PG PH S1-02 (DSC)

TWO YEAR MASTER'S DEGREE COURSE

(CBCS in Accordance with NEP 2020)

SEMESTER-I

EPISTEMOLOGY: WESTERN

PHILOSOPHY

Surya Kumar Bhuyan School of Social Sciences

KRISHNA KANTA HANDIQUI STATE OPEN UNIVERSITY

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COURSE INTRODUCTION

This course deals with Epistemology-Western, which is an important branch of Philosophy. It is concerned with the science of knowledge and discusses the issues like nature and scope of knowledge, origin of knowledge, sources of knowledge, theories of knowledge etc.

Epistemology or the theory of knowing is essentially connected with Metaphysics because we cannot start the enquiry of the theory of 'Real' or 'Being' unless and until we already justify our claim and prove by the process of knowing that knowledge of that enquiry is possible. If it is supposed that we cannot know the 'Real' or 'Being', it is meaningless to investigate the nature of Reality. So, the issue of the nature and validity of our knowledge and the enquiry of the nature of Reality or Being are the two aspects of the same enquiry.

This course consists of fifteen units. The first unit starts with "**Scepticism and Knowledge and Its Varieties**". It includes the concepts like Knowledge and its varieties, What is scepticism, The history of scepticism and its varieties

The second unit is ''**Arguments for Scepticism**". The concepts included in this unit are:

Scepticism is a philosophical method, Development of skepticism, Different sense and applications of skepticism, Academic skepticism and Pyrrhonism in ancient period, Skepticism after Rene Descartes, Hume's skepticism, Irrational skepticism, Naturalistic skepticism.

Philosophical skepticism and logical positivism, Philosophical and Scientific skepticism

A. J. Ayer's view. The concepts included in this unit are Zta, Theism and its various types, Polytheism, Henotheism, Monotheism, Deism, and Monism.

The third unit is ''**Ways of Knowing**". It deals with the issues such as Knowledge, JTB definition of knowledge, The theories of epistemic justification, Sources of knowledge, The theories of origin of knowledge: rationalism, empiricism and skepticism

The fourth unit is "**Perceptions**". It basically discusses the concepts like Nature of perception, Different theories of perception, Direct realism, indirect realism, Idealism, Phenomenalism, Perception in Indian philosophy The fifth unit, "Carvaka Epistemology" discusses the concepts like accidentalism and naturalism, the denial of inference, and the denial of the validity of the Vedas.

The Sixth unit is **Knowledge and Belief**". The concepts included in this unit are-

Nature of Knowledge, Nature of Belief, Relation between knowledge and belief-Traditional view.

Knowledge and Belief-Modern view and Difference between knowledge and Belief

The seventh unit is "**Knowledge as Justified True Belief**". The concepts included in this unit are The tripartite theory, Knowledge as justified true belief, The Truth Condition, The Belief Condition, The Justification Condition, Approaches to justification, Kinds of justification, Lightweight knowledge, The Gettier Problem, The No-False-Belief condition, The No-Defeaters condition, Doing without Justification? Reliabilist Theories of Knowledge and Causal Theories of Knowledge

The name of the eighth unit is '**Belief Condition**'. It deals with the issues like Knowing, Knowing in everyday life, Knowing that and knowing how, Believing, Some aspects of belief, Believing that, Traditional development of knowledge and belief, Differences between knowledge and belief, and Relation between knowledge and belief

The name of the ninth unit is '**Theories of Truth**'. It discusses the units like Truth in Philosophy, Correspondence theory of truth, Coherence theory of truth, Pragmatic theory of truth, and Some other important theories of truth

The tenth unit is "**Gettier's Problem**". It deals with the issues such as the standard analysis of Knowledge (JTB), The "Knowing That" and "Knowing How": Distinction, Belief, Belief as a necessary condition for knowledge, The analysis of Beliefs, Truth Necessary condition for knowledge, No Magical Connection between knowledge and truth, Alleged Counter examples to the Necessary of Condition (ii) i.e. truth, Justification: justification as a Necessary Condition for Knowledge, Why Justification Is Necessary for Knowledge, The Nature of Justification, Knowledge and Its Conditions, and Gettier Counter Examples

The elevenths unit is "Self-Knowledge and Personal Identity". The concepts covered in this unit are: Introduction: Self- knowledge meaning, The criterion of personal identity with special reference to Locke and Bernard Williams, The Criterions of Personal Identity, The physical criterion of personal identity, and Hume's concept of self-knowledge and personal identity

The twelfth unit is ""**Problem of the Knowledge of Other Minds**". The concepts included in this unit are Argument from Analogy, Philosophical Behaviourism, Wittgenstein's Linguistic Argument Criteriological Argument, and a Few More Comments

The thirteenth unit is "**Knowledge and Certainty of Cogito**". This unit deals with the issues such as Knowledge and quest for certainty, The role of reason: Rationalism, Descartes method, The method of Mathematics, Intuition and Deduction, Descartes' Methodic doubt, Cogito Ergo sum, and Criticisms

The fourteenth unit is "**Certainty of A Priori Knowledge of Kant**". The concepts covered in this unit are- The problem of synthetic judgement a priori, Synthetic judgement a priori mathematics, Synthetic judgment a priori in physics, Synthetic judgment a priori in metaphysics, Main division of Kant's system, Space and time are a priori percepts, and Criticism

The fifteenth unit is "**Wittgenstein on Certainty**". The issues included in this unit are: the knowledge of General discussion on Certainty, certainties of a world-picture: The Epistemological Investigation of 'on Certainty', and Knowledge and Certainty

While going through this course you will come across some boxes which are put on the left side or right side of the text. These boxes will give us the meanings of some words and concepts within the text. Apart from this, there will be some broad and short questions included under Activity and Check Your Progress in every unit. Activities will increase our thinking capacity because questions put in Activity are not directly derived from the text. But answers to the short questions are put in the section Answers to Check Your Progress. Besides, there are some text-related questions which are put in Model Questions. These questions will help you in selecting and mastering probable topics for the examination so that you can prepare for the examination with confidence.

UNIT-1 : SCEPTICISM AND KNOWLEDGE AND ITS VARIETIES

UNIT STRUCTURE:

1.1 Learning Objectives

1.2 Introduction

1.3 Knowledge and its Varieties

1.4 What is Scepticism

1.5 The history of Scepticism and its Varieties

1.6 Let Us Sum Up

1.7 Further Reading

1.8 Model Questions

1.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to

- explain the concept of Scepticism
- discuss the history of skepticism and its varities

1.2 INTRODUCTION

Epistemology has often been regarded as the most central area of any philosophical enquiry. It is the scientific study of knowledge: its nature, its requirements, and its limitations. It is an enquiry into the nature, origin, validity and extent of knowledge. In brief, epistemology is the study of:

(a) The defining components,

(b) The substantive conditions or sources, and

(c) The limits of knowledge and justification.

What sort of knowledge can one obtain and what sort of knowledge one cannot. Can one arrive at knowledge of all kind or there is any limitation of attaining its level? The thought of one's limitedness to arrive at certainty of knowledge generates doubt to the process or outcome of knowledge. Therefore, it can be said that one of the fundamental problems of epistemology is doubt or denial of certainty. Doubt arises in human mind

because different dogmatic systems arrive at different conclusions which contradict each other. The doubt that arises in human mind asks the question if knowledge is attainable at all. Russell gives the following definition of knowledge: “what we firmly believe, if it is true, is called knowledge.”

1.3 KNOWLEDGE AND ITS VARIETIES

Everyone has a different opinion about what knowledge is, or knowledge is not. Philosophers are of diverse views regarding the varieties of knowledge. A priori and a posteriori are two of the original terms in epistemology. A priori literally means “from before”. This is because a priori knowledge depends upon what a person can derive from the world without needing to experience it. This is better known as reasoning. A posteriori literally means “from what comes after.” This is a reference to experience and using a different kind of reasoning to gain knowledge. This kind of knowledge is gained by first having an experience and then using logic and reflection to derive understanding from it. In philosophy, this term is sometimes used interchangeably with empirical knowledge, which is knowledge based on observation.

Russell draws a distinction between two sorts of knowledge, viz. knowledge of things and knowledge of truths. Knowledge of things is again divided into two kinds, viz. ‘Knowledge by Acquaintance’ and ‘Knowledge by Description.’ Knowledge of truths is divided into intuitive knowledge and derivative knowledge. Russell holds that all our knowledge, both knowledge of things and knowledge of truths, rests upon acquaintance as its foundation.

Ordinary knowledge of things admits of degrees, i. e. we speak of knowing someone well, or not so well, depending upon the extent of our information about them. Russell holds that only such type of knowledge capable of providing the firm foundation for all other knowledge. Russell says, “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.” On the contrary, our knowledge of the table may

be described by means of the sense-data. When we know a table as a physical object, we know it through description. While explaining knowledge by description, Russell tries to show how the complicated theory of knowledge by description actually works. The most conspicuous things that are known to us by description are physical objects and other people's minds.

According to Donald Davidson, there are three types of knowledge, namely knowledge of our own minds, knowledge of other minds, and knowledge of an external reality. In other words, they are Subjective, Inter-subjective and Objective knowledge. Davidson writes: "I know, for the most part, what I think, want, and intend, and what my sensations are. In addition, I know a great deal about the world around me, the locations and sizes and causal properties of the objects in it. I also sometimes know what goes on in other people's minds. Each of these three kinds of empirical knowledge has its distinctive characteristics."

The popular division of the varieties of knowledge is found into three categories: personal, procedural, and propositional. It is the last of these, propositional knowledge, that primarily concerns philosophers. However, understanding the connections between the three types of knowledge can be helpful in clearly understanding what is and what is not being analyzed by the various theories of knowledge. The first kind of knowledge is **personal knowledge** or knowledge by acquaintance. This is the kind of knowledge that we are claiming to have when we say things like "I know Mozart's music."

The second kind of knowledge is **procedural knowledge** or knowledge how to do something. It is also known as **ability knowledge**. For example, one may claim to know how to drive a car. To know how to drive a car is to have a certain ability—the ability to drive a car. In doing that one is not simply claiming that one understands the theory involved in those activities. Rather, it is claimed that actually, one possesses the skills involved or one is able to do the activity. This "ability account" of know-how is often

attributed to Gilbert Ryle. Ryle holds that knowing how to do something is simply having the ability to do it. Knowing how to do something entails having the ability to do it. Likewise, it seems that if you have the ability to do something, it follows that you know how to do it.

claiming to have propositional knowledge. With propositional knowledge, one claims to have knowledge of different things. It is also known as Descriptive or Declarative Knowledge.

1.4 WHAT IS SCEPTICISM

Scepticism is a method of philosophical enquiry that questions on the certainty of knowledge. As like as dogmatism is a method without a prior criticism of knowledge, scepticism is a method that doubts the possibility of knowledge. The rise of scepticism as a method has come as a first effect of the failure of dogmatism. The reason is that the conflict of two opposite dogmas produces a “sense of hopelessness.”In other words, whatever can be asserted may be with equal reason denied. Thereby, there arises a sense of doubt on the certainty of knowledge or on the common standard of what is the truth. Scepticism questions the possibility of ultimate knowledge and stresses on the limitedness of the grasping capacity of reality. It doubts the possibility of our cognitive achievements and as such challenges our ability to obtain reliable knowledge. In the history of epistemology, scepticism sets itself as a good antidote to self-satisfied dogmatism. Its importance lies in the fact that a healthy scepticism helps to keep one’s mind always open to criticism.

The method of philosophy which holds that knowledge of ultimate reality is not possible has been considered as scepticism. Scepticism denies the universal and necessary knowledge of, and hence certainty in the field of knowledge. It regards all knowledge only as probable. A sceptic criticises the very existence of knowledge instead of making endeavours to prove it. It retains a negative attitude to the problem of knowledge and is opposite to the dogmatic attitude of rationalism.

Rationalism affirms its faith in the possibility of valid knowledge regarding the real things underlying experiences. In contrast, scepticism goes to the other extreme of doubting the very possibility of knowledge. It says that we can affirm nothing. It sets a limit to ignorance.

Scepticism is considered as a thesis about the human condition. It is understood as the view that we know nothing or that nothing is certain or that everything is open to doubt. According to A. J. Ayer, the sceptic does not question our actual acceptance of the truth of the statements referring to experience but questions the very grounds for this acceptance. What philosophical scepticism calls in question is not the way in which we apply our standards of proof, but these standards themselves. The Sceptics believe that things appear differently to different and differently to different members of the same species and differently to the same person at different times The Sceptic counters by asking how we can tell which appearances are cognitive appearances. It is no good defining them as ones which compel assent since people often feel compelled to assent to appearances which turn out to have been misleading.

Wholesale scepticism is said to be impossible on the basis of two arguments: the argument from polar concepts and the paradigm case argument. The argument from polar concepts points out that certain concepts come in pairs such that a given member of any pair gets its sense by way of its contrast with the other. As Norman Malcolm says, real/unreal, knowledge/belief, and many other examples are polar in this sense. Thus, if there is a belief, there must also be knowledge. As Ryle says, there cannot be counterfeit coins unless there are genuine ones. But as Hamlyn points out, it seems conceivable that in a country genuine coins should exist if there are to be counterfeit ones. On the other hand, it must be possible to know what it is for something to be a genuine coin if it is to make sense to speak of counterfeit ones. So a sceptic can quite properly claim that there are no cases of knowledge as long as he gives some sense to be the concept of knowledge.

At this point, the paradigm-case argument holds that if a given term is to be meaningful, there must be instances to which the concept and the term are applied as paradigms. But Hamlyn says that it cannot be inferred simply from the fact that a term supposedly has a meaning that anything answers to it. From the fact that the term 'knowledge" has to mean, it does not follow that there must be knowledge.

The sceptic directs his doubts against the alleged knowledge of physical objects, the past and other minds. Rationalism seeks to answer the sceptic by discovering truths that are indubitable. The most explicit instance of a belief in this procedure is the philosophy of Descartes. His "cogito ergo sum" is a necessary and indubitable truth. But, as Ayer puts it, the sense in which I cannot doubt the statement that I think in just that my doubting it entails its truth and in the same sense I cannot doubt that I exist. The fact that I cannot without absurdity doubt that I exist does not mean that the proposition "I exist" is in any way a necessary truth; indeed it seems manifestly a contingent matter that I exist.

According to Ayer, even statements formulating immediate experiences can be mistaken but that our doubts tend naturally to come to rest after the evidence have been traced back to certain lengths; and if we are willing to accept such evidence as are available to us, we can in a legitimate sense be said to have genuine knowledge in all three of the areas against which the sceptics direct us to attack, viz. physical objects, past and other minds.

Concerning physical objects, it is conceivable that such objects are s we see them, though evidence for this is hardly available and abundant evidence is at hands to show that with respect to some of their characteristics physical objects are not as see them. Ayer admits that physical objects cannot reasonably be reduced to sense data for they endure when there are no sense data. Nevertheless, we can through approved inductive procedures know something about physical objects in terms of sense data for the reason that the concept of a physical object is so framed that sensory

experiences are evidential with reference to such objects. Concerning our knowledge of the past Ayer points out that by following the best authenticated inductive procedures we can both know the past and support our own memories. If the sceptic says that our inability to recapture any past experience leaves it an entirely open question whether any statement about the past is true, Ayers's reply is that the sceptic is irrational. But this will not worry the sceptic, for he objects to our standard of rationality. Ayer says that the proof that the sceptic requires of us is something which is logically impossible for us to give. It is no discredit to our proofs that they do not imply that we can achieve the impossible; it would be a discredit to them, rather, if they did. Concerning knowledge of other minds, Ayer points out that another mind seems to be other by definition and that we cannot reduce other minds to our own experiences. But the term 'other' is systematically ambiguous and there is no distinct class of other minds as such. Accordingly, we may legitimately make reasonable inferences concerning other minds on the basis of the analogy of our own experiences together with the variety of indirect evidence.



ACTIVITY: 1.1

Write three questions which you think as to be a sceptical question

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1.5 THE HISTORY OF SCEPTICISM AND ITS VARIETIES

Any view involving doubt about whether something exists, or about whether we can know something, or about whether we are justified in arguing in certain ways. Throughout the ages, many philosophers have held that

unless we know some things for certain we cannot know anything at all, or even legitimately think anything probable. Many of them, especially the Greek sceptics and Descartes, have therefore sought a sure mark or 'criterion' of when a proposition is true.

Xenophanes (c. 570–480 B.C.E.) declared that, even if the truth were stated, it would not be known. Gorgias (c. 485–380 B.C.E.) stated, "There is no reality, and if there were, we could not know of it, and even if we could, we could not communicate our knowledge." Heraclitus (c. 535–475 B.C.E.) had the idea that, just as you cannot step into the same river twice, everything is in flux; this theory suggests it is impossible to discover any fixed truth beyond what is expressed in the theory itself. Pyrrho (c. 365 – 270 BC) of Elis is considered as the founder of Scepticism. He had served as a soldier in the army of Alexander the great. It is said that Pyrrho campaigned with Alexander to India and could see the diversity of countries and the opinions of people during his tour. He could experience the beliefs of one section of people which is totally opposite of another section. Most astonishingly, a set of argument is equally good with another set of argument believed by its opposite section. In such circumstance, one is to go with one's direct experience in support of own set of argumentation. But an experience may be deceptive. As such, one can never assume the truth of one explanation rather than any other. Pyrrho suggests going with the flow of customs and practices prevail in the circumstance one happens to find oneself in. Consistently with that view, he said that nothing could be known.

Pyrrho's pupil, Timon of Philus (320 – 230 BC) tried to establish this with more substantial intellectual arguments. Timon denied the possibility of finding any self-evident principles to serve as the foundation of sciences. There is no premise grounding on which truth can be established. The reason is that all premises need some supportive premise or proof. In other words, if one seeks to demonstrate the truth of a proposition one needs the truth of its supportive premise or premises. The absence of such axioms becomes very clear. In this process, one is to go ad infinitum and all lines

of reasoning must be either circular or endless. As such, it is concluded that no ultimate ground of certainty can ever be reached.

After the death of Timon, his successor Arcesilaus (315 – 240 BC) became head of the Platonic Academy. It is pertinent to mention that Plato's Academy remained in the hands of sceptics for two hundred years. Arcesilaus propounded two important teachings. Firstly, one was to expound equally powerful argument on both sides of a question. Secondly, to offer to refute any case put forward by one of his students. Plato also stressed on the un-attainability of absolutes in our knowledge of this world. He himself, like Socrates, used to demolish theses put forward by his pupils; the proper attitude for the philosopher was to suspend judgment on all important topics. Plato began with the Myth of the Cave, which shows how and why human beings are in the dark about the truth of things. And this ignorance is almost universal.

Descartes expanded the realm of what was doubtful. Descartes begins by noting that the senses have deceived him on some occasions and that it is never prudent to trust what has occasionally misled one. But that ground for doubting the deliverance of our senses can be neutralized because, as he points out, we seem to be able to determine when our senses are not trustworthy. To neutralize a ground for doubt, d, is to grant that d is true but conjoined with something else worthy of assent such that the conjunction no longer provides a basis for doubt. So, the proposition that my senses have deceived me on some occasions is not a genuine ground for doubt because, even if it were granted as true, there is a way of neutralizing its effect.

Descartes started his journey from a mathematician to a philosopher by worrying the state of philosophy in his times. He believed that there is no firm and solid foundation of philosophy as like as mathematics. According to him, it was a method and not subject matter for which mathematics attains certitude. Therefore, Descartes advocated an introduction of a proper method in philosophy to bring forth certain lofty philosophical principles.

Therefore, he adopted the method of doubt in his philosophy. He employed two famous conjectures, the dream conjecture and the evil demon conjecture. For all I know, I might now be dreaming. This is Descartes' dream conjecture. And further, he said, for all I know, some malevolent demon devotes himself to deceiving me at every turn so that I regard as true and certain propositions that are in fact false. That supposition is Descartes' evil demon conjecture. Descartes begins by noting that the senses have deceived him on some occasions and that it is never prudent to trust what has occasionally misled one. But that ground for doubting the deliverance of our senses can be neutralized because, as he points out, we seem to be able to determine when our senses are not trustworthy. The proposition that my senses have deceived me on some occasions is not a genuine ground for doubt because, even if it were granted as true, there is a way of neutralizing its effect. Cartesian scepticism is only a starting point to find out the indubitable truth.

Hume's tendencies of his philosophy have led some to call it Skepticism. He was a sceptic in relation to the belief in the possibility of reason. He considered reason as the slave of passion. As an empiricist, he occupies a significant place in the history of western philosophy. It is said that Hume has been influential in rousing Kant from his dogmatic slumber. Hume opines that certainty is not possible. He made scepticism as the background of his philosophy with a complete display of sceptic arguments. At the same time, he said that obtaining knowledge on the basis of custom and imagination is possible. Hume formed a constructive philosophy of empiricism with the principles of impressions and ideas, the laws of association, imagination and his theory of relations. Particularly, he considered custom as the great guide to human life.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Fill in the blanks:

a. …… is considered as the founder of skepticism.

b. This "ability account" of knowledge is attributed to ……..

c. ……. Categorized knowledge into Subjective, Inter-subjective and Objective.

Q 2: What are the three types of knowledge, according to Davidson?

Q 3: What is dogmatism?

Q 4: What is propositional knowledge?

Q 5: Give an example of ability knowledge

Q 6: "There is no reality, and if there were, we could not know of it, and even if we could, we could not communicate our knowledge." Who says

Q 7: What is skepticism?

Q 8: Name the philosopher who employed the method of doubt in philosophy?



1.6 LET US SUM UP

- Epistemology is the scientific study of knowledge. Everyone has a different opinion about what knowledge is, or knowledge is not. Philosophers are of diverse views regarding the varieties of knowledge. Knowledge is found in three categories: personal, procedural, and propositional. Russell draws a distinction between two sorts of knowledge, viz. knowledge of things and knowledge of truths. It is, in fact, a distinction between personal and procedural knowledge. Propositional knowledge is knowledge of facts.

- Scepticism is a method of philosophical enquiry that questions on the certainty of knowledge. The doubt that arises in human mind asks the

question if knowledge is attainable at all. It is understood as the view that we know nothing or that nothing is certain or that everything is open to doubt.

1.7 FURTHER READING

1) Descartes, Rene. Meditations. London: Cambridge University Press. 1911

2) Russell, Bertrand. The Problems of Philosophy. London: Oxford University Press. 1959.

3) Ryle, Gilbert. The Concept of Mind. New York: Routledge. 1949.

1.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans. to Q No 1: a) Elis b) Ryle c) Davidson

Ans. to Q No 2: According to Donald Davidson, there are three types of knowledge, namely knowledge of our own minds, knowledge of other minds, and knowledge of an external reality.

Ans to Q No 3: Dogmatism is a method of knowledge that accepts without a prior criticism of knowledge.

Ans to Q No 4: Propositional knowledge is knowledge of facts. Mathematical equations could be an example of propositional knowledge, because it is knowledge of something, as opposed to knowledge of how to do something.

Ans to Q No 5: To know how to drive a car is to have a certain ability, that is, the ability to drive a car.

Ans to Q No 6: Gorgias

Ans to Q No 7: scepticism is a method that doubts the possibility of knowledge.

Ans to Q No 8: Descartes

1.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very short questions

Q 1: Write the literal meaning of scepticism

Q 2: Name one philosopher who are known as sceptic.

Q 3: What is epistemology?

Q 4: What is propositional knowledge?

Q 5: What is ability knowledge?

Q 6: What is skepticism?

Q 7: Name the philosopher who employed the method of doubt in philosophy?

B) Short questions (Answer in about 100-150 words)

Q 1: Briefly explain the concept of skepticism.

Q 2: What are the basic tenets of skepticism? Briefly explain

Q 3: Explain briefly the history of scepticism

Q 4: Give a brief account of the varieties of knowledge.

C) Long questions (Answer in about 300-500 words)

Q.1: Explain the varieties of knowledge.

Q.2: What is scepticism? What are its basic tenets? Explain

Q.3: Discuss the history of scepticism.

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UNIT-2: ARGUMENTS FOR SCEPTICISM

UNIT STRUCTURE

2.1 Learning Objectives

2.2 Introduction

2.3 Scepticism is a Philosophical Method

2.4 Development of Skepticism

2.5 Different sense and Applications of Skepticism

2.6 Academic Skepticism and Pyrrhonism in Ancient Period

2.7 Skepticism after Rene Descartes

2.8 Hume's Skepticism

2.9 Irrational Skepticism

2.10 Naturalistic Skepticism

2.11 Philosophical Skepticism and Logical Positivism

2.11.1 Philosophical and Scientific Skepticism

2.11.2 A. J. Ayer's View

2.12 Let Us Sum Up

2.13 Further Reading

2.14 Answers to Check Your Progress

2.15 Possible Questions

2. 1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- define Scepticism;
- discuss skepticism is a philosophical position on the possibility of knowledge;
- discuss arguments for skepticism.
- explain skepticism plays a pivotal role towards acquiring certain knowledge;
- discuss various sense and applications of skepticism;

2.2 INTRODUCTION

Skepticism (from the Greek *skeptesthai*, 'to examine') is the philosophical view that it is impossible to know anything with absolute certainty, or to know the world as it 'really' is. The word can also mean a general reluctance to accept anything on face value without sufficient proof. Skeptics may be taken to be denying the possibility of empirical knowledge.

2.3 SCEPTICISM IS A PHILOSOPHICAL METHOD

A. J. Ayer in his book *The Problem of Knowledge* has developed a Chapter entitled Scepticism and Certainty. It shows that skepticism is required for the quest for certainty. Skepticism is required or needed in every sphere of knowledge claim. In the ordinary sense, this concept is taken into account in negative sense. However, there is no point of denying the fact that every man in some sense or other is skeptic. However in the domain of philosophy, particularly, in the branch of the theory of knowledge or epistemology, the concept of skepticism plays a pivotal role towards acquiring certain knowledge. Keeping this in mind, it can still be said that in Western philosophy the attitude of doubting knowledge claims set forth in various areas. Skeptics in various ways have challenged the adequacy or reliability of knowledge claims by asking what principles they are based upon or what they actually establish. Skeptics also have questioned whether some such claims really are the alleged indubitable or necessarily true. They have equally challenged the alleged rational grounds of accepted assumptions in everyday life. Although in everyday life everyone is skeptic in some sense or other about some knowledge claims, but philosophical skeptics have doubted the possibility of any knowledge beyond that of the contents of directly felt experience. The point of contention of this unit is to show and establish arguments for skepticism. In this regard, it would be claimed that skepticism is no longer a negative concept or negative method to deny knowledge claims, rather it should be taken up as a philosophical method through which one may quest *the philosophical certainty of knowledge*.

2.4 DEVELOPMENT OF SKEPTICISM

Ironically, skeptics from ancient times onward had developed arguments to undermine the contentions of dogmatic philosophers. Philosophy was full of dogmas on the basis of which one may derive or claim knowledge. As a result of that skeptical arguments and their employment against various forms of dogmatism had played an important role in shaping both the problems and the solutions offered in the course of Western philosophy. As ancient philosophy and science developed doubts arose about various basic widely accepted beliefs about the world in ancient times, skeptics challenged the claims of Plato and Aristotle. During Renaissance similar challenges were raised against the claims of Scholasticism and Calvinism. In the 17th century skeptics attacked Cartesianism established by the French philosopher and mathematician Rene Descartes along with other theories that attempted to justify the scientific revolution initiated by Copernicus, Kepler and Galileo. Subsequently, a skeptical offensive was leveled against the Enlightenment philosopher Immanuel Kant and then against idealist philosopher Hegel. Each challenge led to new attempts to resolve the skeptical difficulties. This clearly reflects that philosophical arguments for skepticism is not something new, it was strongly visible from the antiquity and it had played a pivotal role towards developing certain and incorrigible knowledge.



ACTIVITY- 2.1

Is every man in some sense or other skeptic? Give reason in support of your answer.

.....

.....

"Philosophy was full of dogmas on the basis of which one may derive or claim knowledge." Explain.

.....

.....



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: From which Greek word 'Skepticism' is derived?

.....

Q 2: Who wrote the book, *The Problem of Knowledge?*

.....

Q 3: Is it true that philosophical skeptics have doubted the possibility of any knowledge?

.....

Q 4: When skeptics attacked Cartesianism?

.....

Q 5: What do you generally mean by Skepticism?

.....

2.5 DIFFERENT SENSE AND APPLICATIONS OF SKEPTICISM

There are various sense and applications of skepticism with regard to various philosophical disciplines through which people claimed to have certain knowledge. Skepticism raised serious questions about the certainty of knowledge about metaphysics, ethics, and religious beliefs. David Hume seemed to show that no knowledge can be gained beyond the world of experience and that one cannot discover the real causes of experienced phenomena. Any attempt to do so, as Kant argued, leads to antinomies or contradictory knowledge claims. However, a dominant form of skepticism concerns knowledge in general questioning whether anything actually can be known with complete or adequate certainty. This is called *epistemological skepticism* or skepticism pertaining to the theory of knowledge. Thus, when we discuss about skepticism, it is in general pertaining to epistemology. However, there are various kinds of epistemological skepticism differentiated in terms of the area in which doubts are raised. Again, forms of skepticism

can also be distinguished in terms of the motivation of the skeptic – whether he is challenging views for ideological reasons or for pragmatic or practical ones in order to attain certain psychological goals.

2.6 ACADEMIC SKEPTICISM AND PYRRHONISM IN ANCIENT PERIOD

The first kind of skepticism appeared and developed in the Academy, the school founded by Plato and it was known as 'Academic skepticism'. It set forth a series of epistemological arguments to show that nothing could be known challenging primarily what were then the two foremost schools Stoicism and Epicureanism. They denied that any criteria could be found for distinguishing the true from the false instead only reasonable or probable standard could be established. The other major form of ancient skepticism was **Pyrrhonism** apparently developed by medical skeptics in Alexandria. It adhered to the view that nothing could be known and that some things are more probable than others. To settle any disagreement a criterion seems to be required. Any purported criterion, however, would have to base either on another criterion or on itself. Sextus offered arguments to challenge any claims of dogmatic philosophers to know more than what is evident. Sextus said that his argument were aimed at leading people to a state of a taraxia where people who thought that they could know reality were constantly disturbed and frustrated. If they could lead to suspend judgment, they would find peace in mind. In this state of suspension they would neither affirm nor deny the possibility of knowledge but would remain peaceful and still waiting to see what might develop. The Pyrrhonist did not become inactive in the state of suspense but lived un-dogmatically accepting to appearances, customs and natural inclinations.

2.7 SKEPTICISM AFTER RENE DESCARTES

After academic skepticism developed in ancient period, subsequently, there developed medieval skepticism, modern skepticism, the famous Catesianism in the 17th century, the skepticism of David Hume

in the 18th Century. Rene Descartes actually offered a fundamental refutation of the new skepticism which claimed that by applying the skeptical method of doubting all beliefs that could possibly be false, one could discover a truth that is genuinely indubitable- namely, 'I think; therefore I am' (*cogito ergo-sum*). From this truth one could discover the criterion of true knowledge – namely, that whatever is *clearly and distinctly* conceived is true. Using this criterion, one could then establish a number of truths that God exists that he is not a deceiver, that he guarantees the veracity of clear and distinct ideas and that an external world exists that can be known through mathematical physics. Thus, Descartes starting from skepticism claimed to have found a new basis for certitude and for knowledge of reality. Throughout the 17th century, skeptical critics sought to show that Descartes had not succeeded and that if he sincerely followed his skeptical method his new system could only lead to complete skepticism. They challenged whether the *cogito* proved anything and whether it was indubitable, whether Descartes's method could be successfully applied and whether it was certain and whether any of the knowledge claimed of Cartesianism was really true. Nicolas Malebranche, the developer of occasionalism, revised the Cartesian system to meet skeptical attacks only to find his efforts challenged by the new skeptical criticisms of Foucher and others. Various English philosophers, such as John Locke, tried to blunt the force of skepticism by appealing to common sense and to the 'reasonable' person's inability to doubt everything. They admitted that there might not be sufficient evidence to support knowledge claims extending beyond immediate experience. But this did not actually require that everything be doubted by using standards of common sense.

