are known, what that sentence means can be understood. In order to address language in this way, the existence of a language at the lowest level in which the words "true" and "false" do not appear is assumed. This form of language does not contain logical words (and, or, all, some). Russell calls this language "object-language" or "primary language." The subject mentioned here are objects that make up the content of sense-

data. In this regard, each word constitutes meaning by corresponding to the object that constitutes the content of sense-data. Therefore, the meaning is defined not in the context of the sentence, but in the context of the word. Since object-language does not contain logical words, its validation depends on experimental data.

When language is considered as a perceptible object, a word is defined in four forms: spoken, heard, written, and read. Therefore, written words can be the subject of analysis by replacing material objects. In this context, a word is the subject of perception as an object that can be heard when said and seen when written. Object-words constitute the object-language. The meaning of an object-word is known through the object being present when that word is spoken, so the explanation of the meaning should begin with such words that do not need other words because object-words are known immediately by acquaintance.

“Before considering the meaning of words, let us examine them first as occurrences in the sensible world. From this point of view, words are of four sorts: spoken, heard, written, and read. It will do no harm to assume a common-sense view of material objects, since we can always subsequently translate what has been said in common-sense terms into whatever philosophical language we may prefer” (Russell, 1956, p. 23)

According to Russell, when words are classified in this way, they form part of the perceptible world. An uttered word is a class of movements of the tongue, larynx, and throat. So saying a word is talking about a class of bodily movements. Defining language as a physical object means considering the language itself as a perceptible object. In this context, a certain word can be heard, read, written, and said by many people. Russell calls a certain word, verbal utterance when said, verbal sound when heard, and verbal shape when written.

According to Russell, words spoken, written, and heard differs from other body movements, sounds, or shapes because they have meaning. These words are

object-words and constitute the object-language. To know a language, it is necessary to know object-words and to use the words properly. Understanding a word means establishing a connection between the pointed object and the spoken word. What sentences having object words suggests depends on the meaning of the object-words. The meanings of object-words are learned by being uttered in the presence of the object (children learn their first words this way) and once the word is learned, it is understood in the absence of the object. According to Russell, object-language consists of words learned in this way. When a word heard causes an appropriate response to its meaning, it belongs to the object-language. Because in the object-language, words are clear and arise in the presence of what it is about. Therefore, they do not include the words "true" and "false" in any sense. In Russell's view, sentences in everyday speech are true or false, but words alone are not both, there is no true-false distinction in the object-language. A word can also be used alone. For example, when the word "dog" is said, if a dog is pointed, the statement is true; anything other than a dog is false. The word alone can be verified in this way, but the only form that can be logically verified is a sentence.

There exist sentences that do not contain an object-word; the sentences of logic and mathematics are of this kind, but all empirical statements require object-words because the validation of empirical statements depends on the object-words. According to Russell, words are divided into three different classes: object-words, propositional words, and dictionary words. The object-words belonging to an object-language is learned by the direct association between the word and the thing. The propositional words consist of words not found in object-language such as "not", "or", "and". The dictionary words are words learned through a verbal definition. Language

is classified as the object-language and the languages of higher order. Analyzing the language itself requires a language of higher order.

“We pass from the primary to the secondary language by adding what I call “logical words”, such as “or”, “not”, “some” and “all”, together with the words “true” and “false” as applied to sentences in the object-language. The development of languages higher order than the second is a matter for the logician since it raises no new problems as to the relation between sentences and non-linguistic occurrence.” (Russell, 2013, p. 20)

Object-language, as mentioned, consists of the object-words learned through established relations with the external world and is the basis of languages. Languages with logical words are languages of higher order. These words are words that do not have objective counterparts and have a meaning according to their usage in a sentence. A language of higher order or meta-language includes all explanations on language. The meta-language deals with the words themselves, i.e. the words are addressed in terms of being words rather than being a class of bodily movements as in the object-language. In logic, a metalanguage is a language of higher order used to analyze a language (for example an object-language). The words or expressions in a metalanguage are usually separated from primary language words and expressions by the use of quotation marks.

“We are concerned, that is to say, with the relation between object-words and object-sentences on the one hand, and what they designate or assert on the other hand. “Word” cannot occur in the object-language, but “object-word” can occur in the secondary language. Assuming that logical words occur in the secondary language, “logical word” will first occur in the tertiary language.” (Russell, 1956, p. 79)

It is necessary to know the usage of logical words in order to understand the metalanguage. The point to note here is that a word can be used to point to any object, as well as the same word itself, can be addressed as an object. In the first case, the

word is used, in the second, the same word is mentioned. When the word is shown with quotation marks, the word itself is emphasized, not the object. For example, in the expression "White" is a two-syllable word, the word in the quotation marks refers to the word white, not the color white. Therefore the word "white" here refers to a linguistic object, not its objective correspondence to the color white. The quotation mark determines this distinction. Such an analysis of language requires a language of higher order. One of the obvious consequences of the logical study of language, according to Russell, is that there must be a hierarchy of languages. High-level language includes the words "true" and "false" and requires the presence of a lower-order language where these words do not occur.

4.1.4. The Relationship between Language and Thought

The most distinctive feature of the period, which started at the end of the nineteenth century and is considered as the general approach of the twentieth century and which can be called "return to language" in the history of philosophy, is the discussion of lingual analysis methods. In this period, language constitutes the main problem of philosophy as a field that needs to be analyzed and philosophy is considered as a language analysis activity. Philosophers, who argue that the traditional problems of philosophy arise from the misuse of language, make the analysis of language the main subject of philosophy. According to the view clearly defended by Wittgenstein, who is one of these philosophers, especially in his work *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, language is a tool to describe the world and pictures the facts of the world. Wittgenstein's thought, which reduces all philosophical problems to a language problem, can be seen as an effort to determine the scope and limits of language. It is the ability to use and understand language that distinguishes humans from other

beings. According to Wittgenstein, this raises two main problems. The first of these is the question 'what is the relationship of language with the world?' The second one is how the relationship of language with thought is formed.

Wittgenstein's views on language can be understood, generally dividing them into two periods. The first period can be seen as an effort to establish an ideal language for explaining the facts in the context of *Tractatus*, while the second period can be interpreted as the investigation of problems arising from the use of daily language in the context of *Philosophical Investigations*. The two main areas of *Tractatus* are logic and language. Thought is a picture of the world in this period, and language is the way of expression of this picture. The world consists of facts, thought establishes the logical picture of facts, and language provides a meaningful picture of thought. The second period of Wittgenstein is about analyzing everyday language and in this period, language is explained by the concept of game. However, Wittgenstein retained the idea that philosophy is a language analysis activity in both periods. The relationship between language and thought in *Tractatus* is along the following lines: language expresses a thought, and according to this relationship, language disguises thought. This form of disguise is likened to the relationship between body and clothing. The language covers the thought like a veil and hides the form of that thought. No conclusion can be drawn about the form of thought covered by the outward form of language. The outward form of language is composed of subject, predicate, and conjunction and this structure is constituted to correspond to the facts.

According to Wittgenstein, the misunderstanding of the logic of language is the cause of philosophical problems. In this approach, which aims to set a limit for what can be said in a language; Wittgenstein considers everything that goes beyond this limit as nonsense. In the context of Wittgenstein, a limit can be applied to the

expressions of the thought; but one cannot set a limit to thought, because in order to draw this limit, it is necessary to know both sides of the thought, that is, it is necessary to consider the unthinkable, so all problems can only be addressed at the language level. Facts are expressed through logical pictures, and only facts can be talked about. Facts form the subject of experience and are expressed through language. The language mentioned here is an ideal language and this language can help us understand the facts. The world is the totality of facts, and language is the totality of sentences. According to Wittgenstein, thought is expressed in a meaningful sentence. The meaning of the thought depends on the correspondence of the expressed sentence to the state of affair. Man has the ability to construct languages that enable meaning to be expressed. To mention the meaning is to express a true thought about the facts. Meaning occurs when the fact expressed by the sentence is true.

In Wittgenstein's view, there is a correspondence relationship between facts, thought, and language. The relationship between the logical structure of language and the structure of the world is determined by the correspondence of a sentence to a fact. The relationship that Wittgenstein established between language, which is the representation of the thought and he sees as the logical picture of facts, is a correspondence relationship. Language makes statements about facts, and the truth of this statement indicates the presence of the state of affair. Language is a means of getting to know the world.

“4.01 A proposition is a picture of reality.
A proposition is a model of reality as we imagine it.

4.011 At first sight a proposition -one set out on the printed page, for example -does not seem to be a picture of the reality with which it is concerned. But neither do written notes seem at first sight to be a picture of a piece of music, nor our phonetic notation (the alphabet) to be a picture of our speech.” (Wittgenstein, 1990, p. 32)

According to Wittgenstein, understanding a sentence is knowing 'what is as it is' when the sentence is true. Since language describes a state of affair, it must have a connection with it. And since a sentence is a description of the state of affair, when the sentence is true, one can also see how a state of affair is as it is. Since language is a model of reality, it is formed by our thoughts. All kinds of statements about the world are determined in the context of the internal depicting relations and all are formed according to a certain logical structure.

According to Wittgenstein, the limits of language are the limit of the world. So, language can only speak about facts in the world that are the subject of experience. It cannot extend beyond the world. The most important function of language is to create signs that contain information about the world. If a proposition is true, according to Wittgenstein, this is a "picture" showing a fact of the world. Language depicts the world in this way, explains it, and reflects its reality. Knowledge is a true statement about the world through language. The truth of what is spoken is inferred from the existence of the fact that it is about. Language can make explanations about the physical world. Everything outside of experience is left out of language as unspeakable. In this context, Wittgenstein's early period marks the distinction between what can and cannot be said in language.

Daily language determines the framework of Wittgenstein's philosophical approach, which is seen as the second period of his language analysis activity. Because a large part of the daily language - in the context of *Tractatus* - has to be regarded as non-language when it is addressed as a picture of a fact. Therefore, Wittgenstein thinks that this problem should be solved and in this period he develops a theory of meaning for use. Language has a changing structure and is determined by agreed rules. By learning these rules, people know how to use words. He argues that

language should be investigated at a primitive level in order to understand this situation better, because the thought that every word corresponds to something in the external world, obscures the functioning of language. Language contains many explanations in this form, and these explanations stabilize language. However, learning a language in its primitive use removes this ambiguity, because children learn a language with such training, and this is the form that provides the agreement for a particular language.

“An important part of the training will consist in the teacher's pointing to the objects, directing the child's attention to them, and at the same time uttering a word; for instance, the word "slab" as he points to that shape. (I do not want to call this "ostensive definition", because the child cannot as yet ask what the name is. I will call it "ostensive teaching of words". —I say that it will form an important part of the training, because it is so with human beings; not because it could not be imagined otherwise.) This ostensive teaching of words can be said to establish an association between the word and the thing.” (Wittgenstein, 1958, p. 6)

In Wittgenstein's thinking, learning a language in this way allows one to see the function of a word at a glance. Pointing to an object and saying its name eliminates the explanations outside of the language. After the object is named in this way, it uses should be learned. This relationship is established by pointing and naming the pointed. Wittgenstein argues that general statements that words correspond to an object found in the external world render language dysfunctional, instead he proposes the concept of "family resemblance", which he thinks indicates certain uses of the words. Family resemblance characterizes different uses of the same concept, so there is no certainty and no limit in the use of language. The concept of family resemblance means that things are different in that they are distinctive members of the same family or distinct aspects of the same life form, what could be thought to be linked to a single common feature, may have several features not actually common to all, but can be

linked to a series of overlapping similarities. Therefore, the relationship is based on similarity, not on commonality. Certainty and limits are features of propositions. Wittgenstein says that the general concept of word correspondence means that words have objective equivalents and are matched with the object to which the word corresponds. However, this claim is not something that can be clearly seen at a glance. According to him, this type of matching can explain a particular part of a language; these formal explanations end eventually because there are words that do not have an objective counterpart, and these words are also learned. As an example of the primitive use of language, he gives also an example of the way children learn to speak.

Wittgenstein put forward the concept of language-game in the context of his *Philosophical Investigations*. However, he tries to explain this concept through metaphors without giving a full definition. In this approach, where he likens language to a game, he says that it has rules like a game and that learning a language is actually learning and applying these rules. For him, learning a language and speaking a language is like learning a game and playing it. However, for a language to exist, there must be a certain set of rules accepted by a community. The language-game is the totality of that set of rules and it requires a community. The language-game is not a game where a person can make rules alone, so there cannot be a personal language.

“All language-games derive their existence from the fact that they are played by a set of rules. Wittgenstein states that among these rules are grammar rules, syntax rules, semantic rules, and pragmatic rules, but above all moral and legal rules.” (Cevizci, 2018, p. 1094)

Compliance with these rules is the condition of learning a language. Speaking a language means being a member of a community that speaks that language. Language is not static and unchanging, but something that changes with time and context.

