**Meaning of Power Query Editor in Power BI:**

The **Power Query Editor** in Power BI is a data connection and transformation tool that allows you to import, clean, reshape, and transform data from various sources before loading it into Power BI for analysis and visualization. It operates on the **ETL (Extract, Transform, Load)** process, focusing primarily on the **Extract** and **Transform** stages.

**Key Features of Power Query Editor:**

1. **Data Import:**  
   Connects to a wide range of data sources like Excel, SQL Server, SharePoint, APIs, web data, and more.
2. **Data Transformation:**  
   Perform operations like filtering rows, sorting, pivoting/unpivoting data, merging tables, grouping data, replacing values, splitting columns, etc.
3. **Data Cleaning:**  
   Remove duplicates, handle missing values, detect data types, format columns, and eliminate errors.
4. **Query Steps (Applied Steps):**  
   Each transformation is recorded as a step, which can be edited, reordered, or deleted. These steps are written in the background using the **M language**.
5. **Preview Mode:**  
   Provides a preview of the data after each transformation without affecting the original source data.
6. **Dynamic Data Refresh:**  
   Queries can be refreshed automatically when the source data updates, maintaining consistency in reports.

**Usage of Power Query Editor in Power BI:**

1. **Open Power Query Editor:**
   * Go to **Home Tab** in Power BI Desktop → Click **Transform Data** → Select **Power Query Editor**.
2. **Common Data Transformation Tasks:**
   * **Filter Rows:** Exclude irrelevant data based on specific conditions.
   * **Merge Queries:** Combine data from different tables (similar to SQL joins).
   * **Append Queries:** Stack datasets vertically (adding rows).
   * **Group Data:** Aggregate data using sum, count, average, etc.
   * **Pivot/Unpivot:** Reshape data to suit analysis needs.
   * **Custom Columns:** Add calculated fields using M code or built-in functions.
3. **Load Data to Power BI:**
   * After transforming the data, click **Close & Apply** to load it into Power BI’s data model for creating dashboards and reports.

**Example Scenario:**

Let’s say you’re working with sales data from 2017 to 2020 (like in Excel). In Power BI:

* **Import** all datasets.
* **Append** them to create a consolidated view.
* **Separate** shipping mode and container into different columns.
* **Calculate** sales amounts using custom columns.
* **Filter** for specific years or products.
* Finally, **load** the data to create interactive dashboards.