2.8 HUME'S SKEPTICISM

In the 18th century David Hume asserted that neither inductive nor deductive evidence was establish the truth of any matter of fact. Knowledge can consist of intuitively obvious matters or demonstrable relations of ideas but not of anything beyond experience. The mind can discover no necessary

connections within experience or any root cause of experience. Beliefs about the world are based not upon reason or evidence or even upon appeal to the uniformity of nature but only on habit and custom. For Hume, beliefs cannot be justified. Belief that there is an external world, a self and a God is common, but there is no adequate evidence for it. Although it is natural to hold these convictions, they are so to speak inconsistent and epistemologically dubious. Hume further upheld that 'philosophy would render us entirely Pyrrhonian'. The beliefs that a person is forced to hold enable him to describe the world scientifically but when he tries to justify them he is led to complete skepticism. However, nature brings him back to common sense to unjustifiable beliefs. Thus, Hume's fideism was a natural rather than a religious one. It is only animal faith that provides relief from complete doubt. We find the radical skepticism in Condorcet who held that mathematics, physics and moral philosophies were all merely probable. He also raised the possibility that mental faculties by which people judge their knowledge might change over time and hence that what is judged true today might not be judged true tomorrow.

It seems that the central themes in Hume's skeptical analysis – the basis of induction and causality, knowledge of the external world and the self proofs of the existence of God – became the key issue of later philosophy. Hume's contemporary Thomas Reid hoped to rebut Hume's skepticism by exposing it as the logical conclusion of the basic assumptions of modern philosophy from Descartes onward. Such disastrous assumptions, he urged, should be abandoned for commonsensical principles that have to be believed. Although Kant thought that he had answered the challenge of skepticism, some of his contemporaries saw his philosophy as commencing a new skeptical era. Schulze, a notable critic of Kantianism, insisted that on Kant's theory no one could know any objective truths about anything. He could only know the subjective necessity of his own views. Even some critic contended that though there are such things as a priori concepts, their application to experience is always problematical and whether they apply can be determined only through experience itself. Hence the possibility

of knowledge can never be established with certainty. Assured truth on the basis of concepts is possible only of human creations like mathematical ideas and it is questionable whether these have any objective truth. Another Kant critic Harman saw in Hume's and Kant's work a new basis for fideism. If knowledge of reality cannot be gained by rational means then one must turn to faith.

2.9 IRRATIONAL SKEPTICISM

In the 19th century, irrational skepticism was developed into existentialism, a school of philosophy that emphasizes the concrete and problematic character of human existence. Using traditional skeptical themes to attack Hegelianism and liberal Christianity, Soren Kierkegaard stressed the need of faith. Only by an unjustified and unjustifiable *leap into faith* could certainly be found – which would then be entirely subjective rather than objective. Subsequent theologians influenced by existentialism argued that the challenge of skepticism highlights humanity's inability to find any ultimate truth except through faith and commitment. Non-religious forms of this view were developed in the 20th century by existentialist's writers such as Sartre and Albert Camus both of whom combined the epistemological skepticism of Kierkegaard with the religious and ethical skepticism of Friedrich Nietzsche. The rational and scientific examination of the world shows it to be unintelligible and absurd and if 'God is dead' as Nietzsche proclaimed then the world is ultimately meaningless.

2.10 NATURALISTIC SKEPTICISM

Besides the above, other kinds of skepticism appeared in various schools of modern and contemporary philosophy. The English idealist F. H. Bradley used classical skeptical arguments in his *Appearance and Reality: A Metaphysical Essay* (1893) to argue that the world cannot be understood empirically or materialistically. For Bradley, true knowledge can be reached only by transcending the world of appearance. There also developed naturalistic skepticism which stated that any interpretation of immediate or

intuited experience is open to question. It developed an argument by saying that in order to make life meaningful; people interpret their experience on the basis of 'animal faith' according to biological and social factors. The resulting beliefs though unjustified and perhaps illusory, enable them to preserve and to find meaning in their lives.

2.11 PHILOSOPHICAL SKEPTICISM AND LOGICAL POSITIVISM

The development of skepticism continued even in the 20thcentury logical positivism and linguistic philosophy. The attack on speculative metaphysics incorporated skepticism about the possibility of gaining knowledge of anything other than mere logical tautologies. Russell and the important philosopher of science Karl Proper further stressed the un-justifiability of the principle of induction and Popper criticized theories of knowledge based upon empirical verification. Fritz Mauthner, a founder of linguistic analysis, set forth a skepticism according to which there are no objective connections between language and the world. Word meaning in a language is relative to its users and thus subjective. Every attempt to determine what is true leads back to linguistic formulations, but not to objective state of affairs. The result is a complete skepticism about reality – a sort of reality that cannot even be expressed except in terms of what Mauthner called godless mystical contemplation. We think Mauthner's linguistic skepticism bears some affinities to be expressed in Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1921). Wittgenstein in his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (TLP) was completely skeptical about the possibility of religious language and religious experience, ethics, theology, and metaphysics. In view of this, he drew the limits of language as well as the limits of world (reality) and then said that anything that would lie beyond the limits of language as well as the limits of the world would be nonsensical. Before Wittgenstein, a different way of dealing with skepticism was set forth by the Cambridge philosopher G. E. Moore. He contended skeptical arguments cannot undermine the certain knowledge that people have of basic proposition such as 'the Earth has existed for a long time'. This kind

of certain knowledge can serve as a foundation for other knowledge claims, even though there may be some highly unusual circumstances in which it could be questioned. Wittgenstein in his later work *On Certainty* (posthumously published in 1969) explored this kind of resolution though he rejected Moore's characterization of that which is certain as a kind of knowledge. For Wittgenstein, 'certainty lay in the ways in which human beings act-in their forms of life'. Contemporary philosophers continue to argue about what constitutes knowledge and whether there can be kind of certain knowledge that is immune to skeptical doubt.

Further a new radical form of skepticism emerged in the last half of the 20th century postmodernism. This view questioned whether there can be any rational objective framework for discussing intellectual problems, or whether instead the intellectual frameworks that people use are inherently determined by their life situations. Developing out of 20th century literary criticism and psychological theory postmodernism undermined confidence in the validity of any kind of human investigation of the world by showing that such an investigation itself would need to be investigated invoking ideas drawn from Heidegger, Foucault, Derrida, Lyotard, Rorty. Postmodernism saw philosophy and science merely as activities – to be judged in terms of their roles in or effects on human societies rather than by some transcendent standard of truth and falsehood. A general skepticism from seeing that there is no objective standpoint from which to compare or evaluate these different points of view. However, critics of postmodernism regarded it as confused and malicious because for them it seemed to imply a thoroughgoing epistemological relativism.

Even though the best way known to evaluate claims is to adopt the intellectual discipline of science and scientific methods of investigation, but this methodology must be adopting 'philosophic doubt' or 'skepticism'. Although all of the methods of science are important, practicing skepticism is crucial to protecting oneself from believing unsubstantiated claims. Skepticism is not a view that promotes the disbelief of every truth or claim, rather it has been defined as 'an attitude or doubt or a disposition to incredulity

either in general or towards a particular object'. It means 'inquirer' or 'investigator'. In a sense, skepticism is closer to the original Greek meaning as the suspension of judgment (either to adopt or reject) until sufficient evidence is examined. Thus, skeptical approach promotes the examiner or the skeptic to seek 'when feasible, adequate evidence and reasonable grounds for any claim to truth in any context'. Thus, if there is a particular treatment for which valid scientific evidence has been drawn, that treatment should be adopted and viewed as evidenced-based. However, when a claim is not supported by evidence or when the evidence is weak and of poor validity, rejecting the claim or position is wise. Since epistemological knowledge or certainty is evidential on the basis of which incorrigible or indubitable knowledge can be gained, the evidence must be fulfilled on the basis of truth, belief and justification. Thus, truth, belief and justification conditions have been treated as the necessary and sufficient conditions for epistemological knowledge. It has been developed by the classical epistemologists. Simplistically, it can be said that skepticism is the position of objectively evaluating, by looking for empirical evidence, the validity of any claim of fact, and basing adopting or rejecting on the evidence. Normal Malcolm distinguishes between strong and weak sense of knowledge on the basis of the confidence of the knowledge claimer. According to Malcolm, weak sense of knowledge is nothing but belief. The incorrigibility of epistemological knowledge actually hinges on the strong sense of knowledge.

The skeptical attitude and the corresponding investigatory approach, reduces the possibility of adopting as true a claim or treatment that may not be true. As is often said, extraordinary claims could be true, but a skeptical approach towards them would require extraordinary evidence and evaluation of that evidence. To reiterate, a skeptical thinker does not reject all claims, nor does he accept all claims as true, rather the position of a skeptical thinker is one of assessing the validity of the evidence before rendering a decision. The type of evidence is important, and there is an acknowledgement that there exists quite a bit of variation and debate regarding the evidence

constitutes 'valid' evidence. However, there is general agreement that the methods and criteria used by science is the most acceptable perspective to take.

2.11.1 Philosophical and Scientific Skepticism

Thus, there develops two types of skepticism, viz., scientific skepticism and philosophical skepticism. Study and adopt the method of science, scientific investigation is the hallmark of scientific skepticism. It states that anyone who claims extraordinary evidence to substantiate those claims. Don't be gullible; do not accept claims without evaluation. Accepting all claims is not only intellectually dishonest, but potentially dangerous and fatal. Gullibility is the opposite of skepticism. Therefore, to demand evidence of truth will naturally protect one from being gullibly accepting every claim. In scientific skepticism, one has to keep an open mind just not so open that brain fall out. In other words, one has to be intellectually willing to accept any claim, but always seek evidence and proof of truth before acceptance is granted. Undoubtedly, skepticism is a key concept in understanding how to assess the level of believability of something. Everyone must seek the truth. This set of analytic and decision making procedures and rules allow us to ascertain what might be true and what does not have evidence of believability. In fact, the adoption of healthy skepticism will result in a more informed public, more informed decision making about claims and treatments, and have the overall effect of the promotion of truth and validity to protect us from extraordinary claims that have little reason to be believed.

2.11.2 A. J. Ayer's View

A. J. Ayer introduced the concept of **philosophical skepticism**. It calls in question is not the way in which we apply our standards of proof, but these standards themselves. However, not all questions have philosophical nature. The peculiarity of philosophical skepticism is that they are not in the way connected with experience. Philosophical skeptic is not concerned, as a scientist would be, with distinguishing the conditions in

which these sources are likely to fail those in which they are normally be trusted. The philosophical skeptic makes no such distinction regarding matters of fact like the scientific skeptic. Examining the entrails of birds or the question whether the failure to survive a trial by ordeal was a trustworthy indication of guilt is subject matter of scientific skepticism, but not the matter of philosophical skepticism. In this way Ayer makes the distinction between scientific and philosophical skepticism. Philosophical skepticism is not connected with experience. However, scientific skepticism is connected with experience. Philosophical skeptic casts doubt on those matters on which scientific knowledge hinges on.



ACTIVITY- 2.2

- Is Descartes a supporter of skepticism? Explain briefly.

  .....

- Do you find any gap between philosophical and scientific skepticism? Discuss.

  .....



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 6: Who is the founder of 'Academic skepticism'?

Q 7: Is Hume a skeptic?

Q 8: Name two books written by Wittgenstein.

Q 9: Define epistemological skepticism.

Q 10: What is Naturalistic Skeptic?



2.12 LET US SUM UP

- The above discussion makes it clear that skeptical doubt is global and is unsparing so far as the logical grounds of knowledge are concerned. That is why it is out of the question to reject skepticism.

- Skepticism is a philosophical position on the possibility of knowledge. Its interest is in viewing that knowledge is not possible or to show that we do not know what we believe we know. In this regard, it would be claimed that the skeptic's position is negative in that he asks the very standards of knowledge because he finds that all these standards can be questioned from a reasonable point of view.

- Although skeptic's position is negative, but philosophical skeptics have doubted the possibility of any knowledge beyond that of the contents of directly felt experience. This makes the sense to say that skepticism is no longer a negative method to deny knowledge claims, rather it should be taken up as a philosophical method through which one may quest the philosophical certainty of knowledge.



2.13 FURTHER READING

1) Ayer, A. J. 1958. *The Problem of Knowledge.* Macmillan, London: Penguin Books.

2) Ayer, A. J. 1940. *The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge.* Macmillan, London: Penguin Books.

3) Bradley, F. H. 1930. *Appearance and Reality.* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

4) Chakravarty, D. K. *Fundamental Questions of Epistemology and Metaphysics.*

5) Das, K. L. 2006. *Philosophical Relevance of Language.* New Delhi: Northern Book Centre.

6) Pradhan, R. C. 2001. *Recent Development in Analytic Philosophy.* New Delhi: ICPR.

7) Wittgenstein, L. 1961. *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. Trans. D. F. Pears and B. F.

8) McGuinness. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

9) Wittgenstein, L. 1974. *On Certainty.* Trans. Denis Paul and G. E. M. Anscombe. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

2.14 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: *Skeptesthai*

Ans to Q No 2: A. J. Ayer.

Ans to Q No 3: True.

Ans to Q No 4: In the 17th century skeptics attacked Cartesianism.

Ans to Q No 5: Skepticism (from the Greek *skeptesthai*, 'to examine') is the philosophical view that it is impossible to know anything with absolute certainty, or to know the world as it 'really' is. The word can also mean a general reluctance to accept anything on face value without sufficient proof. Skeptics may be taken to be denying the possibility of empirical knowledge. In short, skepticism is a philosophical position on the possibility of knowledge. Its interest is in viewing that knowledge is not possible or to show that we do not know what we believe we know.

Ans to Q No 6: Plato.

Ans to Q No 7: Yes, Hume is a Skeptic.

Ans to Q No 8: *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus , Philosophical Investigations.*

Ans to Q No 9: A dominant form of skepticism concerns knowledge in general questioning whether anything actually can be known with complete or adequate certainty. This is called *epistemological skepticism* or skepticism pertaining to the theory of knowledge.

Ans to Q No 10: Naturalistic skepticism stated that any interpretation of immediate or intuited experience is open to question. It developed an argument by saying that in order to make life meaningful; people interpret their experience on the basis of 'animal faith' according to biological and social factors. The resulting beliefs though unjustified and perhaps illusory, enable them to preserve and to find meaning in their lives.



2.15 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very short Questions

Q 1: What is philosophical skepticism?

Q 2: Is there any difference between *doubt* and *skepticism*?

Q 3: Who is the author of *On Certainty?*

Q 4: Who is the author of *The Problem of Knowledge*?

Q 5: Skepticism is a philosophical method through which one may quest the philosophical certainty of knowledge.–Is it true?

Q 6: What is meant by *cogito-ergo-sum*?

Q 7: Weak sense of knowledge is nothing but belief – who said this?

Q 8: 'Certainty lay in the ways in which human beings act-in their forms of life.' Who expressed this view?

Q 9: Name one Cambridge philosopher.

Q 10: Who introduced the concept of Philosophical Skepticism?

Q 11: Define *Irrational skepticism*.

Q 12: What is scientific skepticism?

B. Short type Questions (Answer in about 100-150 words)

Q 1: Is Skepticism a philosophical method? Briefly Explain.

Q 3: Distinguish between Scientific and philosophical skepticism.

Q 4: Write a note on Pyrrhonism.

Q 5: "Skeptic's position is negative." Elucidate.

C) Long Questions (Answer in about 300-500 words)

Q 1: Discuss briefly linguistic skepticism.

Q 2: What is Skepticism? Explain after Hume.

Q 3: Discuss various sense and applications of skepticism.

Q 4: Explain briefly philosophical skepticism.

Q 5: Explain and discuss arguments for skepticism.

Q 6: Discuss Hume's theory of skepticism.

Q 7: What is skepticism? What are its characteristics?

Q 8: What is philosophical skepticism? Explain different forms of skepticism.

Q 9: Explain and examine Scepticism after Descartes.

Q 10: Discuss briefly A. J. Ayer's view on philosophical Skepticism.

Q 11: What do positivists understand by skepticism? Explain philosophical Skepticism with special reference to positivism in the 20th century linguistic philosophy.

Q 12: Write an essay on the development of Skepticism.

Q 13: State and comment on philosophical Scepticism.

Q 14: Explain and examine Scepticism as a philosophical method.

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UNIT-3: WAYS OF KNOWING

UNIT STRUCTURE

3.1 Learning Objectives

3.2 Introduction

3.3 Knowledge

3.4 JTB definition of Knowledge

3.5 The Theories of Epistemic Justification

3.6 Sources of Knowledge

3.7 The Theories of Origin of Knowledge: Rationalism, Empiricism, Skepticism

3.8 Let Us Sum Up

3.9 Further Reading

3.10 Answer to Check Your Progress

3.11 Model Questions

3.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the concept of epistemology
- discuss the problem of JTB definition
- explain the theories of epistemic justification
- illustrate the theories of origin of knowledge

3.2 INTRODUCTION

The word epistemology has been derived from two Greek words: Episteme and logos. The word ;episteme' means knowledge and 'logos' means science. Epistemology is the study of the origin, nature, methods and limits of knowledge. Epistemology deals with certain questions. Those are - what is the meaning of knowledge? What are the sources of knowledge? Can we have knowledge of the ultimate reality? What are the conditions of validity of knowledge? Is there any limit of knowledge? So epistemology or theory of knowledge enquires into the nature of human knowledge, as to

how it develops and how far it is able to grasp reality. For the first time, John Locke, in his book, “An Essay Concerning Human Understanding” made an attempt to discuss seriously about epistemology. There he mentions about the importance of enquiring into nature, conditions and limits of knowledge. Like John Locke, Immanuel Kant, in one of his books discussed about epistemology and he regarded philosophy as the science and criticism of knowledge. According to Kant’s view philosophy is identical with epistemology.

There are several approaches to the study of processes that contribute to knowing; the history of science and the sociology of knowledge are two closely related fields. Methodology is one aspect of epistemology. Methodology is generally seen as the system of values, beliefs, principles and rules that guide analysis within a given discipline. The methodology(ies) that prevails within a discipline plays a major role in the nature of questions that are asked as well as the answers that are offered.

The problem concerning the origin of knowledge is the main problem of epistemology. There are some theories of knowledge offered by different philosophers- Rationalism, Empiricism, skepticism.

3.3 KNOWLEDGE

There are various kinds of knowledge: knowing how to do something (for example, how to swim), knowing someone in person, and knowing a place or a city. Although such knowledge is of epistemological interest as well, we shall focus on knowledge of propositions as the epistemologists typically do not focus on technical or acquaintance knowledge, however, instead preferring to focus on propositional knowledge. A proposition is something which can be expressed by a declarative sentence, and which asserts to describe a fact or a state of affairs, such as “Socrates is a philosopher.”

3.4 THE JTB DEFINITION OF KNOWLEDGE

One of the most widely held definition of knowledge is that it is justified true belief. This definition contains the idea of 'epistemic justification.' The term epistemic justification signifies a property ascribed to belief in virtue of satisfying certain evaluative norms concerning what a person ought to believe. A distinction may be drawn between what a person ought to belive and what a person ought not believe. Certain norms of evaluation are to be satisfied by a belief and when these norms are satisfied then the belief becomes knowledge. When these norms are satisfied then the belief is epistemically justified as true. Such a belief is considered to be knowledge.

Edmund Gettier, a distinguished American philosopher is primarily known for a paper titled " Is justified true belief knowledge?" that he published in Abalysis in which by using counter example he criticized the JTB definition of knowledge. In this definition propositional knowledge is defined as justified true belief. Edmund Gettier very successfully and strongly criticed the JTB definition of knowledge. The JTB definition of knowledge states that S knows , if and only if

1. P is true
2. S believes P
3. S is justified in believing P

An interesting counter example given by Gettier may be presented here. Let us suppose there is a clock. Normally the clock gives accurate time but the clock has stopped working last night, and has yet to be repaired. But accidently when someone looks at the clock exactly twelve hours later and that indicates the very time which actually is. There we have a true belief regarding the time. And our belief is justified, as we have no reason to doubt that the clock is working, and we cannot be blamed for basing beliefs about the time on what the clock says. All the three conditions of knowledge, namely the belief condition, the justification condition and the truth condition are fulfilled. But still it cannot be said that there is knowledge.

Another counter example may be given to criticize the JTB definition of knowledge. This counter example has not actually been given by Gettier. But it closely follows the line shown by Gettier. Scott Sturgeon gave this counter example.

Suppose John has driven his car to work. He has parked his car in his usual parking place. Unknown to John someone breaks into his car. The thief takes the car far a drive and co-incidentally parks the car again back in the original place. Let us suppose John wants to allow Joseph to drive his car for a purpose. John tells Joseph where his car is. Naturally John is right. The car is in the usual parking place. John believes that the car is in the parking place is justified. But does it mean that John knows that his car is in the parking place? It is certainly not. It is just an accident that John's car is in the usual parking place. The three conditions of knowledge as presented by the JTB definition are not adequate.

The two counter examples that we have mentioned indicate that an element of accident or luck is present in both the cases. In the first counter example we accidently glance at the clock whose hands indicated precisely the time at which we looked at the clock. This element of accident is present in the second case also. By such counter example Edmund Gettier wanted to establish that knowledge cannot be defined simply in terms of justified true belief.

The damage done by Gettier's criticism was very severe. Some philosophers attempted to defend the JTB definition by whatever means they could. Some other philosopher looked for a forth condition of knowledge. The forth condition of knowledge was suggested by some philosophers as follows-

"S's grounds for believing P do not include any false belief."

This fourth condition of knowledge has not satisfied all philosophers. The forth condition actually implies that there be no true defeaters. The conception of defeater may be illustrated by an example given by Keith

Lehrer. The counter example given by Keith Lehrer refers to defeater and also defeater's defeater. The counter example given by Keith Lehrer in first person language as follows-

I go to the library and see a man removing a book from the shelf and concealing it under his coat. I am sure that the thief is Tom Grabit because he often attends my classes. I know that Tom Grabit has stolen the book and I report it to the library stuff. But subsequently the library stuff meets Tom's mother Mrs. Grabit. Mrs Grabit states that Tom Grabit is actually in another place at that time. He has a twin brother name John Grabit who actually is in the library. Mrs Grabit's statement is a defeater. It defeats the justification that I have for my belief. But in a further suppose that we come to know that Mrs. Grabit is a habitual liar. She always tells lies about her having twins. This is a defeater's defeater.

But we neednot stop the couner example at this point. We may say that the neighbor who tells that Mrs. Grabit is a liar has some old quarrel with her and therefore the neighbour's view is not reliable. It is a defeater of the defeater's defeater. The process is theoretically an endless process. Such counter examples show that Edmund Gettier was rather successful in demonstrating that the JTB definition of knowledge is not adequate. We may find cases in which all the three conditions of knowledge are accidentally fulfilled. The mere fulfillment of these three conditions cannot give us knowledge. Gettier successfully established this point. After the appearance of Gettier's criticism philosophers are looking for a fourth condition of knowledge (propositional knowledge). But it cannot be said that there is a general consensus among philosophers regarding the fourth condition of knowledge.

3.5 THEORIES OF EPISTEMIC JUSTIFICATION

In the classical epistemological conception of knowledge justification is necessary for knowledge. Justification is seen as a matter of adequacy of evidence one has for a given belief. A significant question is raised here-

under what conditions are a person's reason for some belief good enough that the belief is justified? Three theories are brought forth by philosopher in this connection.They are the theories of epistemic justification. They are- 1. Foundationalism 2. Coherntism 3. Reliabilism

Foundationalism is the theory of epistemic justification according to which our beliefs are classified into two types- foundational beliefs and non-foundational beliefs. The foundational beliefs are justified without being based upon other beliefs. The function of the foundational beliefs is to provide justification to the other beliefs which are non-foundational. According to foundationalism justified non foundational beliefs are based upon the foundational beliefs through good inferences or reasoning.

The second theory of epistemic justification is coherentism. This theory denies that some beliefs are foundational. A belief derives its justification, according to coherentism, not by being based on one or more other beliefs, but by virtue of its membership in a set of beliefs that all fit together in the right way. According to coherentism a belief is always justified within a system. Outside of or independently of a system a belief cannot be justified.

Reliabilism is the third theoru of epistemic justification. Reliabilism states that a belief is justified when it is the product of a reliable or a permissible process or method.

3.6 SOURCES OF KNOWLEDGE

Beliefs arise in people for a wide variety of causes. Among them, we must list psychological factors such as desires, emotional needs, prejudice, and biases of various kinds. For true beliefs to count as knowledge, it is necessary that they originate in sources we have good reason to consider reliable. These are perception, introspection, memory, reason, and testimony. Let us briefly consider each of these.

Perception: Perception is a fundamental concern in epistemology. It is a way where knowledge can be perceived through the experiences of

the senses. The view that experience is the primary source of knowledge is called empiricism (about which we discuss later). At root, all our empirical knowledge is grounded in how we see, hear, touch, smell and taste the world around us. perception is the process by which we acquire information about the world around us using our five senses. Consider the nature of this information. There are differences between the views of direct and indirect realists about the structure of perceptual knowledge. Indirect realists states that we acquire perceptual knowledge of external objects by virtue of perceiving sense data that represent external objects. By sense data Sense data, we mean a species of mental states, enjoy a special status. So indirect realists think that, when perceptual knowledge is foundational, it is knowledge of sense data and other mental states. According to them Knowledge of external objects is indirect and it is derived from our knowledge of sense data. Direct realists can be regarded as more moderate about the foundation of our knowledge of external objects. Because they hold that it possible for perceptual experiences to make us in direct contact with external objects, they can say that such experiences can give you foundational knowledge of external objects. Most of the time we take our perceptual sense to be reliable. But how can we be so sure that they are reliable? For externalists, if the use of reliable sources is sufficient for knowledge, and if by using reliable sources we get the belief that our sources are reliable, then we come to know that our sources are reliable. But even externalists might wonder how they can they be so reliable just based on arguments. The problem is this. It would seem the only way of acquiring knowledge about the reliability of our perceptual sources is through memory, through remembering whether they served us well in the past. But should we trust our memory, and should we think that the episodes of perceptual success that we seem to recall were in fact episodes of perceptual success? If we can answer these questions with 'yes', then we need to have reason to view our memory and our perceptual experiences as reliable. So in the conclusion it seems like there is no non-circular way of arguing for the reliability of one's perceptual sources.

Introspection: knowledge of one's self that can be found through internal self-evalution. This is generally considered to be a sort of perception. (For example, I know I am hungry or tired.) It is the capacity to inspect the, metaphorically speaking, "inside" of one's mind. Through introspection, one knows what mental states one is in: whether one is thirsty, tired, excited, or depressed. Compared with perception, introspection appears to have a special status. It is easy to see how a perceptual seeming can go wrong

Memory: Memory is the storage of knowledge that was learned in the past — whether it be past events or current information. Some philosophers maintain that memory only retains or preserves knowledge but doesn't produce new knowledge. Others insist that there are cases where a person first comes to know by remembering. It is the capacity to retain knowledge acquired in the past. What one remembers, though, need not be a past event. It may be a present fact, such as one's telephone number, or a future event, such as the date of the next elections. Memory is, of course, imperfect. Sometime it happens that what you remember does not entail the truth of that incident or thing.

Testimony: It is the knowledge from reliable sources. Testimony relies on others to acquire knowledge and communicate it to us. Some deny that testimony can be a source of knowledge, and insist that beliefs gained through testimony must be verified in order to be knowledge. In this regard an externalist might say that testimony is a source of knowledge if and only if it comes from a reliable source. But internalists will not find that answer satisfactory. But if the reliability of a testimonial source is not sufficient for making it a source of knowledge, what else is needed? Thomas Reid suggested that, by our very nature, we accept testimonial sources as reliable and tend to attribute credibility to them unless we encounter special contrary reasons. But that's merely a statement of the attitude we in fact take toward testimony. What is it that makes that attitude reasonable? It could be argued that, in one's own personal experiences with testimonial sources, one has accumulated a long track record that can be taken as a sign of reliability.

Reason:. Reason can be defined in two ways. First reason is that thing that makes a fact, theory, or principle comprehensible and secondly it is the power of comprehending and inferring in rational ways. Some beliefs would appear to be justified solely by the use of reason. Justification of that kind is said to be a priori: prior to any kind of experiences. So,in other words reason can be considered a source of knowledge, either by deducing truths from existing knowledge, or by learning things a priori, discovering necessary truths (such as mathematical truths) through pure reason. The view that reason is the primary source of knowledge is called rationalism.

3.7 THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE (RATIONALISM, EMPIRICISM AND SKEPTICISM)

Different philosophers have offered different theories regarding the origin of knowledge. Among them rationalism and empiricism are significant.

Rationalism: The theory according to which reason is the main source of knowledge is called rationalism. Rationalists don't depend on sense experience. According to all rationalists the knowledge that we get through sense experience generally deceive us. Sense experience cannot give us universal validity as sense experience is relative to different person. For example, in the absence of proper light we sometime perceive a rope as a snake. Again what a person who has perfect eye sight can see appears blur to a person who has weak eye sight.

Some of the early rationalist philosophers are Socrates and Plato. Later Descartes (who is also regarded as the father of modern philosophy) , Spinoza, Leibnitz and Wolff join this league and gave a new form to rationalism. According to all of them mind is always active. Knowledge is actively produced by the mind out of its inner ideas with the help of reason. For Descartes reason is the source of true knowledge. He regarded the knowledge of sense perception doubtful. He divided ideas into three kinds, namely; adventitious ideas, factitious ideas and innate ideas. Adventitious ideas and factitious ideas are not clear and distinct according to Descartes.

But for him innate ideas (those ideas which are imprinted on the mind by God at the time of birth) are only clear and distinct. The ideas of causality, God, morality etc are innate ideas. Spinoza, Leibnitz and Wolff followed the same trend and regarded knowledge as a priori.

But there are some criticisms of this theory :

1. Rationalism has completely ignored the part of knowledge that we attain through sense perception. This leads rationalism towards dogmatism.
2. Descartes' idea of innate ideas has been criticized by John Locke. According to Locke there is nothing like innate ideas and if there were something like innate ideas then those ideas should be equally present in all minds and should be accepted by all. But children, mentally imbalanced, uncivilized are not aware of such ideas.
3. If we accept rationalism then knowledge means something that we deduce from innate ideas. Then we will never be able to get new information. Only through sense experience we can come into contact with new facts. So rationalism is wrong in this point.

Empiricism :

The reactionary theory against rationalism which holds the view that all our knowledge is derived from sense experience is known as empiricism. According to this theory knowledge is a posteriori (posterior to experience) which means we get knowledge through our senses only, not with innate ideas. Empiricist thus believe in the knowledge based on experience. According to them experience is of two kinds-sensation and reflection. Sensation is external perception and reflection is internal. Mind is always passive recipient of sensation. In the history of philosophy Sophist were the earlier supporter of empiricism. Later Bacon, John Locke, Berkeley, Hume became the supporter of empiricism. John Locke was the propunder of empiricism in modern philosophy. He criticized Descartes' doctrine of innate ideas in his treatise 'An Essay Concerning Human Understanding.' According

to Locke our mind at the time of birth is a tabula rasa (a blank slate). That blank slate is filled up by our experiences. For him there is no contribution from reason in the process of gaining knowledge. His famous dictum: 'There is nothing in the intellect which was not previously in the sense' leads us to accept that knowledge is a posteriori. Though Locke was an empiricist he is not free from rationalistic bias as he has accepted the existence of God, soul etc.

Berkeley and Hume also contributed for the empiricist tradition. From Berkeley's famous statement 'esse est percipi' which means to exist is to be perceived- we can sense that he accepted sense perception as the source of knowledge. Hume also developed Locke's empiricism. To him knowledge comes from ideas and impressions. The material object of knowledge is composed of ideas and impressions where they are connected with each other with the help of law of association. Hume developed Locke's empiricism to a different kind. Whereas Locke accepted the ideas of God, soul, matter, mind, Hume denied the existence of those things. According to Hume there is no absolute certainty in knowledge. Everything finally gets a probable position. Hume's form of empriricism is thus known as skepticism.