Changes are again limited by rules and are not arbitrary. Language-game is a social activity involving a word and an action pointed by it. Speaking a language means participating in an activity that takes place in life, being involved in a game in life. A word is meaningful by the rules of the game in which it is used, and the meaning of the word can be completely different in a different context. Concepts do not need to be clear to be meaningful, it is only sufficient to show an action that it points to with a linguistic statement, that is, the language-game.

Wittgenstein states that just like the rules of a game, the rules of everyday language cannot be true or false. Language-games are independent activities, just like games. In a game, the meaning is not sought outside the game. Likewise, language is an activity whose meaning emerges in its use. Like every game, the language-game has its own set of rules. In this context, language is learned by using it just like a game is learned by watching it. Understanding a language is obeying its rules, obeying the rules is not a "personal" but a social action, and in this regard, language cannot be personal.

“One learns the game by watching how others play. But we say that it is played according to such-and-such rules because an observer can read these rules off from the practice of the game—like a natural law governing the play. -But how does the observer distinguish in this case between players' mistakes and correct play?-There are characteristic signs of it in the players' behaviour. Think of the behaviour characteristic of correcting a slip of the tongue. It would be possible to recognize that someone was doing so even without knowing his language.” (Wittgenstein, 1958, p. 27)

If people play a language-game with different rules, the agreement will disappear. Grammar determines the rules of the language-game and these rules must be learned. According to Wittgenstein, disagreement arises from not knowing the rules of a language-game. Language, on the other hand, should be addressed in its natural environment and the current situation, attitude, and behavior should be taken into

account while speaking. The game is an activity that has certain rules. Language is a "game" as a set of activities formed by certain rules. Understanding language is being involved in a language-game and knowing its rules. In this context, language is not a subjective but a common field created by agreements. However, these rules can be altered, because language is dynamic.

4.1.5. Language and Mind

Noam Chomsky, who put language and mind at the center of his studies, is considered the founder of contemporary linguistics. Based on the necessity of classifying natural languages according to their meanings, he has made a classification of this type with the help of meta-language. An analysis of language itself entails a meta-language because one cannot speak about language from within the language. According to Chomsky, it is wrong to think that the use of language is only informative. In addition to providing information, human language can be used to mislead the other person, to clarify one's own thoughts, or to display one's intelligence, or simply to play games. Man has the innate linguistic ability and can form an unlimited number of sentences with certain grammatical rules and a limited number of words.

According to modern language theories, human languages are very complex objects. The syntactic rules governing sentence formation and semantic rules that govern the assignment of meanings to linguistic expressions are extremely complex, but language users apply them effortlessly and unconsciously hundreds or thousands of times a day. But to know a language is to know all these ambiguous rules.

“I take to be this: having mastered a language, one is able to understand an indefinite number of expressions that are new to one's experience, that bear no simple physical resemblance and are in no simple way analogous to the expressions that constitute one's linguistic experience; and one is able, with greater or less facility, to produce such expressions on an appropriate

occasion, despite their novelty and independently of detectable stimulus configurations, and to be understood by others who share this still mysterious ability. The normal use of language is, in this sense, a creative activity. This creative aspect of normal language use is one fundamental factor that distinguishes human language from any known system of animal communication.” (Chomsky, 2006, p. 88)

Obviously, there is something very special in the human brain that enables it to master natural language. In Chomsky's view, the human brain contains a special innate mental faculty. Language ability has some innate knowledge. This innate knowledge constitutes the "initial state" of language ability. One acquires new linguistic rules by being exposed to language experiences in childhood - primary linguistic data in Chomsky's words. The acquired rules and knowledge increase the capacity of the language competence and thus the language competence of the person is formed. According to Chomsky, language is a system that can produce an infinite number of expressions. Sentences are formed by combining the signs (such as words, affixes) in the language. Once certain rules of the language are learned, with the help of these rules, humans can construct sentences similar to what they hear, but original. This shows the creative side of language usage. Every person is involved in this process beginning from childhood.

The generative grammar is Chomsky's syntactic approach that tries to show the combinations of structures that form grammatical sentences. Generative grammar tries to identify an unlimited number of combinations of a limited number of words in a language. However, in this study, it is seen that different, meaningful, or meaningless sentences can be produced with different combinations. In this context, even if the sentences produced by the grammar are grammatical, they may not be meaningful. As a result, Chomsky says that the capacity to produce sentences is related to the faculty of language, while the capacity to produce meaning is related to

the mental faculties. That is why syntax and semantic are separated in the generative grammar.

“In the case of language, the technical term for the underlying system of beliefs is “grammar” or “generative grammar.” A grammar is a system of rules that generates an infinite class of “potential percepts,” each with its phonetic, semantic, and syntactic aspects, the class of structures that constitute the language in question. The percepts themselves are first-order constructs; we determine their properties by experiment and observation. The grammar that underlies the formation of percepts is a second-order construct.” (Chomsky, 2006, p. 150)

According to Chomsky, someone who speaks his or her native language has internalized the generative grammar of this language, but that person is not aware of this. A child who starts to speak, knows internally, which sentences are meaningful and which sentences are meaningless. Those who use the language know internally which of the linguistic productions are suitable for use. According to generative grammar, each individual implicitly and intuitively has knowledge of a native language. The generative grammar of each language examines created or probable sentences with a process specific to that language. For this reason, it is not possible for a language to produce sentences belonging to another language with its own words.

Language is part of the world and has some kind of relationship with other parts of the world. According to Chomsky, the extremely simple and similar nature of languages makes it possible to acquire a language. However, although it seems like a contradiction that they are complex and different when examined, when general principles are determined, it is seen that languages are almost the same. It is because the principles of languages are basically the same that enable learning another language. In order to define the faculty of language, it is necessary for all languages to determine the general principles that make up its characteristics and the differences

called “parameters”. According to Chomsky, consistent principles are sufficient to show the general character of the language. In addition, since human beings have an innate faculty of language and in Chomsky's view, they have a number of innate principles in their minds, once one finds these principles; one realizes the similarities and differences between languages.

The analysis, which Chomsky calls “the creative aspect of language use”, determines the ability of people who use the language to produce entirely new sentences. The creative aspect of the use of language is one of the important features that distinguish humans from animals and is a human faculty due to its connection with the mind. This feature, which occurs in daily language, enables the possibility that people construct new and meaningful sentences.

“This new principle has a “creative aspect,” which is evidenced most clearly in what we may refer to as “the creative aspect of language use,” the distinctively human ability to express new thoughts and to understand entirely new expressions of thought, within the framework of an “instituted language,” a language that is a cultural product subject to laws and principles partially unique to it and partially reflections of general properties of mind.” (Chomsky, 2006, p. 8)

Chomsky bases this principle on a number of observations. The most important of these is that most of the things we say in normal language are completely new and have no structural resemblance to any sentence. According to Chomsky, in the behaviorist period of linguistics, the creative aspect of language use was either not accepted or ignored. In this context, Chomsky criticizing the behaviorist period argues that linguistic knowledge cannot be a description of linguistic structures learned and stored through continuous repetition and training. According to him, there are many phrases in one's mother tongue that can be easily understood even if one has heard it for the first time; therefore, the use of everyday language is innovative in this context.

This fact carries the possibility of forming new and creative sentences in daily language.

Chomsky's theory is philosophically based on the 'mentalist' tradition. According to this approach, everything that exists can be explained in mental terms. According to the mental approach, language is a tool that enables the transmission of thoughts. The mental approach in language philosophy assumes that meaning comes before use. According to Chomsky, language is only a human ability and animals do not have this ability. The child uses language with an innate ability. People are born with an internal language capacity and they discover and internalize the language spoken around them with their innate language ability. In this aspect, Chomsky enters into the linguistic perspective that sees language as a special case of the abilities of the mind. The idea of innate knowledge suggests that some knowledge and values in philosophy are innate in human beings, that is, they exist *a priori*. It becomes possible to learn about things in the perceptible world thanks to the "patterns" that exist *a priori* in the structure of the mind.

“It is quite natural to expect that a concern for language will remain central to the study of human nature, as it has been in the past. Anyone concerned with the study of human nature and human capacities must somehow come to grips with the fact that all normal humans acquire language, whereas acquisition of even its barest rudiments is quite beyond the capacities of an otherwise intelligent ape – a fact that was emphasized, quite correctly, in Cartesian philosophy. It is widely thought that the extensive modern studies of animal communication challenge this classical view; and it is almost universally taken for granted that there exists a problem of explaining the “evolution” of human language from systems of animal communication.” (Chomsky, 2006, p. 118)

Chomsky's thinking must be viewed in a Cartesian attitude. Descartes' thoughts are an important starting point for Chomsky, who draws attention to the inner states and innate characteristics of human beings, especially in the face of empirical philosophy

and behavioral approaches. Descartes' philosophy, which emphasizes the concept of human nature and mental faculties, claims that language is a faculty inherent in human nature and belongs only to the human species; it is why Chomsky has a Cartesian stance. According to Chomsky, since language is one of the foundations of human nature, it is a faculty not found in animals, even at the most primitive level. In this context, it is nonsense to claim that language evolved from lower-level communication systems in terms of mental faculties, as behaviorist approaches do. Man has mental and language faculties that have specific biological laws and develop according to these laws. Since the development of these faculties depends on innate biological factors, the faculty of language is determined by “genetically endowed” principles. Today, the main debates on the faculty of language focus on whether language is an innate faculty or a learned system. Chomsky insists that language is an innate faculty and that this faculty is specific to humanity because the readiness of various parts of the brain for linguistic stimuli is an innate and genetically determined feature.

Since language is a biological and a cognitive feature of the human species, it can be examined in terms of both physiological and mental processes. The mind has the power to make sense of stimuli coming from the external world thanks to a number of innate principles. This inference, which is the general approach of the rational tradition, also applies to Chomsky. As it is known, according to the rational approach, human has a number of innate principles. For him, the only concrete suggestion about the acquisition of language came from rational understanding. Language is a human faculty with its inherent creative aspect and by studying language; one can learn something that can explain the inherent features of the human mind.

“Speaking again from a personal point of view, to me the most interesting aspects of contemporary work in grammar are the attempts to formulate principles of organization of language which, it is proposed, are universal reflections of properties of mind; and the attempt to show that on this assumption, certain facts about particular languages can be explained. Viewed in this way, linguistics is simply a part of human psychology: the field that seeks to determine the nature of human mental capacities and to study how these capacities are put to work.” (Chomsky, 2006, p. 90)

According to Chomsky, in the field of linguistics, the views that language can express the principles that are claimed to be universal reflections of the properties of the mind and that some facts about special languages can be explained based on these principles are important arguments that should be emphasized. It is the human-specific mental faculties that enable people to learn a language, and it is possible to learn the features that are thought to be inherent to the mind through studies on language. Chomsky says that the source of some human knowledge is not environmental stimuli, as the empiricist attitude asserts, but can be found in human nature. It is logical for him that some innate knowledge emerges as a result of experience or that this internal knowledge organizes external knowledge because some principles in the human mind do not exactly determine human behavior. It is not possible to express this knowledge without interacting with the external world. Therefore, knowledge and language system is formed as a result of the interaction of some innate and genetically determined characteristics with the physical environment.

5. ON WHATNESS OF CONCEPTUAL ART

Whatness is a term that expresses the nature, essence, and quiddity of something, and describes the essential characteristics that a particular thing (art, for example) shares with others of its kind and sets it apart from others. The question “What is this?” requires a general explanation, and the answer to this question must cover all

members of what it is about. Therefore, when questioning the nature of conceptual art, it is necessary to express the features that distinguish it from other things. The Aristotelian descriptive pattern that proceeds by referring to a genus to which a term belongs is determined by an essential distinction that gives the species of something and thus places it under a genus. Under a genus, the species are listed, and the essential distinction is the characteristics that indicate the species. The essential distinction is a necessary attribute to distinguish the species from other genera; because without a distinction, a complete definition cannot be made. In this context, the highest species cannot be defined, because there is no genus above the highest species; so it cannot be described by its genus and a distinction. For example, the definition "Man is a rational animal" was constructed in this way by giving the genus, species, and the essential distinction. In this context, art can be defined as follows: Art (genus) is a general term under which the formal art (genre) and conceptual art (genre) are listed. Now it is necessary to reveal the essential distinctions of formal art and conceptual art (i.e., a quality that is in formal art, but not in conceptual art or in conceptual art, but not in formal art); otherwise, the definition would be incomplete. Along these lines, the "sensory" distinction is determined for formal art and "rational" for conceptual art; thus we arrive at two separate definitions: formal art is a sensory art and conceptual art is a mental art. By its very nature, art, in general, has to do with reason in terms of being human, and trying to define art in this way may not be accepted; but it still seems appropriate to show the way a definition is made in the context of Aristotle. However, in the context of our own thinking, we can expand this definition and put forward the following distinctions: i.e., in terms of being "sensation" and "thought" oriented. Because being sensory does not necessarily mean

not being about the mind. There is a distinction between being sensory and sensory-oriented.

