

I-15. What Is in a Name?

**What's in a name? That which we call a rose
By any other word would smell as sweet.
- in *Romeo and Juliet*:**

Possibly yes. But words are not mere conventions. Words connote a lot more than an object, act or event. Often representation (#A2-5) of a class includes not just what is common to the class but also the range of behaviors. The world of flowers includes bees and birds. A bee, and for that matter any bee, does not look for a particular flower nor for a flower by name. By all indications bees look for something in a flower with which its own existence is intricately associated - nourishment to thrive (#A4). Success of bees rests on the fact that they forage on a large variety of flowers, even though some insects are highly specialized to feed on few plants. Generalization of the strategy of a bee lies in the variety and numbers of flowers it forages on. It suits the plants as well for reasons not unlike in spirit to those echoed by Tennyson (*Flower in the Crannied Wall*)

Little flower - but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.

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A word connotes not just certain qualities but the entity in its entirety of form, function and all. Whether or not coined with such a purpose, enduring words come to represent such a concept space. For many words such understanding is lost in their evolutionary history (etymology). However, an appreciation of word boundaries is indispensable for guiding and enriching the observer-observed interactions. Words are coined to carve out a part of the universe. Once let go, with use the word boundary

takes on its own course where meanings are shaped and connotations are chiseled. A consensus emerges about the experience of reality communicated by the word representation. Lasting words become modules of shared experience and the basis for communication of shared knowledge (III-32).

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Words invoke the reality to evoke the essence for a shared consideration. What is unusual in the *anugam* approach for the evaluation of reality is an explicit acknowledgement that those who interact with representations have wide-ranging purposes and perceptions shaped by the web of motives and background. This is a critical consideration if the experience is to be accessible to all for real-time use without reliance on the experts and agents-of-insights including variations of family, educational, church, political and scientific enterprises where the decision-making power is wrested upon experts and “those who know best.”

Real-time decision-making requires real-time interactions. It is useful to be aware of the limits imposed by attenuated and augmented perceptions implicit in all hierarchies. The past can be a guide but it is not a substitute for the present or the future. It is critical to consider relevance of what one understands and how it translates into action. Common experience of this type of real-time decision-making is part of the problem solving where one learns the art and strategy of mid-course correction. The quality of the observer-observed interactions often lies beyond word, yet such representations do facilitate realization of the real world potential.

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