But this theory also have some drawbacks :

1. Empiricim has completely ignored the part of knowledge that we attain through reason. This leads empiricism towards dogmatism.
2. Empiricism accepts experience as the base of valid knowledge. But experience cannot give us universal knowledge all the time. From experience we can have only particular truths. Conclusion based on particular truths cannot be universally true.
3. Another part of empiricism is skepticism according to which absolute certainty in knowledge is not possible. So empiricism cannot be accepted as a proper error free theory.

So after discussing both rationalism and empiricism we can conclude that to obtain true knowledge both reason and sense experience is essential.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1. Fill in the blanks

a) The term epistemology has been derived from two Greek words. They sare_____ and _____.

b) _____ criticized the JTB definition of knowledge.

c) _____states that a belief is justified when it is the product of a reliable or a permissible process or method.

Q 2. Find out whether the following statements are true or false:

a) Foundationalism is the theory of epistemic justification.(True/ False)

b) JTB stands for Just True Belief. (True/False)

c) Perception has no relation with our senses. (True/False)

Q 3. Answer the following:

a) What is the etymological meaning of epistemology?

b) What are the main theories of epistemic justification?

c) Who is known as the father of modern philosophy?

d) What do you mean by the JTB definition?

e) Define perception and testimony.



3.8 LET US SUM UP

- The etymological meaning of epistemology is the science of knowledge.
- The book where John Locke first mentions about epistemology is “An Essay Concerning Human Understanding.”

- The book where Immanuel Kant discusses about epistemology is "Critique of Pure Reason"
- Gettier gave counter examples to criticize the JTB definition and succeeded to a very extend.
- The fourth principle that the defender of JTb dentition presented is: There be no true defeater.
- The main sources of knowledg-e are: Perception, introspection, memory, testimony and reason
- The in process of knowledge the relation between the knower and the known is very important
- Hume developed Locke's version of empiricism to a logical version where Hume denied the existence of God, mind, matter and soul and presented a different kind of empiricism namely skepticism.
- Some empiricist philosophers are- Locke, Hume, Berkeley, Russell
- Some rationalist philosophers are- Plato, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibnitz, Wolff.



3.9 FURTHER READING

1) Steup, Matthias, Epistemology(summer,2018), The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Ed. Edward N. Zalta, Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University

Url: https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/epistemology/

2) David A. Truncellito, Epistemology, Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy

Url: https://www.iep.utm.edu/epistemo/

3) Alston, William. 1989. *Epistemic Justification. Essays in the Theory of Knowledge*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

4) Armstrong, D.M. 1973. *Belief, Truth, and Knowledge*. Cambrdidge: Cambridge University Press.

3.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: a) Episteme, Logos b) Edmund Gettier c) Reliabilism

Ans to Q No 2: a) True. b) False c) False.

Ans to Q No 3:

a) The word epistemology has been derived from two Greek words: Episteme and logos. The word ;episteme' means knowledge and 'logos' means science. So the etymological meaning of epistemology is the science of knowledge.

b) The main theories of epistemic justification are- 1. Foundationalism 2. Coherntism 3. Reliabilism.

c) Descartes is known as the father of modern philosophy,

d) Edmund Gettier, a distinguished American philosopher is primarily known for a paper titled " Is justified true belief knowledge?" that he published in Abalysis in which by using counter example he criticized the JTB definition of knowledge. In this definition propositional knowledge is defined as justified true belief. The JTB definition of knowledge states that S knows , if and only if – a) P is true, b) S believes P, S is justified in believing P.

e) Perception: Perception is a way where knowledge can be perceived through the experiences of the senses. Perception is the process by which we acquire information about the world around us using our five senses(ears, tongue, skin, eyes, nose).

Testimony: It is the knowledge from reliable sources. Testimony relies on others to acquire knowledge and communicate it to us. For example: Scientist, Historian are most of the time reliable sources for knowledge.

3.11 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very short Questions

Q 1: What is meant by knowledge?

Q 2: What is epistemology?

Q 3: What are the two Greek words from which the word 'epistemology' has been derived?

B) Short Questions (Answer in about 100-150 words)

Q 1: What is knowledge? Briefly explain.

Q 2: Briefly explain the theories of epistemic justification.

Q 3: Briefly explain the sources of knowledge.

Q 4: Write short notes on-

a) Empiricism

b) Rationalism

C) Long Questions (Answer in about 300-500 words)

Q 1: Explain the sources of knowledge.

Q 2: Explain with examples the Gettier's idea about JTB definition.

Q 3: What do you mean by epistemic justification? Describe its theories.

Q 4: What is rationalism? Explain with critical points.

Q 5: What is empiricism? Explain with critical points.

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UNIT- 4: PERCEPTION

UNIT STRUCTURE

4.1 Learning Objectives

4.2 Introduction

4.3 Nature of Perception

4.4 Different theories of Perception

- 4.4.1 Direct Realism
- 4.4.2 Indirect Realism
- 4.4.3 Idealism
- 4.4.4 Phenomenalism

4.5 Perception in Indian Philosophy

4.6 Let Us Sum Up

4.7 Further Reading

4.8 Answers to Check Your Progress

4.9 Model Questions

4.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- explain the concept of perception.
- discuss the nature of perception.
- explain various theories of perception.
- analyse Indian views of perception.
- discuss two views of perception.

4.2 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will discuss about perception according to western and Indian perspective. It also deals with various theories of perception. Generally, perception is defined as the apprehension of the world through the senses, or the general exercise of it, or particular cases of its exercise. Again, perception may be defined as a process by which individuals organize and interpret their sensory impressions in order to give meaning to their

environment. Perception is a subjective process; therefore, different people may perceive the same environment differently. It is based on what particular aspects of the situation they choose to selectively absorb, how they organize this information and the manner in which they interpret it to obtain a grasp of the situation.

4.3 NATURE OF PERCEPTION

Perception is a central issue in epistemology, the theory of knowledge. At root, all our empirical knowledge is grounded in how we see, hear, touch, smell and taste the world around us. Or, we can say that perception is that process by which using our five senses, we acquire information about the world. There are four elements in perception. They are- (i) the perceiver, (ii) the object, (iii) the sensory experience and (iv) the relation between the object and the subject commonly taken to be a causal relation by which the object produces the sensory experience in the perceiver. To see the field is apparently to have a certain sensory experience as a result of the impact of the field on our vision.

There are three quite different ways to speak of perception. Each corresponds to a different way of perceptually responding to experience. We often speak simply of what people perceive, for instance see. We also speak of what they perceive the object to be, and we commonly talk of facts they know through perception, such as the grass is long. Hence, I see, perceive the green field. Secondly, speaking in a less familiar way, I see it to be a rectangular. Thus, I might say that I know it looks different from that hill, but from the air one can see it to be perfectly rectangular. Thirdly, I see that it is rectangular. Perception is common to all three cases, seeing which is a paradigm case of perception, is central in all of them. These cases represent three modes of perception. They are- perception of the simplest kind, such as seeing, occurs in all three. But especially because of their relation to knowledge and justified belief they are significantly different.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: What do you mean by perception?

Q 2: What are the elements of perception?

Q 3: There are four elements of perception (true/false).

4.4 DIFFERENT THEORIES OF PERCEPTION

There are mainly three theories of perception- direct realism, indirect realism and idealism. Philosophers of perception are divided into realists and idealists. Realists claim that what we perceive are physical objects only, which exist independent of our mind and of our perception. On the other hand idealists argue that we perceive only mental things or ideas of some kind.

4.4.1 Direct Realism

Direct realism is the natural starting point for theories of perception. It is common sense to say that we perceive physical objects and these exists independently of our minds. 'Physical objects' include tables, books, our own bodies, plants, mountains. According to direct realism, what we perceive through our senses are just these very things, physical objects, together with their various properties. For example, when I perceive my desk, I perceive its size, shape, colour, smell and texture. So, direct realism claims that what we perceive are mind-independentphysical objects and their properties. But Russell in his book, 'The Problems of Philosophy' argues that there are variations in our perceptual experience, for the properties of texture and shape. The table might be smooth to touch, but at a microscopic level there are all kinds of bumps and dips- so should we say that when we touch the table, the smoothness we feel is a property of the table? And the shape that something appears to have, liked its colour, varies with the angle from which you view it. A rectangular table, from every

angle except 90 degrees, does not look perfectly rectangular. All this perceptual variation causes a real problem for the direct realists. The direct realists say I perceive physical object and their properties, in this case the desk, 'directly', as they are. Now we need a name for talking about what we are immediately aware of in perception, e.g. the colour and shape of the desk as I see it now. Russell calls these sense-data. When I look at the desk, I have a sensation- I am aware of something. The content of my sensation –what I am immediately aware of is sense-data. But direct realism claims that what we perceive are physical objects but not sense data. Even it does not have to claim that all their properties, as we perceive them are mind –independent.

The appearance/reality distinction challenges direct realism in cases of illusions and hallucinations. Illusions first: if you half- submerge a straight stick in a glass of water, it looks crooked, but it is not. We see a crooked stick, but the stick is not crooked. However, just from what you experience, you cannot tell whether you are seeing an illusion or not. Someone who does not know about the crooked stick illusion thinks they are seeing a crooked stick. Direct realism replies that when the stick in water looks crooked, there is nothing that is crooked; is wrong. Instead, the stick has the property of looking crooked when half-submerged in water. There is a difference between the property 'being straight' and the property 'looking straight'. Usually, of course, something looks straight when it is straight. But the two properties can come part, and something can look crooked when it is straight. So, sometimes we perceive the 'looks' properties of physical objects, sometimes we experience the properties they have that do not relate to how they are perceived. In both cases, we directly perceive physical objects and their properties.

We can experience perceptual hallucinations- not just visual ones, but auditory and olfactory hallucinations as well. In a hallucination, we perceive something having some property F. When we perceive it, then there is something that has this property. We cannot perceive a physical object at all, therefore what we perceive must be mental- sense data.

Hallucinations can be experiences that are 'subjectively indistinguishable' from veridical perceptions. Thus we see the same thing namely sense-data in hallucinations and therefore, in all cases we see sense-data, and not physical objects, immediately.

The main points of direct realism are-

- Direct realism claims that physical objects exist independently of our minds and of our perceptions of them.
- It again claims that when we perceive physical objects, we perceive them 'directly'.
- The argument from perceptual variation points out that different people perceived the same physical object differently. Therefore, what each person perceives is how the object appears to them.
- The arguments from illusion and hallucination claim that in illusions and hallucinations, we see something, but we do not see the physical world as it is. What we see are sense-data.
- Direct realism note that when we describe what we perceive, we use physical object concepts. This shows that perception seems to be perception of physical objects. To deny this is therefore very counter-intuitive.

4.4.2 Indirect Realism

Indirect realism claims that we perceive physical objects which are mind- independent, but we perceive sense-data immediately and physical objects indirectly. According to indirect realism, there are many perceptual experiences in which what we experience is not the properties of physical objects. When we perceive something having some property F, then there is something that has this property. In such cases, given that what we perceive is not the way the world is, what we perceive are sense-data. Therefore, we always perceive sense-data. Russell defines sense-data as

sense-data are mental things which are the way we perceive them to be. Sense-data only exist while they are being experienced. An experience must be experienced by someone to exist at all. Physical objects can exist when no one experiences them. Even sense-data are 'private'. No one else can experience your sense-data. The key points of indirect realism are –

- Indirect realism claims that when we perceive something having the property F, then there is something that has this property. If it is not the physical object, it must be something mental-sense-data that we perceive.Sense-data are private; they only exist while they are being experienced, and they are exactly as they seem. Physical objects are public, exist when not being perceived, and can be different from how they appear.

- Indirect realism faces an objection that if all we experience are sense-data, how do we know what causes them? How do we know physical objects exist at all?

- Russell argues that we cannot prove that physical objects exist, but this claim is the best explanation for our experience.

- Locke argues that physical objects exist from the fact that we cannot choose what to perceive, and from the fact that information from one sense coheres with information from another.

- We can object that indirect realism entails that our belief in physical objects remains a hypothesis, which leaves the belief open to skepticism.

- Locke distinguishes between primary and secondary qualities. Locke's primary qualities are extension, shape, motion, number and solidity. Secondary qualities are colours, sounds, tastes, smells and hot/cold.

- Locke is not consistent in how he understands the distinction. He defines primary qualities as properties that objects have in themselves and are inseparable from them. He first says secondary qualities are 'nothing

but' properties that objects have that produce sensations in us i.e. they are relational properties of objects. But later, he talks of secondary qualities as subjective and existing in the perceiving mind – a view supported by Russell and Berkeley.

- Locke argues that sense-data resemble the world in respect to primary qualities but not secondary qualities.
- Following Locke, indirect realists can argue that the world has only primary qualities in itself, but we perceive it as having secondary qualities. This is another way in which what we perceive is different from how the world is 'in itself'.
- Berkeley argues that the argument from perceptual variation applies as much to primary qualities as to secondary qualities. Therefore, primary qualities are mind –dependent as well.
- He also argues that sense-data do not, and cannot resemble mind-independent physical objects.
- Russell argues with many of Berkeley's criticisms, but argues that sense-data can still represent physical objects. The relations between physical objects in space and time and various types of similarity correspond to relations between sense-data in these same respects.
- But Russell's theory assumes that mind –independent physical objects can cause mind-dependent perceptual experiences. How this is so remains a philosophical puzzle.

4.4.3 Berkeley's Idealism

Berkeley rejects the existence of physical objects, as they are usually thought of, namely mind-independent. He claims that reality is dependent on minds. The ordinary objects of perception –tables, chairs, and trees and so on- must be perceived in order to exist. The only things that exist are minds and what minds perceive. The claim that nothing exists that is independent of mind is idealism. The key points of Berkeley's idealism are-

- Idealism claims that all that exists are minds and ideas. What we think of as physical objects are, in fact, bundles of ideas.

- Everything we perceive is either a primary or a secondary quality. We do not perceive anything in addition to these. Since both are mind-independent, everything we perceive is mind-dependent.

- Berkeley argues that the idea of a world with just primary qualities makes no sense, e.g. something that has size and shape must also have colour. Locke argues that something that has size and shape must also have solidity, a primary quality, so a world of just primary qualities does make sense.

- The idea of mind-independent objects does not make sense: if we argue that we need a 'material substratum' in which qualities exist, we have no conception of this independent of its qualities.

- Idealism solves the objection to indirect realism that we cannot know how the world is. In experiencing ideas, we are experiencing the world.

- Berkeley's master argument claims that we cannot conceive of anything existing independent of all minds.

- When we think of such a thing, our thinking of it makes it not mind-independent. We can object that Berkeley confused thought with what a thought is about.

- If physical objects are no more than their primary and secondary qualities, and these are ideas, then we cannot say that physical objects cause our perceptions, because ideas are passive. Therefore, what causes our perceptions must be a mind, not matter.

- We can distinguish between what I imagine and what I perceive by the fact that the latter are not voluntary and they are part of a coherent order of nature. So, what I perceive must originate in another mind.

- Illusions are misleading not because we misperceive, but because we make false inferences about what we would perceive. To mark the fact that the perception is not 'normal', we say that what we see 'looks' a certain way rather than 'is' a certain way.

- Idealism can mark off hallucinations from perception as less clear and not connected coherently with the rest of our perceptual experience.

- Berkeley explains scientific investigation as discovering not the real nature of physical objects, but connections between our ideas. It does not discover causal connections, but regularities.

- We can object that idealism entails that no two people ever perceive the same thing, since each perceives the ideas in their own mind. Berkeley responds that we perceive similar things, and these are copies of the one idea in God's mind.

- We can object that I do not know that any other minds exist. Berkeley argues that we can reason that the ideas I perceive originate in the mind of God, and that my experience contains evidence that there are also other minds like mine.

- How can what I perceive exist in God's mind? Berkeley explains that I perceive copies of ideas that exist eternally in God's understanding when God wills me to do so.

4.4.4 Phenomenalism

Phenomenalism is best thought of as a secular idealism. Like idealism, it holds that objects are dependent upon our perceptions of them. Unlike idealism, however it is not committed to the existence of a God who constantly perceives everything. Idealism holds that objects exist only in so far as they are perceived. Therefore, it faces the dual problem of explaining what happens to objects when we cease to perceive them, and why different people's experiences are consistent. To solve both of these problems, idealism invokes God. Phenomenalism differs from idealism in that it holds

that objects exist insofar either as they are perceived or as it is possible to perceive them. Thus, phenomenalism is a weaker theory than idealism. Whereas, idealists committed to the idea that an object that is not perceived are not exist. Phenomenalists can allow that such objects exist in so far as it is possible to perceive them. Therefore, they have no need to invoke God to explain objects disappearing and reappearing when people cease and recommence perceiving them, as the idealists do.

George Berkeley argued from a variety of angles that sense-data is indeed what a perceptible object is. This view is a version of what is often called phenomenalism, since it constructs external objects out of phenomena, which, in this use of term, are equivalent to sense-data. The view is also considered a kind of idealism, since it construes physical objects as ideal, in the sense of being composed of 'ideas' rather than material stuff that would exist even if there were no minds and no ideas.

Using the adverbial theory of sensory experience, one might also formulate an adverbial phenomenalism, which constructs physical objects out of sensory experience alone and says that to see a green field is to experience "green-fieldly " in a certain vivid and stable way. On this phenomenalist view, perception can occur without even sense-data; it requires only perceivers and their properties. Whereas the sense-datum theory is an indirect realism, phenomenalism is a direct irrealism: it says that perceptual objects are directly perceived, but it denies that they are real in the sense that they are mind-independent and can exist apart from perceivers. This is not to say they are not perceptually real-real items in sensory experience. Then, phenomenalism does not deny that physical objects exist in the sense that they are both stable elements of our experience and governed by causal laws, such as those of physics. What phenomenalism denies is that physical objects are real in the classical sense, implying that their existence is independent of our experience. A phenomenalist need not to be a theist, however, to offer an account of the stability of external objects and their lawful behavior. However, a phenomenalist can be more radical and take objects not to have any kind of

existence when unperceived. They are born and die with the experiences in which they appear.

Unlike the sense-datum theory of perception, phenomenalism is only occasionally defended by cotemporary philosophers. Moreover, compared with the sense-datum theory, it is more economical and in that way simpler. As a theory of perception, phenomenalism has fewer objects to analyze and interrelate than do the other theories we have discussed. In addition, it appears to bridge the most important gap between sensory experience and perception of objects; since the objects are internal and directly experienced.

Then, it is difficult to provide an overall philosophical account of just what seeing, or perception in general, is; and while all the theories we have discussed can help in answering the questions just posed, none does so in such a simple and decisive way to leave all its competitors without some plausibility. Still, in exploring those theories we have seen many important points about perception. It is a kind of causal relation. Even its least complex and apparently most basic mode, simple perceiving requires, in addition to the perceiver, both an object of perception and a sensory experience that in some way corresponds to that object and records, if only imagistically , an indefinite and possibly quite extensive amount of information about the object.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: What is perception?

Q 2: What are the four elements of perception?

Q 3: How many theories are there regarding perception?

Q 4: What is perception according to direct realism?

Q 5: Define sense-data.

State two main points of indirect realism.

Q 6: Fill in the blanks:

(i) Idealism is propounded by …….

(ii) Idealism states that everything we perceive is either a …….. or a …… secondary quality.

Q 7: What is phenomenalistic view of perception?

4.5 INDIAN CONCEPT OF PERCEPTION

In Indian philosophy, perception is accepted as a direct source of knowledge of reality. In perception we are face to face with reality. All the philosophical schools call it to be the basic and fundamental source of knowledge. As per literal meaning, "perception" is the pratyaksa. Perception is called pratyaksa because it takes place through the relation to the senses. They are – eye, ear, nose, tongue and skin, these five sense organs have an important role in the theory of perception. In Layman's language, perception is called the direct knowledge of the objective world. The process of perception is as follows: first of all the self comes into contact with the mind, then the mind comes in contact with the senses and the senses in their turn come in contact with their objects, when the mind undergoes a modification through these contacts, then perception follows. All the schools of Indian thought have taken perception or pratyaksa as a source of valid knowledge. In fact; the first source of valid knowledge, recognized by all Indian philosophers in general is 'perception'. Perception is caused by sense-object contact and is not caused by any antecedent knowledge.

Definitions of perception:

Perceptual knowledge is the apprehension of the unique particular object and is given directly through the senses. Perception has been universally accepted as the primary source of valid knowledge by all the orthodox schools of Indian thought i.e. Nyaya, Vaisesika, Samkhya, Yoga, Mimamsa and Vedanta. It could be defined as an immediate knowledge of a present object by the use of sense organ contact. Different schools of Indian Philosophy have defined Perception in different ways.

It is generally defined in the early Nyaya-Vaisesika, as adefinite and true cognition of objects produced by sense object contact. Ganesha defines perception as direct apprehension. Gautama defines sense perception as that knowledge which arises from the contact of a sense organ with its object in expressible words, unerring and well defined. Vaisesika says that perception enables us to apprehend substance, qualities and action. Gautama definition sets four conditions necessary for a judgment to be a true perceptual judgment. 1. A judgment is perceptual and true only if it is produced from contact between sense organ and an object. 2. It is not verbal. 3. It does not wander; and 4. It is definite. Samkhyadefines perception as the direct cognition of an object through its contact with some sense. Kapila views "perception as a cognition takes the form of an object being related to it." KesvaMisra in his 'TarkaBhasa' defines Perception as the source of valid immediate knowledge; and immediate knowledge is that which is brought about by sense object contact. Prasatpada defines Perception as the cognition that depends on sense organs. Yoga, which is an allied system of Samkhya philosophy also recognizes, Perception as an independent source of knowledge. Visvanatha also defined Perception as direct or immediate cognition which is not derived through the instrumentality of any other cognition. Prabhakara, of Mimamsa School defines perception as direct apprehension, which relates to an object, the self and cognition. Jaimini explains "perception as a cognition produced in the self by the sense object contact along with this, he adds that it apprehends only existing and does not apprehend super-sensuous moral. Perception, according to Pramana-candrika, is the means to the apprehension of that which is comparatively proximate and is non-mediated. Kumarila discusses the nature of direct knowledge is that knowledge obtained by a person, which is the result of the right functioning of the sense organs with reference to their objects. Advaita-Vedanta defines perception as 'perceptual knowledge is awareness of external objects'. Perception as a Pramana, is the unique cause of valid knowledge. In the real, sense organs constitute the Karana or the unique cause of perceptual cognition. We can attribute Perception activity to our organs. This source of knowledge is more

concerned with empirical world as held by Sankara. The true perception is defined as immediate and timeless knowledge. It provides us the direct consciousness of objects obtained generally through the exercise of the senses. Identification of the subject and object consciousness by chitta adopting the form of the external object is Perception. According to Vedanta the subject and the object become identical, in Perception because both are the same consciousness.

Besides the orthodox schools, Charvaka, the school of materialism has also accepts perception as a source of knowledge. According to it, perception is the only means of valid knowledge. A general proposition may be true in perceived cases, but there is no guarantee that it will hold true even in unperceived cases.

Different Kinds Of Perception

Many philosophers have analyzed perception in various ways. It has two distinctions, ordinary and extra-ordinary. In ordinary perception, knowledge results from the contact of the sense organs with the object. Extra ordinary perception provides immediate knowledge even without the senses. When the contact between the senses and the object is ordinary, we have ordinary perception, but in case of extra ordinary perception, the contact between the object and the senses is not usual. Again, ordinary perception has been divided into three classes. They are –(i) Indeterminate perception, (ii)determinate perception and (iii) recognition.

The Naiyayikasrecognized two modes of perception, nirvikalpaka or indeterminate and savikalpaka or determinate. Nirvikalpaka or indeterminate perception is the bare perception of a thing along with its generic and specific qualities but without any judgment about it as this or that thing. And savikalpaka is the determinate perception of a thing along with the predicative judgment about it as this or that. It necessarily presupposed a nirvikalpaka or bare perception of the object without explicit recognition or characterization. Again, perception is classified into ordinary

and extra-ordinary. In the former, the sense came into contact with the object in the usual or normal way. In the extra-ordinary perception, the sense-object contact is extraordinary. Ordinary perception is of two kinds-internal and external. In internal perception, the mind which is the internal organ comes into contact with the physical states and the processes like cognition, affection, desire, pain, pleasure etc. external perception takes place when five external organs of senses comes into contact with the external objects. It is of five kinds-visual, auditory, tactual, gustatory and olfactory. Extra-ordinary perception is of three kind again, samanyalaksana, jnanalaksana and yogaja. Samanyalaksana perception is the perception of the universals. Whenever we perceive a particular 'cow' we first perceive the 'universal cowness' inhering in it. Jnanalaksana perception is the complicated perception through association. Here an object is not directly presented to a sense-organ, but is revived in memory through the past cognition of it and is perceived through representation. And the yogaja perception is the intuitive and immediate perception of all objects, past, present and future, possessed by the Yogins through the power of meditation.

Samkhya explanation of determinate perception is different from the Nyaya school, Samkhya states that the former is a vague awareness which latter becomes clear and distinct through analysis, synthesis and interpretation. Through indeterminate perception we express our perceptual experience in the form of a judgment-'this is something'. Samkhya refer to indeterminate perception as the immediate pure and simple cognition of an object. At the state of determinate perception, there is analysis as well as synthesis of an object. Both Kumarila and Prabhakara admit two stages in perception –indeterminate and determinate. Determinate perception is direct and immediate knowledge of an object and its properties as related to each other, which is produced by the sense-object- intercourse added by subconscious impressions. Kumarila recognizes the validity of determinate and indeterminate perception both. Advaita states savikalpaka seems to consist in our seeing an object, and then declaring that it is this or that; simply accepting a thing such as it is without any previous idea of it, such

as when we awake from sleep ,see a tiger, and that once run away. Advaitins accept that determinate perception does not give knowledge of reality. They recognized that indeterminate perception is the only valid perception.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 7: State Nyaya-vaisesika definition of perception.

Q 8: Is the theory of perception accepted by all the schools of Indian philosophy?



4.6 LET US SUM UP

- Perception is that process by which using our five senses, we acquire information about the world. There are four elements in perception. They are- (i) the perceiver, (ii) the object, (iii) the sensory experience and (iv) the relation between the object and the subject commonly taken to be a causal relation by which the object produces the sensory experience in the perceiver.

- There are mainly three theories of perception- direct realism, indirect realism and idealism. Philosophers of perception are divided into realists and idealists. Realists claim that what we perceive are physical objects only, which exist independent of our mind and of our perception. On the other hand idealists argue that we perceive only mental things or ideas of some kind.

- Phenomenalism is best thought of as a secular idealism. Like idealism, it holds that objects are dependent upon our perceptions of them.

- According to Indian philosophy, perception is accepted as a direct source of knowledge of reality. In perception we are face to face with reality. All the philosophical schools call it to be the basic and fundamental source of knowledge. As per literal meaning, “perception”

is the pratyaksa. Perception is called pratyaksa because it takes place through the relation to the senses.

4.7 FURTHER READING

1) Hume, David: A Treatise of Human Nature, Oxford, 1888
2) Russell, Bertrand: The Problem of Philosophy, London, 1912.
3) O'Connor, D.J., and Carr: Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge, 1982.
4) Chisholm, R: Theory of Knowledge, Prentice-Hall, 1966.
5) Sharma, C.D: A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy, MotilalBanarsidass Publishers, Delhi 1976.
6) Chatterjee, S.C: The Nyaya Theory of Knowledge, Calcutta, 1978.

4.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: By perception we generally mean an apprehension of the world through the senses, or the general exercise of it, or particular cases of its exercise. Again it may be defined as a process by which individuals organize and interpret their sensory impressions in order to give meaning to their environment.

Ans to Q No 2: There are four elements of perception. They are (i) the perceiver, (ii) the object, (iii) the sensory experience and, (iv) therelation between the object and the subject commonly taken to be a causal relation.

Ans to Q No 3: Four theories.

Ans to Q No 4: Indirect realism, as a theory of perception holds that, we perceive physical objects, and these exist independently of our minds. According to it, what we perceive through our senses are physical

objects, together with their various properties. For example- when I perceive my desk, I perceive its size, shape, colour, smell and texture.

Ans to Q No 5: Russell defines sense-data as are mental things which are the way we perceive them to be. Sense-data only exist when they are being experienced. Again Russell says that sense-data are private.

Ans to Q No 6: Two main points of indirect realism are-

(a) Indirect realism claims that when we perceive something having some property F, then there is something that has this property. If it is not the physical object, it must be something mental-sense-data that we perceive.

(b) However, we cannot tell the difference between illusory and veridical perception. Therefore, we perceive the same thing. Since we are perceiving sense-data in case of illusion, we should infer that we always perceive sense-data.

Ans to Q No 7:

(i) George Berkeley.
(ii) Primary, secondary.

Ans to Q No 8. Phenomenalistic view of perception is that, according to this view, perceptual objects are directly perceived, but it denies that they are real in the sense that they are mind-independent and can exist apart from perceivers.

Ans to Q No 9: Nyaya-vaisesika definition of perception is as follows: Gautama defines perception as “non-erroneous cognition which is produced by the intercourse of the sense-organs with the objects, which is not associated with a name and which is well-defined.” Vishvanatha has defined perception as ‘direct or immediate cognition which is not derived through the instrumentality of any other cognition.’

Ans to Q No 10: Yes, almost all the schools of Indian philosophy have accepted the theory of perception as a source of knowledge. Rather, Charvaka, the school of materialism holds that perception is the only means of valid knowledge.



4.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very short questions

Q 1: What is the general meaning of perception?
Q 2: How many elements are there in perception?
Q 3: What is nature of sense-data?
Q 4: Is perception accepted by Materialistic school?

B. Short questions (Answer in about 100-150 words)

Q 1: Write short notes on (a) direct realism, (b) idealism.
Q 2: What is perception according to indirect realism? Discuss.
Q 3: State briefly Nyaya-vaisesika view of perception.
Q 4: How does Mimamsa School defines perception?

C. Long questions ((Answer in about 300-500 words)

Q 1: What are the theories of perception in Western Philosophy? Describe.
Q 2: State the key points of idealism as a theory of perception.
Q 3: Why Phenomenalism is regarded as a theory of perception?
Q 4: Discuss Indian view of perception.

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UNIT- 5: MEMORY

UNIT STRUCTURE

5.1 Learning Objectives

5.2 Introduction

5.3 Definitions of Memory

5.4 Characteristics of Good Memory

5.5 Stages of Memory

5.6 Theories of Memory

- 5.6.1 The Representative Theory
- 5.6.2 The Realist Theory

5.7 Forms of Memory

- 5.7.1 Factual Memory
- 5.7.2 Practical Memory
- 5.7.3 Personal Memory

5.8 Is memory reliable?

5.9 The Indispensability of Memory-Knowledge

5.10 Let Us Sum Up

5.11 Further Reading

5.12 Answers to Check Your Progress

5.13 Model Questions

5.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- explain the concept of memory
- discuss characteristics of good memory
- describe the theories of memory
- discuss the forms of memory

5.2 INTRODUCTION

Our first questions are obvious. What precisely is memory? What is it to remember something? These philosophical questions need to be

distinguished from the similar questions that might be asked by a psychologists or neurologist. There are problems about how memory operates, about what goes on in our body or brain when we remember, about what physical and psychological factors help or hinder our remembering, and so on. These are the concern of the scientist, who investigates the functioning of the human capacity we call memory. But our question is different; we are asking what memory is in itself, what that human capacity consists in, however it may operate. We want to explain not the mechanism of memory, but its nature; not how it works, but what it is. The question is, in effect, what it is that we are talking about when we talk about memory, as we all do, without knowing anything of the physical processes involved. When we say that we remember something, what are we referring to? When we talk about remembering, what, exactly, are we talking about?

Memory means the ideal revival of an object or event or experience. It is the recall of an old personal experience which had temporarily dropped from our consciousness. It may be exemplified by taking the case of our remembering some past fact of our childhood. A witness giving evidence in a court furnishes typical example of memory. He recalls, as far as possible, the past objects and events which he had witnessed, in the order and manner of their original occurrence. Thus in memory, the fact remembered is referred to the past. But the mere dating of an event in the past is not memory; it must be dated in our own past. Hence, in strict appropriateness, memory is the recall or're-instatement' of an old experience, with the additional consciousness that we have thought or experienced in its occurrence.

LET US KNOW



Memory means the ideal revival of an object or event or experience. It is the recall of an old personal experience which had temporarily dropped from our consciousness.