When we consider art as a genus, formal art and conceptual art as two separate species, we reach this type of definition. These two definitions show that formal art is oriented towards the senses and conceptual art is oriented towards thought. However, from the very beginning of this study, we claim that art is a conceptual activity due to its nature, and defining art by dividing it into genres in this way seems contradictory. But, this is not the case. No one can dispute that art is one of the human activities. Human activities, on the other hand, are performed using the mind by their very nature. In this context, it is certain that formal art must also contain thought; in other words, whatever style, method, and form are used, there must always be a thought behind it. A bird must fly by nature; a man has to think by nature, therefore, it is not expected from a human being to fly, and from a bird to do science, art, and philosophy. When we start with these premises, we can come to the conclusion that conceptual art, which is directly related to thought, includes formal art and that art is conceptual by nature. Conceptual art is an investigation into the nature of art; any approach that involves such an investigation (including this thesis) is a conceptual artwork.

Since an investigation into the whatness of something is done by determining its distinctive features, in this section, which includes explanations about the nature of conceptual art, we will first try to explain the nature of such an approach. The expression “The Conceptual Art” has been first used in the 1960s for art activities that were not present or produced in the usual way. This approach, which is also referred to as the art of thought, includes artworks produced outside of traditional methods. These works, which are far from all kinds of appreciation and emerged only as a

result of an intellectual activity, apart from aesthetic concerns, allow art to be open to discussion again. Some of the pioneers of the conceptual artistic approach are Joseph Kosuth, Sol LeWitt, Terry Atkinson, Lawrence Weiner, Ian Burn Bernar Venet, Douglas Huebler, Robert Barry, Michael Baldwin, and The Definition of Art Group, which has been performing conceptual art activities in Turkey since 1972. Conceptual artworks emerge not as a result of formal concerns, but as a result of mental activity. Therefore, Marcel Duchamp's ready-mades that give priority to thought in art can be shown as examples of conceptual art.

In the context of this study, conceptual art will be considered as an approach that encompasses art, not just as the activities belonging to a period, because art is already conceptual by its very nature. Mind, which is the distinction of human beings, shows that all kinds of human activity must have an intellectual dimension (as mentioned above). Throughout the history of art, important breaking points have always had an intellectual aspect. In any case, this intellectual aspect makes these breaks. The fact that art is a conceptual activity due to its nature requires that it be considered primarily as an effort to understand its own nature. Each artist has the opportunity to analyze art in this way due to his own distinction (i.e. reason).

As a general representation that includes the common features of objects or events and gathers them under a common name, the concept is the building block of thought. Concept is about thinking because concepts are general representations in the mind. Prioritizing the intellectual aspect of art, not its sensory side, requires recognizing concepts. In this regard, art can be also discussed as a concept. According to Ad Reinhardt, art is nothing but ‘art in terms of being art’. A definition in this way can be read as an expression that explains what conceptual art is.

“The one thing to say about art is that it is one thing. Art is art-as-art and everything else is everything else. Art-as-art is nothing but art. Art is not what is not art.” (Harrison, Wood, 1993, p.805)

Art is art. Everything else is everything else. Art is not non-art; sentences are tautological expressions when constructed in this way, that is, they are always true due to their logical form. Since they do not give any information, it is sufficient to look at the sentence itself to verify it. The use of a logical form separates the expression from its empirical side and allows a self-analysis. The statement is an objection to traditional artistic approaches and says that art is merely art, not objective, representational, or anything else. The intellectual aspect determines the relationship which art establishes with object, meaning, and language. The form of this relationship does not only consist of appearances. Thus, part of the artwork which is towards perception disappears. Conceptual art, therefore, is not concerned with the representation of the formal properties of an object; formal properties aim at the senses. Conceptual art is important in terms of the thoughts it contains. These thoughts are directed towards the nature of art. However, objects can be considered in terms of their relations, because the relation between two things is resolved by thought and thus the relation can be conceived in connection with another thing, so it has no objective counterpart. Considering art as thought requires the use of language and, naturally, writing; since language and writing are signifiers of thought, they are inevitably the means of conceptual art.

“Often all that remains to be seen of Conceptual Art is its documentation... Moreover, at the same time, the artwork is not inaccessible -we can contemplate it- through the artist’s report of what she did (mentally). Thus, the work is accessible, though it is not, strictly speaking, in any physical medium - let’s say her thoughts were not verbal, but are merely described rather than transcribed by her list. If such works are art, then it is not the case that artworks require incarnation in a physical medium.” (Carroll, 1999, p. 77)

The thought that a work of art should be perceived physically makes it difficult to understand conceptual art. Traditionally, a physical structure has been expected of a work of art. Since the orientation of conceptual art is towards the conceptual structure of objects, not the physical appearance, it does not meet such an expectation, so art emerges as a conceptual activity. Although the documents that make up the visual part of this activity seem to allow a formal inference, these documents are not intended for the senses but for thought as the means of expression of thoughts. A study of the senses allows individual inferences because the senses are individual and changeable. However, the concept is objective and general, and in this context, it is closed to interpretation and open to analysis. A conceptual artwork is not presented with any physical appearance, such as color, shape, or line. It particularly avoids such an approach because these appearances distract the viewer from the thoughts behind the artwork. Shapes cannot be a means of presenting thought. Thought can only be expressed through language, so the medium of conceptual art is language and therefore texts.

The relationship of conceptual art with philosophy and language is important. The mode of production, in which the image disappears, it is replaced with text and the priority is given to the concept, reveals itself in all kinds of materials, situations, and shapes. Conceptual art can make all kinds of objects the subject of conceptual art, starting with the idea that art cannot be limited to any object and space. Everything can be used as a tool of thought because it is the concept and thought that is desired to stand out. However, it is wrong to consider the tool used as an image. Because the artwork is the tool of thought and a formal evaluation cannot be made in this context.

“Suppose the following hypothesis is advanced: that this editorial, in itself an attempt to evince some outlines as to what 'conceptual art' is, is held out as a 'conceptual art' work. At first glance this seems to be a parallel case to many

past situations within the determined limits of visual art, for example the first Cubist painting might be said to have attempted to evince some outlines as to what visual art is, whilst, obviously, being held out as a work of visual art. But the difference here is one of what shall be called 'the form of the work.' Initially what conceptual art seems to be doing is questioning the condition that seems to rigidly govern the form of visual art - that visual art remains visual." (Harrison, Wood, 1993, p. 873)

When it comes to cubism, objects still exist on the painting surface, but they are in a geometrically fragmented shape. In this context, it cannot be said that the representation of the object is completely denied, although it questions the third-dimension, it is positioned in the space of traditional art, it is still a painting with an intellectual background and it is displayed in this way. However, an exhibited text includes a theoretical analysis on art, and this analysis is inferential. The text is closed to formal analysis as the basis of conceptual art and opens up the possibilities of displaying a text for discussion. The text shows thought, not any emotion. The text emphasizes thought as a visual phenomenon produced or chosen by the artist because language expresses thought and writing indicates the language. In the context of conceptual art, the importance of texts can be understood through their relationship with thought. This form of presentation (displaying the text or thinking of it as a work of art) also reveals the distinction between conceptual art and philosophy. For a philosopher, it is a tool that reveals the system of thought of the text, while for a conceptual artist, the text is an artistic fact that complements his work. The way and purposes of presenting the texts of philosophy and art, which are human activities, are different. This text written on conceptual art can also be presented as a work of art because the text is an artistic practice when presented in this form.

Conceptual art also includes the effort to analyze and redefine art theoretically, therefore it is closely related to mental processes such as philosophy and logic. Conceptual art includes all kinds of "language" used to make artistic function and

thought visible. In this context, the most important thing is thought, and those made visible are the elements that complement the thought. These appearances, which we can call sensory shape, are not sufficient in terms of understanding the whatness of conceptual art. Analyzing only the appearances is not only experimentally possible but also logically false. Since thoughts do not have to be presented in the form of objects, it is necessary to grasp the content of the presentation style. The relationship of conceptual art with language is very important due to the fact that thought is conveyed through language. According to philosopher and artist Henry Flynt, who called this form of approach "concept art" in an article published in a Fluxus publication in the early 1960s, the materials of art are concepts, and since concepts are related to language, conceptual art is also an art in which the material is language, because the priority for conceptual art is the concept, and since the concept is closely linked to the text, the works of art can manifest itself in any form and material. The way the concept is presented (text, sound, image, performance, material) depends on the tastes of the artist.

In the context of conceptual art, each work includes inquiries into the nature of art. This investigation can be in the context of art history as well as on the dynamics of conceptual art itself. Art is practical, determined by its own history and intellectual inquiries made in this context are inherent to conceptual art. For example, the effort to eliminate the accidental qualities (such as aesthetics) that are thought to be in the definition of art and reach the essential qualities, that is, to reveal the definition, is an analytical approach towards one of the general presuppositions of art. This effort brings up a concept recognized in the context of art history for discussion.

All the definitions that have been explained until this part of the thesis are addressed in terms of being art, and all definitions are given to enlighten this last

section. The explanation of the meaning is consistent with the aim of the study since the relation of art with object requires defining object to a certain extent, the relation of object with language requires analyzing language and meaning stands between them. The relationship between conceptual art and language is important, as language is the means of expression of intellectual processes; therefore, an explanation of what linguistic expressions are also necessary to understand the expressions of conceptual art. Conceptual art has carried the works of art from sensoriness to intellectuality and conceptual activity and formed its foundations in the context of language. We believe that the artists and the artistic approach (The Definition of Art Group) which we choose to investigate conceptual art are necessary for an investigation into the nature of conceptual art. Like Joseph Kosuth, we believe that after Marcel Duchamp, art became completely conceptual. Therefore, this section on conceptual art will start with Duchamp and continue with Kosuth and Sol Lewitt. The Definition of Art Group, which has been performing conceptual art activities since 1972 in Turkey will be addressed in the last section. Based on the definition of knowledge as “justified true belief”, we think that conceptual art is not an activity covering a certain period, but a field of knowledge in which one can try to make an inclusive definition of art. As a justification for our argument, we cite The Definition of Art Group conceptual art activities.

5.1. Art as an Effort to Understand the Universe

When viewed in the context of Aristotle, man’s desire to know by nature leads him to activities aimed at comprehending the universe. Art, which was a product of the effort to grasp the universe intuitively and with the senses in the beginning, emerges as a

result of this effort to know. Intuition, which is thought to be the ability to perceive reality directly, in philosophy, the power of obtaining knowledge that cannot be acquired by either observation or inference, hence allows, in contrast to reasoning, to perceive something directly and to make sense of it. This is why art, which is oriented towards perceptions, prioritizes the senses and intuition as an effort to comprehend the universe. However, conceptual art aims to make this effort with reason, therefore with thought. Art, philosophy and science, as the means of comprehending the universe, produce knowledge; knowledge is possible with the comprehension of universals. Art realizes the act of comprehending the universe in its own field. If science could answer all the questions about the universe, philosophy, and art would not be necessary, but since this is an ongoing process, art seeks answers in its own field, with its own effort, and each individual has the opportunity to ask questions about the universe and answer that question. The thought that art is a field that produces accurate information is linked to all of these and this is the responsibility of each artist.

Understanding and comprehending the universe as a whole, even today, does not seem fully possible both by experiment and by reason. However, all the efforts of man who wants to know are in this direction. The fact that it is not possible to grasp the universe turns the purpose of obtaining information about the universe into an effort. Since this is an ongoing process, any field of knowledge that reflects an understanding of the universe is an effort in this direction. In terms of being a human activity, art has shown this effort in every period either implicitly or explicitly. The effort to comprehend the universe is possible by grasping the universal laws that are supposed to exist and be valid all over the universe. In the artistic context, this effort

can be defined as an attempt to analyze the universal laws through art. So it can be said that art is an information system consisting of correct propositions.