5.3 DEFINITIONS OF MEMORY

For a layman, memory implies the power to remember the past experience. Psychologists have attempted to define memory in different ways. A few definitions are given below:

1. **Stout's view:** "Memory is the ideal revival of past experiences, as far as possible, in the manner and order in which they originally occurred."

2. **Woodworth's view:** "Memory consists in remembering what has previously been learnt." He regards memory as involving learning, retaining, recall and recognition."

3. **Ross's view:** Ross defines memory as a "new experience determined by the disposition laid down by previous experiences, the relation between the two being clearly apprehended."

4. **James Draver in dictionary of psychology** defines memory as the "characteristic of living organism in virtue of what they experience, leaves behind effects which modify future experience and behaviour."

From the above definitions, we conclude that memory consists in

(i) Learning something by certain experience
(ii) Each experience leaves behind certain impressions
(iii) These impressions are recalled in order
(iv) This recall of impressions modifies future behaviour.

Memory is, therefore, the conservation of past experiences to be utilized later, as and when the occasion arises.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: What is meant by memory?

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.....

Q 2: What is Stout's view about memory?

.....

.....



ACTIVITY- 5.1

Explain the definitions of memory given by various thinkers.

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.....

5.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD MEMORY

Good memory is a great asset. A number of characteristics distinguish good memory from bad memory. These are mentioned below:

1. **Rapid learning:** Good memory facilitates learning and not much time is wasted. Certain other factors like concentration, attention, interest are also involved in rapid learning.

2. **Longer retention:** Good memory helps a person in retaining the learnt material for a longer time.

3. **Early and accurate recall:** Early recall is another mark of good memory. Certain people cannot recall the right thing at the right time. They have bad memory. Good memory facilitates rapid and accurate recall when a certain occasion demands it so.

4. **Rapid recognition:** Early recall must be accompanied by quick recognition of the definite idea needed for certain occasion. Unless you are able to recognize the idea which provides correct answer

to a ticklish situation, you will give a proof of poor memory, and will not do well in that situation.

Thus, good memory is always serviceable and helps in recalling the required details with case, speed, accuracy and promptness. According to Stont, rapidity, quickness in length of timeand duration, promptness and accuracy are the marks of good memory.

LET US KNOW



Memory has certain characteristics e.g; rapid learning, longer retention, early and accurate recall, and rapid recognition.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS



Q 3: What are the characteristics of good memory?

……

……

Q 4: What is rapid learning?

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Q 5: What is known as rapid recognition?

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ACTIVITY - 5.2



Explain the characteristics of good memory.

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5.5 STAGES OF MEMORY

Memory has certain stages. They are as follows:

1. **Registration or learning:** Learning or registration is the first step in memory. Whenever something is learnt, it leaves behind a record or impression. The impression is registered in our mind in the form of memory traces. There are several laws of learning which help to facilitate learning process. The other three factors are dependent upon learning.

2. **Retention:** Every experience leaves behind is residual dispositions or traces which are retained and they help its subsequent recall. This fact of retaining the traces is named retention or retentiveness. Retention is a longing state of impressions received by the mind.

3. **Recall:** Recall is the reproduction of the material learnt and retained in the mind. It implies the reviving of the memory trace of brain structure. If an idea is associated frequently, recently and vividly with an event, the recall of the latter is prompter than otherwise.

   Recall is of two types: spontaneous and deliberate. The recall is spontaneous when no special effort is involved to recall an event or a name. The recall is deliberate when we exert our mind to remember certain facts, e.g.; recall in the examination hall.

4. **Recognition:** The last and the most important factor in memory is recognition. Whenever an event or an experience is recalled, it must be recognized to be our own, i.e.; we have ourselves experienced it in the past. Recognition simply means consciousness that we have experienced the recalled event before.

To sum up, memory involves learning, retention, recollection and recognition. These four factors are interrelated. Recollection is impossible without retention and retention is useless without recollection. Again, retention and recollection both would be meaningless without recognition.



LET US KNOW

The stages of memory are registration or learning, recall, retention and recognition.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 6: What are the four stages of memory?

.....

.....

Q 7: What do you mean by retention?

.....

.....

Q 8: How does recall become a stage of memory?

.....

.....

Q 9: What is recognition?

.....

.....



ACTIVITY-5.3

Elaborate the four stages of memory.

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5.6 THEORIES OF MEMORY

5.6.1 The representative theory

The representative theory of memory was most widely held by philosophers ranging from Aristotle to Bertrand Russell. According to the representative theory to remember is to undergo a certain sort of mental experience. In particular, it is to experience an image, a memory-image,

which reproduces some past sense-experience. The image might even be said to be literally a reproduction of the original sense-impression, which has, in the meantime, been stored away in the mind. This image provides us with the information we are then said to remember; it is because we have and experience the image that we have the particular piece of memory-knowledge. So, the distinctive feature of the representative theory is that memory is held to involve representations in the form of memory-images of what has happened. But this raises difficulties.

One such difficulty is that these representations, the memory-images, are things that occur now, when we are remembering, so that, according to the theory, what we are apprehended when we remember is not what has happened, but what is happening now. But if that is so, how can memory be awareness of the past? So Aristotle said, "how it is possible that, though perceiving only the impression, we remember the absent thing which we do not perceive." Aristotle's answer is that, just as we can see Coriscus when we look at a portrait, because the portrait is a representation of Coriscus, so we can be aware of the past when we have the present experience, because the present experience is a representation of the past. But the question now is, in what way is the present image a representation of what has happened?

One suggestion might be that this present image is not so much a fresh impression that represents the past event, as the original sense-impression produced all over again. Thus, John Locke in his Essay Concerning Human Understanding had spoken of memory as "the storehouse of our ideas" in which the various experiences we have had are laid up out of sight until we revive them.

Thomas Reid also points out that it is very difficult to revive things which have ceased to be anything, as it is to lay them up in a repository, or to bring them out of it. When a thing is once annihilated, the same thing cannot be again produced, though another thing similar to it may. Locke also acknowledges that the same thing cannot have two beginnings of

existence, and that things that have different beginnings are not the same but diverse. From this it can be said that an ability to revive our ideas or perceptions, after they have ceased to be, can signify no more but an ability to create new ideas or perceptions similar to those we had before.

The representative theory suffers from two disabilities. The theory is that to remember is to have an image that represents some past event or reproduces some past experiences. But if the image is all I have to go on, I can never tell whether it does do this, and so cannot know whether it is a memory image at all though there is no difficulty in establishing that that is what it is meant to be. So the Representative theory makes it impossible to know whether we actually are remembering, as opposed to trying to remember or thinking we remember; and as a consequence of this, it makes it impossible for memory to provide us with knowledge of the past or of anything else. If we are to avoid these difficulties it seems that, as Reid argues, we will have to make use of some other form of remembering, a form in which memory is, in Reid's words, "an immediate knowledge of something past," rather than the awareness of some present representation."

5.6.2 The realist theory

The realist theory of memory hopes to avoid the difficulties inherent in the representative theory by maintaining that what we are aware of, when we remember, are not representations of past items, but those past items themselves-just as, according to the realist theory of perception, what we are aware of, when we perceive, are not ideas or representations of objects in the world around us, but those objects themselves. As J. Laird puts it, "memory does not mean the existence of present representations of past things. It is the mind's awareness of past things themselves." This realist theory has been by no means as widespread as the Representative account, but it was common in the first quarter of this century, through the influence of Henri Bergson, for whose metaphysics the notion of "pure memory," a direct awareness of the past, was of central importance. Other significant

realists were Alexander, Stout, and Laird, and more recently Woozley, Earle, Taylor, and Smith; the theory was also held, in a rather different form, by Moore, Russell and Price. So, the realist theory of memory to have a memory-image is to be aware, in a unique and characteristic way, of past events. What we call the image is no more than the way this past event appears to us when we so remember it. Remembering is compared not with looking at pictures, but with looking at things themselves. According to Alexander, "the pastness of the object is a datum of experience, directly apprehended. The object is compresent with me as past. The act of remembering is the process whereby this object becomes attached to or appropriated by myself."

However, the realist theory of memory has certain objections. For example, C.D. Broad points out that the memory-image may differ in many respects from the item remembered, which suggests that the image cannot exactly be what is remembered. The answer to this is that when we describe the memory-image, we describe the item as we remember it, as it appears to us in our remembering, and this may very well differ from what actually was the case. The fact that a thing appears different from what it really is does not mean that we cannot perceive that thing itself. This applies equally whether we are talking about perception or about memory. A second objection of Broad's is that the one thing may be remembered at different times, which suggests that according to the realist, images occurring at numerically different times are nevertheless one and the same thing. The answer to this is that, if we are prepared to talk about numerically distinct appearances-which is what memory-images amount to on a realist view, there is no reason why we should not be aware of numerically distinct appearances of one and the same thing at different points in time, just as we may be aware of numerically distinct appearances of one and the same thing from different points in space.

The more serious objection to the realist theory is that it remains totally unexplained how in memory we can be aware of the past, of what no longer exists. According to Aristotle, "one might as well suppose it possible

also to see or hear that which is not present." Then Reid writes, "It is by memory that we have an immediate knowledge of things past." Hamilton adds, "An immediate knowledge of a past thing is a contradiction. For we can only know a thing immediately, if we know it in itself, or as existing; but what is past cannot be known in itself, for it is non-existent." Laird insists that the past does exist, although, of course, it does not exist now; existence includes past existence, and there is therefore no difficulty about direct acquaintance with the past. Price also maintains that talk of a past event being present to consciousness need not mean that that past event exists again in the present; it may mean only that it is presented to us and that we are now aware of it. Nothing prevents a past event from being presented to consciousness, though it may be a contradiction to say that a past event could be present in the sense of 'now existing'. But none of the above views become successful in clearing how the strange quasi-perceptual awareness of the past operates.

Moreover, it is not at all clear that the realist theory in its present form avoids the objections to the representative theory. It may or may not be an advantage to speak of a mysterious form of awareness of the past rather than of a form of awareness of mysterious present entities, but the major difficulties remain. We saw that the representative theorist seems to have no way of telling from the experience whether or not he is genuinely remembering, and therefore cannot use memory in order to arrive at knowledge of the past. The problem remains, irrespective of whether we think of the experience as looking at some present representation or whether we think of it as looking at an appearance of the past event itself. This may seem surprising, since we arrived at the realist theory precisely in order to avoid that problem. It has been argued that since we can check the accuracy of our memory-images, we must have a direct awareness of the past to check the images against. Thus Russell claims that we are certainly able to some extent to compare our image with the object remembered, so that we often know, within somewhat wide limits, how far our image is accurate; but this would be impossible, unless the object, as opposed to the image,

were in some way before the mind. According to H.H. Price, memory-images are often inadequate and known to be so. If we can detect their inadequacy and correct it, surely we must have some 'direct acquaintance' with past events themselves.

The solution to these difficulties is that memory is not to be thought of as a form of consciousness or awareness at all, but as a form of knowledge. Almost alone among those who adopted the realist approach, Stout explicitly distinguished the claim that memory provides an immediate experience of the pats from the claim that it provides immediate knowledge of the past. Stout suggests that to say that memory directly acquaints us with the past is not to say that it provides some inexplicable immediate awareness or experience of things that no longer exist, but that it provides us with immediate knowledge of the past; where by "immediate knowledge" he means non-inferential knowledge, such that the ground of the memory judgment "is not capable of being known by itself in such a way as to be asserted in a proposition distinct from the memory judgment itself as premise is distinct from conclusion" that is, Stout is suggesting that, when I make a memory judgment, this judgment is not based on some present experience of remembering, but is simply a report of what I know about the past, and as such is not based on anything apart from the fact that I know it.

The realist account was common only towards the beginning of this century and soon it led quickly to a view of memory that replaces both it and the representative account. Because if memory is explained as direct awareness of the past, this "direct awareness" might refer either to some form of experience of past events, in which case we have the realist theory or it might refer to Stout's non-inferential knowledge of the past. Indeed, the two interpretations will hardly be distinguished as long as it is held, as in Russell's theory of knowledge by acquaintance that the only way of knowing something directly or immediately is to experience it. But once we distinguish knowing from experiencing, the way is open for an entirely different approach to the problems of memory, according to which remembering is not a type of experience, but a type of knowledge. This is the contemporary approach

towards knowledge according to which memory is a form of knowledge and there is a familiar distinction between these three types of knowledge or three different ways in which we can speak of knowing things which again lead towards the three forms of memory.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 10: What are the two theories of memory?

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Q 11: What is representative theory of memory?

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Q 12: Who are main advocates of representative theory of memory?

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Q 13: What is the realist theory of memory?

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Q 14: Who are the supporters of realist theory of memory?

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ACTIVITY-5.4

Explain the representative theory of memory.

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Elaborate the realist theory of memory.

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5.7 FORMS OF MEMORY

5.7.1 Factual Memory

Factual memory is that type of memory where we speak of knowing or remembering that something is the case that it is so e.g.; Brutus stabbed Caesar. Factual memory is factual knowledge that has been acquired in the past and does not come from present experience or observation. We can remember facts about the present and even about the future as when I remember that today is Tuesday or that I have an important appointment in the morning. The distinguishing feature of the factual memory is not that it is knowledge of the past, but that it is knowledge acquired in the past.

However, factual memory cannot be defined simply as knowledge acquired in the past, because there is always a lot of information we have acquired and forgotten. Rather, we should define factual memory as retained factual knowledge, i.e.; as knowledge we have possessed before and still possess. This definition serves to rule out only such factual knowledge as is acquired at the time in question, as when I know that something happened because I now read about it in a book. Remembering a fact is incompatible with having just learned it; if you remember it, then you knew it before.

More generally, it seems a mistake to suggest that knowledge in memory depends on past knowledge. My present knowledge that Brutus stabbed Caesar does not depend on previous knowledge that Brutus stabbed Caesar; it is precisely the same knowledge, which I still possess. But once we say that memory is the retention of knowledge, then, we do not need to think of the present knowledge as depending on the past knowledge. Retention, says Squires, is simply continuous possession. To say that memory is retained knowledge is only to say that it is knowledge possessed continuously from past acquisition up to the time of remembering.

However, there are some crucial cases where I cannot remember someone's name for a long time, and then it comes back to me, it might be

said that the knowledge was nevertheless continuously possessed, that I knew it all along even though I could not think of it. But if someone reminds me of some fact I had completely forgotten, and would not have remembered if he had not reminded me, it does not seem correct to say that I possessed that knowledge continuously. Something has been retained, something that enables me to say when reminded, "ah yes, I remember it now." But that something does not seem to be a piece of knowledge, because, before I was reminded, I no longer knew the fact in question. Hence, factual memory is not to be defined not as retained factual knowledge , but as knowledge that depends partly on something that might be called a "memory-trace."

5.7.2 Practical Memory

Practical memory is that type of memory where we speak of knowing or remembering how to do something, which amounts to possessing some skill or ability.Practical memory can be defined in terms of practical knowledge. To remember how to drive a car is to know how to drive one, where this is not knowledge I have just acquired, but something I knew before; just as factual memory is retained factual knowledge, so, in the same way, practical memory is retained practical knowledge. Just as practical knowledge seems to consist in possessing certain acquired abilities and skills, so too does practical memory; to remember or know how to drive a car is simply to be able to do so.

However, Brian Smith has argued that remembering how to do something is not simply a matter of being able to do it, but is more a matter of knowing what to do, of knowing that certain things have to be done-as knowing how to drive this particular car involves knowing that the starter button is on the floor, not on the dashboard. This may not affect the definition of practical memory in terms of practical knowledge, since I suspect that smith would say the same things about knowing how to do something that he says about remembering how to do it, but if Smith is correct remembering how would seem to reduce to a form of remembering that, which would

mean that practical memory is not a separate form of memory distinct from factual memory. Smith argues that we can speak of someone remembering how to do something even when he is not doing it and is perhaps unable to do it; and conversely, someone may be able to do or even actually do something without our wanting to say that he is remembering how to do it. He suggests that a purely automatic response cannot count as remembering how, but the explanation might rather be that we speak of remembering how only where we are referring to skills that have had to be acquired, more particularly skills that have to be acquired outside the normal process of development -we do not speak of remembering how to breathe, or even how to walk, as we do speak of remembering how to ride a bicycle. Nevertheless, Smith insists that someone who is doing, in a completely automatic manner, something he has learned to do, is not remembering how to do it.

5.7.3 Personal Memory

Personal memory is that kind of memory where we speak of knowing or remembering some particular person we have met or place we have been visited. Personal memory is the memory we have of particular items like people, places, things, events, situations that we have personally experienced. The distinctive feature of this form of memory is not that it is memory of specific items as opposed to memory of facts and skills; we sometimes speak of remembering specific items without it being personal memory that is involved.

However, Ayer has argued that it is only a contingent fact what I am calling personal memory is restricted to what we have personally experienced, since it is at least logically possible that we might remember the experiences of others. If Ayer is right, then perhaps we should modify our account to say that personal memory is memory of things as if we have experienced them for ourselves, but I am not sure that he is right. Certainly, a person could have knowledge and imagery of something he had not experienced, just as if he had experienced it, and it might turn out to be just

the knowledge and imagery as was once possessed by someone else who did experience it. But the question is whether we would describe this as remembering. A person can seem to remember something he did not experience, just as he can seem to remember something that did not happen, but seeming to remember is notitself remembering.

Personal memory consists in bringing some previously experienced thing to mind, thinking about it again, and going over what it was like, whether we realize that we have actually experienced it or not, where the ability to do this depends on our having experienced it. According to Broad, it is the one and only kind of memory which can plausibly be regarded as closely analogous to perception. For this reason Broad calls this type of memory not "personal" but "perceptual" memory



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 15: What are various kinds of memory?

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Q 16: What do you mean by factual memory?

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Q 17: What is personal memory?

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ACTIVITY - 5.5

Elaborate the different types of memory.

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…….....

LET US KNOW



There are three kinds of memory- factual, perceptual and personal.

5.8 IS MEMORY RELIABLE?

The question of whether memory is reliable or not arises because if there is to be such a thing as memory knowledge, we will need some way of telling whether the facts we remember are indeed facts whether the things we remember happening did actually happen. For memory is not always correct, we sometimes think we remember various things, and it turns out that those things are not so, sometimes we are not sure, or simply do not know, whether we are remembering something or merely imagining it. This leads to the search for a "memory indicator", something that will mark off the genuine cases of memory from cases of mere imagination or of mistakenly thinking we remember. But the search proved unsuccessful; we saw that although we can tell-or rather, know without having to tell-whether we are trying to remember as opposed to deliberately making things up, there is no way of telling, from our remembering itself, whether we are remembering correctly or not. To establish that our memories are correct we have to get outside the remembering and compare what is remembered with the facts. But the trouble is it seems that the only way of getting at the facts is through memory. If we have no way of telling whether our memory is correct in any particular case, we have no way of telling whether it is ever correct. We are entitled to rely on something which proves itself as an accurate guide to the facts of the matter. But if we never tell when memory is correct and when it is not, we can never establish that it is a reliable guide to anything, and so we can never be entitled to rely on our memories. Unless we can show that memory is often correct, we cannot show that memory is reliable, we cannot be entitled to speak of memory-knowledge at all. If I am to know something from memory, or because I remember it, I have first to establish that my memory is reliable and to do that I need to establish that my memory is correct more often than not.

One simple-minded approach to the above problem would be to argue that memory is by definition infallible because so far as it is concerned we cannot be said to remember something unless it is so.But this does not solve the problem. It only shifts the problem to another field. It may be that we cannot remember a fact unless it is a fact, but the question remains of whether we are remembering when we think we are.The problem can be stated not in terms of remembering, but in terms of seeming to remember, or 'ostensible remembering.' Again, it can be argued that factual memory is, by definition, a form of knowledge, so there can be question but that we know what we factually remember. But once the fact remains that we can think we are remembering when we are not, and the question remains of how we are to know whether and when cases of 'ostensible' remembering are in fact cases of genuine remembering.

Another argument is that we cannot show that memory is unreliable without implicitly relying on memory.We know that memory is not always correct only because we remember that it has let us down in the past, so the argument itself presupposes that memory is sometimes correct, viz., when it tells us we have gone wrong in the past: there cannot be reasonable grounds for asserting or even for suspecting the falsity of any memory-judgement unless the infallibility of some memory-judgement is assumed. Yet even if memory had never been shown to be incorrect, the problem of whether we can ever prove it correct would still remain. We don't have to presuppose the correctness of one memory-judgement in order to show that some memory-judgements are false; if I now remember or think I remember that my memory has been mistaken in the past, then either my memory has been mistaken in the past or this present memory is mistaken. Either way, some memory is shown to be incorrect, without my having to assume the correctness of any particular piece of remembering.

But any attempt to show the reliability of memory fails in its ultimate stage. Our problem of showing memory reliable turns out to be insoluble. We cannot rely on anything not even memory itself, unless we already rely on memory. But it is nothing but a circularjustification and according to J. T. Saunders"a circular justification is no justification at all. It only serves to

show that the reliability of ostensible memory is a fundamental assumption of the knowledge enterprise as we in fact pursue it. Such an enterprise must have its unprovable first principles. What we need if we are to avoid it is some justification for relying on memory as a contingent first premise of human knowledge, even though no non-circular proof of its reliability is possible. One suggestion offered by Richard Brandt, is that even if we cannot in the last analysis demonstrate that memory is reliable, nevertheless, it is the only simplest, indeed the only plausible assumption to make when we come to explain the plain facts of the human situation. In such cases, the only acceptable theory would be that which asserts that a large proportion of our memory beliefs are veridical. No alternative to such a theory has been proposed; nor can we imagine what it would be like.This would certainly be a reason to accept that memory is reliable. This is the theory that there has actually been no past at all us to remember or retain knowledge from, the theory that we have been created just as we are, complete with our existing but delusive memories. This theory seems farfetched, but unless we can rule it out, unless we can establish that there has been a past, as we naturally think there has, we cannot accept that memory is reliable. The past is remembered in the present and the claim to remember some fact involves the claim not only that it is a fact, but also that the knowledge was acquired in the past. But for all that present experience can show, it may be that something we claim to remember is not remembered at all but just happens, to come to mind without being information we acquired in the past. So if the claim to remember something, as opposed to the claim that what is said to be remembered is correct, is ever to be verified, we will need to have some knowledge of the past.

5.9 THE INDISPENSABILITY OF MEMORY-KNOWLEDGE

Memory-knowledge is an indispensable element in human knowledge. Most of the things we know we know because we remember them, and the progress of knowledge or even day-today conduct of our lives, would be quite impossible without the ability to remember. Indeed

without memory we could not even have knowledge of our present environments. So without memory one could know nothing at all and there would be no such thing as human knowledge.

Norman Malcolm draws an even stronger conclusion that without memory we could scarcely be human. According to Malcolm a being without factual memory would not have the ability to remember that he was about to do so-and-so or that he had been doing such-and-such. He would not remember where he had put anything, where he was, or when he was to do a certain thing. A being without factual memory would have no mental powers to speak of, and he would not really be a man even if he had the human form. He maintained that true memory is the sort of occurrence that constitutes the essence of memory and both factual and personal memories are essential to mankind. They are so thoroughly entwined with one another that it would be impossible to say which is more essential.

In such case we must be prepared to rely on what we remember or seem to remember if there is to be human knowledge at all. This has two important consequences. First, we were quite wrong to be worried by the fact that the reliability of memory has to be accepted, without proof, as a contingent premise or first principle of human knowledge because it is not something that could possibly be otherwise. Although ostensible memory is a contingent fact, yet we cannot prove that fact. Secondly, though the general reliability of memory can be described as a first principle of human knowledge, but since this 'first principle' is contingent, and yet, in the last analysis, unprovable, it looked as though human knowledge must therefore be built on an unjustifiable assumption. However, this assumption should be reasonable because it has to be made if knowledge is ever to be possible at all. This will be called a 'transcendental argument' for the reliability of memory. In fact, it seems to be the position we are in with regard to our reliance on memory; we have either to accept this reliance as legitimate, or give up all claim to knowledge of the past or acquired in the past or in any way based on such knowledge. Memory-knowledge along with knowledge is only possible only so far as we are prepared to accept memory as reliable.

Perhaps it is a necessary or logical truth thatmemory is reliable, or that our reliance on memory cannot legitimately be questioned at all. Memory is the store of common knowledge. Sydney Shoemaker argues against this, that we have to accept it as a necessary truth that confident memory beliefs and similarly confident perceptual beliefs are generally true, if we are ever to know anything on the basis of memory or perception. Because he argues that if it is a contingent fact, which could be otherwise, that one's confident perceptual and memory beliefs are generally true, and if one cannot establish this fact on the basis of observation and memory, then surely there is no way in which I could establish it. But it does not follow from this argument that we have to take the reliability of memory to be a necessary truth, knowledge depends on its being a fact that memory is reliable, not on its being a necessary or logical fact. Perception and memory themselves cannot used to establish that they are reliable, but this is according to Shoemaker a logical truth that they are reliable, if it is to be true at all. In fact, it is a transcendental argument that we have to accept something as true even though it is neither a necessary truth nor one that can be established by experience. One main function of such arguments is to show how certain presuppositions are essential to various modes of human thought. This must be the conclusion of our discussion of memory-knowledge, there is such a thing as memory-knowledge, and memory has to be accepted as reliable,because without it there would be no knowledge at all, in particular no knowledge of the past. One cannot question the possibility of memory-knowledge without shaking the entire structure of human knowledge to its foundations.



5.10 LET US SUM UP

- Memory means the ideal revival of an object or event or experience. It is the recall of an old personal experience which had temporarily dropped from our consciousness. It may be exemplified by taking the case of our remembering some past fact of our childhood.

- Good memory has certain characteristics like: rapid learning, longer retention, early and accurate recall, and rapid recognition.
- Memory has certain stages like registration or learning, retention, recall and recognition.
- Learning or registration is the first step in memory. Whenever something is learnt, it leaves behind a record or impression. The impression is registered in our mind in the form of memory traces.
- Retention is a longing state of impressions received by the mind.
- Recall is the reproduction of the material learnt and retained in the mind. It implies the reviving of the memory trace of brain structure.
- Recognition simply means consciousness that we have experienced the recalled event before.
- Memory involves learning, retention, recollection and recognition. These four factors are interrelated. Recollection is impossible without retention and retention is useless without recollection. Again, retention and recollection both would be meaningless without recognition.
- There are two types of theories of memory: the representative theory and the realist theory of memory.
- The representative theory of memory was most widely held by philosophers ranging from Aristotle to Bertrand Russell. According to the representative theory to remember is to undergo a certain sort of mental experience. In particular, it is to experience an image, a memory-image, which reproduces some past sense-experience.
- The realist theory of memory hopes to avoid the difficulties inherent in the representative theory by maintaining that what we are aware of, when we remember, are not representations of past items, but those past items themselves-just as, according to the realist theory of perception, what we are aware of, when we perceive, are not ideas or representations of objects in the world around us, but those objects themselves.

- Memory has certain forms: factual, practical and personal.

- Factual memory is that type of memory where we speak of knowing or remembering that something is the case that it is so e.g.; Brutus stabbed Caesar. Factual memory is factual knowledge that has been acquired in the past and does not come from present experience or observation.

- Practical memory is that type of memory where we speak of knowing or remembering how to do something, which amounts to possessing some skill or ability. Practical memory can be defined in terms of practical knowledge.

- Personal memory is that kind of memory where we speak of knowing or remembering some particular person we have met or place we have been visited. Personal memory is the memory we have of particular items like people, places, things, events, situations that we have personally experienced.

- The question of whether memory is reliable or not arises because if there is to be such a thing as memory knowledge, we will need some way of telling whether the facts we remember are indeed facts whether the things we remember happening did actually happen. To establish that memory is correct we need to have some knowledge of the past.

- Memory-knowledge is an indispensable element in human knowledge. Most of the things we know we know because we remember them, and the progress of knowledge or even day-today conduct of our lives, would be quite impossible without the ability to remember. Indeed without memory we could not even have knowledge of our present environments. So without memory one could know nothing at all and there would be no such thing as human knowledge.

- It is a necessary or logical truth that memory is reliable, or that our reliance on memory cannot legitimately be questioned at all. Memory is the store of common knowledge.

- Memory has to be accepted as reliable, because without it there would be no knowledge at all, in particular no knowledge of the past. One cannot question the possibility of memory-knowledge without shaking the entire structure of human knowledge to its foundations.



5.11 FURTHER READING

1) Aristotle, On Memory and Reminiscence, in R. Mekeon, ed., The Basic Works of Aristotle, 1941 Random House.

2) Benjamin, B. S. Remembering, 1956, Mind.

3) Locke, John, Essay Concerning Human Understanding, BK.II. chptr. 10.

4) Munsat, S. The concept of Memory, 1966, Random house.

5) Locke, Don, Memory, 1971, The Macmillan press LTD., London



5.12 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q.1: Good memory has certain characteristics like: rapid learning, longer retention, early and accurate recall, and rapid recognition.

Ans to Q.2: Rapid learning is that characteristics of memory which facilitates learning and where not much time is wasted.

Ans to Q.3: Rapid recognition is the quick recognition of the definite idea needed for certain occasion and without it our memory will be poor.

Ans to Q.4: Memory has four stages like registration or learning, retention, recall and recognition.

Ans to Q..5: The retaining traces of every experience which help in subsequent recall is named retention or retentiveness.

Ans to Q.6: Recall associate es different ideas frequently, recently and vividly with an event, the recall of the latter is prompter than otherwise.

Ans to Q.7: Recognition simply means consciousness that we have experienced the recalled event before.

Ans to Q.8: The two theories of memory are the representative theory and the realist theory of memory.

Ans to Q 9: According to the representative theory to remember is to undergo a certain sort of mental experience.

Ans to Q.10: Aristotle and Bertrand Russell were the main advocates of the representative theory of memory.

Ans to Q.11. The realist theory says that what we are aware of are not ideas or representations of objects in the world around us, but those objects themselves.

Ans to Q.12. The supporters of realist theory are Henri Bergson, Alexander, Stout, and Laird, Woozley, Earle, Taylor, and Smith, Moore, Russell and Price.



5.13 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very short Questions

Q 1: What is memory?
Q 2: What are the first characteristics of memory?
Q 3: What is the third stage of memory?
Q 4: What are the two theories of memory?
Q 5: What kind of theory of memory was advocated by Aristotle?
Q 6: What is retention?
Q 7: What is practical memory?

Q 8: Is memory reliable?

Q 9: What is the indispensability of memory?

B) Short questions (answer each question in about 100-150 words)

Q 1. What do memory consists of?

Q 2. What do you mean by rapid learning?

Q 3: What are the first two characteristics of good memory?

Q 4: What are the stages of memory?

Q 5: Is memory reliable? Briefly explain

Q 6: Is memory indispensable for our learning? Briefly explain

C) Write Short notes (answer each question in about 100-150 words)

Q 1: Types of memory

Q 2: Stages of memory

Q 3: Personal memory

Q 4: Reliability of memory

Q 5: Indispensability of memory

Q 6: The representative theory of memory

Q 7: The realist theory of memory

D) Long Questions (answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q 1: Explain the characteristics of memory.

Q 2: Elaborate the different forms of memory with suitable examples.

Q 3: Explain the realist theory of memory.

Q 4: Is memory reliable? Explain.

Q 5: How is memory-knowledge indispensable for learning? Elaborate.

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UNIT 6: KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF

UNIT STRUCTURE

6.1 Learning Objectives

6.2 Introduction

6.3 Nature of Knowledge

6.4 Nature of Belief

6.5 Relation between knowledge and belief-Traditional View

6.6 Knowledge and Belief-Modern View

6.7 Difference between knowledge and Belief

6.8 Let Us Sum Up

6.9 Future Reading

6.10 Answers to Check Your Progress

6.11 Model Questions

6.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to

- explain the nature of knowledge.
- describe the nature of belief.
- explain the relation between knowledge and belief.

6.2 INTRODUCTION

The problem of knowledge is the corner stone of all philosophical investigation. What is Knowledge—is the central questions to which epistemologists try to provide answers which include also other questions—What is the distinction between knowledge and belief? Which beliefs are justified and which are not? Is knowledge necessarily true? Etc. These are prerequisite primary questions for epistemology.

The word 'knowledge' is derived from platonic term 'episteme' which may refer either to a body of truth or to the state of someone who knows them. A naturalistic account of the concept of knowledge is that knowledge registers truth just as a thermometer registers temperature. Knowing of

person and objects as well as for propositional knowing when epistemology concentrates on the nature of knowledge, it mainly recognizes factual knowledge which is close to reality.

The term 'knowledge' has various usages such as—

1) Knowledge of people, places and things. For e.g. 'I know the city' or 'I know y'

This kind of use of knowledge is named by Russell as 'knowledge by acquaintance'. It is direct, immediate and pre-judgmental knowledge. Russell pointed out that we do not have knowledge by acquaintance of physical objects. Again we are not acquainted with other people's minds. We obtain the knowledge of these things what is called by Russell knowledge by description. This knowledge by description is judgmental knowledge.

2) Knowledge in the sense of having an ability to do thing. For e.g. I know how to play guitar. Ryle says that knowing how is practical and non-propositional knowledge.

3) Knowledge in the sense of apprehending information or knowing that. For e.g. I know that the 'earth is round' and 'I know that x is the mother of y'. Knowledge in this propositional sense is the knowing that so and so. There is some relation between this last sense of 'know' and the earlier ones. According to Ryle, knowing that is theoretical and propositional knowledge.

The sense of 'know' is elementary to human cognition and is required both for theoretical speculation and practical investigation. The importance of the third sense of 'know' is that, this is not, however, knowledge in the sense that concerns us. It is merely the possession of information. But what is the requirement to know in this third and most important sense. Suppose that the letter "p" stands for any proposition. One believes that p must be true. The moment one has some reason to believe that a proposition is not true; this immediately negates a person's claim to know

p. Similarly if one says 'he knows p, but p is not true, so it becomes self-contradictory. It may be that I thought I knew p; but p is false, I didn't really know it. It means knowing p knows that p is true.

The concept of 'belief' is very central to the epistemology as the ground level epistemological concepts of truth and falsity and justification are applied primarily to beliefs and of derivatively to knowledge. The concept of knowledge is associated with the concept of belief as per Plato's definition. According to the earlier epistemologists, knowledge and belief are terms of descriptive of mental occurrences.

In philosophical tradition we find various ways of conceiving of beliefs. Armstrong put forward three important ways of conceiving of belief i.e.

1) Beliefs are conscious occurrences in believers mind.
2) Beliefs are dispositions of the believer.
3) Belief the state of the believer's mind.

Let us now discuss the nature of knowledge and nature of Belief.

6.3 NATURE OF KNOWLEDGE

Regarding the nature of Knowledge philosophers can discuss various views from the very early period. Among them we preferably discuss the views of Plato, Ryle, Austin, Ayer etc. We can discuss them below—

Plato's concept of knowledge:

In his dialogue Theaetetus Plato tried to define knowledge through various concepts. He assumes that knowledge is infallible and of what is. With this assumption he goes to examine different traditional accounts of knowledge and shows them to be inadequate.

Traditionally knowledge is identified with perception. According to Plato, if knowledge had been identified with perception then it implies that what appear to be true for one person is true for that person. Secondly,

perception often gives us contradictory results. The same thing may be perceived by some one as 'x' and some one else as 'y'. Thirdly, if all perceptions are equally true then all proofs and refutations become meaningless. And there will be no criterion for differentiating the perception of an individual from the perception of the other non-human sentient beings. Further he says that perceptions are not even a part of knowledge. We can not really be said to know anything if we have not attained truth about it. Hence it can be said that mere sense perception neither in the whole nor in the part can be identified with knowledge.

Secondly, Plato says that knowledge is identified with true judgment. A true judgment can be a guess or a random shot. For e.g. in case of an innocent man under trial, against whom there are strong evidences. A skilful lawyer defending him may elicit the judgment that he is innocent from the jury by manipulating the evidence. Plato here states that someone can be persuaded into making a true judgment without knowing the truth. So knowledge is not just true judgment.

In his third assumption Plato says that knowledge is defined as true judgment with an account. This definition of knowledge actually means— knowledge is true judgment plus an account (logos) or knowledge is true belief with logos. In three senses this definition has been understood—

a) The first sense is 'making one's thought apparent vocally.
b) The second sense is the enumeration of the element that something.
c) The third is 'telling some mark by which the object you are asked about differs from all other things'.

A true judgment is a true belief and a true belief is not true knowledge. If justification is added to true knowledge then true judgment is not identical with knowledge. If justification is taken to be the analysis of the belief into constituent parts, then such justification can not convert true belief into knowledge as the enumeration of parts of an object. There is no scientific account of that object. So this definition can not make a true notion of knowledge.

In Theaetetus he makes a distinction between knowledge and opinion. These are considered to be the two different functions are based on the differentiation of their objects. In Republic, Plato says knowledge as a function of mind may operate in two different ways- either as pure reason or as understanding. The objects of pure reason are Ideas or Forms or Archetypes while those of understanding are mathematical entities. On the other hand opinion (doxa) could also be of two kinds' viz. higher opinion and lower opinion. Their corresponding objects are particular sensible objects and the 'shadows' and images of such objects respectively. So, according to Plato, knowledge and opinion are two different states of mind dealing with different sorts of objects. So knowledge and belief are two distinct faculties as they cognize two different kinds of objects.

Gilbert Ryle's concept of Knowledge:

Gilbert Ryle was a philosopher of ordinary language. He tried to remove lots of myths that resulted from the philosopher's deviation from ordinary usages of language. In order to fulfill this purpose he takes up the concept of knowledge. In his book 'Concept of Mind' he makes a distinction between 'knowing how' and 'knowing that'. The former involves some activity while the later involves information. There are some similarities as well as differences between the two.

We can say about how to play an instrument as well as of learning something but we never speak of a person believing or opinion how and though it is proper to ask for grounds or reasons for someone's acceptance of a proposition. Knowing how to do something, according to Ryle, involves ability to give correct and successful performance which satisfies a standard or criterion. One can not say that a well performing clock knows how to show the time because knowing how as an intelligent performance is a predicate applicable to persons responsible for their performances. Hence it can be said that knowing how involves intelligent performance and in our language an action is said to be intelligent. Since knowing how in many of the cases does not involve consideration of principles, maxims or

imperatives and in those cases where it can be shown that it involves consideration of these, their consideration involves knowing how which in its turn does not involve knowing that. Therefore we may say that according to Ryle's interpretation, knowing how is more fundamental than knowing that.

Knowing how consist in the ability to give a successful performance. But in our ordinary usage we do not accept that a person knows how to do a thing in spite of his ability to give successful performance in many cases. We make distinction between things done successfully by chance or blindly and things done from the knowledge of doing that thing.

According to Gilbert Ryle, the verb 'to know' is a dispositional or a capacity verb. Dispositional words like 'to know' are used to describe human behaviour and as a result "sentences embodying these dispositional words have been interpreted as being categorical reports of particular but unwitnessable matters of fact instead of being testable, open hypothetical and what is called 'semi-hypothetical statements'. It is noted that some dispositional words are highly generic or determinable while others are highly specific or determinate. Dispositional words like 'know', 'believe', 'aspire', 'cleaver' and 'humorous' is determinable dispositional words. They signify abilities, tendencies or proneness to do, not things of one unique kind, but things of lots of different kinds. Thus knowing is a determinable dispositional verb which is mistaken to be determinate dispositional word and hence supposed to be like other determinate dispositional word indicating a disposition which is actualized in one definite way. All the different activities that are the exercises of the disposition to know are supposed to be the same, i.e. involving a secret, unobservable etc are called mental state.

Therefore 'to know' as a dispositional word does not describe any secret state of affair going inside one's private chamber called mind, but states a hypothetical assertion that if such and such conditions are fulfilled then the individual concerned will act or react in such and such a way. Dispositional sentences narrate no incidents; they assert the hypothetical

assertion that if the dispositional assertion is true then it is satisfied by narrated incidents. However Ryle says dispositional expression may imply either capacities or tendencies. 'Know' is a capacity verb and as a capacity verb of that special sort that is used for signifying that the person described can bring things off or get things right. According to Ryle, epistemologists wrongly assimilate knowledge with belief. They mistakenly thought that knowledge differs from belief in the way that it contains all the elements of belief and some elements of itself both of which are introspectible. In reality there is no difference between knowledge and belief. 'Belief' differs from 'know' because it is not capacity verb but a tendency verb. However 'belief' belongs to the family of motive words while know belongs to that of skill words. Hence knowledge is not a mental state. It is a disposition and capacity.

Austin's concept of knowledge:

According to J.L. Austin when we use words, we become engaged in three kinds of activities- locutionary act of merely making some utterance, perlocutionary act of bringing about changes and consequences concerned could be brought about without making the utterance. Again elocutionary act which is performed by making the utterance that could not be done without making the utterances. The meaning of an expression is constituted by its elocutionary act potentials. Austin was attentive to this fact and consequently he brought to light the elocutionary act performed by the utterance 'I know' while dealing with the concept of knowledge. Austin says the utterance 'I know' does not describe a special state of mind. It is a performative utterance. 'To promise' is such an expression. If I utter 'I promise' then the fact of promising is brought about. If one says 'I know' I give a sort of guarantee of the hearer that the statement followed by it has the best evidential conditions supporting it. According to Austin, if I say this, my saying makes the fact of guaranteeing into existence. In order to show the performative character of 'I know' Austin likens it with 'I promise' which is conspicuously performative. Hence it can be said that Austin used the word 'to know' in a social context. He says by uttering this I become vulnerable as I put my dignity as I put my dignity under stake. If the statement

claimed to be known turns out to be false, I am likely to be reproached by those others.

Austin distinguishes between knowledge and belief. He says they are differed from each other as they involve two different kinds of elocutionary acts. It becomes clear when he says, "Saying 'I know' is not saying 'I have performed a specially striking feat of cognition, superior, in the same scale as believing.

A.J. Ayer's concept of knowledge:

Ayer presents a philosophical treatment of the concept of knowledge in his book "The Problem of Knowledge". Like other philosophical problems this problem of knowledge is also not capable of being solved by referring to factual information. What is true of philosophical problem in general should be true of the problem of knowledge in particular. In order to answer the question 'what is knowledge' Ayer makes a distinction between the use of an expression and the analysis of its meaning. The word 'know' has different uses. Some of this are-

- Knowing- in the sense of 'being familiar with
- Knowing something- in the sense of having had the experience of 'it', as when someone says that he ha known hunger or fear.
- Knowing- in the sense of 'being able to recognize or distinguish as when we claim to know an honest man when we see one or to know butter from margarine.
- To know how to swim or drive a car.
- Knowing in the sense of being to apprehend or comprehend as fact or truth.

So there are different uses of the word 'know'. But philosophers are not satisfied with these uses. So Ayer tries to determine the kind of

resemblances among the different instances of the use of the word 'knowledge'. Here Ayer has given three alternative possibilities:

1) The resemblance is straightforward. This sort of resemblance leads us naturally to their having an identical quality.

2) The resemblance is merely a 'family resemblance'.

3) The resemblance among different instances in which we use the word 'to know' is such that 'they share a common factor the possession of which is necessary to their being instances of knowledge, even though it is not sufficient.

Ayer, considering the third alternative, says if knowledge were always knowledge that something is the case, then such a common factor may be found in the existence of a 'a common relation to truth. What is true may be believed or disbelieved, doubted or imagined. So truth is not a sufficient condition of knowledge. But it is a necessary condition as what is known can not but be true. Here knowledge is supposed to be always knowledge that something is the case.

Like Ryle, Ayer also says the word 'know' is used to signify a disposition. It is a capacity verb. So if one says 'he knows some facts of ancient history' does not mean actually thinking of certain historical facts but it implies that I have the capacity to give a successful performance in the way that if the subject comes up I am in a position to make statements which are authoritative and true. To have knowledge is to have the power to give a successful performance not actually to be giving one. So the word 'know' is not a descriptive phrase. Its function is not to describe any mental state though it may incidentally imply.

According to Ayer, there are three conditions which are necessary and sufficient for knowing that something is the case. These are

- What is known should be true.
- One must be completely sure of what one knows.

- One must have the right to be sure.

Ayer states these to be the necessary and sufficient conditions of knowledge as definition of knowledge is not possible. The first condition of the three necessary and sufficient conditions is the truth of the statement concerned. Secondly one has to be completely sure of what one knows. But these two conditions are not in themselves sufficient.

According to Ayer, an intentional definition of knowledge is not possible in terms of these conditions. Of the three necessary and sufficient conditions the first is what is known should be true. The truth condition does not imply that what is known should be infallible. The third condition for knowledge is having the having the right to be sure. In most of the cases we concede the right to be sure to one who can give appropriate evidence in support of what he claims to know. But if the statements given in support of the belief give the right to be sure, then these statements themselves shall be justified by others statements. Otherwise they would remain unjustified and will not be able to justify other statements and thus this process of justification will go on ad infinitum.

6.4 NATURE OF BELIEF

The concept of belief is one of the important concepts of epistemology. Belief may be characterized as stronger than mere under grounded opinion but weaker than full knowledge. For Descartes, belief is an active state of mind in which assent to some proposition is granted or withheld; it is a passive state that occurs or fails to occur in respect of some propositions. The objects of belief are propositions.

The belief states themselves possess a sentential structure, that they are maps in some literal sense. In P.F. Ramsey's phrase a belief is viewed as "a map of neighboring space by which we steer". Ramsey attributed two characteristics to the belief-it is a map and it is something by which we steer. D.M. Armstrong supposes that Wittgenstein's comparison of sentences to pictures inspired Ramsey's formula gives us the solution

to the problem of Hume. Hume in his 'Treatise' asks marks of believing something from merely entertaining the thought. Ramsey shows that beliefs are maps by which we steer. So unlike entertaining propositions, beliefs are action guiding. Armstrong argues that Ramseyan account of belief is satisfactory only in cases of belief concerning things at particular times and spaces.

According to Robert Stalnker, though beliefs have sentential characteristics it does not imply that beliefs themselves must have a sential structure. Stalnaker hold that beliefs are attitude directed, not towards propositions, but towards the world. Belief states are best characterized by sets of 'possible' worlds, alternative ways the world may be.

Some thinkers view that belief like meaning, is indeterminate. According to him, it makes no sense, to talk of beliefs or meanings independently of a particular linguistic context. Again for Quine there is no translation independent fact of the matter as to what a given sentence means, there is no non-contextual fact of the matter as to what a given agent believes. In case of beliefs, agents are in a position to decide on their beliefs, yet believing appears not to be voluntary. According to Descartes, believing depends on some prior act of will. Ryle also regards belief as tendencies to say and do various things. Ryle argues that mental states like belief are not causes of behaviour. On the other hand they are dispositional states triggered causally.

Some contemporary accounts of beliefs try to state that beliefs try to state that belief is 'semantically indifferent' in nature or 'standard infirmity of belief'. A. N. Prior says that 'belief can not be a relation since there is no actual relation or objects of belief to be related with the subject or the belief. This can be considered as a stepping stone to distinguish knowledge from belief on the grounds of their respective objects. But so far as the objects are concerned in case of belief it does not seem there is any real difference. One's believing is always one's believing something. There is always an object in believing.

One believes a proposition contrast with one believes a proposition with regard to an object. In the first case, the object is just a proposition and this kind of believing is 'de dicto' In. the second case, the object is not merely propositional or conceptual that believing is 'de re'. This kind of believing involves an 'absoluteness relation' to an object that is not found in 'de dicto' believing. But believing 'de re' is related also to a propositional object where the 'objects' is denotatively defined through a referential absoluteness relation. So the vital point is that both 'de re' and 'de dicto' believing have propositional objects that are either true or false. So belief is an attitude one can have towards a proposition. There may be three kinds of propositional attitudes of belief.

1) Belief that P (take p to be true)
2) Disbelief that P (take p to be false)
3) Suspend judgment as to p (neither belief nor disbelief)

6.5 RELATION BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF—TRADITIONAL VIEW

The term 'knowledge' and 'belief' are two important concepts in the philosophical investigation of knowledge. These two terms sometimes used interchangeably as there is no radical difference between knowing and believing. Knowing could properly be regarded as specific variety of believing. Yet again on some occasions someone may not know so and so but merely believing. And on some other occasions someone may not know so and so but merely believes that here knowledge contrast belief. But the general agreement is that what we know can only be true whereas what we believe may be true or may not be true. So it may imply that truth or falsity does not apply to what we know but apply to what we believe.

Regarding the relation between knowledge and belief philosophers have given various views. Greek philosopher Plato started the discussion of distinguishing knowledge from belief with the problem concerning the possibility of false logos. In his dialogues Meno and Phaedo he gave clear

distinction between knowledge and belief with the theory of recollection. It is assumed that we do have knowledge which is distinct from certain cognitive states particularly from belief and opinion. Plato holds the view that knowledge and belief should distinguish both by their objects and by their different faculties employed. What is known is unchanging and by contrast what is believed is in flux and allows of contradictory possibilities.

Plato distinguishes between the intelligible world and the physical world. The first world consists of

a) The objects of pure thought and
b) Physical objects used for the purpose of mathematical reasoning.

The second world or the physical world is sub-divided into

a) Physical things and
b) Shadow and images of physical things.

Corresponding to these four classes of objects, there are four levels of apprehension. Knowledge may be either

a) Pure thought or
b) The abstract reasoning of mathematics.

While belief includes

a) Opinion
b) Illusion.

So according to Plato, belief is clearer than ignorance and more obscure than knowledge and secondly belief is an intermediate state and it is neither ignorance nor knowledge.

In Theaetetus Plato also discusses the relationship between the knowledge and belief with the problems concerning the possibility of meaningful falsity. Plato set before himself whether knowing can be identified with sense perception, failing this, against whether it is true belief with an

account. But he fails to accept any satisfactory definition of knowledge. Ultimately it has been established that knowledge is neither perception nor true belief with an account.

The above stated Plato's view is most important as well as significant in the analysis of knowledge. He keeps knowledge, thought and intelligible objects on the one hand and beliefs, sense and sensible objects on the other. Thus we find the concept of two-world in Plato's epistemology.

6.6 KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF—CONTEMPORARY VIEW

Akin to Plato other epistemologists also give the views that the concept of 'knowledge' is completely different from that of the concept of belief. Concerning the relation between knowledge and belief as put forward by different philosophers, some epistemologists concise the relation under one roof.

Russell makes a divergence between knowledge and belief. He says knowledge has facts for its objects and knowledge is a relation between two genuine objects: the knower and the fact known. But there may not be any fact as is believed by the believer. For e.g. we may believe that there is a lotus blooming in the sky, which actually not existent in nature. So belief is not always a two-termed relation between believer and the fact.

Regarding belief, the believer is personally involved and so beliefs are subjective. On the other hand knowledge is not a personal affair. Though knowing and believing are cognitive activities yet the two terms are different in nature. The verb 'to know' is not a proper psychological verb. Hence no empirical science can study the logical or paralinguistic behaviours of 'know' which is a philosophical term. Again the adjectives like true, false, justified, unjustified are applicable only to belief. But they can never be applied to knowledge. It is possible that justified and unjustified belief can be true by chance, but knowledge can never be true by chance.

Hintikka also put forward an important elaboration between knowledge and belief from the point of modal logic of epistemic concept. Knowledge can not be lost simply as a result knowing something new. But it is quite possible that we can change, modify or give up our beliefs in the presence of new information. It refers a person knows all logical consequences of what he knows.

Chisholm also gives analogous views in this respect. He says, "If a man knows that a proposition is true, then he is justified in believing that there is no truth that could disturb the case that he has for that proposition. He remarks that a man can be said to believe firmly or hesitatingly. He claims an important distinction between knowledge and belief. He argues, "We often speak of what a man ought to know but seldom. If ever, of what a man ought to believes". In other words one can not know the faults but, one can only fail to know the right thing. The believer on the other hand can believe what is false and he can also fail to believe what is true. So both 'error of commission' and 'error of omission' are possible in the state of belief. The process of knowing is radically different from the process of belief. There are ways of knowing but there are no ways of believing.

Again Austin holds the view that the expression 'I know' has a special performative function. When one knows something and believes something, the two acts are different. The illocutionary act performed by 'I know' is quite different from the illocutionary act performed by 'I believe'.

According to Ryle, 'know' and 'believe' are dispositional verbs but the verb 'know' is named as a capacity verb of a special sort whereas 'believe' is a tendency verb. For e.g. the verb 'know' truly signifies something which is a success verb but the verb 'believe' signifies nothing of this sort. He says objectives like obstinate, wavering, fanatical, wholehearted, childlike etc can be applied to believes, but the same all not applicable to knowledge.

Hence it can be seen that there is a clear distinction between knowledge and belief. From the nature of knowledge, as explained by Plato, knowledge is defined as justified true belief. But this definition is untenable.

So by criticizing the JTB definition of Plato philosophers like A.J. Ayer, R.M. Chisholm, C.I. Lewis and Armstrong try to explain the relation between knowledge and belief. They tried to give answer the question "Is knowledge justified true belief?" with their respective definitions of knowledge. JTB defines knowledge with three conditions viz. the truth condition, the belief condition and the justification condition. The truth condition in JTB assumed that "if one knows that p, then p is true in the sense that p states how things actually are." Here we must have guided by the following two points about the relation between truth and justification.

1. It is possible that p is true although there is no one who has justified belief that p.

2. It is possible for S to be completely justified in believing that p although p is false.

The second is belief condition. A belief is an attitude one can have towards a proposition. An object of one's believing is a propositional truth. It is something that is true or false. One can stand in any of three philosophically possible relations to a proposition one consider. They are

1. Believing that P.
2. Disbelieving that P.
3. Suspending judgment as to P.

So knowledge requires believing or at least asserting or knowing that p requires one's belief or assent to p. That is why knowledge is perspective.

The third condition is justification. In the JTB account of knowledge, knowledge is a true belief which is justified. Propositional knowledge requires justification. It requires that a knower has adequate indication that a known proposition is true justification. Justification helps to guess facts a true belief in relation to certain relevant facts where truth is not likely out come. Epistemic purification is needed to exclude co-incidentally true belief.

The JTB analysis of knowledge was accepted universally by the philosophers till the middle of the sixties. JTB analysis was considered as giving both the necessary as well as the sufficient conditions of knowledge. From the traditional and modern philosopher's point of view, we can formulate a general account of knowledge where truth, belief and justification are three necessary and sufficient conditions of knowledge.

E.L.Gettier argued that the tripartite account of knowledge is not sufficient. He said that in order to have knowledge, one need to have justified true belief. In his paper "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?" he presented counter examples to show the inadequacy of traditional definition of knowledge. He claimed that it is possible for someone not to know p, even when all the three conditioned are satisfied. Through his counter examples, he shows the absence of knowledge in the presence of justified true belief. Gettier allows that the traditional three conditions are individually necessary and sufficient condition of knowledge. It is known as 'the Gettier problem' or the problem of fourth condition of knowledge.

Gettier states that the counter examples are created to show that the true conditions of JTB are not sufficient conditions for the claim that 'S knows that p' whether they constitute the set of necessary condition is not considered by Gettier. His one of the counter examples is:

Suppose that Smith and Jones have applied for a certain job. And suppose that Smith has strong evidence for the following conjunctive proposition: a) Jones is the man who will get the job and Jones has ten coins in his pocket. Smith's evidence for (a) is that the President of the company assured him that Jones would get the job and that he, Smith has just counted the coins in the pocket of Jones. Now (a) entails (b) The man who will get the job has ten coins in his pocket. Smith sees the entailment and accepts (b). He is clearly justified in believing that (a) is true. Suppose that unknown to Smith, he himself, not Jones will get the job and also unknown to him, he himself has ten coins in his pocket. In this e.g. (b) is true, Smith believes that (b) is true. But it is clear that Smith does not know

(b). The other potentials are (c) The man who will get the job has ten coins in his pocket. Let us see that Smith sees the entailment from (b) to (c) and accepts (c) on founds of (b) for which he has strong evidence. In this case, Smith is justified in believing that (a) is true. It is the famous Gettier's example.

This is how analytic philosophers tried to explain the relation between knowledge and belief.

6.7 CRITICISM

Although Philosophers have given a lots of explanation about the relation between Knowledge and Belief but criticisms arise behind it. M. Clark has immediately and directly reacted to Gettier's paper and suggests a fourth condition to overcome it. His definition of knowledge states that

S knows that P if only if – (1) P is true, (2) S believes that P, (3) S is justified in believing that p and (4) S's belief that p is fully grounded in which from 1 to 4 jointly will give the necessary and sufficient condition for knowing that p. So in this suggestion of fourth condition, Clark wants to say, "if each ground in this chain is true, then I will say that the belief is fully grounded."

Again R.M. Chisholm by admitting the genuineness of Gettier's counter examples tried to repair the JTB analysis. He has changed in definition of knowledge on various occasions, but the changes were made to make these definitions consistent with the refinement in his theory of justification. In the field of empirical knowledge the concept of 'certain' is illustrated Chisholm as 'self-presenting'. In Gettier's counter example, the belief concerned is not cases of evident belief.

Finally, D.J. O'Connor and B.Carr have tried to offer a simple solution to Gettier's problem. Ac cording to them for a justified belief to constitute knowledge appear as that there should exist a connection between the truth of the proposition believe and the grounds on which it is believed.

Hence it can be said that the relation between knowledge and belief is of a kind of weak compatibilism where A knows that p, a may believe p, may not believe as well.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: What is meant by knowledge by acquaintance, according to Russell?

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.....

Q 2: What is knowledge, according to Russell?

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.....

Q 3: Write Plato's view on 'knowledge is perception'.

.....

.....

Q 4: Write the name of the book of Ryle in which he makes a distinction between 'knowing how' and 'knowing that'

.....

.....

Q 5: Who is the author of 'The Problem of Knowledge'?

.....

.....



6.8 LET US SUM UP

We have discussed the concept of Knowledge and Belief. The basic points are:

- Knowledge and belief are two important concepts of epistemology.
- Knowledge is elementary to human cognition and beliefs are dispositions of the believer.
- According to Plato, knowledge is justified true belief.

- According to Ryle, the verb 'know' is a dispositional or a capacity verb. Knowing is a determinable dispositional verb which is mistaken to be determinate dispositional word.

- According to Austin, knowledge is a performative utterance. Knowledge and belief are two different kinds of elocutionary act.

- According to Ayer, the word 'know' is not a descriptive phrase. To have knowledge is to have to give a successful performance not actually to be giving.

- Belief is an active state of mind in which assent to some proposition is granted for withheld.

- Knowledge and belief are differed from each other—

  a) What is known is unchanging but what is believed is flux.

  b) Belief is subjective whereas knowledge is objective.

  c) Knowledge is a capacity verb while believe is a tendency verb.

- Knowledge has been justified with truth and belief has been analyzed by Gettier with a fourth condition



6.9 FURTHER READING

1. Austin, J.L.1956. The Problem of Knowledge, Penguin Books, London and Baltimore.
2. Ayer, A.J.1946. Language, Truth and Logic, Victor Gollancz, London.
3. Chisholm, R.1996. Theory of Knowledge, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs.
4. Hamlyn, D.W.1970. The Theory of Knowledge, Macmillan London.
5. Hintikka, J. 1962. Knowledge and Belief, Cornell University Press, Ithaca.

6. Hospers, J. 1971 An Introduction to Philosophical Analysis, Allied Publishers, New Delhi.
7. Ryle, Gilbert. 1949. The Concept of Mind, Hutchnson University Library, London

6.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans. to Q No 1: It is direct, immediate, and prejudgmental knowledge.

Ans. to Q No 2: According to Plato, knowledge is knowledge through concepts. He views that knowledge is infallible.

Ans. to Q No 3: According to Plato, traditional philosophers hold that knowledge is identified with perception. But, Plato in this respect views that perceptual knowledge give us contradictory knowledge or results because what one person perceives and holds to be true may be false for another person. Therefore, knowledge cannot be identified with perception, to Plato.

Ans to Q No 4: Concept of Mind.

Ans to Q No 5: Ayer.

6.11 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Short Questions:

Q.1. What is JTB definition?

Q.2. Define Knowledge by acquaintance?

Q.3. Who made the distinction between knowing how and knowing that?

Q.4. Is knowledge a performative action?

Q.5. Who writes the book 'The Problem of Knowledge'?

B. Short questions (Answer in about 100-150 words)

Q.1. Write short note on

a) Knowledge by acquaintance and Knowledge by description.

b) Knowing how and Knowing that.

c) Plato's concept of knowledge according to Theaetetus.

Q.2. Explain Truth condition of knowledge.

Q.3. Write Ayer's view on Knowledge.

Q.4. Give the example of Knowledge according to Gettier.

C. Long Questions (Answer in about 300-500)

Q.1. Explain the relation between knowledge and belief.

Q.2. Elaborate the distinction between knowledge and belief.

Q.3. According to Ryle, "knowledge is a dispositional verb"—explain.

Q.4. Explain the nature of Belief.

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UNIT-7: KNOWLEDGE AS JUSTIFIED TRUE BELIEF

UNIT STRUCTURE

7.1 Learning Objectives

7.2 Introduction

7.3 The Tripartite Theory

7.4 Knowledge as Justified True Belief

- 7.4.1 The Truth Condition
- 7.4.2 The Belief Condition
- 7.4.3 The Justification Condition

7.5 Approaches to Justification

7.6 Kinds of Justification

7.7 Lightweight Knowledge

7.8 The Gettier Problem

- 7.8.1 The No-False-Belief Condition
- 7.8.2 The No-Defeaters Condition

7.9 Doing without Justification?

- 7. 9.1 Reliabilist Theories of Knowledge
- 7.9. 2 Causal Theories of Knowledge

7.10 Let Us Sum Up

7.11 Further Reading

7.12 Answers to Check Your Progress

7.13 Model Questions

7.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the tripartite theory,
- discuss the concept of knowledge as justified true belief,
- illustrate the kinds of justification,
- describe the concept of lightweight knowledge,
- analyse the gettier problem,
- analyse the concept of doing without justification.

7.2 INTRODUCTION

The problem of knowledge is the corner stone of all philosophical investigations. Central questions to which epistemologists try to provide answers include- 'what is knowledge?', 'what is the distinction between knowledge and belief?', 'which beliefs are justified and which are not?', 'is knowledge necessarily true?' questions like these are at the heart of epistemology. But recent epistemology spreads like all philosophical enquiries and its boundaries are fuzzy.

For any person, there are some things they know, and some things they don't. What exactly is the difference? What does it take to know something? It's not enough just to believe it—we don't know the things we're wrong about. Knowledge seems to be more like a way of getting at the truth. The analysis of knowledge concerns the attempt to articulate in what exactly this kind of "getting at the truth" consists.

More particularly, the project of analyzing knowledge is to state conditions that are individually necessary and jointly sufficient for propositional knowledge, thoroughly answering the question, what does it take to know something? By "propositional knowledge", we mean knowledge of a proposition—for example, if Susan knows that Alyssa is a musician, she has knowledge of the proposition that Alyssa is a musician. Propositional knowledge should be distinguished from knowledge of "acquaintance", as obtains when Susan knows Alyssa. The relation between propositional knowledge and the knowledge at issue in other "knowledge" locutions in English, such as knowledge-where ("Susan knows where she is") and especially knowledge-how ("Susan knows how to ride a bicycle") is subject to some debate.

The propositional knowledge that is the analysandum of the analysis of knowledge literature is paradigmatically expressed in English by sentences of the form "*S* knows that *p*", where "*S*" refers to the knowing subject, and "*p*" to the proposition that is known. A proposed analysis consists

of a statement of the following form: *S* knows that *p* if and only if *j*, where *j* indicates the analysans: paradigmatically, a list of conditions that are individually necessary and jointly sufficient for *S* to have knowledge that *p*.

The attempt to analyze knowledge has received a considerable amount of attention from epistemologists, particularly in the late 20th Century, but no analysis has been widely accepted. Some contemporary epistemologists reject the assumption that knowledge is susceptible to analysis.