5.1.1. Marcel Duchamp: The End of Philosophy and the Beginning of Art

Marcel Duchamp (1887-1968) is one of the most important artists of the twentieth century and his influence on the foundation of conceptual art is indisputable. He moved the concept of art away from the idea of a specially produced object and opened up the aesthetics, which is seen as the essential quality of art, for discussion, and presented a series of ready-mades in the context of art. Presenting an ordinary object as a work of art, which has been given the status of an artwork with the original selection of the artist, starts an intellectual process. Since the fact that thought comes before visual is the basic approach of conceptual art. Duchamp is also seen as a conceptual artist in this context. The artworks that were chosen from ordinary objects and transferred to an artistic dimension as ready-made objects caused a break. Duchamp, who thinks that the reason for the existence of art is to activate thought, determines art as a field that reveals concepts and meanings that will appeal to the mind of the spectator rather than manufacturing a "product" and an object of pleasure that appeals to the spectator's eye. According to Joseph Kosuth, who is also a conceptual artist, a period has begun with Marcel Duchamp, which can be defined as the end of philosophy and the beginning of art.

“The event that made conceivable the realization that it was possible to 'speak another language' and still make sense in art was Marcel Duchamp's first unassisted Readymade. With the unassisted Readymade, art changed its focus from the form of the language to what was being said. Which means that it changed the nature of art from a question of morphology to a question of function. This change -one from 'appearance' to 'conception'- was the beginning of 'modern' art and the beginning of 'conceptual' art. All art (after

Duchamp) is conceptual (in nature) because art only exists conceptually.”¹⁸
(Harrison, Wood, 1951, p. 843)

The term “ready-made” refers only to ordinary objects produced in series, which have been removed from their ordinary contexts by the artist's choice and gained the status of works of art. This attitude of Duchamp is directed not towards perception but towards thought. What gives ordinary objects the status of art is the artist's choice. Ready-mades, which Duchamp proposes as an alternative method to the art that only appeals to the senses and he calls ‘retinal’, are chosen with a visual indifference, so they do not have an aesthetic concern. Duchamp's particular emphasis is on the fact that ready-mades are never chosen with an aesthetic meticulousness, and this is an analysis of the nature of art.

The term "aesthetics" that was added to philosophy in the eighteenth century is about whether the works of art are necessarily aesthetic objects; whether to define the aesthetic experience in terms of its phenomenological or representative content; how best to understand the relationship between aesthetic value and aesthetic experience, and the structure of sensory-emotional values, also known as the judgment of emotion and taste in the context of beauty. Artistic formalism is the approach in which the artistically determined features of an artwork are only formal and these formal features are seen as features that can only be understood by seeing or hearing. Aesthetics, which is oriented towards perceptions, is a philosophical discipline that takes art at its center, although its subject is not only art. Since formal art is oriented towards the senses, it is thought that there is an essential link between art and aesthetics and it is concluded that the art object is necessarily aesthetic. The essential feature is essential for all instances of a species and implies an inference as follows.

¹⁸ Text titled '*Art after Philosophy*' written by Joseph Kosuth and first published in 1969.

All artworks are aesthetic.

X is an artwork

Hence, *X* is aesthetic.

What is seen is a deductive inference and the conclusion is valid as it is contained in the premises. If the premises are true in such an inference, then the result is true. A premise, such as 'all works of art are aesthetics' is shown to be false once, this inference loses its validity. Essential properties are integral properties of something, and when essential properties are separated from it, that thing disappears. When the relationship between art and aesthetics is assumed to exist, it is not possible to separate aesthetics from art. So the inference shown above is true. However, Duchamp problematized whether there is such a relationship between art and aesthetics and showed that there does not exist such a relationship through his ready-mades. Duchamp's ready-mades are not objects chosen according to aesthetic criteria. Ready-made shows that an ordinary object can be presented as a work of art and does not have to be made by the artist. In the context of art history, such an approach leads to questioning the nature of art, so after Duchamp, art became entirely conceptual, because the orientation of art evolved from form to thought. The artist uses the sensory only as a means of the intellectual.

Ready-mades are ordinary objects, but they turn into works of art only when the artist has chosen them. They also open up the concept of artwork for discussion. It is a criticism of artworks which are perception oriented and produced manually. The object put into an artistic context, loses its meaning and loses its functionality. Duchamp says that he tries to choose objects without any taste and aesthetic concerns and it is difficult. Because there is always the possibility that the chosen object will turn into something beautiful or ugly over time, due to the established aesthetic

judgment. Although the viewer also has an aesthetic expectation towards the ready-made, this expectation does not answer the question of how ordinary-objects turn into a work of art.

“You are undecided about whether this will be recognized as a work of art, as it was not made with painting-specific tools. This is irony. The artist's intentional choice is now in question. The emergence of ready-mades determines a break point for the aesthetic reference frame of non-artistic items for the first time. ‘The moment an object is moved to the aesthetic field, it has lost its function.’ The choice of ready-mades is based on visual indifference and keeping all tastes away.”¹⁹ (The Definition of Art Group, 1984, p. 23)

When an ordinary object is put into the context of art, it loses its function. Although the spectator is initially unsure whether to recognize it as a work of art or not, it can maintain traditional perception habits due to the sensory shape of the ready-made. Duchamp especially avoided this situation because it is not appropriate to approach such an artwork with aesthetic judgments. Because the state that makes an artwork the ready-made is not the formal features which it shares with the ordinary object, since all the formal features of the ordinary object are for performing its function, but the ready-made does not have such a function. The ready-made is an ordinary object chosen by the artist; what distinguishes it from the ordinary object is that it is chosen by an artist and presented as an artwork.

Duchamp does not produce ready-mades himself as an artist, he chooses them and interrupts the traditional notion that art is an act of making. If the ready-made objects are works of art, it makes us question why similar things, the ordinary objects produced in mass and coming from the same factory, are not works of art. Ready-mades are visually and perceptually indistinguishable from their ordinary counterparts in the external world. Yet Duchamp's ready-made objects are classified in completely

¹⁹ This excerpt is taken from the book edited by Şükrü Aysan and published by The Definition of Art Group Publications in October, 1984; 2000 copies, 500 of which are numbered.

different categories than their external world counterparts, even for someone who has nothing to do with art. Because ready-mades are artworks, whereas ordinary objects are not. Ordinary objects are not exhibited in the gallery, but ready-mades are displayed and make the spectator looking at it, question why it was there, so just looking at it is not enough. The artist chooses an object and names it art. The artwork is not literally produced by the labor of the artist. In the face of such a work that confuses the traditional spectator, the spectator is not supposed to merely look at it, he has to think, because even if he does not accept it as an artwork, "to say what a thing is not" is about thinking.

“The artist Duchamp, by virtue of his knowledge, understanding, and experience, had the authority to confer the status of candidate for appreciation on the urinal that he entitled *Fountain*. A plumber reading the reviews of *Fountain*, on the other hand, could not show up at the gallery the next day and present his own bathroom fixtures as artworks. Why not? Because he is not empowered to act on behalf of the art world. Is this sheer elitism? No. For the plumber doesn't know anything about art; he does not put forward his plumbing fixtures on the basis of any understanding of art theory and art history, whereas Duchamp does.” (Carroll. 1999, p. 230)

In a sense, this justifies the argument that art is an activity determined by its own history since in the artistic context, it is the artist who gives the ordinary object artistic function. This power is based on knowledge and experience. According to Carroll, knowledge and experience give the artist the power of giving ordinary objects the status of art on behalf of the art world. Ordinary objects are products known to all, having a function suitable for use, so it is pointless to think about what they are; but ready-mades are products chosen by the artist that determine the artistic function and they force the spectator to think about the artwork. The point that Duchamp wants to emphasize is that, as mentioned before, the choice of ready-made is carried out in the

absence of aesthetic taste. This situation, which he defines as visual indifference, is a reaction to the art towards the senses, which he calls retinal art.

Duchamp thinks that art, which he calls "retinal," is overestimated because art towards the senses does not go beyond providing aesthetic satisfaction, whereas art has a more important function. Undoubtedly, Duchamp's most significant contribution in the context of conceptual art is his showing that the importance of art might not depend on aesthetic qualities.

“Duchamp’s philosophical discovery was that art could exist, and that its importance was that it had no aesthetic distinction to speak of, at a time when it was widely believed that aesthetic delectation was what art was all about. That, so far as I was concerned, was the merit of his ready-mades. It cleared the philosophical air to recognize that since unaesthetic art could exist, art is philosophically independent of aesthetics. Such a discovery means something only to those concerned, as I was, with the philosophical definition of art, namely, what the necessary and sufficient conditions are for something being a work of art.” (Danto, 2013, p. 144)

What dispels philosophical doubt is the fact that a quality that is assumed to be necessary for the definition of art does not actually exist in that definition. The necessary and sufficient condition is a logical tool used to give a precise definition of a concept or phenomenon. In this context, every definition is a proposition of the "if and only" type. The phrase "if and only" is a logical connective, and it means bidirectional "if" operation. The "if" operation essentially connects the two statements conditionally. The problem here can be expressed as follows: aesthetic is a necessary condition for art; that is, what is not aesthetic is not art; however, with his ready-made objects, Duchamp showed that this form of description is not a definition involving art. In other words, aesthetics does not stand as a necessary condition for an artwork to be art.

5.1.2. Joseph Kosuth: Art after Philosophy and Artistic Propositions

In this part of the study, Kosuth will be discussed in the context of his “Art After Philosophy” text (1969). His thoughts on conceptual art in this text are important in terms of understanding both conceptual art and Kosuth's art. Ludwig Wittgenstein and Alfred Jules Ayer were the leading philosophers who were influential in Kosuth's intellectual development. This influence is clearly seen in his text named “Art After Philosophy”. The text shows that Kosuth is an artist who understood the philosophical language. This philosophical comprehension provided him with an opportunity to analyze the nature of art. In this text where he defines conceptual art, Kosuth also clearly shows the necessity of philosophical knowledge. According to him, being an artist is to ask questions about the nature of art. He defends his view consistently with the questions he poses and the answers he gives about the nature of art throughout the text.

“Traditional philosophy, almost by definition, has concerned itself with the unsaid. The nearly exclusive focus on the said by twentieth-century analytical linguistic philosophers is the shared contention that the unsaid is unsaid because it is unsayable.” (Harrison, Wood, 1993, p. 841)

As we have stated before, analytical philosophers of the 20th century criticized the approach of traditional philosophy that put forward metaphysical propositions, because the validity of metaphysical discourses could not be checked. They argue that philosophy is a language analysis activity and that one can only talk about experimentally verifiable facts. According to analytical philosophers, what can be said is what is offered to our senses and only what is offered to our senses can be expressed. Kosuth's “it is unsayable” thing is Wittgenstein's “whereof cannot speak” topics. As it is understood, Kosuth put language and naturally thought at the center of the conceptual artistic approach and in this context, he determined art as a field to talk

about. It is clearly seen both in his text and the conceptual art activities of Kosuth that the effort of the philosophy of the twentieth century to analyze the language directly affects art. The importance of language as an expression of thought is once again underlined.

According to Kosuth, the arguments of traditional philosophy lose their foundations due to the scientific developments of the twentieth century. Thanks to the new knowledge gained about the universe, it turns out that many interpretations of facts that philosophy has long regarded as true are false. The idea that philosophy provides knowledge of the external world that transcends experimentation is criticized, and it is shown that no valid reasoning can empirically justify metaphysical propositions.

“In no mechanistic sense is there a connection between philosophy's 'ending' and art's 'beginning', but I don't find this occurrence entirely coincidental. Though the same reasons may be responsible for both occurrences the connection is made by me. I bring this all up to analyze art's function and subsequently its viability. And I do so to enable others to understand the reasoning of my - and, by extension, other artists' - art, as well as to provide a clearer understanding of the term 'Conceptual art'.” (Harrison, Wood, 1993, p. 841)

According to Ayer, a philosopher, as an analyst, does not deal directly with the physical properties of objects; he is only concerned with the way in which they are mentioned, therefore, philosophical propositions are linguistic, that is, they concern sentences spoken. The function of philosophy, as a language analysis activity, is to be entirely critical. The fact that brought the end of traditional philosophy is the elimination of metaphysics from philosophy. Metaphysics, referred to as the supreme science by Aristotle, lost this feature over time and was completely denied by philosophers of the Vienna Circle, with philosophy reduced to language analysis only. What started this process was Hume's

statement that metaphysical judgments are nonsense because they are not open to factual justification. Kant's efforts to ground metaphysics did not yield any results, and the Vienna circle, supported by the developments in physical science, opposed everything metaphysical and regarded the whole philosophical tradition as almost meaningless. As a result of the studies of mathematics and logic, it is suggested that metaphysics has no logical structure, that is, it does not signify anything. According to Ayer, in order to reveal the fallacy of a metaphysical proposition, it is sufficient to organize a criterion that will allow testing whether that proposition says anything about a factual situation and to show that the metaphysical judgments discussed do not fit this criterion. As a result of the fact that metaphysics cannot be verified empirically, Ayer states that metaphysics cannot be included in philosophy due to the function of philosophy.