7.3 THE TRIPARTITE THEORY

The tripartite definition of knowledge only applies to propositional knowledge, knowing 'that p'. Some philosophers argue that a complete analysis of a concept, such as propositional knowledge, ought to state conditions that are together 'equivalent' to knowledge. In other words, if someone knows some proposition, they should exactly fulfill those conditions which the analysis of knowledge states. The 'justified true belief' theory of knowledge is like this. It claims that to know that p involves exactly these three things:

1. The proposition p is true;
2. You believe that p;
3. Your belief that p is justified.

It claims these are the necessary and sufficient conditions for knowledge. The justified true belief theory of knowledge claims that if all the three conditions it lists are satisfied- if p is true, and you believe that p, and your belief is justified-then you know that p. you don't need anything else for knowledge; the three conditions, together, are sufficient.



LET US KNOW

The justified true belief theory of knowledge claims that if all the three conditions it lists are satisfied- if p is true, and you believe that p, and your belief is justified-then you know that p. you don't need anything else for knowledge; the three conditions, together, are sufficient.

7.4 KNOWLEDGE AS JUSTIFIED TRUE BELIEF

There are three components to the traditional ("tripartite") analysis of knowledge. According to this analysis, justified, true belief is necessary and sufficient for knowledge.

The Tripartite Analysis of Knowledge:

S knows that *p* if

i. *p* is true;
ii. *S* believes that *p*;
iii. *S* is justified in believing that *p*.

The tripartite analysis of knowledge is often abbreviated as the "JTB" analysis, for "justified true belief".

Much of the twentieth-century literature on the analysis of knowledge took the JTB analysis as its starting-point. It became something of a convenient fiction to suppose that this analysis was widely accepted throughout much of the history of philosophy. In fact, however, the JTB analysis was first articulated in the twentieth century.



LET US KNOW

The tripartite analysis of knowledge is often abbreviated as the "JTB" analysis, for "justified true belief".



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1. Where does the tripartite definition of knowledge apply?

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.....

Q.2. What is the 'justified true belief' theory of knowledge?

.....

.....

Q.3. What do you mean by the tripartite analysis of knowledge?

.....

.....



ACTIVITY - 7.1

Briefly explain the tripartite analysis of knowledge.

.....

.....

.....

.....

7.4.1 The Truth Condition

Most epistemologists have found it overwhelmingly plausible that what is false cannot be known. For example, Hillary Clinton did not win the 2016 US Presidential election. Consequently, nobody knows that Hillary Clinton won the election. One can only know things that are true.

Sometimes when people are very confident of something that turns out to be wrong, we use the word "knows" to describe their situation. Many people expected Clinton to win the election. Speaking loosely, one might even say that many people "knew" that Clinton would win the election-until

she lost. Hazlett (2010) argues on the basis of data like this that "knows" is not a factive verb. Hazlett's diagnosis is deeply controversial; most epistemologists will treat sentences like "I knew that Clinton was going to win" as a kind of exaggeration-as not literally true.

Something's truth does not require that anyone can know or prove that it is true. Not all truths are established truths. If you flip a coin and never check how it landed, it may be true that it landed heads, even if nobody has any way to tell. Truth is a metaphysical, as opposed to epistemological, notion: truth is a matter of how things are, not how they can be shown to be. So when we say that only true things can be known, we're not (yet) saying anything about how anyone can access the truth. As we'll see, the other conditions have important roles to play here. Knowledge is a kind of relationship with the truth-to know something is to have a certain kind of access to a fact.

7.4.2 The Belief Condition

The belief condition is only slightly more controversial than the truth condition. The general idea behind the belief condition is that you can only know what you believe. Failing to believe something precludes knowing it. "Belief" in the context of the JTB theory means full belief, or outright belief. In a weak sense, one might "believe" something by virtue of being pretty confident that it's probably true-in this weak sense, someone who considered Clinton the favourite to win the election, even while recognizing a nontrivial possibility of her losing, might be said to have "believed" that Clinton would win. Outright belief is stronger. To believe outright that p, it isn't enough to have a pretty high confidence in p; it is something closer to a commitment or a being sure.

Although initially it might seem obvious that knowing that p requires believing that p, a few philosophers have argued that knowledge without belief is indeed possible. Suppose Walter comes home after work to find out that his house has burned down. He says: "I don't believe it". Critics of

the belief condition might argue that Walter knows that his house has burned down (he sees that it has), but, as his words indicate, he does not believe it. The standard response is that Walter's avowal of disbelief is not literally true; what Walter wishes to convey by saying "I don't believe it" is not that he really does not believe that his house has burned down, but rather that he finds it hard to come to terms with what he sees. If he genuinely didn't believe it, some of his subsequent actions, such as phoning his insurance company, would be rather mysterious.

A more serious counterexample has been suggested by Colin Radford (1966). Suppose Albert is quizzed on English history. One of the questions is: "When did Queen Elizabeth die?" Albert doesn't think he knows, but answers the question correctly. Moreover, he gives correct answers to many other questions to which he didn't think he knew the answer. Let us focus on Albert's answer to the question about Elizabeth:

- (E)Elizabeth died in 1603.

Radford makes the following two claims about this example:

a. Albert does not believe (E).
b. Albert knows (E).

Radford's intuitions about cases like these do not seem to be idiosyncratic; Myers-Schutz&Schwitzgebel (2013) find evidence suggesting that many ordinary speakers tend to react in the way Radford suggests. In support of (a), Radford emphasizes that Albert thinks he doesn't know the answer to the question. He doesn't trust his answer because he takes it to be a mere guess. In support of (b), Radford argues that Albert's answer is not at all just a lucky guess. The fact that he answers most of the questions correctly indicates that he has actually learned, and never forgotten, such historical facts.

Since he takes (a) and (b) to be true, Radford holds that belief is not necessary for knowledge. But either of (a) and (b) might be resisted. One

might deny (a), arguing that Albert does have a tacit belief that (E),even though it's not one that he thinks amounts to knowledge. David Rose and Jonathan Schaffer (2013) take this route. Alternatively, one might deny (b), arguing that Albert's correct answer is not an expression of knowledge, perhaps because, given his subjective position, he does not have justification for believing (E). The justification condition is the topic of the next section.

7.4.3 The Justification Condition

Why is this third condition necessary? Why not say that knowledge is true belief? The standard answer is that to identify knowledge with true belief would be implausible because a belief might be true even though it is formed improperly. Suppose that William flips a coin, and confidently believes-on no particular basis-that it will land tails. If by chance the coin does land tails, then William's belief was true; but a lucky guess such as this one is no knowledge. For William to know, his belief must in some epistemic sense be proper or appropriate: it must be justified.

Socrates articulates the need for something like a justification condition in Plato's Theaetetus, when he points out that "true opinion" is in general insufficient for knowledge. For example, if a lawyer employs sophistry to induce a jury into a belief that happens to be true, this belief is insufficiently well-grounded to constitute knowledge.

LET US KNOW



The truth condition, the belief condition and the justification condition are the three necessary and sufficient conditions of knowledge. This is known as the tripartite analysis of knowledge.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.4. What are the three necessary and sufficient conditions of knowledge?

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Q.5. Why is the justification condition necessary for knowledge?

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ACTIVITY-7.2

Elaborate briefly about the truth, belief and justification conditions of knowledge.

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7.5 APPROACHES TO JUSTIFICATION

There is considerable disagreement among epistemologists concerning what the relevant sort of justification here consists in. Internalists about justification think that whether a belief is justified depends wholly on states in some sense internal to the subject. According to one common such sense of "internal", only those features of a subject's experience which are directly or introspectively available count as "internal"-call this "access internalism". According to another, only intrinsic states of the subject are "internal"-call this "state internalism".

Conee and Feldman present an example of an internalist view. They have it that S's belief that p is justified if and only if believing that p is the attitude towards p that best fits S's evidence, where the latter is understood to depend only on S's internal mental states. Conee and Feldman call their view "evidentialism", and characterize this as the thesis that justification is wholly a matter of the subject's evidence. Given their (not unsubstantial) assumption that what evidence a subject has is an internal matter, evidentialism implies internalism. Externalists about justification think that factors external to the subject can be relevant for justification; for example, process reliabilists think that justified beliefs are those which are formed by a cognitive process which tends to produce a high proportion of true beliefs relative to false ones.

7.6 KINDS OF JUSTIFICATION

It is worth noting that one might distinguish between two importantly different notions of justification, standardly referred to as "propositional justification" and "doxastic justification". Unlike that between internalist and externalist approaches to justification, the distinction between propositional and doxastic justification does not represent a conflict to be resolved; it is a distinction between two distinct properties that are called "justification". Propositional justification concerns whether a subject has sufficient reason to believe a given proposition; doxastic justification concerns whether a given belief is held appropriately. One common way of relating the two is to suggest that propositional justification is the more fundamental, and that doxastic justification is a matter of a subject's having a belief that is appropriately responsive to or based on their propositional justification.

The precise relation between propositional and doxastic justification is subject to controversy, but it is uncontroversial that the two notions can come apart. Suppose that Ingrid ignores a great deal of excellent evidence indicating that a given neighborhood is dangerous, but superstitiously comes to believe that the neighborhood is dangerous when she sees a black cat crossing the street. Since forming beliefs on the basis of superstition is not

an epistemically appropriate way of forming beliefs, Ingrid's belief is not doxastically justified; nevertheless, she does have good reason to believe as she does, so she does have propositional justification for the proposition that the neighborhood is dangerous.

Since knowledge is a particularly successful kind of belief, doxastic justification is a stronger candidate for being closely related to knowledge; the JTB theory is typically thought to invoke doxastic justification.



LET US KNOW

There are two kinds of justification: propositional justification and doxastic justification.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.6. What are the two kinds of justification?

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Q.7. What do you mean by propositional justification?

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Q.8. What is doxastic justification?

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7.7 LIGHTWEIGHT KNOWLEDGE

Some epistemologists have suggested that there may be multiple senses of the term "knowledge", and that not all of them require all three elements of the tripartite theory of knowledge. For example, some have argued that there is, in addition to the sense of "knowledge" gestured at above, another, weak sense of "knowledge", that requires only true belief (see for example Hawthorne 2002 and Goldman & Olsson 2009; the latter contains additional relevant references). This view is sometimes motivated

by the thought that, when we consider whether someone knows that p, or wonder which of a group of people know that p, often, we are not at all interested in whether the relevant subjects have beliefs that are justified; we just want to know whether they have the true belief. For example, as Hawthorne points out, one might ask how many students know that Vienna is the capital of Austria; the correct answer, one might think, just is the number of students who offer "Vienna" as the answer to the corresponding question, irrespective of whether their beliefs are justified. Similarly, if you are planning a surprise party for Eugene and ask whether he knows about it, "yes" may be an appropriate answer merely on the grounds that Eugene believes that you are planning a party.

One could allow that there is a lightweight sense of knowledge that requires only true belief; another option is to decline to accept the intuitive sentences as true at face value. A theorist might, for instance, deny that sentences like "Eugene knows that you are planning a party" or "eighteen students know that Vienna is the capital of Austria" are literally true in the envisaged situations, explaining away their apparent felicity as loose talk or hyperbole.

Even among those epistemologists who think that there is a lightweight sense of "knows" that does not require justification, most typically admit that there is also a stronger sense which does, and that it is this stronger state that is the main target of epistemological theorizing about knowledge. In what follows, we will set aside the lightweight sense, if indeed there be one, and focus on the stronger one.

7.8 THE GETTIER PROBLEM

For some time, the justified true belief (JTB) account was widely agreed to capture the nature of knowledge. However, in 1963, Edmund Gettier published a short but widely influential article which has shaped much subsequent work in epistemology. Gettier provided two examples in which someone had a true and justified belief, but in which we seem to

want to deny that the individual has knowledge, because luck still seems to play a role in his belief having turned out to be true.

Consider an example. Suppose that the clock on campus (which keeps accurate time and is well maintained) stopped working at 11:56pm last night, and has yet to be repaired. On my way to my noon class, exactly twelve hours later, I glance at the clock and form the belief that the time is 11:56. My belief is true, of course, since the time is indeed 11:56. And my belief is justified, as I have no reason to doubt that the clock is working, and I cannot be blamed for basing beliefs about the time on what the clock says. Nonetheless, it seems evident that I do not know that the time is 11:56. After all, if I had walked past the clock a bit earlier or a bit later, I would have ended up with a false belief rather than a true one.

This example and others like it, while perhaps somewhat far-fetched, seem to show that it is possible for justified true belief to fail to constitute knowledge. To put it another way, the justification condition was meant to ensure that knowledge was based on solid evidence rather than on luck or misinformation, but Gettier-type examples seem to show that justified true belief can still involve luck and thus fall short of knowledge. This problem is referred to as "the Gettier problem." To solve this problem, we must either show that all instances of justified true belief do indeed constitute knowledge, or alternatively refine our analysis of knowledge.

Edmund Gettier in 1963 paper, "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?" presented two cases in which a true belief is inferred from a justified false belief. He observed that, intuitively, such beliefs cannot be knowledge; it is merely lucky that they are true.

In honour of his contribution to the literature, cases like these have come to be known as "Gettier cases". Since they appear to refute the JTB analysis, many epistemologists have undertaken to repair it: how must the analysis of knowledge be modified to accommodate Gettier cases? This is what is commonly referred to as the "Gettier problem".

Above, we noted that one role of the justification is to rule out lucky guesses as cases of knowledge. A lesson of the Gettier problem is that it appears that even true beliefs that are justified can nevertheless be epistemically lucky in a way inconsistent with knowledge.

Epistemologists who think that the JTB approach is basically on the right track must choose between two different strategies for solving the Gettier problem. The first is to strengthen the justification condition to rule out Gettier cases as cases of justified belief. This was attempted by Roderick Chisholm. The other is to amend the JTB analysis with a suitable fourth condition, a condition that succeeds in preventing justified true belief from being "gettiered". Thus amended, the JTB analysis becomes a JTB+X account of knowledge, where the "X" stands for the needed fourth condition.

Let us consider an instance of this attempt to articulate a "degettiering" condition.

LET US KNOW



Edmund Gettier in 1963 paper, "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?" presented two cases in which a true belief is inferred from a justified false belief. He observed that, intuitively, such beliefs cannot be knowledge; it is merely lucky that they are true.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.9. What is known as 'Gettier problem'?

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ACTIVITY - 7.3

Discuss in short about 'Gettier problem' in theory of knowledge?

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7.8.1 The No-False-Belief Condition

We might think that there is a simple and straightforward solution to the Gettier problem. Note that my reasoning was tacitly based on my belief that the clock is working properly, and that this belief is false. This seems to explain what has gone wrong in this example. Accordingly, we might revise our analysis of knowledge by insisting that to constitute knowledge; a belief must be true and justified and must be formed without relying on any false beliefs. In other words, we might say, justification, truth, and belief are all necessary for knowledge, but they are not jointly sufficient for knowledge; there is a fourth condition - namely, that no false beliefs be essentially involved in the reasoning that led to the belief - which is also necessary.

Unfortunately, this will not suffice; we can modify the example so that my belief is justified and true, and is not based on any false beliefs, but still falls short of knowledge. Suppose, for instance, that I do not have any beliefs about the clock's current state, but merely the more general belief that the clock usually is in working order. This belief, which is true, would suffice to justify my belief that the time is now 11:56; of course, it still seems evident that I do not know the time.

7.8.2 The No-Defeaters Condition

However, the no-false-belief condition does not seem to be completely misguided; perhaps we can add some other condition to justification and truth to yield a correct characterization of knowledge. Note that, even if I didn't actively form the belief that the clock is currently working properly, it seems to be implicit in my reasoning, and the fact that it is false is surely relevant to the problem. After all, if I were asked, at the time that I looked at the clock, whether it is working properly, I would have said that it

is. Conversely, if I believed that the clock wasn't working properly, I wouldn't be justified in forming a belief about the time based on what the clock says.

In other words, the proposition that the clock is working properly right now meets the following conditions: it is a false proposition, I do not realize that it is a false proposition, and if I had realized that it is a false proposition, my justification for my belief that it is 11:56 would have been undercut or defeated. If we call propositions such as this "defeaters," then we can say that to constitute knowledge, a belief must be true and justified, and there must not be any defeaters to the justification of that belief. Many epistemologists believe this analysis to be correct.

7.9 DOING WITHOUT JUSTIFICATION?

As we have seen, one motivation for including a justification condition in an analysis of knowledge was to prevent lucky guesses from counting as knowledge. However, the Gettier problem shows that including a justification condition does not rule out all epistemically problematic instances of luck. Consequently, some epistemologists have suggested that positing a justification condition on knowledge was a false move; perhaps it is some other condition that ought to be included along with truth and belief as components of knowledge. This kind of strategy was advanced by a number of authors from the late 1960s to the early 1980s, although there has been relatively little discussion of it.

7.9.1 Reliabilist Theories of Knowledge

One candidate property for such a state is reliability. Part of what is problematic about lucky guesses is precisely that they are so lucky: such guesses are formed in a way such that it is unlikely that they should turn out true. According to a certain form of knowledge reliabilism, it is unreliability, not lack of justification, which prevents such beliefs from amounting to knowledge. Reliabilist theories of knowledge incorporate this idea into a reliability condition on knowledge. Here is an example of such a view:

Simple K-Reliabilism:

S knows that piff

a. p is true;
b. S believes that p;
c. S's belief that p was produced by a reliable cognitive process.

Simple K-Reliabilism replaces the justification clause in the traditional tripartite theory with a reliability clause. As we have seen, reliabilists about justification think that justification for a belief consists in a genesis in a reliable cognitive process. Given this view, Simple K-Reliabilism and the JTB theory are equivalent. However, the present proposal is silent on justification. Goldman 1979 is the seminal defense of reliabilism about justification; reliabilism is extended to knowledge in Goldman 1986. See Goldman 2011 for a survey of reliabilism in general.

In the following passage, Fred Dretske articulates how an approach like K-reliabilism might be motivated:

Those who think knowledge requires something other than, or at least more than, reliably produced true belief, something (usually) in the way of justification for the belief that one's reliably produced beliefs are being reliably produced, have, it seems to me, an obligation to say what benefits this justification is supposed to confer…. Who needs it, and why? If an animal inherits a perfectly reliable belief-generating mechanism, and it also inherits a disposition, everything being equal, to act on the basis of the beliefs so generated, what additional benefits isconferred by a justification that the beliefs are being produced in some reliable way? If there are no additional benefits, what good is this justification? Why should we insist that no one can have knowledge without it?

According to Dretske, reliable cognitive processes convey information, and thus endow not only humans, but (nonhuman) animals as well, with knowledge. He writes:

I wanted a characterization that would at least allow for the possibility that animals (a frog, rat, ape, or my dog) could know things without my having to suppose them capable of the more sophisticated intellectual operations involved in traditional analyses of knowledge.

It does seem odd to think of frogs, rats, or dogs as having justified or unjustified beliefs. Yet attributing knowledge to animals is certainly in accord with our ordinary practice of using the word "knowledge". So if, with Dretske, we want an account of knowledge that includes animals among the knowing subjects, we might want to abandon the traditional JTB account in favor of something like K-reliabilism.

7.9.2 Causal Theories of Knowledge

Rather than modifying the JTB account of knowledge by adding a fourth condition, some epistemologists see the Gettier problem as reason to seek a substantially different alternative. We have noted that knowledge should not involve luck, and that Gettier-type examples are those in which luck plays some role in the formation of a justified true belief. In typical instances of knowledge, the factors responsible for the justification of a belief are also responsible for its truth. For example, when the clock is working properly, my belief is both true and justified because it's based on the clock, which accurately displays the time. But one feature that all Gettier-type examples have in common is the lack of a clear connection between the truth and the justification of the belief in question. For example, my belief that the time is 11:56 is justified because it's based on the clock, but it's true because I happened to walk by at just the right moment. So, we might insist that to constitute knowledge, a belief must be both true and justified, and its truth and justification must be connected somehow.

This notion of a connection between the truth and the justification of a belief turns out to be difficult to formulate precisely, but causal accounts of knowledge seek to capture the spirit of this proposal by more significantly altering the analysis of knowledge. Such accounts maintain that in order for

someone to know a proposition, there must be a causal connection between his belief in that proposition and the fact that the proposition encapsulates. This retains the truth condition, since a proposition must be true in order for it to encapsulate a fact. However, it appears to be incompatible with fallibilism, since it does not allow for the possibility that a belief be justified yet false. (Strictly speaking, causal accounts of knowledge make no reference to justification, although we might attempt to reformulate fallibilism in somewhat modified terms in order to state this observation.)

While causal accounts of knowledge are no longer thought to be correct, they have engendered reliabilist theories of knowledge.

Another move in a similar spirit to K-Reliabilism replaces the justification clause in the JTB theory with a condition requiring a causal connection between the belief and the fact believed; this is the approach of Goldman. Goldman's own causal theory is a sophisticated one; we will not engage with its details here.

Simple Causal Theory of Knowledge:
S knows that p if

a. p is true;
b. S believes that p;
c. S's belief that p is caused by the fact that p.

Do approaches like Simple K-Reliabilism or the Simple Causal Theory fare any better than the JTB theory with respect to Gettier cases? Many of the standard counterexamples to the JTB theory appear to refute these views as well. Consider again the case of the barn facades. Henry sees a real barn, and that's why he believes there is a barn nearby. This belief is formed by perceptual processes, which are by-and-large reliable: only rarely do they lead him into false beliefs. So it looks like the case meets the conditions of Simple K-Reliabilism just as much as it does those of the JTB theory. It is also a counterexample to the causal theory, since the real barn Henry perceives is causally responsible for his belief. There is reason

to doubt, therefore, that shifting from justification to a condition like reliability will escape the Gettier problem. Gettier cases seem to pose as much of a problem for K-reliabilism and causal theories as for the JTB account. Neither theory, unless amended with a clever "degettiering" clause, succeeds in stating sufficient conditions for knowledge.



7.10 LET US SUM UP

- The justified true belief theory of knowledge claims that if all the three conditions it lists are satisfied- if p is true, and you believe that p, and your belief is justified-then you know that p.
- There are three components to the traditional ("tripartite") analysis of knowledge. According to this analysis, justified, true belief is necessary and sufficient for knowledge. The tripartite analysis of knowledge is often abbreviated as the "JTB" analysis, for "justified true belief".
- The justification condition is necessary to identify knowledge with true belief would be implausible because a belief might be true even though it is formed improperly.
- There are two approaches to justification of knowledge: evidentialism approach and reliabilists approach.
- There are two kinds of justification: propositional justification and doxastic justification.
- Propositional justification concerns whether a subject has sufficient reason to believe a given proposition; doxastic justification concerns whether a given belief is held appropriately. One common way of relating the two is to suggest that propositional justification is the more fundamental, and that doxastic justification is a matter of a subject's having a belief that is appropriately responsive to or based on their propositional justification.

- In 1963, Edmund Gettier published a short but widely influential article which has shaped much subsequent work in epistemology. Gettier provided two examples in which someone had a true and justified belief, but in which we seem to want to deny that the individual has knowledge, because luck still seems to play a role in his belief having turned out to be true.



7.11 FURTHER READING

1) Alston, William P., 1989. Epistemic Justification: Essays in the Theory of Knowledge. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
2) Armstrong, D.M., 1973, Belief, Truth, and Knowledge, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
3) Chisholm, Roderick, 1977, Theory of Knowledge, 2nd edition, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall.
4) Gettier, Edmund, 1963. "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?" Analysis, 23, pp. 121-123.
5) Hume, David, 1751. An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding. Indianapolis: Hackett.
6) Lehrer, Keith, 2000. Theory of Knowledge (2nd ed.). Boulder, CO: Westview.
7) Locke, John, 1689. An Essay Concerning Human Understanding. Oxford: Clarendon.



7.12 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans. to Q.No 1: The tripartite definition of knowledge only applies to propositional knowledge, knowing 'that p'.

Ans. to Q.No 2: The justified true belief theory of knowledge claims that if all the three conditions it lists are satisfied- if p is true, and you believe that p, and your belief is justified-then you know that p.

Ans. to Q.No 3: The tripartite analysis of knowledge implies truth, belief and justification as three necessary as well as sufficient conditions of knowledge.

Ans. to Q.No 4: The three necessary and sufficient conditions of knowledge are truth, belief and justification.

Ans. to Q.No 5: The justification condition is necessary to identify knowledge with true belief would be implausible because a belief might be true even though it is formed improperly.

Ans. to Q.No 6: There are two kinds of justification: propositional justification and doxastic justification.

Ans. to Q.No 7: Propositional justification concerns whether a subject has sufficient reason to believe a given proposition.

Ans. to Q.No 8: Doxastic justification concerns whether a given belief is held appropriately. Doxastic justification is a matter of a subject's having a belief that is appropriately responsive to or based on their propositional justification.

Ans. to Q.No 9: According to Gettier someone had a true and justified belief, but in which we seem to want to deny that the individual has knowledge, because luck still seems to play a role in his belief having turned out to be true. This is known as 'Gettier problem'.



7.13 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very short questions

Q 1: Where does the tripartite definition of knowledge apply?

Q 2: What do you mean by the tripartite analysis of knowledge?

Q 3: What is the 'justified true belief' theory of knowledge?

Q 4: What are the three necessary and sufficient conditions of knowledge?

Q 5: What do you mean by propositional justification?

Q 6: What is 'Gettier problem'?

B) Short questions (answer each question in about 100-150 words)

Q 1: What does tripartite definition of knowledge mean?

Q 2: What is truth condition?

Q 3: What is justification condition for knowledge?

Q 4: What do you mean by doxastic justification?

Q 5: Why is justification necessary for knowledge?

C) Short notes (answer each question in about 100-150 words)

Q 1: The tripartite analysis of knowledge

Q 2: The truth condition

Q 3: Kinds of justification

Q 4: Reliabilist Theories of Knowledge

Q 5: Causal theories of knowledge

Q 6: Gettier problem

D) Long questions (answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q.1: Elaborately discuss about tripartite definition of knowledge.

Q.2: Discuss about the role of belief condition in knowledge.

Q.3: What do you mean by 'Gettier problem'. Discuss its importance in the domain of knowledge.

Q.4: Explain about the different types of justification in knowledge.

Q.5: What are the two kinds of alternatives or approaches in place of justification condition for knowledge. Discuss them.

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UNIT- 8: BELIEF CONDITION

UNIT STRUCTURE

8.1 Learning Objectives

8.2 Introduction

8.3 Knowing

- 8.3.1 Knowing in Everyday Life
- 8.3.2 Knowing that and knowing how

8.4 Believing

- 8.4.1 Some aspects of Belief
- 8.4.2 Believing that

8.5 Traditional Development of Knowledge and Belief

8.6 Differences between Knowledge and Belief

8.7 Relation between Knowledge and Belief

8.8 Let Us Sum Up

8.9 Further Reading

8.10 Answers to Check Your Progress

8.11 Model Questions

8.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the concept of knowing,
- explain the concept of believing,
- discuss the traditional development of knowledge and belief,
- explain the differences between knowledge and belief,
- explain the relation between knowledge and belief.

8.2 INTRODUCTION

There are different types of knowledge (I know Oxford well), ability knowledge (I know how to ride a bike), and propositional knowledge (I know that eagles are birds). The first two types of knowledge are very interesting, but we are concerned only with the third, what it is to know some proposition, 'p'.

We intuitively make a distinction between belief and knowledge. People can believe propositions that aren't true; but if you know that p, then p must be true. You can't know something false; if it is false, then you don't know it. You have made a mistake, believing it to be true when it is not. For example, if you claim that flamingos are grey, and you think you know this, you are mistaken. If flamingos are not grey, but pink, then you can't know they are grey. Of course, you believe that they are grey; that is the difference-beliefs can be false.

There is another distinction between beliefs and knowledge. People can believe propositions for all sorts of reasons. They can have true beliefs without having any evidence or justification for their beliefs. For example, someone on a jury might think that the person on trial is guilty just from the way they dress. Their belief, that the person is guilty, might be true; but how someone dresses isn't evidence for whether they are a criminal. So, belief can be accidentally true, relative to the evidence the person has; if it is, it isn't knowledge.

Someone can hold a belief that is, in fact, true, even when they have evidence to suggest it is false. For example, there is a lot of evidence that astrology does not make accurate predictions, and my horoscope has often been wrong. Suppose on one occasion, I read my horoscope and believe a prediction, although I know there is evidence against thinking it is right. Then this prediction turns out true. Did I know it was right? It looks more like my belief is irrational. I had no reason, no evidence, and no justification, for believing that prediction was true. Knowledge, then, needs some kind of support, some reason for thinking that the proposition believed is true. Knowledge needs to be justified.

The notion of knowledge is intimately tied up with the notion of belief. The relation between knowledge and belief is of great importance. Both the two terms 'knowledge' and 'belief' have their various meanings and uses. 'Is belief completely different from knowledge?', 'does knowledge entail belief?' these are some important epistemological questions. All these issues are observed in the contemporary philosophical development in this study.

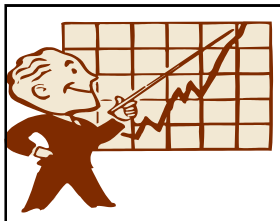
For no less than three decades the problem of the analysis of knowledge and belief has haunted the minds of the epistemologists. Even in times as early as ancient Greek thinkers, philosophers were seen engaged in this problem.

How we know and what we know is a long cherished hope of philosophy. The philosophers of all ages have been seeking answers of these eternal riddles. The rapid growth of epistemology during the last few decades emerges of so many new concepts in the field, cannot but rouse one's curiosity to enter into this unique area of knowing 'how to know'. It has occupied a major interest in contemporary epistemology. Before we ask what we know and how we know it, we should ask what we mean by knowing. Again to answer the question 'what is knowing' is not of course a considerable epistemological ones, but it is a necessary preliminary to do so.



LET US KNOW

The notion of knowledge is intimately tied up with the notion of belief. We intuitively make a distinction between belief and knowledge. People can believe propositions that aren't true; but if you know that p, then p must be true. You can't know something false; if it is false, then you don't know it.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1. What is the other notion that the notion of knowledge is intimately tied up?

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Q.2. What is the difference between knowledge and belief?

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ACTIVITY - 8.1

Briefly explain the concept of knowledge and belief.

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8.3 KNOWING

8.3.1 Knowing in everyday life

The meaning of the word 'knowledge' seems very clear and that's why the concept of knowledge needs no more detailed, careful elucidation. For example, the proposition 'I know something' is similar to 'I see something' or 'I hear something'. But sometimes circumstances may arise where an exact definition of the word 'know' becomes necessary and in such situations the basic task of epistemology will be to draw a definition of the word 'know'.

8.3.2 Knowing that and knowing how

Contemporary philosophersuse the phrase 'knowing that' to solve different problems about the nature of knowledge.

Gilbert Ryle talks about certain distinctions between knowing how and knowing that. 'Knowing that' is propositional but 'knowing how' is not propositional. When we say he knows how to swim we mean that he is capable of swimming when occasions demand. Even when he is sleeping, we can credit him with this ability. In the same way when we say that someone knows how to play chess, we more often refer to the individual's ability or skill to perform those acts that indicate his ability to recite rules for these activities. The abilities do not consist in any act of thinking as this reason knowing how is not propositional.

Here Ryle lays emphasis on the value of knowing how much more than that of knowing that.But Ryle's view breaks down when we take into

consideration the fact that knowing how requires the necessary presences of 'knowing something' which is associated with ;how to do'. Knowing how to drive a car means both to know that there are rules of driving and to be able to drive a car means both to know that there are rules of driving and to be able to drive the car. In this sense, 'knowing how' presupposes 'knowing that'. The propositional content of knowledge is expressed through knowing that and it creates a number of problems.

LET US KNOW



Gilbert Ryle says that there are certain distinctions between knowing how and knowing that. 'Knowing that' is propositional but 'knowing how' is not propositional.

8.4. BELIEVING

8.4.1 Some aspects of belief

There are certain characteristics of belief. The concept of belief is very central to epistemology because the ground level epistemological concepts of 'truth', 'falsity', and 'justification' are applied primarily to beliefs.

Belief may be characterized as stronger than mere ungrounded opinion but weaker than full knowledge. For, Descartes, belief is an active state of mind in which assent to some proposition is granted or withheld, or for Hume, it is a passive state that occurs or fails to occur in respect of some propositions. The objects of belief are propositions.