In this regard, the phenomenon that ends traditional art and initiates conceptual art is the elimination of aesthetics from art. Aesthetics, which is seen as the element that distinguishes the artwork from other ordinary things in the traditional context, is embedded in art as an unquestionable concept. However, it was shown by Duchamp that aesthetics, regarded as belonging to art and as an integral characteristic of it, is not an essential quality of art. The elimination of the necessity that an artwork should be aesthetic, emerges as an attitude, with the display of ordinary objects. This also means the liberation of painting from canvas and paint and re-questioning what art is, and there is no need for aesthetics in terms of the function of art. These profound changes that occur in the context of metaphysics in philosophy and in the context of aesthetics in art, allow establishing a similarity relationship as Kosuth suggested. When the qualities that are considered to belong to something inherently,

leave that thing, if that thing does not disappear, those qualities do not indicate an essential attribute; this is what happened to philosophy and art.

According to Kosuth, the formal features of a work, which is seen as one of the functions of art, disguise the intellectual aspect of the work. The formal features are towards the senses. The reason why art is assumed to be aesthetic, is formal art since formal art is also about appearances like aesthetics.

“In this section I will discuss the separation between aesthetics and art; consider briefly Formal art (because it is a leading proponent of the idea of aesthetics as art), and assert that art is analogous to an analytic proposition, and that it is art's existence as a tautology which enables art to remain 'aloof' from philosophical presumptions. It is necessary to separate aesthetics from art because aesthetics deals with opinions on perception of the world in general. In the past, one of the two prongs of art's function was its value as decoration. So any branch of philosophy which dealt with 'beauty' and thus, taste, was inevitably duty bound to discuss art as well.” (Harrison, Wood, 1993, p. 842)

Since aesthetics in the philosophical context means sensation and perception, it takes beauty and taste as its subject, and the relationship that is thought to exist between art and aesthetics naturally brings out the idea of creating and evaluating beauty in the context of art. Showing that there is no inseparable link between aesthetics, which is a field of philosophy, and art (Duchamp) means that the function of art is determined independently of aesthetic judgments. Until conceptual art, aesthetics has never been discussed. Kosuth likens the relationship between art and aesthetics to the relationship between art and architecture. The specific function of architecture is to design physical structures, and what determines the function is not the appearance but the usage. In this context, functionality rather than aesthetic beauty is expected of an architectural structure. An evaluation made through appearance corresponds to taste, so the relationship between architecture and aesthetics is like the relationship between art and aesthetics. According to Kosuth, aesthetic thoughts are foreign to the *raison*

d'être of both fields. The fact that art is tautological (art is art) and its exclusion from factual discussions enable it to be defined as an intellectual activity because tautologies have no relation with facts. The verification of artistic propositions is done by language; Kosuth, determining thought as the mediator for the analysis of the nature of art, consequently turns to language and logic.

According to Kosuth, the object of art is a medium that conveys thoughts. Following Marcel Duchamp's first question about the function of art, he argues that artists should be evaluated in terms of how much they question the nature of art and what kind of contribution they make to the definition of art. According to Kosuth, being an artist is to question the nature of art. He says that formal artists, as well as critics of formal art, do not question the nature of art, but only accept a definition that considers formal criteria. A conceptual relation cannot be deduced from the relationship between the formal art and object, because the relationship established on similarity is the relation of showing, not the relation of mentioning. Formal art is art with its similarity to previous works of art.

According to Kosuth, making a painting or a sculpture is to accept a specific kind of art. These kinds of art have their own traditions, so one also accepts those traditions. In this context, it can be said that art is a general class, and painting and sculpture are the members of that class. To accept the tradition of painting and sculpture removes the possibility of questioning the nature of art. Kosuth said that *the strongest objection one can raise against a morphological justification for traditional art is that morphological notions of art embody an implied a priori concept of art's possibilities*. With this expression, he argues that the a priori acceptance of the formal affirmations of traditional art leads to a presupposition that "an analysis into the nature of art is impossible." Because formal art is not an analysis on the nature of the

concept of art. Artworks are produced by assuming a number of premises thought to exist in art. In this context, art, which is the tangible remnants of the artist's thoughts, does not lead to another art and produces similar ones. In order to understand the function of art, it is necessary to question the nature of art. The way to overcome a traditional attitude is to put it in the form of questions. It is important to notice the difference between an artist painting using canvas and his making the canvas itself.

In Kosuth's terminology, the work of art is a tautology in terms of being a presentation of the artist's intention and it is impossible for it to give information about the truth. The artist is the person who "says" that something is art, and defines it. Art is not a question of form, but a problem of function, and it is possible to explain the function through language. Questioning the function and nature of art, Kosuth says that a work of art is a proposition put forward in an artistic context. Kosuth who thinks that artistic propositions are analogous to analytical propositions, constructs this similarity using A.J Ayer's classification of propositions.

“What is the function of art, or the nature of art? If we continue our analogy of the forms art takes as being art's language one can realize then that a work of art is a kind of proposition presented within the context of art as a comment on art ... A. J. Ayer's evaluation of Kant's distinction between analytic and synthetic is useful to us here: 'A proposition is analytic when its validity depends solely on the definitions of the symbols it contains, and synthetic when its validity is determined by the facts of experience.'” (Harrison, Wood, 1993, p. 845)

Since we have explained the propositions in the context of Ayer before, here it is necessary to focus on the propositions whose truth depends only on the symbols they contain. Because, according to Kosuth, art forms are the forms which are closest to analytic propositions. Since analytical propositions do not give information about facts, their verification is made within the language. When Ayer explains what kind of an analyst the philosopher is, he states that he is not directly concerned with the

physical properties of objects, but only with the way in which they are mentioned. In this context, the artist also does not deal with the physical properties of the object, if an object is presented as an art object; its physical properties have no effect on this selection. Artistic propositions also have nothing to do with facts. 'Within language' means analyzing the expressions of language only. An analysis is done over the meanings of the symbols used in propositions.

According to Kosuth, it is impossible to talk about art without tautology. Because trying to comprehend it with another tool means mentioning another quality of a proposition that is foreign to the artistic state of the work or to focus on other aspects. Considering art as tautology eliminates the possibility of talking about facts, so nothing outside language is needed to validate this type of proposition. Tautologies are about the structure of propositions, that is, logic, and they say nothing about the external world. When it is accepted that it is not possible to talk about art without tautology, the importance of knowing logic in understanding artistic propositions becomes clear. It will be seen that artistic propositions are also about language, not facts.

Analytical philosophy mainly investigates the relationship between language and non-language. It also uses language to perform such an investigation. The correctness of the statements about non-language are checked by logic because the problems discussed by the analytical philosophy are not related to the external world, but to the statements made about it, so these problems can be formulated in the meta-language, not in the object-language. In this context, art, science, and philosophy, which are human-specific activities, necessarily use logic while working on the analysis of their own structures.

“In this period of man, after philosophy and religion, art may possibly be one endeavour that fulfils what another age might have called 'man's spiritual needs'. Or, another way of putting it might be that art deals analogously with the state of things 'beyond physics' where philosophy had to make assertions. And art's strength is that even the preceding sentence is an assertion, and cannot be verified by art. Art's only claim is for art. Art is the definition of art. (Harrison, Wood, 1993, p. 849)

According to Kosuth, since art cannot be mentioned without tautology, it must exhibit the same features as logic and mathematics. The propositions of logic and mathematics are necessarily true because they are tautologies. The factual aspect of art, which shows similarity with science, is that the artist has the opportunity to make artistic arguments on facts. The appearance of conceptual works of art presented to the senses can be shown as an example of its factual aspect. This appearance can be text or any object, image, sound, or performance. However, it is not possible to understand conceptual art by looking at this sensory shape presented in appearance.

A definition is made to clarify, explain, and determine the meaning of a concept. The tool for this determination is language. The definition of conceptual art in the context of Kosuth can be explained as follows: art is a tautology that concerns the nature of art, does not refer to anything other than itself, and it realizes art in terms of being art.

In Kosuth's art, we can find the purest examples of the works that clearly show the relationship of art with language, thought, and question the nature of art. According to Kosuth, who questions the function of art, art cannot be limited to a formal expression. Kosuth's work and the way he exhibits them are different from traditional display styles. What is expected from the spectator is not a sensory participation, but an intellectual inference. Kosuth's work named *One and Three Chairs* dated 1965 (Figure 1) can be given as the purest example of this thinking. In this work, there is an object, a photograph of the object, and a text showing the

dictionary definition of the object. The name of the work is "One and Three Chairs." An example of the object chair, the photograph of the chair, together with the dictionary definition of the chair constitutes the "three chairs" part of the work. These three chairs determine the "One Chair" part of the work which is referring to the concept of a single chair. The relationship that these elements establish with each other is inferential.

"I would cite my work from 1965–66, the Protoinvestigations, of which One and Three Chairs would be a representative example. This work, using deadpan "scientific-style" photographs, which were always taken by others, also employed common objects and enlarged texts from dictionary definitions. The elements were never signed, with the concept of the work being that this "form of presentation" would be made and remade. The reason for this was an important part of my intention: eliminate the aura of traditional art and force another basis for this activity to be approached as art, conceptually."²⁰ (Alberro, Stimson, 1999. p. 466)

Kosuth said that his work should be approached as an artwork and it emphasizes thought in particular. For Kosuth, the idea of art and art is identical; this is the common point it shares with mathematics and logic. His works analyze the relationship between a general concept of art and a work of art as a singular object considering general concepts and the objects falling under those concepts in the context of conceptual art. The object (objects) presented as a work of art can only be grasped in an analytical method. In the context of Aristotle, the invisible aspect of physical objects (substance), which is not perceived by the senses, but understood with the mind, enables man to be human and the chair to be the chair. When we express the genus, species, and essential distinction of something, we define that thing. According to Aristotle, in order to know individual objects, it is necessary to

²⁰ 'Art after Philosophy' was originally published in three parts in *Studio International*, vol. 178, nos. 915-17, London, October, November, December 1969, pp. 134-7, 160-1, 212-13. Quotations are taken from "Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology" edited by A. Alberro, B. Stimson, in 1999, published by The MIT press.

know universals, because universals determine the common properties of objects and collect them under a group. For example; if we do not know the concept chair, we cannot know whether the object we see is a chair or not. In the context of Aristotle, the particulars can only be known by knowing the universal. When Kosuth's work is read in this context, the three elements found in the work, a particular chair, the photograph of the chair, the dictionary definition of the chair (Three Chairs), allude to the concept chair (One chair). The three elements presented to our senses are directed towards a single concept that can be comprehended by our mind, and this concept is expressed through inference. The elements that complement the work are presented as an artwork and reveal an intellectual comprehension.

The items perceived by the senses have been put into an artistic context as a tool of the mental, that is, the relationships between these elements have been analyzed through art. Although the analysis of the external world is parallel to science and philosophy in terms of human activity, the ways in which these areas present analysis are different. Kosuth's work shows both the part of art that parallels philosophy and the part that differs from it.

Russell says that, if there is such a thing as a "real" object, we will perceive it through immediate experience. We construct real objects by inference from experience, which we directly acquire through our sensory organs. Although Russell states that the relationship between the real object, which he calls the physical object, and the sense data is a problem to be considered; he nevertheless accepts that what causes sense-data is an indication of the existence of something independent of us.

“In fact, almost all philosophers seem to be agreed that there is a real table. They almost all agree that, however much our sense-data -colour, shape, smoothness, etc.- may depend upon us, yet their occurrence is a sign of something existing independently of us, something differing, perhaps,

completely from our sense-data whenever we are in a suitable relation to the real table.” (Russell, 1943, p. 8)

The real object is what reveals the sense-data and if we want to know anything about the real object, we must ask questions about the nature of what generates the sense-data. The view - philosophers generally accept - that there must be some truth behind appearances, can also be seen in Kosuth's work named *One and Three Chairs*. The work presented in relation to a specific object with its dictionary definition and its photograph is the indication of the existence of the real object. The way the work is named allows such an analysis. Like philosophers, Kosuth tries to clarify a thought, but he presents it as an artwork, and in an artistic context, he shows a form of analysis for an object, which we can arrive at by making a logical inference from what is immediately known; this work also shows the relationship of conceptual art with philosophy, logic, and language.

5.1.3. Sol LeWitt: To Engage the Mind

Historically speaking, it is the generally accepted view that Sol LeWitt's text titled *Paragraphs on Conceptual Art* - written to clarify his understanding of art, published in Art Forum magazine in 1967 – was the starting point for conceptual art. Conceptual art was explained systematically in the text, and it affected almost all forms of artistic expression of the period. This approach, which starts with the claim that art is the product of an intellectual effort, excludes judgments about the perception of the external world. Sol LeWitt produced artworks that directed the spectator towards art based on philosophy, language and mathematics by revealing his understanding of “to engage the mind”, because the stimulation of the mind requires an intellectual effort, separated from all senses. The view that art is about the mind processes eliminates the

sensory aspect of the works. According to Sol LeWitt, if a blind man can concretely convey what he has in mind to another mind, he can make art. The blind man metaphor is important because it emphasizes the insignificance of the visual side of art. The fact that conceptual art is not oriented towards the senses enables everyone who can think to reach it; in this case, thoughts are conveyed through language.