The belief states themselves possess a sentential structure, that they are maps in some literal sense. According to P.F. Ramsey, a belief is viewed as "a map of neighbouring space by which we steer." Ramsey attributes two characteristics to the belief- it is a map and it is something by which we steer. He shows that unlike entertaining propositions, beliefs are action guiding.

Armstrong mentions another state of belief in which 'A's believing that is a matter of A's being in a certain continuing state, a state which endures for the whole time that A holds the belief. In the case of beliefs which are acquired, this view thinks of A's belief that P as a matter of A's mind being imprinted or stamped in a certain way.

Donald Davidson views that belief, like meaning, is indeterminate. According to him, it makes no sense, to talk of beliefs or meanings independently of a particular linguistic context. In case of beliefs, yet believing appears not to be voluntary. Descartes writes that believing depends on some prior act of will. In 'Meditation' IV, he says that, 'when something is proposed to us by the 'intellect' we are free either to affirm or deny something. Bernard Williams holds that it is doubtful that believing essentially involves willing; believing is necessary non-voluntary.

Gilbert Ryle considers beliefs as 'tendencies' to say and do various things. Ryle argues that mental states like belief are not causes of 'behaviour, on the other hand they are dispositional states triggered causality.

In our philosophical tradition, we can see various ways of conceiving of beliefs. Armstrong puts forward three ways of conceiving of beliefs like, (a) beliefs are conscious occurrences in the mind of believers, (b) beliefs are believer's disposition and, (c) beliefs are states of the mind of the believers.

8.3.2 Believing that

According to A.D. Woozley belief s is always belief-that. There is no belief corresponding to acquaintance. An object of one's believing is something that is true or false.

One's believing a proposition contrasts with one's believing a proposition with regard to an object. In the first case, the object is just a proposition and this kind of believing is 'de dicto'. In the second case, the object is not merely propositional or conceptual and here believing involves

an 'aboutness relation' to an object, that is not found in 'de dicto' believing. But believing 'de re' is related also to a propositional object where the 'object' is denotatively defined through a referential aboutness relation. So, both the 'de re' and 'de dicto' believing have propositional objects that are either true or false. So, belief is an attitude one can have towards a proposition.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.3. What is the distinction between knowing that and knowing how?

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Q.4. Who has differentiated between knowing that and knowing how?

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Q.5. What does Ryle consider belief to be?

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ACTIVITY - 8.2

Briefly explain the difference between knowing that and knowing how.

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8.5 TRADITIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF

In our everyday life, we think that knowledge has a relation with other concepts like belief and opinion. Sometimes the two terms 'knowledge' and 'belief' are used interchangeably as there is no radical difference between knowing and believing. But if we look into the general agreement then we can see that what we know can only be true whereas what we

believe may be true or may not be true. It implies that the disjunction either true or false does not apply to what we know whereas it can be applied to what we believe.

The discussion of distinguishing knowledge from belief was started by Plato. In 'Meno' and 'Phaedo', plato distinguishes between knowledge and belief with the help of the theory of recollection. It is either assumed or perhaps argued that we do have knowledge and knowledge is distinct from certain other cognitive states particularly from belief and opinion. In the 'Phaedo', Plato holds the view that knowledge and belief should be distinguished both by their objects and by their different faculties employed. What is known is unchanging and cannot be otherwise; what is believed is, by contrast, in flux and allows of contradictory possibilities.

In 'Republic' Plato shows that particular objects are copies or images of the forms. Knowledge is distinguished from belief by reference to their different objects and true knowledge. In the elaborate analogies of the sun, the Divided Line, and the cave, Plato distinguishes knowledge from belief from the point of view of difference between forms and particulars and also in terms of a hierarchically organized systematic body of knowledge.

Kant, in his 'Critique of Pure reason' draws a distinction between knowledge, belief and opinion. He writes, "The holding of something to be true or the subjective validity of the judgment in its relation to the conviction has the following three degrees:opining, believing and knowledge. Opining of such holding of a judgment as it consciously not only objectively, but also subjectively. If our holding of the judgment be only subjectively sufficient and is at the same time taken as being objectively insufficient we have what is termed believing. Lastly, when the holding of something to be true is sufficient both subjectively and objectively, it is knowledge. This subjective sufficiency is termed conviction (for myself) the objective sufficiency is termed certainty (for everyone)."

In Transcendental Dialectic, Kant argues that we can have no knowledge of the properties of the soul, the outer limits and inmost nature

of the cosmos, on the existence of God. Here, Kant states that 'knowledge' transcending possible experience is not knowledge but only matters of faith or speculation.



LET US KNOW

The discussion of distinguishing knowledge from belief was started by Plato.

8.6 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF

There is a view that the concept of 'knowledge' is completely different from that of the concept of 'belief'. Beliefs certainly have some affinity with knowledge though there is a wide difference also.

Plato in his 'Republic' distinguishes knowledge from belief on the basis of their respective objects. Plato's view is not only important but also very significant in the analysis of knowledge. He keeps knowledge, thought and intelligible objects on the one hand and beliefs, sense and sensible objects on the other.

Russell makes a distinction between knowledge and belief by arguing that knowledge has facts for its objects and knowledge is a relation between two genuine objects: the knower and the fact known. But there may not be anything like fact as is believed by the believer. In the case of belief, believe is personally involved and so beliefs are subjective. On the other hand, knowledge is not a personal affair.

Though knowing and believing are cognitive activities yet the two terms are different in nature. The verb 'know' is not a proper psychological verb. So, no empirical science like psychology or grammar can study the logical or the paralinguistic behaviours of 'know', which is a philosophical one.

The adjectives like true, false, justified, unjustified are applicable only to belief. But they can never be applied to knowledge. Even we cannot meaningfully express 'true knowledge' as it is tautologous in nature. It is possible that justified and unjustified belief can be true by chance, but 'knowledge' can never be true by chance. The role which chance necessarily plays to make a belief justified or unjustified- true has to be cancelled in knowledge.

Chisholm said that if a man knows that a proposition is true, then he is justified in believing that there is no truth that could disturb the case that he has for that proposition. Ayer, too, said "knowledge implies having the right to be sure." Chisholm remarks that a man can be said to believe firmly on reluctantly or hesitatingly. Chisholm claims an important distinction between knowledge and belief by saying that "we often speak of what a man ought to know but seldom, if ever, of what a man ought to believe." S. Bhattacharyya views this situation in the way that one cannot know the faults but, one can only fail to know the right thing. The 'believer', on the contrary, can believe what is false and he can also fail to believe what is true. So, both 'error of commission' and 'error of omission' are possible in the state of belief. 'Because of this freedom in believing, we have the appeal "Believe me when I say that P, which would have been impossible if we were not free to a great extent in believing. Thus we find that so far as freedom is concerned, there is much of it in believing, and little of it in knowing." The process of knowing is radically different from the process of belief. "There are ways of knowing but there are no ways of believing." This explains why beliefs are subjective even when they are rational.

According to Ryle, 'know' and 'believe' are dispositional verbs but the verb 'know' is named as a capacity verb of a special sort whereas 'believe' is a tendency verb. For example, the verb 'know' truly signifies something which is a success verb but the verb 'believe' signifies nothing of this sort. Beliefs can be blind and obsessing.

S. Bhattacharyya also elucidates a distinction between knowledge and belief. A belief falls sort of knowledge not merely because the propositions which serve as its evidence are of doubtful truth value, but also because the connection between evidence and belief is loose. He says, "When we are able to tighten up this connection…….by removing logical gaps…….by statistically established laws, then we have knowledge."

LET US KNOW



The adjectives like true, false, justified, unjustified are applicable only to belief. But they can never be applied to knowledge.

All these striking differences between knowledge and belief move us to account the probable and possible relation of belief with knowledge.

8.7 RELATION BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF

From the above discussion it has been seen that there are differences between knowledge and belief. But the view that knowledge excludes belief is however questionable. Several epistemologists put arguments against all versions of the thesis that knowledge requires belief like attitude towards the known. But the view knowledge excludes belief is however questionable. Though some thinkers claim that the attempts to define knowledge in terms of belief have failed to gain general acceptance, yet different versions of incompatibilism between knowledge and belief play an important role in the analysis of knowledge.

The incompatibility thesis is traced to Plato in view of his claim that knowledge is infallible. In the Republic, he says that knowledge differs from belief in respect of its objects or aims. But, many thinkers do not agree with Plato in so far as the objective differences between knowledge and belief are concerned. Plato's version in the Republic is entitled as the 'object theory' by Danto. According to Plato, the objects of knowledge are forms

and ideas whereas the contingent empirical truths are the objects of belief. Knowledge and belief are two separate mental faculties. However, Plato's distinction of knowledge and belief, on the basis of their objects, cannot be entertained in epistemological consideration too, because in this case genuine knowledge of the sensible world is impossible forever.

Again, Plato's view seems to be inconsistent with our common practice of assuming that knowledge and belief or concerned with the same thing. Woozley argues that "we may distinguish necessary from contingent or empirical truth, but we have no right to say that the later cannot be objects of knowledge."

Another incompatibility version is found in the theory of Cook Wilson and Prichard. According to them, knowledge and belief are alternative mental states. Cook Wilson holds that beliefs are not knowledge. He maintains that knowing being the presupposition of all enquiries, 'we cannot make knowing itself a subject if enquiring in the sense of asking what knowing is'. No definition can be given of knowledge; it is the apprehension of fact. Opinion differs from knowledge; it (opinion) can never be called apprehension. The ground of opinion is insufficient evidence for which it is fallible. Cook Wilson tries to show some light upon this difference by showing the relation of knowing to thinking. He holds that the function of opinion is called thinking whereas knowledge is judging or deciding. In knowledge case we judge or decide that A is B, but opinion is not a decision or judgements where we are conscious of the insufficiency of evidence. Thus, Cook Wilson shows that the mental situation of knowing is somewhat different from the mental situation of believing.

Prichard defends the incompatibility thesis and tries to equate knowledge with certainty. Believing involves uncertainty and it rules out the possibility of knowing. Knowing is absolutely different from believing or being convinced. The difference is described as being a difference 'in kind' and not simply a difference 'in degree'. When we know, we know that we are knowing and nothing can exist which is incompatible with the truth of that

proposition. Again, Prichard claims that if we reflect we cannot mistake belief for knowing. Malcolm comments that, 'Prichard is using the 'strong sense' of 'know' and this sense of 'know' is very important and useful.

To Prichard, knowing something is a special state of mind which is infallible. Of course, there are arguments against Cook Wilson's and Prichard's views. Knowing cannot be accepted as some sort of 'experience or mental state; the verb to know neither denotes an act or activity nor denote some unique infallible state of mind. Their theory unduly restricts the sphere of knowledge. We cannot agree with them that belief is a totally unreasonable state of mind. Conscious beliefs clearly involve some level of confidence which is not discussed by them. They hold that there is a sharp distinction between believing and thinking, and they call them as 'thinking without question' or 'being under the impression'.

Philosophers like Ayer argues that there is no infallible state called 'state of knowledge'. He says, "…..there cannot be a mental state which, being as it were directed towards a fact, is such that it guarantees that the fact is so." thus, unlike Cook Wilson and Prichard, Ayer remarks that knowledge is not a distinctive state of mind so far as the mental condition is concerned, between a person who believes and a person who knows.

According to Austin, there is an incompatibility between the utterance 'I know' and 'I believe'. The former is a performative utterance and the latter is a descriptive utterance. In case of 'I know', I give my words whereas with 'I believe' I refrain from giving my word. Austin sys, "when I say 'I know', I give others my word.' I give others my authority for saying that S is P."

Austin's version of incompatibilism between the utterance 'I know' and 'I believe' is however questionable. Austin himself abandons this distinction in his later works. He holds that whenever we utter a certain sentence, we utter it with a certain meaning and the utterance has a certain force. Again, he maintains that one of the conditions of one's uttering "I know that P" is that one must be sure of P.

Harrison shows that Austin's view that 'I know' is similar to 'I promise' is misleading. 'I know' differs from 'I promise'. One of the most important differences is that someone saying 'I promise ……' is thereby promising, whereas someone saying 'I know …..' is not thereby knowing but simply claiming that he knows". Again, someone may utter 'I know' without giving any word and it is possible to utter 'I know' and yet not to know. We cannot accept that 'I believe' is not a performative utterance because the utterance 'I believe' may also be able to perform something by its means.

Lehrer considers belief as a necessary condition among other conditions of knowledge. Further he claims that 'if a person does not believe that p, then he does not know that p; and equivalently, but less negatively, if a person knows that p than he believes that p. it proves that if s knows that p, then s believes that p'. He points out that in a perfect case of believing or knowing that p, a man must be convinced of the truth of p. if, the conviction that p is lacking then, those cases are neither believing nor knowing. Lehrer said "belief is more like a habit than an action……. A person may decide whether or not to perform an action. Acceptance, unlike belief is a matter of choice." Hence, acceptance of belief is very important for knowledge.

Therefore, whether knowledge entails true belief or is radically different from belief are the foremost epistemological questions. It is also viewed that in approaching these questions, the study of epistemology reflects a growing controversy. In spite of all, we must remain aware that there is a profound difference between knowledge and belief in their logical behaviours. Is s knows that p, p entails truth and if s believes that p, p does not entail truth. So, we have reached the position that knowledge is infallible. Plato, in the Theatetus showed the right instinct that the attempt to define knowledge in terms of belief is not satisfactory; knowledge is neither true opinion nor true belief. Here lies the question, 'is knowledge justified true belief?



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.6. Who has started the distinction between knowledge and belief?

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Q.7. In which book Kant distinguished between knowledge, belief and opinion?

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Q.8. On what basis Plato distinguished between knowledge and belief?

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Q.9. What kinds of adjectives can be applied to belief?

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Q.10. What is the necessary condition among other conditions of knowledge according to Lehrer?

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ACTIVITY - 8.3

Briefly explain the difference between knowledge and belief.

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Briefly explain the relation between knowledge and belief.

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8.8 LET US SUM UP

- We intuitively make a distinction between belief and knowledge. People can believe propositions that aren't true; but if you know that p, then p must be true. You can't know something false; if it is false, then you don't know it. You have made a mistake, believing it to be true when it is not.

- There is another distinction between beliefs and knowledge. People can believe propositions for all sorts of reasons. They can have true beliefs without having any evidence or justification for their beliefs.

- The notion of knowledge is intimately tied up with the notion of belief. The relation between knowledge and belief is of great importance. Both the two terms 'knowledge' and 'belief' have their various meanings and uses.

- Gilbert Ryle says that there are certain distinctions between knowing how and knowing that. 'Knowing that' is propositional but 'knowing how' is not propositional.

- The concept of belief is very central to epistemology because the ground level epistemological concepts of 'truth', 'falsity', and 'justification' are applied primarily to beliefs and only derivatively to knowledge. Belief may be characterized as stronger than mere ungrounded opinion but weaker than full knowledge.

- In our everyday life, we think that knowledge has a relation with other concepts like belief and opinion because these notions are frequently grouped together under the heading of the term 'cognitive activities'. Sometimes the two terms 'knowledge' and 'belief' are used interchangeably as there is no radical difference between knowing and believing. But if we look into the general agreement then we can see that what we know can only be true whereas what we believe may be true or may not be true. It implies that the disjunction either

true or false does not apply to what you know but does apply to what we believe.

- The discussion of distinguishing knowledge from belief was started by Plato. In 'Meno' and 'Phaedo', Plato distinguishes between knowledge and belief with the help of the theory of recollection. It is either assumed or perhaps argued that we do have knowledge and knowledge is distinct from certain other cognitive states particularly from belief and opinion. In the 'Phaedo', Plato holds the view that knowledge and belief should be distinguished both by their objects and by their different faculties employed. What is known is unchanging and cannot be otherwise; what is believed is, by contrast, in flux and allows of contradictory possibilities.

- The adjectives like true, false, justified, unjustified are applicable only to belief. But they can never be applied to knowledge. Even we cannot meaningfully express 'true knowledge' as it is tautologous in nature. It is possible that justified and unjustified belief can be true by chance, but 'knowledge' can never be true by chance. The role which chance necessarily plays to make a belief justified or unjustified- true has to be cancelled in knowledge.



8.9 FURTHER READING

1) Armstrong, D.M., "Belief Truth and Knowledge", Cambridge, 1973.
2) Ayer, A.J., "The Problem of Knowledge", McMillan, 1956.
3) Griffiths, A. Phillips (ed.) "Knowledge and Belief", London, Oxford University Press, 1967.
4) Lehrer, K., "Theory of knowledge", London, 1990.
5) Wilson, Cook, "Knowledge and Belief", Griffiths.
6) Woozley, A.D. "Theory of Knowledge", B.I. Publication, 1982.

8.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:

Ans to Q No 1: The notion of knowledge is intimately tied up with the notion of belief.

Ans to Q No 2: People can believe propositions that aren't true; but if you know that p, then p must be true.

Ans to Q No 3: 'Knowing that' is propositional but 'knowing how' is not propositional.

Ans to Q No 4: Gilbert Ryle talks about certain distinctions between knowing how and knowing that.

Ans to Q No 5: Gilbert Ryle considers beliefs as 'tendencies' to say and do various things

Ans to Q No 6: The discussion of distinguishing knowledge from belief was started by Plato.

Ans to Q No 7: Kant, in his 'Critique of Pure reason' draws a distinction between knowledge, belief and opinion.

Ans to Q No 8: Plato in his 'Republic' distinguishes knowledge from belief on the basis of their respective objects.

Ans to Q No 9: The adjectives like true, false, justified, unjustified are applicable only to belief.

Ans to Q No 10: Lehrer considers belief as a necessary condition among other conditions of knowledge.

8.11 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very short questions

Q 1: What is the other notion that the notion of knowledge is intimately tied up?

Q 2: What is the difference between knowledge and belief?

Q 3: What is the distinction between knowing that and knowing how?

Q 4: Who has differentiated between knowing that and knowing how?

Q 5: What does Ryle consider belief to be?

Q 6: Who has started the distinction between knowledge and belief?

Q 7: In which book Kant distinguished between knowledge, belief and opinion?

Q 8: On what basis Plato distinguished between knowledge and belief?

Q 9: What kinds of adjectives can be applied to belief?

Q 10: What is the necessary condition among other conditions of knowledge according to Lehrer?

B) Short questions (answer each question in about 100-150 words)

Q 1: How many types of knowledge are there?

Q 2: Mention one difference between belief and knowledge?

Q 3: What is 'knowing how' knowledge?

Q 4: What is 'knowing that' knowledge?

Q 5: In which books and how Plato discussed about the distinction between belief and knowledge?

C) Short notes (answer each question in about 100-150 words)

Q 1: Difference between knowledge and belief

Q 2: Knowing how and knowing that

Q 3: Relation between knowledge and belief

D) Long questions (answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q.1. Elaborately discuss about Gilbert Ryle's distinction between knowing that and knowing how.

Q.2. Discuss about the difference between knowledge and belief made by Plato.

Q.3. Discuss in general about the distinction between knowledge and belief.

Q.4. Is there any relation between knowledge and belief? If yes, then elaborate the relation between knowledge and belief.

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UNIT-9 : THEORIES OF TRUTH

UNIT STRUCTURE

9.1 Learning Objectives

9.2 Introduction

9.3 Truth in Philosophy

9.4 Correspondence Theory of Truth

9.5 Coherence Theory of Truth

9.6 Pragmatic Theory of Truth

9.7 Some other Important Theories of Truth

9.8 Let Us Sum Up

9.9 Further Reading

9.10 Answers to Check Your Progress

9.11 Model Questions

9.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- define truth in Philosophy
- identify what are the theories of truth
- describe 'The Correspondence Theory' of truth
- explain 'The coherence theory' of truth
- describe 'The Pragmatic Theory' of truth
- discuss semantic, deflationist, and the disquotational theory of truth

9.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit introduces to you the different Theories of truth. You know that a judgment may be true or false. But the question is how truth and falsity are known or tested in philosophy. Philosophers admit three principal Tests of truth. They are:

- Correspondence theory of truth
- Coherence theory of truth
- Pragmatic theory of truth

Realists support the Correspondence and Pragmatic theories of truth while the idealists support the Coherence theory of truth.

The Correspondence theory of truth considers correspondence to be the test of truth. It advocates that a judgment is true if there is a correspondence between the judgment and fact; otherwise the judgment will be false. The Coherence theory considers coherence to be the test of truth. It views that a judgment is true if it coheres with a system. On the other hand, the Pragmatic theory of truth considers workability or meaningfulness and utility or usefulness as the test of truth. So, the pragmatic theory says that a judgment is true if it is workable or meaningful or useful.

To sum up, correspondence, coherence and workability or meaningfulness are the three tests of Truth.

9.3 TRUTH IN PHILOSOPHY

Before we talk about the theories of Truth, let us think about what is truth in philosophy. Philosophers view that Truth is an attribute of beliefs, opinions, theories, doctrines, statements, etc. According to philosophers, there are mainly three theories of Truth.

- Correspondence theory of Truth
- Coherence theory of Truth
- Pragmatic theory of Truth

9.4 CORRESPONDENCE THEORY OF TRUTH

The Correspondence theory is the oldest among the theories of truth. It is found in Aristotle's Metaphysics. He formulates the theory as such: -'to say of what is that it is, or of what is not that is not, is true'. This formulation can be symbolically represented in modern logic as ' "p" is true if and only if p'. The Correspondence theory holds that there is a direct correspondence between judgment and reality. As for instance, 'grass is green' is a judgment. But the question is, whether the judgment is true or

false. Correspondence theory holds that there is a direct correspondence between grass and green. It is not the case that grass is not green. That is why it can be held that the judgment 'grass is green' is true.

It is a common sense theory of truth. Common sense holds that objects exist independently of knowledge in the external world. Our sense organs directly perceive that grass is green. In this context our sense organs do not depend on previous knowledge of things which idealism advocates. Therefore, this theory of truth is known as direct realism or naive realism. Common sense holds that our mind comes in direct contact with the objects. As for instance, people perceive-'The Sun revolves around the Earth'. It is indeed correct in perception. But in reality it is not correct. On the other hand, 'the Earth revolves around the Sun' is a true judgment. Therefore, naive realists view cannot be accepted which asserts a direct correspondence between judgment and reality.

Neo- realism is an improvement upon naive realism. Because neo-realists view that truth consists in the correspondence between knowledge and its object. According to neo-realism, the contents of knowledge are numerically identical with things known. As for instance, when we know a tree we say that it is the same object which is present in the external world and also in our consciousness. Some neo-realists say that it is not the case that the tree bodily enters into our consciousness, rather there is a structural identity between the tree and consciousness.

This theory is also not satisfactory. Here also the correspondence between knowledge and its object is confusing. Because we do not see in what sense we can speak of a correspondence between the two. It can be said that there is no subjective content of the mind that might correspond to the object.

Another form of the correspondence theory is known as the copy theory of ideas. It is found in Locke's book Essay Concerning Human Understanding. He says that the ideas Constituted by the objects are the

copies of objects. But this theory is also not satisfactory. Because objects are external to the mind and its ideas. So, knowledge cannot be directly known by us. Ideas are subjective in the sense that they are private. And objects are objective in the sense that they are public or can be known. Therefore, it will be wrong to say that knowledge is a direct correspondence between ideas and objects.

Another form of the correspondence theory is the logical theory of correspondence. It is advocated by Bertrand Russell. This theory holds that truth is defined by correspondence to fact and not by experience. A proposition is true when it correspond to fact. But a proposition may be true without our knowing it as true. As for instance, the proposition, 'it is raining' is true if it is actually true. It may be the case that you may be sleeping at that time when it is raining and do not realize that it is true. But that will not make the proposition any less true. If you wake up and look out of the window of your room you would know that the proposition "it is raining" is true. So, the logical theory of correspondence holds that truth depends on the character of correspondence to some real facts. And the knowledge of truth depends on its verification by experience. But it is not that all true propositions are verified. As for instance, general propositions like 'All men are mortal' are true in so far as they correspond to facts. But it cannot be verified by experience because we can have no experience of the unlimited number of instances. Hence, we conclude that the truth of a proposition does not depend on its verification by experience. Rather, we can say that truth of a proposition depends on its correspondence to fact.

Megarian "Liar Paradox": Eubulides, a member of the school of Megara, seems to have protested against the basic Platonic and Aristotelian positions. Here Eubulides has shown their position by saying about a man who says "I am lying" or "what I am now saying is false" and it is true if it is itself false and it is false if what the man is saying is not false (false if it is true). Therefore, this view leads to the position that whatever we say about the truth or falsehood of an utterance entails its own opposite. Aristotle's one-sided view on truth and falsehood of sentences depends on the matter

of fact. The sentence that deal with the fact is considered to be a true sentence; otherwise the sentence will be false. This "paradox of the liar" was much discussed by both ancient and modern medieval writers. It undoubtedly presents a serious problem to anyone by attempting to give a satisfactory account of truth and falsehood.

The Megarian School of philosophy, which flourished in the 4th century BC, was founded by Euclid of Megara, one of the pupils of Socrates.



ACTIVITY - 9.1

Do you find any relationship between Correspondence Theory and realism? Discuss.

Ans: .....

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Do you accept the Correspondence theory of Truth? Discuss

Ans:.....

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CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Name the supporters of the correspondence theory of truth.

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Q 2: How do philosophers view truth? (Answers in about 15 words)

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Q 3: State whether the following statements are True or False

a. There are three principal tests of truth (T/F)

b. Correspondence theory is found in Aristotle's Metaphysics (T/F)

Q 4: What do you mean by the correspondence theory of truth? (Answer in about 70 words)

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9.5 COHERENCE THEORY OF TRUTH

By now you have an idea about the concept of correspondence theory of truth. Now let us look at the Coherence theory of truth.

The Coherence theory of Truth is another form of the theories of truth. According to this theory, a judgment is true if it coheres with our beliefs within a system. It is generally accepted by the idealists. Idealists like Berkley, Hegel, Bradley and Bosanquet accept this theory of truth. It also has been accepted by logical positivists like Neurath, Hempel. But there is a difference between logical positivists and idealists.

The logical positivist theory of coherence is found among a system. It is the totality of all possible systems and is true by itself. On the other hand the Hegelian form of the Coherence theory is the theory of absolutists. It differs from logical positivists in two important ways.

- It is not the consistency of formal logic which may characterize a system and make it valid, but not true. A system of thought may be formally consistent but materially false and therefore not correct. As for instance, think about gold mountain. This example is formally and logically correct but not materially in the sense that gold mountain is not found in experience.

- The Hegelians do not advocate the view given by the logical positivists. According to the logical positivists, there are different systems of truth. The different systems of truth are inconsistent with one another. Because a proposition which is true in one sense may be false in another. Against this view, the Hegelians say that the ideal of knowledge is a 'system, not of truths, but of truth'. They advocate that truth is all inclusive and harmonius whole.

Coherence theory also admits degrees of truth. Because a judgment which is consistent and coheres with the all comprehensive system of knowledge is absolutely true. But the problem is that we cannot attain such type of absolute truth. We know that an absolute truth is an ideal truth. A judgment becomes more true if it coheres with the whole system of knowledge. So, coherence admits degrees of truth. Bradley, an absolutist idealist therefore, views that judgments are partially true and partially false. His view is that "truth must exhibit the mark of expansion and all-inclusiveness." He through this saying admits degrees of truth.

From the ordinary view point it can be said that individual statements lead to degrees of truth in comparison to the whole system of truth. So, a judgment may be partially true or partially false. That is why all human errors may be said to be partial truths. Hence, it can be said that Coherence theory of truth admits degrees of truth.

The Coherence theory of truth is also not satisfactory. Because this theory of truth leads to relativism in the sense that it admits different degrees of truth. So, the question comes to our mind, what is the objectivity of truth then? In answer it can be said that truth cannot be varying. If it is, then telling lies by someone will be true. And as a result we fail to distinguish between truth and falsity in our practical life. But the advocates of the coherence theory do not accept this objection. Because at first people thought that 'the Earth is the center of the universe'. This was accepted as true knowledge until the truth being discovered that not the Earth, rather the Sun is the center of the universe. So, it can be said that the first view was

inconsistent when the later view is being proved to be true by Galileo (the Sun is the center of the universe).



ACTIVITY - 9.2

Do you find any relationship between coherence theory and idealism? Discuss

Ans:……

……

……

……

Do you accept the coherence theory of truth? Discuss

Ans:……

……

……

……



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 5: Define coherence theory of truth. (Answer in about 50 words)

……

……

Q 6: State whether the following statements are True or False

a. Coherence theory of truth is generally accepted by the idealists (T/F)

b. Coherence theory is also accepted by logical positivists (T/F)

9.6 PRAGMATIC THEORY OF TRUTH

Now you have some idea about the concept of Coherence theory of truth. Let us know about the Pragmatic theory of truth.

Pragmatism asserts that usefulness or workability is the test of truth. An idea is true if it works. If it leads to fruitful consequence, it is true. On the

other hand, if it leads to unfruitful consequence, it will be false. As for instance, fire burns. This judgment is true if fire burns. On the other hand, the above mentioned judgment will be false if fire does not burn in experience. Therefore, the test of truth is pragmatic usefulness, successful activity, fruitful consequence or utility.

The supporters of the pragmatic theory are C.S. Peirce, William James, Schiller and Dewey.

Pragmatism is a method of philosophizing. It has been developed by C.S. Peirce and revived and formulated by William James as a theory of truth. Again, it has been further developed by John Dewey and Ferdinand Canning Scott Schiller.

According to Peirce, pragmatism is not a philosophy, a metaphysic, or a theory of truth. It is not a solution of an answer to anything but a technique to find solutions of a philosophical or scientific nature.

Peirce holds that pragmatism as a method of philosophy deals with the clarification of the meaning of words, ideas and concepts. Similarly, it is also a method of clarifying and determining the meaning of signs. Peirce, in this context, holds that "All thought whatsoever is a sign, and is mostly of the nature of language." The pragmatic method does not apply to all the various kinds of signs and modes and purposes of communication.

The aim of the method is to facilitate communication to an extent which finally determines the relevance and justification of the method.

This aim shows us the critical nature of pragmatism. It directs us that words are being used in different ways or without meaning at all. Peirce says, "Pragmatism will show that almost every proposition of ontological metaphysics is either meaningless…….or else absurd." Peirce also remarked that "Pragmatism solves no real problem. It only shows that supposed problems are not real problems."

William James in his book Pragmatism states: "Truth is a property of certain of our ideas. It means their agreement, as falsity means their disagreement with reality." By the agreement of ideas he does not mean that our ideas copy reality. It also does not mean that there is a fixed relation of correspondence between ideas and objects. Therefore, it cannot be said that ideas are true because they copy or correspond to reality. That is why it is clear that pragmatic theory goes against the Correspondence theory of truth.

The truth of ideas depends on verifiability. "True ideas are those that we can assimilate, validate, corroborate and verify. False ideas are those that we cannot."(James) Ideas and judgments are not true until they are verified by their fruitful consequences. When they lead to successful activities they are true. An idea is not true by itself. This means that the truth of an idea is constituted by verifiability. William James in his book Essays in Pragmatism says: 'True ideas are those that we assimilate, validate, corroborate, and verify. False ideas are those that we cannot.'

Schiller points out that the question of truth is primarily a practical one. Our success in practical life depends on our ability to predict and control the course of events in the world. We want to discover truth. The test of truth depends on our ability to predict and control the course of events in the world. Predictions which are formally valid, but practically inapplicable are only truth-claims. Truth claims are not considered as truths. So, predictions become true only when they turn to success. Here we find a distinction between positive value of successful prediction and negative value of unsuccessful prediction.

According to Dewey, truth or knowledge is the outcome of adequate enquiry. 'Knowledge is related to enquiry as a product of the operations by which it is produced.' Enquiry is a process of investigation which is evoked by a doubtful situation. It begins in doubt and proceeds to remove doubt through proper investigation. A proposition is true means it is warranted by competent and controlled enquiry. Dewey prefers to use the words 'warranted assertability' for knowledge or truth.

The pragmatic theory has been criticized by critics. According to them, pragmatic theory reduces the true to be useful and obliterates the distinction between truth and error. It is a matter of common experience that what is not useful and what is false may sometimes be useful for certain purposes.

Again, the pragmatic theory makes truth appear as subjective. If the test of truth is utility or usefulness then the truth will depend on people's interest. That is why, it is clear that pragmatic theory cannot provide us objective test of truth. So, it can be said that pragmatic theory is not satisfactory.