“I will refer to the kind of art in which I am involved as conceptual art. In conceptual art the idea of concept is the most important aspect of the work. When an artist uses a conceptual form of art, it means that all of the planning and decisions are made beforehand and the execution is a perfunctory affair. The idea becomes a machine that makes the art. This kind of art is not theoretical or illustrative of theories; it is intuitive, it is involved with all types of mental processes and it is purposeless. It is usually free from the dependence on the skill of the artist as a craftsman. It is the objective of the artist who is concerned with conceptual art to make his work mentally interesting to the spectator, and therefore usually he would want it to become emotionally dry. There is no reason to suppose, however, that the conceptual artist is out to bore the viewer. It is only the expectation of an emotional kick, to which one conditioned to expressionist art is accustomed, that would deter the viewer from perceiving this art.”²¹ (Alberro, Stimson, 1999, p. 12)

When concept constitutes the main part of an artwork, the relationship between art and the process of making art can be discussed. The preliminary sketches showing the main lines of the work are all premises that determine the result; therefore, once an inference with its premises and conclusion is understood, it is closed to all interpretations, so if an application is to be made, every individual can do it. Therefore, the application part of the work works like a machine with the necessary information already entered. The artist is the person who enters that information into the machine, and this is what really matters. Since conceptual art is an intellectual activity, it is closed to any sensory evaluation. The expressionist approach has a subjective aspect that includes the way of expressing emotions with introspection, so

²¹ First published in *Art Forum*, vol. 5, no. 10, Summer 1967, pp. 79-83, taken from “Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology” edited by A. Alberro, B. Stimson, in 1999, published by The MIT press.

there is a distinction between conceptual art and the expressionist approach. According to LeWitt, the expressionist attitude directs the audience away from the intellectual processes and towards the sensory. However, what conceptual art expects from the audience is not a sensory but a mental concentration. Conceptual art focuses on what the artist says, not how he says it.

Sol LeWitt says that unlike Kosuth, conceptual art does not have to be logical (tautological). Analysis can be used to reveal a tautology or to show a contradiction. Logic enables man to arrive at consistent and correct inferences as a result of their inherent reasoning. Not all discussion leads to logical research. For example, storytelling or literary speaking does not require logical research. The kinds of speech or research in which proof is sought naturally lead to logical research; because to prove a proposition is to derive it validly from correct premises. Logical thoughts are expressed with a proposition and take a truth-value - true or false. The validity of a proposition is factually or logically checked. Tautology and contradiction are forms that are logically checked. Concepts, on the other hand, cannot be true or false; they are real if they have counterparts in the external world; otherwise, they are not real. Considering that propositions have more than one element, such as subject, predicate, and conjunction, an analysis can be made on propositions, and in this context, a proposition is a complex expression. According to LeWitt, thoughts do not have to be complicated, since it is possible that simple things can also be thought of, those that do not require analysis are these simple things; because simple things are described, the complex ones are analyzed.

The view that the main function of artwork is thought, excludes all evaluations about its appearance. Even if the artwork has an appearance oriented towards perception, an evaluation through appearance is against the nature of conceptual art.

Because the important thing is the thought and the process of putting forward that thought; this process may not also end with a sensory appearance. Conceptual art does not allow an experience for the senses, since the concept is represented in minds, it needs language as a form of expression. Therefore, it is a lingual expression of an intellectual process, which is expected from an artwork.

“What the work of art looks like isn’t too important. It has to look like something if it has physical form. No matter what form it may finally have it must begin with an idea. It is the process of conception and realization with which the artist is concerned. Once given physical reality by the artist the work is open to the perception of all, including the artist. (I use the word “perception” to mean the apprehension of the sense data, the objective understanding of the idea and simultaneously a subjective interpretation of both.) The work of art can only be perceived after it is completed.” (Alberro, Stimson, 1999, p. 13)

In conceptual art, what intellectual processes the artwork goes through is more important than how it looks; because the artwork is the result of a conceptual analysis, not of the artist's plastic concerns. When the work gains a physical appearance, it becomes open to perception; however, the appearance of it does not matter, since it is not oriented towards perception but rather thought. Appearance should be considered as an element that complements the work. In this context, since the sensory shape of the artwork is not a condition for understanding its conceptual structure, the spectator should realize that the work is not determined by any sense and that the part presented to perception is not the main part of the work. The perception is subjective for both the artist and the spectator of the work, but the concept is objective and general, so the integrity of conceptual art cannot be reached by subjective evaluations. Since the thought itself is as much a work as any finished product, it not only eliminates the arbitrary and subjective but also eliminates the need for a professional critic by presenting the work of art in an already interpreted form. All the responsibility of the

work belongs to the artist, and he should clearly state all his thoughts about the work; therefore preliminary studies that describe the intellectual process are important. Preliminary studies showing the main lines of a conceptual artwork are the stages that determine the thought process of the artwork. Pre-prepared plans minimize arbitrary decisions and subjective judgments. When the artist presents an artistic problem, he can suggest more or less a solution; this is part of the intellectual process of the work.

“To work with a plan that is pre-set is one way of avoiding subjectivity. It also obviates the necessity of designing each work in turn. The plan would design the work. Some plans would require millions of variations, and some a limited number, but both are finite. Other plans imply infinity. In each case, however, the artist would select the basic form and rules that would govern the solution of the problem. After that the fewer decisions made in the course of completing the work, the better.” (Alberro, Stimson, 1999, p. 13)

The process brought to the conclusion in the form of drafts is important in the presentation of a conceptual work because it eliminates the arbitrary and subjective as much as possible. However, ultimately, minimizing these drafts is important in terms of making the thoughts more understandable. Sol LeWitt considers such a method of reduction necessary for a more objective attitude. Approaching a conceptual work that begins with a thought and is presented to the senses, through the effects it leaves on the person causes subjectivity, but the work put forward with the instructions determined by the artist eliminates personal evaluations. Because the spectator cannot watch the work arbitrarily, they follow the thought with the help of drafts.

Due to the emphasis of conceptual art on intellectual processes, it is sometimes necessary to distinguish it from fields such as philosophy, mathematics, logic; because, although they are similar in being human activity, they are different in the way they are presented. However, seeing this distinction requires knowledge and the texts written by conceptual artists on art underline this distinction especially.

Conceptual Art is not in mathematics, philosophy, or any other intellectual discipline. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the viewer to understand the conceptual dimension of the work. The relationship of conceptual art with philosophy display itself in the artwork. This "display" relation separates conceptual art from philosophy, but one needs to be familiar with philosophy in order to grasp conceptual artworks because the systems chosen by the artist simply necessitates knowledge for both the artist and the spectator.

“Conceptual art doesn’t really have much to do with mathematics, philosophy or any other mental discipline. The mathematics used by most artists is simple arithmetic or simple number systems. The philosophy of the work is implicit in the work and is not an illustration of any system of philosophy.” (Alberro, Stimson, 1999, p. 14)

Even if it is based on philosophy, science, logic, and mathematics, the main problem of conceptual art, is not the systems of these fields, but art. An artwork is closed to subjective interpretations; it is open to analysis in the context of its own relations. Using a philosophical or mathematical system does not require any effort to explain the system itself; for this kind of effort belongs to the field itself. The intention of the artist is to examine a system in terms of being art rather than explaining it; however, this is not an arbitrary attitude, but it requires knowledge. Since this approach, which requires an intellectual effort, involves the audience in this process as someone who makes this effort, the way the work is perceived is not important, but the way it is understood is important. According to Sol Le Witt, Conceptual Art activates the mind of the viewer, not their senses.

In Sol LeWitt's conceptual artistic approach, the artist's self-expression is a necessity. The thought itself does not need to be interpreted by an art critic, as it is as much a work of art as any finished product. According to him, this situation

eliminates subjective and arbitrary situations. It is the artist's responsibility to express his art in his own words. Questioning art institutions in this way also eliminates the possibility of talking about the meaning of art loaded with infinite possibilities. It is already not possible to talk through a common language in the context of art criticism.

Since LeWitt distinguishes between perceptual art based on visual forms and conceptual art made to occupy the mind rather than the viewer's eye, his conceptual idea of art is that the concept determines how the work of art will "look". However, unlike Kosuth's theory, which argues that the idea itself can be regarded as art, the process of conceptualization, according to LeWitt, is complementary to the process of realization (the presentation of thoughts in a shape), mutually reinforcing each other's deficiencies and therefore being equally important.

When Sol LeWitt's work named "*The location of six geometric figures (circle, square, triangle, rectangle, parallelogram and trapezoid)*" (1974) (Figure 2) is considered in line with his own explanations, it can be analyzed with the presupposition that it is not a description of a mathematical system. Questioning the possibilities of placing six geometric figures on a two-dimensional surface, the work considers the text, which is an element that complements the work, in the context of its relation to the surface rather than as a description text. Because the description of a geometric shape concerns the field of mathematics; what is in question here are the relations between shape, writing, and surface. Two-dimensional shapes positioned on a two-dimensional surface are open to perception, but they are directed towards thought. In the context of Sol LeWitt, what is evident in such a work is that a geometric shape is put into the context of art. The relation of the spectator with the work is in proportion to his own fund of knowledge. The placement of the figures, which Sol LeWitt explains in detail in this work, includes a comprehension into the

whole work, not an analysis of the shape itself. Geometry describes spatial relationships; Sol LeWitt's work shows artistic function. The artist also documents his work. There can be many elements in a work, but the most important is the most obvious.

“15. Since no form is intrinsically superior to another, the artist may use any form, from an expression of words (written or spoken), to physical reality, equally.

16. If words are used, and they proceed from ideas about art, then they are art and not literature; numbers are not mathematics.

17. All ideas are art if they are concerned with art and fall within the conventions of art.” (Alberro, Stimson, 1999, p. 107)

Sol LeWitt, who sees conceptual art as a way of making art, says that he does not suggest conceptual art forms, because only the thought of conceptual art should be important. Everything that is also put into the context of art is art. This is why words are not literature; numbers are not mathematics; because they are addressed in terms of being art. The artist uses them as a tool; "display", which is in the art tradition, put anything into an artistic context.

5.1.4. The Definition of Art Group (Sanat Tanımı Topluluğu): The Definition of Art

“Sanat, felsefe, bilim, mantık ve matematik alanlarına dayalı düşünsel bir etkinliği, oluşturduğu betik, görüntü ve ses öğeleriyle çeşitli nesneler içeren "yerleştirmeler" içinde, belirli bir uzamda, belirli bir zamanda, katılımcılarla birlikte, gösterisel bir tarzda, sanat olmak bakımından gerçekleştiren Sanat Tanımı Topluluğu özgün sanat yaklaşımı 1972 yılından bu yana geliştirilmektedir.” (www.sanattanimitoplulugu.org, Accessed: 8 May 2020)

“Performing an intellectual activity based on the fields of art, philosophy, science, logic and mathematics in "installations" containing various objects

with the scripts, images and sound elements it creates, in a specific space, at a certain time, with the participants, in a demonstrative style, in terms of being art, The Definition of Art Group's (STT) original artistic approach has been developed since 1972.” (The Definition of Art Group)

This quote, which gives the definition of the conceptual artistic approach of The Definition of Art Group, is its own statement regarding the whatness of The Definition of Art Group; therefore, all explanations in the thesis, except for this definition and the sentences quoted from The Definition of Art Group's own texts, consist of what I have inferred from the artistic activities of The Definition of Art Group, which I have been a participant since 2006. This opportunity exists for every individual participating in the conceptual art activities. In these activities, various objects are placed according to an order derived from the relations of the objects to each other and according to space. What is expected from the participant is to notice this. In this thesis, from now on, the abbreviation "STT", which is the abbreviation of the Turkish name of The Definition of Art Group (and it is called so in its circle), will be used instead of the expression The Definition of Art Group for convenience.

The work, consisting of texts and visual documents about Conceptual Art sent to Adnan Çoker²² by Şükrü Aysan²³ from France in 1972, was an effort for the recognition of conceptual art in Turkey and it can be said that it determined the beginning of STT.

“The event titled “The Exhibition” organized by Şükrü Aysan in 1976 in Mimar Sinan Hall, Mimar Sinan University of Fine Arts, was the first Conceptual Art show that took place in Turkey and implemented "installation" in space intentionally. Şükrü Aysan also included his students, who he taught

²² Turkish painter, academician, retired as a professor from the Academy of Fine Arts, where he entered in 1960 as an assistant. He went to Paris in 1955 and worked in Andre Lhote's workshops between 1958-1957 and in Henri Goetz's workshops between 1957-1960. His paintings are generally based on abstract expressionism.

²³ The founder and permanent participant of The Definition of Art Group.

Conceptual Art lessons at the Academy, in developing his pioneering art approach in 1977. This original work, which would be known as The Definition of Art Group about two years later, has also taken on the role of a school that revealed what Conceptual Art is, in an increasingly inclusive way; while the original work of The Definition of Art Group is developed, Conceptual Art education is also provided in a way. It is not an art group in the usual sense; The Definition of Art Group has been oriented towards being an original art event from the very beginning.” (www.sanattanimitoplulugu.org, accessed: 10 May 2020)

After the "The Definition of Art Group" event, which was held jointly between March 22 and April 5, 1980, in the space of Mimar Sinan University of Fine Arts Exhibition Hall, the group was named “The Definition of Art Group” and it still continues conceptual art activities with its participants in a certain space and at a certain time. Şükrü Aysan taught Conceptual Art at Mimar Sinan University of Fine Arts, Department of Painting between 1987-1991. This was the period when the way Conceptual Art is realized by the group is questioned and Leyla Dedea²⁴ joined the group. The idea of realizing Conceptual Art with a community in the context of STT, reveals the distinction between those who are permanent participants (Şükrü Aysan, Leyla Dedea, Tuna Dengiz, Asuman Destecioğlu, Bedriye Kaya) (*Figure 3*) and those who participate at certain times (anyone who have a specific formation and liking) (*Figure 4*). The fact that the conceptual art activities of The Definition of Art Group are organized together with the participants has also caused the formation of an STT circle over time.

“The Definition of Art Group is an original Conceptual Artistic Approach. Conceptual Art is based on researching the nature and structure of art. Conceptual artists investigate the structure of art from one work to another. "Conceptual" is related to the concept of art. What is in question is an idea, a work that aims to reveal all the aspects and contradictions of the concept of art.” (www.sanattanimitoplulugu.org, accessed: 10 May 2020)

²⁴ A permanent participant of The Definition of Art Group.

Primarily, conceptual art involves the reflection of modernist painting and sculpture on itself, which systematically problematizes and shatters the integral elements of the traditional structure of the artwork. This return to itself calls into question the structure and nature of art. One of the features that recur in many works called conceptual art is that each of the elements that make up the work of art is treated as equal components. In this process, a work based on technical and manual skills was largely abandoned. In the works that follow this line, the visual elements are increasingly challenged, the importance of the text expands, and the degree to which display depends on the integration of possible and contextual elements becomes a focal point. Since the work exists with all its components, it is considered as a whole even if it is presented to perception. In this context, STT has all these explanations about conceptual art inherent in its attitude, with an approach that makes the structure of art problematic and does not refer to anything other than itself. Considering the concept of art with all its aspects requires an effort to analyze it. To reveal a contradiction can only be done through logic, so the necessity of language comes into play here. In this context, STT presents its inquiries into the nature of conceptual art in terms of being art with the activities it carries out on the basis of art, philosophy, science, and logic. Expressing a thought without contradiction, with a proposition, arises in the relation of the activities to logic.

“Şükrü Aysan discusses all of his artistic activities in the context of collective artistic work under the name of The Definition of Art Group. The distinction between yesterday and today within the continuity of The Definition of Art Group, which has been developed starting from 1972, means clarifying the idea at the beginning, clarifying the theme of presenting the studies between fields (Art, Philosophy, Science) as art, which is continued without interruption.” (www.sanattanimitoplulugu.org, Accessed: 10 May 2020)

The activities that have continued uninterruptedly since 1972 primarily focus on the conceptual analysis of art. The distinction made between the beginning and the present is that the activity realized in terms of being art was refined to a demonstrative style and presents the activity itself as art. In the beginning, the activity involved questioning and trying to comprehend the nature of art through joint exhibitions based on art, philosophy, science, and logic; now it is performed as an intellectual activity held with participants in a certain space and time. Conceptual Art according to STT tries to analyze the nature of art, the world, language, and the relationships between language and the world. This analysis requires a study involving the fields of art, philosophy, science, logic, and mathematics, and the work done in this context is presented as art. STT conceptual art activities can be understood with an intellectual effort, not with personal evaluations; because the constitutive elements of the activity are closed to any subjective evaluation and these elements can only be analyzed in the context of their necessary relations.

The Definition of art Group conceptual art activities requires participation based on the premise of “It is the spectator who makes art”. Activities involving the analysis of spatial relationships are based on active, passive, moving, and immobile elements (*Figure 5, 6, 7*). The objects in the STT's space constitutes the immobile elements, while participants are mobile elements. The installations which are made according to the order inferred from the relations of the immobile objects to each other and to space are realized in terms of being art. Participants, who are among the elements of the activities, differ from other elements by having intellect; therefore, in the activity, which is an intellectual one, each participant carries the possibility of doing this activity in its own distinction, in terms of being human.

“Aristotle defines man as a rational animal. The definition of man as a species (that is, as the species that is essentially a predicate, which specifically fits into a plurality of terms that are essentially different from one another) is formed by adding "the quality of being rational", which is its essential distinction, to the genus to which it belongs (that is, the genus that is different in particular - which is animal for human beings).” (The Definition of Art Group, 1997, p. 3)

Definition in the context of Aristotle is made based on genus, species, and the essential distinction; the essential distinction separates man from the animal species and gives its definition; that is, it makes him human. In this regard, the prerequisite of being human is to be rational. The reason is common to all humans, but it manifests itself in reasoning. For instance, according to Locke, one cannot speak of reason without knowing the three principles of logic; hence, correct and rational thinking determines the distinction of man. The Definition of Art Group conceptual art activities are human activities in which art is made in terms of being art. It is necessarily intellectual in the context of being a human activity. Thought manifests itself in reasoning. Correct reasoning depends on the correctness of the premises and the use of a valid method of inference. So, the concern of The Definition of art Group is to draw correct conclusions from correct premises through an intellectual activity and to present it in an artistic form and a demonstrative style. The expression “based on the field of logic” in its definition allows this form of analysis.

The Definition of Art Group’s artistic activities, as prepared intellectual functions, do not refer to anything other than art. Thought is emphasized based on the premise that art has been conceptual due to Marcel Duchamp. In the activities where changing facts are not mentioned, the generality and unchanging nature of concepts are questioned in the artistic context. In the context of Russell, the changing table object, which is an element of the activity and we recognize through sense-data, is in the spotlight throughout the activity as a member of the general concept ‘table’, which

does not change. When it is realized that a particular table presented to the senses is an example of the universal table that causes sensations and which we reach through thought, one comprehends the universal table, and this realization is possible with an intellectual effort. STT conceptual art activities make this form of effort possible. Although the relations which the objects establish with each other and space rather than the objects themselves are the primary elements of the activities, the analysis of the objects themselves is also mentioned in one way or another. (*Figure 8, 9*)

Perceiving objects differently from every point of view causes individual interpretations; hence it is impossible for an object to appear the same to two different people but common sense makes us think that they are the same. Although we believe that the table does not change, its color changes according to the light, its shape changes according to our point of view. Again in the context of Russell, this is explained as follows:

“To make our difficulties plain, let us concentrate attention on the table. To the eye it is oblong, brown and shiny, to the touch it is smooth and cool and hard; when I tap it, it gives out a wooden sound. Anyone else who sees and feels and hears the table will agree with this description, so that it might seem as if no difficulty would arise; but as soon as we try to be more precise our troubles begin. Although I believe that the table is 'really' of the same colour all over, the parts that reflect the light look much brighter than the other parts, and some parts look white because of reflected light. I know that, if I move, the parts that reflect the light will be different, so that the apparent distribution of colours on the table will change.” (Russell, 1943, p.5)

Therefore, talking about the table in a common way is possible with the conceptual structure of the object. Since this conceptual structure is logical, it is expressed in language. Conceptual art, like analytical philosophy, concerns with the relationship between language and non-language; each activity is an artistic performance that tries to analyze the relationship between language and the external world. Such an analysis also makes it easier to understand The Definition of Art Group conceptual art

activities, because every deduction made by looking at the sensory form of the work remains individual; however, these activities are closed to individual evaluations. Understanding the activities is possible through thought.

The spaces, where the conceptual art activities of The Definition of Art Group take place and which are a component of the activities, are analyzed without distorting their main structure (*Figure 10*). Various objects that complement the activity, are placed in certain areas, with certain movements according to a certain order by permanent participants. In the activities based on spatial relationships, participants occupy certain regions, according to a certain order, with certain movements. All these movements, which are performed in a demonstrative style and in terms of being art, make the participant - even if it participates for the first time - realize the conceptual art activity. However, it is clear that such an activity cannot be solved by subjective evaluations, because the nature of the work is based on reasoning, so it can be solved by logic.

“Pure Conceptual Art by taking this situation to its extreme point, accepts no other audience or observer than the ones actively participating in the making of the work. Thus, art transforms into a state as serious as science that needs no audience. When using the term, Conceptual Art or its more characteristic name, Analytical Art, in referring to a specific period in the history of Conceptual Art as an approach to art, one is speaking of an art that has completely eliminated the production of objects and all plastic art forms. But if one considers the broader understanding of conceptualism, within our twentieth century art, in addition to the side that verifies by analyzing itself, there is also a logical and philosophical dimension directed towards comprehension of its structure. In other words, a strongly intellectual art continues its hegemony today. In our time, art without an idea cannot be effective. (www.sanattanimitolulugu.org/, Accessed: 12 May 2020)

6. CONCLUSION

This thesis named "A Treatise of the Whatness of Conceptual Art in the Context of Object, Meaning and Language" aims to show how artistic propositions should be established, starting from the idea that every artist should make this kind of treatise. In the first part that constitutes the introduction of the thesis, the information given about logic, which is the tool of rational, correct, and consistent thinking, has been deemed necessary in order to facilitate the understanding of artistic propositions. The mandatory relationship of conceptual art, which always strives to be objective, with reasoning allowed this form of inference (the necessity of logic), and the argument that reason, which is the distinctive feature of human beings, covers art as well as all human activities, was accepted without discussion. We tried to show in the context of selected examples that, conceptual art, in which human thought processes are prioritized, is an activity that considers the whatness and nature of art as a problem and does not refer to anything other than itself, and this activity is performed in an effort to determine the definition of art. It is especially emphasized throughout the text that an investigation into the nature of art can only be made with philosophical analysis and that all the similarities and distinctions of human activities can be shown with such an effort. It is by art's nature to make such an effort towards the objective and general, away from individual evaluations. All analyses into the nature of things are possible on an intellectual basis; therefore, the parts that are open to perception are far from this analysis. The parts open to perception can only be mentioned as a tool of the intellectual.

The analysis of the concept "object", which constitutes the second part of the thesis, has been deemed necessary in terms of establishing the relation of art with object correctly, primarily on a philosophical plane, and with the help of examples, it

has been shown that, the way important philosophers have defined object affected art as well as science. In addition, this kind of investigation is necessary to be able to see the distinctions between object and art object, ordinary object, and ordinary object put into the context of art. Because the artist is the person who gives the ordinary object the status of being an art object. When an ordinary object is displayed as it is - where the emphasis is on the act of displaying - the function of the object itself has no meaning. Determining a function is possible on an intellectual plane. The ordinary object has a different function from everyday life; this function, which emerges as a result of an artistic attitude, is different from the mandatory function of the ordinary object.

Throughout the thesis, we tried to show, at what points, art, which we consider as an effort to grasp the universe, just as science and philosophy, which are among human activities, differs from them. To comprehend the universe means to grasp the general truths that are valid in the whole universe and to try to explain these truths with the minimum number of principles. The distinction of art is in the analysis through art of the general laws that are thought to exist in the universe. The thought reached as a result of the thesis is that conceptual art tries to do this analysis in its purest form. It is possible to understand conceptual art by having the knowledge that reveals this pure form. This knowledge can be grounded in the context of its relation to philosophy, logic, and mathematics. The fact that there is no direct knowledge of the outside world requires recognizing the concepts. Therefore, any kind of experiment can become knowledge as a result of an intellectual process. Because knowledge is expressed by a proposition and proposition is the form of thought.

Since the definition of object, meaning, and language is considered as a prerequisite while making an investigation on conceptual art, the concept of meaning

constitutes the third part of the thesis. Because it is the relationship between object, meaning, and language that enables one to talk about the outside world and convey what is spoken to someone else. In this context, since we think that it is not pertinent to talk about artistic meanings without defining the meaning, a complete analysis of the meaning is made in this section; because in artwork, one of these definitions determines meaning. When meaning is considered in a relation of correspondence, a relationship is established with the outside world in the context of art; therefore, a true reading can be made through the relationship of correspondence. It is impossible to talk about artistic meanings without analyzing the concept of meaning since even giving a new meaning to a concept is possible by mastering that concept.

Language, the fourth part of the thesis, stands in a central position as a form of expression of thought, and this has been especially emphasized throughout the thesis. Language distinguishes man from other living things, as it is a symbolic system necessary to convey thoughts to others because thought is a human feature and language constitutes its expression. Language, like art, is a human-made structure and it is considered suitable for the structure of reality; therefore, any analysis made on language is important for understanding human activities. Every thought about the external world is formed by the relationship between object, meaning, and language. The relationship of conceptual art with language makes it necessary to analyze language. Language is a system whose form is made of writing, and due to the relationship of conceptual art with text, one has to examine language separately.

The thoughts put forward in this study are what ‘an effort to understand the nature of art’ involves. The last part of the thesis, which includes the explanation of conceptual art, is based on the presupposition that conceptual art is an activity that maintains this effort; therefore, it is accepted as a definition that conceptual art is an

effort to understand the nature of art in terms of being one of the human activities. When viewed in the context of art history, it does not seem possible to give a definite, complete, and comprehensive definition of art, because such a definition should include all works, which is not possible in the context of all works; however, we still think that the most appropriate approach to making such a definition is Conceptual Art. The argument that art is a conceptual activity due to its nature can be expanded to include all works. We are not in a position to discuss the relations of all kinds of works to thought, because every human activity is related to the mind, and therefore to thought. In addition, it is necessary to determine the artistic function in order to make an accurate reading about art. This is not an operation performed through the senses, but a result reached through the mind; therefore, it is not enough to perceive the work; it is also necessary to comprehend it in the context of its relationships.

1. Art, science, and philosophy are **human activities** aimed at understanding the universe.
2. Human activities are possible with an **intellectual endeavor**.
3. Intellectual endeavor manifests itself in **reasoning**.
4. Reasoning is a **logical** operation.
5. Logic sets the rules of **valid thinking**.
6. Valid thinking is determined by **the correspondence of statements to facts**.
7. The correspondence of statements to facts is **true knowledge**.
8. True knowledge is proven by **observation and experiment**.
9. There are also some **statements** that cannot be proven by observation and experiment.
10. Such statements are known through **reason**.

11. There are **three basic principles** of reason.
12. The principles of reason are also called **principles of logic**.
13. The principles of logic are represented in the form of " $p \rightarrow p$ ", " $\sim(p \wedge \sim p)$ ", and " $p \vee \sim p$ ".
14. $(p \rightarrow p)$ **If a proposition is true, it is true.** (Identity)
15. $\sim(p \wedge \sim p)$ **A proposition cannot be both true and false.** (Non-Contradiction)
16. $(p \vee \sim p)$ **A proposition is either true or false.** (Excluded Middle) (*Figure 11*)



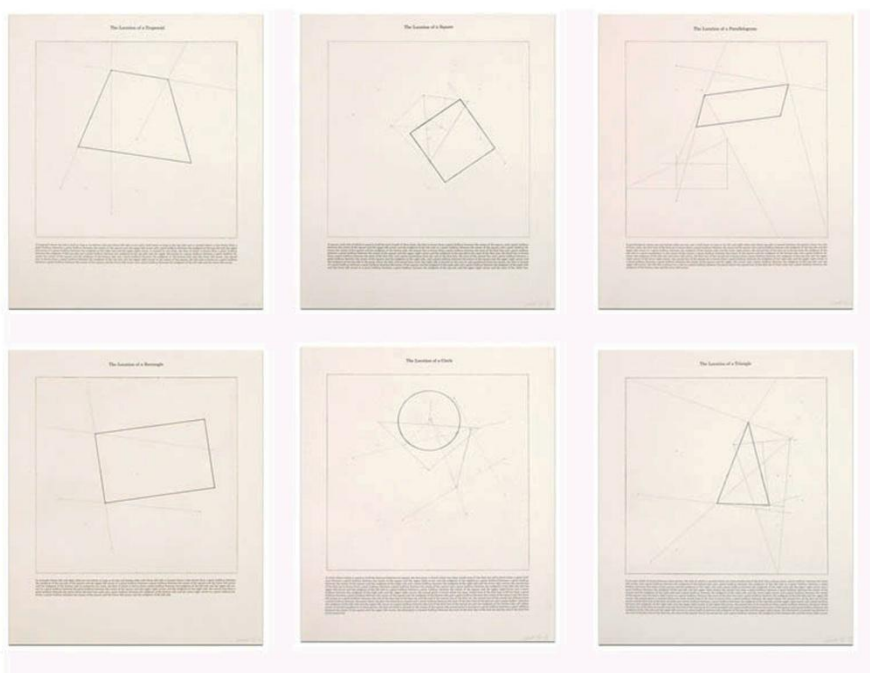
7. FIGURES

Figure 1



Joseph Kosuth. 1965. *"One and Three Chairs"*. (Wood folding chair, mounted photograph of a chair, and mounted photographic enlargement of the dictionary definition of "chair", Chair 32 3/8 x 14 7/8 x 20 7/8" (82 x 37.8 x 53 cm), photographic panel 36 x 24 1/8" (91.5 x 61.1 cm), text panel 24 x 30" (61 x 76.2 cm). New York, MoMA

Figure 2



Sol LeWitt. 1974. *"The location of six geometric figures (circle, square, triangle, rectangle, parallelogram and trapezoid)"*. Set of six etchings. Parasol Press Ltd., New York, ABD. (Other publications: Sol LeWitt: Prints 1970-1986. London: Tate Gallery Publications, 1986.)

Figure 3**The Definition of Art Group's Permanent Participants****Figure 4**

STTSNTETKNLK19-20-7-261219STTM

The Definition of Art Group's Participants Who Attends at Certain Times.

Figure 5



The Definition of Art Group. 2019. *YRLŞM240419STTM*

Figure 6



The Definition of Art Group. 2018. *SNTETKNLK18-19-5-061218*

Figure 7



The Definition of Art Group. 2018. *SNTETKNLK280318STTM*

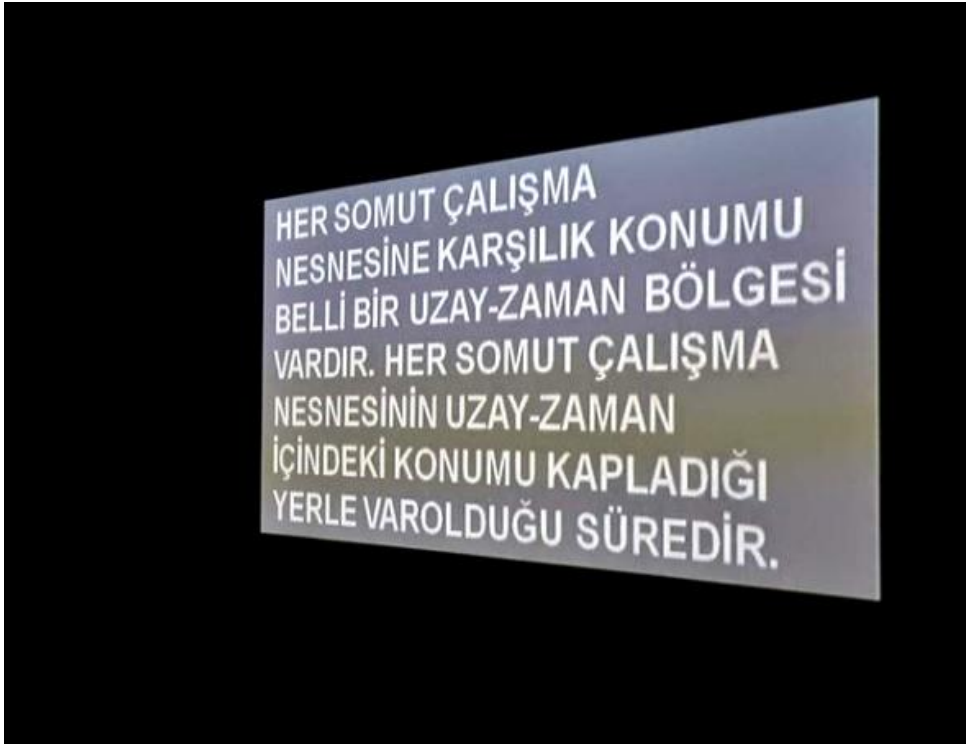
Figure 8



The Definition of Art Group. 2019. *STTSNTETKNLK19-20-7-261219*

Figure 9

The Definition of Art Group. 2020. STTSNTETKNLK19-20-12-300120STTM

Figure 10

The Definition of Art Group. 2019. SNTETKNLK19-20-4-051219

Figure 11

No:01.16ONERME16PROPOSITIONS.2020.ÇÖZ

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Sanat, bilim ve felsefe, evreni kavrama çabası ile yapılan insan etkinlikleridir . | 1. Art, science, and philosophy are human activities aimed at understanding the universe. |
| 2. İnsan etkinlikleri düşünsel bir çaba ile mümkündür. | 2. Human activities are possible with an intellectual endeavor . |
| 3. Düşünsel bir çaba, kendini akıl yürütmede gösterir. | 3. An intellectual endeavor manifests itself in reasoning . |
| 4. Akıl yürütme mantıksal bir işlemdir. | 4. Reasoning is a logical operation. |
| 5. Mantık, doğru düşünmenin kurallarını belirler. | 5. Logic sets the rules of valid thinking . |
| 6. Doğru düşünce ifadelerin olguya uygunluğu yoluyla belirlenir. | 6. Valid thinking is determined by the correspondence of statements to facts . |
| 7. İfadelerin olguya uygunluğu doğru bilgidir . | 7. The correspondence of statements to facts is true knowledge . |
| 8. Doğru bilgi gözlem ve deneyle kanıtlanır. | 8. True knowledge is proven by observation and experiment . |
| 9. Gözlem ve deneyle kanıtlanmayan ifadeler de vardır. | 9. There are also some statements that cannot be proven by observation and experiment. |
| 10. Bu türden ifadeler akıl aracılığıyla bilinir. | 10. Such statements are known through reason . |
| 11. Aklın üç temel ilkesi vardır. | 11. There are three basic principles of reason. |
| 12. Aklın ilkelerine aynı zamanda mantığın ilkeleri de denir. | 12. The principles of reason are also called principles of logic . |
| 13. Mantığın ilkeleri " $p \rightarrow p$, $\sim(p \wedge \sim p)$, $p \vee \sim p$ " biçiminde gösterilir. | 13. The principles of logic are represented in the form of " $p \rightarrow p$ ", " $\sim(p \wedge \sim p)$ ", and " $p \vee \sim p$ ". |
| 14. $(p \rightarrow p)$ Bir önerme doğru ise doğrudur. (Özdeşlik) | 14. $(p \rightarrow p)$ If a proposition is true, it is true. (Identity) |
| 15. $\sim(p \wedge \sim p)$ Bir önerme hem doğru hem yanlış olamaz. (Çelişmezlik) | 15. $\sim(p \wedge \sim p)$ A proposition cannot be both true and false. (Non-Contradiction) |
| 16. $(p \vee \sim p)$ Bir önerme ya doğrudur ya yanlıştır. (Üçüncü halin imkânsızlığı) | 16. $(p \vee \sim p)$ A proposition is either true or false. (Excluded Middle) |

16.1. Görülen 16 önerme, dil ve dil-dışı arasındaki ilişkiyi ve bu ilişkinin biçimlerini çözümler. 16 önerme iki farklı dil ve bir anlamdan oluşur. Her dilde aynı olan simgeler matematiğin, başka dillerde başka biçimlerde kullanılan sözcükler ise dilin simgeleridir. Dil, düşüncenin aracı; yazı, dilin gösterenidir. İfade edilen her bir biçim sanat bağlamına alınmış dilsel bildirimlerdir. 16 önermenin her biri tek başına anlamlıdır ve 16 önermenin her biri birbirleriyle ilişkidir. Tek tek anlamları dil ve dil-dışı belirler ancak bir bütün olarak anlamı belirleyen sanatsal bağlamdır.

16.1. What is seen are 16 propositions analyzing the relationship between language and non-language and the forms of this relationship. These 16 propositions consist of two different languages and one meaning. The symbols that are the same in every language are the symbols of mathematics, and the words used in other languages in other ways are the symbols of language. Language is the mediator of thought; writing is the signifier of language. Each form expressed is linguistic statements put into the context of art. Each of the 16 propositions is meaningful on its own, and all 16 statements are related to each other. Language and non-language determine individual meanings, but it is the artistic context that determines meaning as a whole.

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