LET US KNOW



Peirce, Charles Sander(1834-914) American Philosopher of Science and Language. He was founding figure of American "Pragmatism" best expressed in his essay "How to make our ideas clear".

Dewey, John: (1859-1952) American philosopher of 'pragmatism'. He developed the pragmatism of William James and Peirce.

Schiller, FCS(1864-1937)Philosopher of pragmatism who holds the doctrine that our cognitive efforts and human needs transform the reality we seek to describe.

ACTIVITY - 9.3



Is pragmatic theory practical? Give answer.

Ans: …….....…….....…….

…….....…….

…….....…….

…….....…….

…….....…….



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 7: Fill in the blanks:

a. ----------is the test of pragmatic theory of truth.

b. Pragmatic theory is supported by----------.

Q 8: State whether the following statements are True or False:

a. James wrote Essays in Pragmatism (T/F)

b. Pragmatic theory is free from criticism (T/F)

Q 9: What is pragmatic theory? (Answer in about 50 words)

……..

……..

……..

……..

9.7 SOME IMPORTANT THEORIES OF TRUTH

Besides the three theories of truth like Correspondence, Coherence, and Pragmatic theory of truth we also get some other theories of truth. They are - Semantic theory of truth, Deflationary theory of truth, and Disquotational theory of truth etc.

● Semantic theory of truth

This theory of truth originates with the mathematician and logician Alfred Tarski. It shows that the sentence like 'Aardvarks amble' is true if and only if aardvarks amble. It holds the symbolic form of all true sentences such as 'p is true if and only if p.

Tarski shows that all true sentences must logically follow from the adequate definition in And if we were dealing with a finite language, we need all the associated T-sentences for a complete definition of truth. Tarski has dealt with the definition of truth of formal languages which are infinite. Apart

from this, Tarski defined truth in terms of satisfaction. He insisted on the definition of truth for formal languages that implied the T- sentences. It can be viewed that both the Correspondence theorists and Deflationists follow the Tarski's theory of truth. Correspondence theory holds a word-world relationship and it leads to a satisfaction when we can make a compatible relationship between a word and its objects refered to. It confirms that correspondence is no more mysterious than the semantic relations between predicates and names and their referents.

Deflationist theory of truth

Deflationists hold that the substantive theories like the Correspondence and the Coherence theory are not satisfactory. There is no substantive property of truth. Frank Ramsey in this context holds that truth is redundant. It is true that 'Caesar was murdered' means no more than that Caesar was murdered. Truth is less easily eliminated from generalizations like "Everything Socrates says is true." Ramsay agrees with the view. Here, the word 'true' disappears and any effort to investigate the nature of truth also disappears. The Prosentencial theory of truth, which is considered a sophisticated version of the theory of truth, views that the word true is not even a genuine predicate but a mere component of pro-sentences. If I say 'that is true' in response to a claim of yours then I have produced not a new sentence but pro-sentences by going back to the original (your) sentence just as pronouns he/she are used in lieu of nouns like Mantu, Kalpana etc. So, the word true is no longer used as a discrete property by denoting predicate. P.F. Strawson asserts that we use the word true not to mention a property but to perform speech-acts such as endorsing, agreeing, and conceding.

● Disquotational theory of truth

The disquotational theory of truth, which is championed by W.V. Quine and further developed and defended by Field, holds that a sentence is true due to its indirect way of saying the sentence itself. That is why, the

word true is not directly related to the sentence like 'Penguin waddles' which is the Tarskian T-sentence. "Penguin waddles" is true if and only if Penguin waddles. And the totality of T-sentences tells the whole story about truth. This raises the question whether we can talk about the truth of a sentence without using truth predicate in case of direct talk about the world. The disquotationalist will reply by pointing to the general form "p or not p' is true. In this case, truth predicate can be eliminated from sentences in order to determine the truth or falsity of sentences only if we could produce an infinite conjunction of sentences of the form "p or not p". "Penguin waddles or penguin does not waddle', and "Aardvarks amble or aardvarks do not amble." Therefore, this theory of truth views that true does not denote a property or relation. It is a logical device.



9.8 LET US SUM UP

- Aristotle formulates the theory as such: -'to say of what is that it is, or of what is not that is not, is true'.
- The Correspondence theory holds that there is a direct correspondence between judgment and reality. As for instance, 'Milk is white' is a judgment. But the question is, whether the judgment is true or false. Correspondence theory holds that there is a direct correspondence between milk and white. It is not the case that milk is not white. That is why it can be held that the judgment 'milk is white' is true.
- It is a common sense theory of truth. Common sense holds that objects exist independently of knowledge in the external world. Our sense organs directly perceive that milk is white. This theory is also known as direct realism. Because our common sense holds that our mind comes in direct contact with the objects.
- The Coherence theory of truth holds that a judgment is true if it coheres with our beliefs within a system. It is generally accepted by the idealists.

Idealists like Berkley, Hegel, Bradley and Bosanquet uphold this theory of truth.

- According to Pragmatism, usefulness or workability is the test of truth. An idea is true if it works. If it leads to fruitful consequence, it is true. On the other hand, if it leads to unfruitful consequence, it will be false. The supporters of pragmatism are Dewey, James, Schiller.

- The semantic theory of truth originates in the ideas of Alfred Tarski. The symbolic form of the semantic theory of truth is P is true if and only if P. The truth of a sentence logically follows from the sentences. Each T-sentence is partially true because it concern with finite language. Therefore, Tarski is concerned is concerned with formal languages which are linked with infinite.

- Deflationists' theory of truth holds that truth is redundant. Truth is not even a genuine predicate but a mere component of pro-sentences.

- The disquotational theory of truth holds that truth is not directly related to the sentence, rather it is indirectly related to the sentence itself. This theory holds that truth does not denote a property, rather it is a logical device.



9.9 FURTHER READING

1) Chatterjee, S.C.(1949). The Problems of Philosophy. Das Gupta & Co. Ltd., Calcutta.

2) Patrick, Thomas White.(2006). Introduction to Philosophy. George Thomas White Surjeet Publications, Delhi, 2006

3) Datta, D.M. (1961). Chief Currents of Contemporary Philosophy. Bharati Printing Books, Calcutta, University Press.

4) Hosper, J. (1973). An Introduction to Philosophical Analysis. Edition, London Routledge &Kegan Paul.

9.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: Aristotle, John Locke, Bertrand Russell support correspondence theory of truth.

Ans to Q No 2: Truth is an attribute of beliefs, opinion, theories, doctrines, statements, etc.

Ans to Q No 3: a) True b) True

Ans to Q No 4: The Correspondence theory means that there is a direct correspondence between judgment and reality. As for instance, 'milk is white'. But the question is, whether the judgment is true or false. Correspondence theory upholds that there is a direct correspondence between milk and white. It is not the case that milk is not white. That is why it can be held that the judgment 'milk is white" is true.

Ans to Q No 5: This theory says that a judgment is true if it coheres with our beliefs within a system. It is generally accepted by the idealists. Idealists like Berkley, Hegel, Bradley and Bosanquet accept this theory of truth. It also has been accepted by logical positivists like Neurath, Hempel.

Ans to Q No 6: a) True b) True

Ans to Q No 7:

a) Pragmatic usefulness, successful activity, fruitful consequence or utility is the test of truth

b) William James, Schiller, Dewey

Ans to Q No 8: a) True b) False

Ans to Q No 9: Pragmatic theory of truth views that usefulness or workability is the test of truth. An idea is true if it works. If it leads to fruitful

consequence, it is true. On the other hand, if it leads to unfruitful consequence, it will be false. As for instance, fire burns. This judgment is true if fire burns.



9.11 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very short Questions

Q 1: Name two supporters of Correspondence theory.

Q 2: Which theory of truth advocates 'the degress of truth'?

Q 3: What are the theories of truth?

Q 4: What is the logical formula of Aristotelian Correspondence theory of truth?

B) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: Briefly explain the Correspondence theory of truth?

Q 2: What is pragmatic theory of truth?

Q 3: Is Coherence theory of truth satisfactory? Discuss briefly.

Q 4: What is Semantic theory of truth?

Q 5: Write briefly on the deflationist theory of truth.

Q 6: What is 'megarian Liar Paradox'? Explain briefly.

C) Write short notes on (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: Common sense view on The Correspondence Theory of Truth.

Q 2: Degrees of truth.

Q 3: Neo-realists view on The Correspondence theory of Truth.

Q 4: The logical theory of Correspondence.

Q 5: The semantic theory of truth.

Q 6: Disduotational theory of truth.

D) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: Explain the correspondence theory of truth. Is it satisfactory?

Q 2: Define coherence theory of truth. Explain its defects giving proper reasons.

Q 3: Is pragmatic theory free from defects? Discuss.

Q 4: What is the difference between correspondence theory and coherence theory? Explain.

*** ***** ***

UNIT-10 : GETTIER'S PROBLEM

UNIT STRUCTURE

10.1 Learning Objectives

10.2 Introduction

10.3 The Standard Analysis of Knowledge (JTB)

10.4 The "Knowing That" and "Knowing How": Distinction

10.5 Belief

- 10.5.1 Belief as a Necessary Condition for Knowledge
- 10.5.2 The Analysis of Beliefs

10.6 Truth Necessary Condition for Knowledge

- 10.6.1 No Magical Connection between Knowledge and Truth
- 10.6.2 Alleged Counterexamples to the Necessary of Condition (ii) i.e. truth

10.7 Justification: justification as a Necessary Condition for Knowledge

- 10.7.1 Why Justification Is Necessary for Knowledge
- 10.7.2 The Nature of Justification

10.8 Knowledge and Its Conditions

10.9 Gettier Counter Examples

10.10 Let Us Sum Up

10.11 Further Reading

10.12 Answers to Check Your Progress

10.13 Model Questions

10.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to know:

- describe the general meaning of knowledge and what is Gettier's Problem
- explain the standard analysis of Knowledge
- explain and analysis what is belief
- explain the difference between " knowing that" and " knowing how"
- describe belief as a Necessary Condition for Knowledge
- describe what is connection between knowledge and Truth

- explain what is justification
- explain why Justification is necessary for Truth
- describe the nature of Justification
- discuss Knowledge and its Truth
- explain Gettier counter examples
- explain conditions in the concept of knowledge

10.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit will introduce to you about the Gettier's Problem and how it is related to knowledge. The concept of knowledge is a perfect candidate for philosophical analysis. In the first place, it is not a strange or technical term, all of us can, and do, use the noun knowledge and various forms of the verb to know quite frequently and quite correctly. In the course of ordinary life, we often reject, often with good reasons, various people's claims to know this or that.

Fortunately, philosophers have developed widely accepted analysis of the concept of knowledge.According to this standard account, knowledge is justified true belief i.e. JTB.

Gettier problems or cases are named in honour of the American philosopher Edmund Gettier. This problem, in the field of epistemology, is a landmark philosophical problem concerning of understanding of knowledge. Attributed to American philosopher Edmund Gettier, Gettier type counterexamples which is also called Gettier cases challenge, the long held justified true belief i.e, JTB account of knowledge.

LET US KNOW



Gettier, Edmund (1927-): American philosopher, who's Is Justified True Belief Knowledge? (1963), offers counter-examples to show that even justified true belief may not be genuine knowledge in cases where that which justifies one's belief happens not to be related directly to the truth of what one believes.

10.3 THE STANDARD ANALYSIS OF KNOWLEDGE (JTB)

JTB can be expressed, in explicit analytical form, as follows:

X knows that P IFF

i) X believes that P;
ii) It is true that p;and
iii) X justified in believing that p (if X does)

I know that 2+ 2=4, for example, just in case (or just when) I believe that 2+2=4; is true that 2+2=4;and I am justified in believing that 2+2=4. Similarly, you know that the dog is in the backyard just in case you believe that the dog is in the backyard, that's where the dog is, and you are justified in your belief.

According to the standard analysis, then there are three necessary conditions for knowledge;

1) The belief condition
2) The truth condition and
3) The justification condition

No one who fails to satisfy one or more of these conditions can possibly know that p. The standard analysis of knowledge also claims that these three conditions are together sufficient-that is, there is no other requirement that needs to be met in order to have knowledge.



ACTIVITY - 10.1

● Give two examples from day to day life where JTB can be understood very clearly.

Ans:- .....

.....

.....



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1. What is Knowledge?

……..……..……..

Q 2. What is the full form of JTB?

.....……

Q 3. Who is the author of Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?

.....……

10.4. THE "KNOWING THAT"/ "KNOWING HOW": DISTINCTION

The standard analysis of knowledge is an analysis of: knowing that". However, "knowing that" must be carefully distinguished from "knowing how". We know that how to ride a bicycle, bake a pineapple upside-down cake, or do a handstand, this is common know-how, or knowledge-as-ability. Ordinarily, we cannot fully verbalize knowledge and ability: such knowledge is taught more by showing than by saying.

Knowledge in the "knowing that" sense is called propositional knowledge. Indeed, the "p" in both "believing that p" and "knowing that p" is called a propositional variable. It is generally assumed that propositional knowledge, unlike know-how, can be fully verbalized.



ACTIVITY - 10.2

Give an example of the differences between "Knowing that" and " Knowing how".

Ans:- .....

……..……

……..……



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 4. What are the differences between "knowing that" and "knowing how" ?

……..……..……..……..

……..……..……..……..

10.5 BELIEF

10.5.1 Belief as a Necessary Condition for Knowledge

Condition (i) i.e. belief in the standard analysis of knowledge tells us that we cannot know that which we do not believe. In other words, we cannot have knowledge without belief (although we can certainly have beliefs that do not amount to knowledge). It is preciselythat subset of our beliefs that are both true and justified that constitute knowledge. Although this is a quite natural way of looking at knowledge, it has sometimes been challenged.



ACTIVITY - 10. 3

Try to give one example of belief which is related to knowledge.

Ans:- ……..……..……..……

……..……..……..……..



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 5: What is the 1st condition of Knowledge?

……..……..……..……..

Q 6: What is belief?

……..……..……..……..

10.5.2 The analysis of Beliefs

Although everyone, we are, of course,generalizing about adult speakers of English has the word belief in his or her vocabulary, the associated concept is very difficult to analyze. One initial clarification is easy to make: we should distinguish belief as a propositional attitude-that is, believing that"-from belief as confidence -that is "believing in". In this present discussion, we are not concerned with the concept involved in believing in, such as believing in democracy, the American way of life, votes for seventeen year olds, Senator X, or whatever.

One analysis of belief that reads as follows:

X beliefs that p IFF
X thinks p is true,

Any counter example to the necessity of condition (i) for knowledge would require us to accept a situation in which a person could consistently say "I know that p, but I don't think it is true that p." If someone were to say something like "I know that I went to the movies last night, but I don't think I did." We would not, I think, credit that person with an unusual-but possible-state ofmind; we would, instead, suppose that the person was using the word know or the word think correctly. It is the job of Psychology to describe peculiar, including very confused, states of mind; philosophy, based on its analyses of concepts, can say that no state of mind, or psychological condition, could possibly be correctly described as a state, or condition, of "belief less knowledge." is a phrase that has as much chance of describing anything as "four sided triangle" or "square circle".

LET US KNOW



Belief: Affirmation of, or conviction regarding, the truth of a proposition, especially when one is not (yet) in possession of evidence adequate to justify a claim that the proposition is known with certainty.

10.6 TRUTH: NECESSARY CONDITION FOR KNOWLEDGE

Condition (ii) i.e. truth in the standard analysis of knowledge tells us that we cannot know that which is not true though certainly many things may be true we don't know. There may indeed be things that are true that no one knows.

Condition (ii) is a necessary condition for knowledge because a commitment to its necessary is built into our use of the term knowledge, as well as into our thinking about knowledge. The necessity of condition (ii) regulates our use of knowledge and related terms. Even if we are not fully aware of this. Once again, conceptual analysis makes explicit something implicit in our actual, often quite unreflective, practice.

People, of course, quite often think they know something they don't know. But the correct way of describing this is never to say they know various things falsely. About the people in the Middle Ages who said "we know the earth is flat." the correct thing to say is that they were making two necessarily interlocking mistakes. Their first mistakeswas about the shape of the earth: they thought it was flat, but it wasn't and isn't. Their second mistake was about their inventory of knowledge; they thought it contained an item about the shape of the earth, but it didn't.

This is always the situation when people think they know what cannot know because it is false, If X says "I know that p, " but p is in fact false, necessarily X makes two mistakes. The first, about himself and what he knows (he overestimates his supply of knowledge by one unit), and second, about p. Imagine a not very clever child, just learning arithmetic, who is delighted that he now " knows" that 2+2=5. Necessarily the child makes two mistakes: a mistake about what he knows (less than he thinks) and a mistake about what 2+2 equals.



LET US KNOW

TRUTH: the conformity of a proposition to the way things are. Precise analysis of the nature of truth is the subject of the correspondence, coherence, pragmatic, redundancy and semantic theories of truth.



ACTIVITY - 10. 3

- Do you find any relationship between truth and knowledge?

Ans:- .....

.....

.....

- Do you accept thattruth is a main criterion of knowledge?

Ans:- .....



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 7: Fill up the blanks:

a. People, of course, quite often think they know something they _____ _____.

b. Condition (ii) is a necessary condition for _____ because a commitment to its necessary is built into our use of the term _____, as well as into our thinking about knowledge.

10.6.1 No Magical Connection Between Knowledge and Truth

When people first hear the principle, if you know something, it has to be true, they something imagine they are being given a magical guarantee that reliably concretes their saying "I know that p" (or their sincerely believing that they know that p) with p's being true. This gets the real connection

between knowledge and truth background, however; it works only the other way around. If p turns out to be false, you turn out not to know that p, whatever you may or believe.

10.6.2 Alleged Counterexamples to the Necessary of Condition (ii)

Proposed counterexamples to the necessity of condition (ii) for knowledge (the truth condition) all turn out to be counterexamples to such principles as "If X says he knows that p, then p" or "If X believes he knows that p, then p." These are false principles, and are of course open to counterexamplification.

There is no genuine counterexamples to "If X knows that p, then p." This should not be puzzling. We simply refuse to count anything as knowledge that is not true. This is why it is so often difficult to acquire knowledge, and why its acquisition counts as an accomplishment. It also explains why claims to know can be and often is incorrect.

It is sometimes maintained, despite the considerations above, that people in the Middle Ages really did know the earth was flat, it seemed flat to ordinary people, respected experts held that it was flat, belief in the earth's flatness was traditional. All of this may be true, but it is irrelevant. It may have been reasonable for people, in the middle Ages, to believe that the earth was flat, but reasonable belief is not the same as knowledge.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 8: (a) There is no genuine counterexamples to "If X knows that p, then p." (T/F)

(b) It also explains why claims to know can be and often is correct. (T/F)

10.7 JUSTIFICATION: JUSTIFICATION AS A NECESSARY CONDITION FOR KNOWLEDGE

Condition (iii) i.e, justification in the standard analysis of knowledge tells us that cannot know what we believe without justification. The first thing that has to be made clear is that the justification condition is separate from the truth condition. You can satisfy condition (ii) and not satisfy condition (iii) in other words, you can believe something that is true and still not be justified in your belief, Similarly, you can satisfy condition (iii) and not satisfy condition (ii) in other words, you can be justified in believing something which is false, Of course it veryoften happens that you believe something that is true, ad are justified in your belief . (or believe something that is false, and fail to be justified in your belief). These are the most obvious possibilities, but instances where truth and justification go their separate ways are also possible.

LET US KNOW



Judgement: The mental act of affirming a proposition or the capacity for distinguishing truth from falsity.

Justification: justification is offered as grounds for believing an assertion? Hence, also an explanation of the legitimacy of each step in the formal proof of the validity of a deductive argument.

ACTIVITY - 10.4



Give one example from day to day life showing that justification is related to knowledge

Ans: .....

.....



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 9: What is Justification? Answer in about 20 words)

.....

10.7.1 Why Justification Is Necessary for Knowledge

Why isn't true belief enough for knowledge? The simplest answer is that justification is built into the concept of knowledge that we, as a matter of fact, employ. This is a correct answer as far as it goes. But there is an explanation of why we have the concept we have with just those necessarily conditions we take to define it. The point of calling something knowledge is to indicate that we can rely on it, that we can be very, if not perfectly, certain that it is correct. Once something is classified as knowledge, we want to be able to use it, with as much security as possible, as the basis for plans and actions.

Although beliefs that are the products of lucky guesses or prejudices or otherwise arrived at irrationally, and which fail to be supported by relevant evidence, may occasionally be true, we can never be confident that they will be true. True beliefs that are true "by chance" do not provide the maximal certainty that it is the point of knowledge to provide.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 10: Why Justification Is Necessary for Knowledge?

.....

.....

10.7.2 The Nature of Justification

We are here talking about justification only in connection with beliefs-what is often called doxastic justification. Decisions, Actions, plans, rules

and possibly feelings can also be justified (or fail to be justified), but whatit means to speak of justification in each of these cases is not the same as what it means to speak of the justification of belief. An analysis of belief, or doxastic, justification builds on the ordinary idea that a person is justified in believing something just in case he has "good reasons" for his belief. Although the word reason sometimes means cause (as in the sentence, "The reason my car dint start was that it was out of gas") reason here does not mean cause. A hypnotist might cause me to believe that Mickey Mouse is president of the United States but, although the causal story provides me with an excuse for believing something so absurd, it does not give me good reasons for my belief. Reasons that have justification force are, at least for most beliefs, to be understood in terms of the possession of adequate evidence.

LET US KNOW



Doxa (Greek) Greek term for opinion, belief or judgement, as opposed to systematic knowledge, frequently contrasted with real knowledge in classical philosophy. According to Plato, this limited awareness of the sensible world encompasses the lower portion of the divided line. In Aristotle's works on logic, the same terms are used to distinguish contingent from necessary truths about the world. Doxastic: It simply means "concerning beliefs." Doxastic Logic: The logic of belief.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 11: What is often called doxastic justification?

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10.8 KNOWLEDGE AND ITS CONDITIONS

We have seen that conditions (i), (ii) and (iii) in the standard analysis of knowledge all have to be satisfied for a person to have knowledge. This

happens only when a person believes something that is true and is also justified in his or her belief. When a person believes something that is false and also lacks justification, that person (very obviously) does not have knowledge. When a person believes something that is true but lacks justification, that person also does not have knowledge.

Finally, when a person believes something that is false, but nevertheless has justification, he still fails to have knowledge. There are cases like too, cases where there are "good reasons" for believing something that is in fact false. So we might judge that people in the Middle Ages, given the evidence then available, were justified in believing that the earth is flat.



ACTIVITY-10. 5

What are the three conditions of Knowledge? Discuss.

Ans: ……..…..…….....……

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10.9 GETTIER COUNTER EXAMPLES

Thereare general agreements that each of the three conditions for knowledge discussed in this chapter is necessary. This leaves open the question of whether the three conditions are jointly sufficientor sufficient a "package." Could someone satisfy the three conditions and still the American philosopher Edmund Gettier (b. 1927) has proposed counterexamples to the joint sufficiently of the three conditions constituting the standard analysis of knowledge. His counterexamples (and similar examples) have come to be known as Gettier Counterexamples.

Let us consider one such example. Suppose I took out the window of my apartment , see what any reasonable person would take to be rain failing, and come to be believe that it is indeed raining. In fact, though what I am seeing is not real rain, but the special-effects rain produced by movie crew. The "fake rain" is coming from sprinklers below a temporary roof.

However, at the same time, it really is raining, and -if the temporary roof were not in place-real rain would be failing in place of the movie rain that I see. I believe that it is raining, it is true that it is raining, and I am justified; yet it seems odd to say that I know that it is raining. That my belief is true in the special circumstances of the Gettier counterexample seems a matter of pure coincidence. In any case, my evidence seems somehow defective. I have come to believe that it is raining via false belief that the stuff failing outside my window is real rain.

There is no general agreement, among philosophers, on just how to handle Gettier counterexamples. Does the possibility of constructing such examples mean that the standard analysis is incomplete? Not necessarily. We might take Gettier counterexamples to show that judgements are, like most other judgements, fallible (fallible= "possibly mistaken") or corrigible (corrigible= "subject to correction"). In the circumstances just described, a person who judges that it is raining arrives at that belief by a reasonable route. If it turns out that his actual process of belief formation, though of a generally reliable sort, relies on a false assumption ("That's real rain out there") then it turns that he is not justified. He does, after all, fail to satisfy condition (iii), so it is not surprising that he does not know that it is raining.



ACTIVITY-10.6

Try to give one Gettier's Counterexample from day to day life.

Ans:……

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CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 12: What is Gettier Counterexamples? Give examples.

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Q 13: What is corrigible?

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Q 14: What is No-Theory of truth?

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Q 15: What is correspondence theory of truth?

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Q 16: What is coherence theory of truth?

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Q 17: What is pragmatic theory of truth?

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LET US KNOW

The No-Theory of Truth: This theory is meant as a philosophical theory of truth and its basic claim is that 'p' is true just means that p

This theory is also sometimes called the disappearance theory of truth.

Correspondence Theory of Truth: belief that a proposition is true when it conforms with some fact or state of affairs. While this theory properly emphasizes the notion that propositions are true when they correspond to reality, its propositions often have difficulty explaining what facts are and how propositions are related to them.

Coherence Theory of Truth: belief that a proposition is true to the extent that it agrees with other true propositions. In contrast with the correspondence theory's emphasis on an independent reality, this

view supposes that reliable beliefs constitute an inter-related system, each element of which entails every other. Thus, such idealists as Bradley, Bosanquate and Blanshard, all defended versions of the coherence theory.

Pragmatic Theory of Truth: belief that a proposition is true when acting upon it yields satisfactory practical results. As formulated by William James, the pragmatic theory promises (in the long term) a convergence of human opinions upon a stable body of scientific propositions,that have been shown, in experience, to be successful principles for human action.

Bradley, Frencies Herbert (1846-1924): English philosopher and absolute idealist. His Ethical Studies (1876) criticized Mill's utilitarianism and defended an ethics of self-realisation, understood as the conquest of the bad self by the good. Bradley's metaphysical views, akin to those of Hegel, with a special emphasis on the internal relations of the Absolute, are developed at length in Appearance and Reality (1893) and defended in Essays on Truth and Reality (1914). Bradliian metaphysics became the primary target for the anti-idealistic polemics of Moore and Russell.

Bosanquate, Bernard (1848-1923): British philosopher who defended a modified version of Hegel's absolute idealism in Logic, or the Morphology of Knowledge (1888). The Principle of Individuality and Value (1912) and The Value and Destiny of Individual (1914). According to Bosanquet, all contradictions are merely apparent and are wholly harmonized as part of the Absolute, a process said to account for the possibility of judgements about beauty in his History of Aesthestics (1892). Bosanquet further argued in The Philosophical Theory of the State (1899) that individual human beings are properly understood only in terms of their social and cultural efforts at transcendence.

Blanshard, Brand (1892-1987): American philosopher and long-time professor at Yale University. In The Nature of Thought (1939), Blanshard defended absolute idealism and argued that causal necessity is a genuine features of the natural world. According to Blanshard's Reason and Analysis, the philosophical methods of Anglo-American philosophers during the twentieth century were fundamentally misguided. He also rejected the prevalent non-cognitivism of twentieth-century ethicists, by defending a thoroughly naturalistic moral theory in Reason and Goodness(1962).



10.10 LET US SUM UP

- The single concept of knowledge fuses together three quite different considerations. One consideration concerns the knower and what he believes. Another considerations concern what is actually true, which has absolutely nothing to do with what the knower (or would-be knower) believes to be true. And the last consideration concerns the knower (or would-be knower) and his reasons-good or bad, adequate or inadequate-for belief, but has nothing to do with his views about the quality of his reason for belief.

- The concept of knowledge can be analysed in terms of belief, truth and justification. Each of these is a necessary condition for knowledge, and despite Gettier counterexamples should probably be regarded as jointly sufficient.

- The kind of belief that is involved in the analysis of knowledge is "belief that" (belief as a propositional attitude) rather than "belief in" (belief as confidence). Believing that p involves "thinking that p is true." This leads us to an account of the concept of truth.

- The relevant sense of 'truth' is that of propositional truth. Eachof the main theories of truth-the No-theory theory, the correspondence theory,

the coherent theory, the pragmatic theory and the assertibility theory- adds something to our understanding of the concept of truth.

- Finally, to be justified in believing something is to have good reasons for one's belief. For most beliefs, this means having enough of the right kind of evidence. For all beliefs, it means arriving at one's belief in a way that is not open to criticism.



10.11 FURTHER READING

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7) Sengupta, DrIra(2012): A Short History of Western Philosophy, New Central Book Agency(P) Ltd, London.

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10.12 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No. 1: Knowledge is justified true belief

Ans to Q No. 2: Justified True Belief

Ans to Q No. 3: Gettier

Ans to Q No. 4:

Ans to Q No. 5: Belief

Ans to Q No. 6: Belief is an affirmation of, or conviction regarding, the truth of a proposition, especially when one is not (yet) in possession of evidence adequate to justify a claim that the proposition is known with certainty.

Ans to Q No. 7: (a) Don't know

Ans to Q No. 7: (b) knowledge, knowledge

Ans to Q No.8 (a): T

Ans to Q No.8 (b): F

Ans to Q No. 9: Justification is offered as grounds for believing an assertion? Hence, also an explanation of the legitimacy of each step in the formal proof of the validity of a deductive argument.

Ans to Q No. 10: Justification is built into the concept of knowledge that we, as a matter of fact, employ.

Ans to Q No.11: Concerning beliefs

Ans to Q No 12: The American philosopher Edmund Gettier (b. 1927) has proposed counterexamples to the joint sufficiently of the three conditions i.e. Belief, Truth and justification constituting the standard analysis.

Ans to Q No. 13: Corrigible means correction.

Ans to Q.No.14: No theory is meant as a philosophical theory of truth and its basic claim is that

'p' is true just means that p

This theory is also sometimes called the disappearance theory of truth.

Ans to Q.No. 15: In correspondence theory ,belief that a proposition is true when it conforms with some fact or state of affairs,. While this theory properly emphasizes the notion that propositions are true when they correspond to reality, its propositions often have difficulty explaining what facts are and how propositions are related to them.

Ans to Q.No.16: In Coherence Theory of Truth**,** belief that a proposition is true to the extent that it agrees with other true propositions. In contrast with the correspondence theory's emphasis on an independent reality, this view supposes that reliable beliefs constitute an inter-related system, each element of which entails every other. Thus, such idealists as Bradley, Bosanquate and Blanshard, all defended versions of the coherence theory.

Ans to Q.No.17: In Pragmatic Theory of Truth, belief that a proposition is true when acting upon it yields satisfactory practical results. As formulated by William James, the pragmatic theory promises (in the long term) a convergence of human opinions upon a stable body of scientific propositions,that have been shown, in experience, to be successful principles for human action.



10.13 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very short Questions

Q 1: What is knowledge?

Q 2: What is JTB?

Q 3: What is belief?

Q 4: What is truth?

Q 5: What is Justification?

Q 6: Who is Blanshard, Brand?

B) Short Questions (Answer each Questions in about 150 words)

Q 1: Briefly explain the nature of Knowledge.

Q 2: What are the three main conditions of Knowledge?

C) Write Short Notes (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: Correspondence Theory of Truth

Q 2: Coherence Theory of Truth

Q 3: Pragmatic Theory of Truth

D) Distinguish between (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: Correspondence and Coherence

Q 2: Belief and Truth

E) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500words)

Q 1: Briefly explain what is Gettier's Problem?

Q 2: Discuss theories of truth.

Q 3: Briefly Discuss about Gettier and his counter examples?

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UNIT-11: SELF-KNOWLEDGE AND PERSONAL IDENTITY

UNIT STRUCTURE

11.1 Learning Objectives

11.2 Introduction: Self- knowledge Meaning

11.3 The Criterion of Personal Identity with Special Reference to Locke and Bernard Williams

11.3.1 The Criterions of Personal Identity

11.3.2 The Physical Criterion of Personal Identity

11.4 Hume's Concept of Self-knowledge and Personal Identity

11.5 Let Us Sum Up

11.6 Further Reading

11.7 Answer to Check Your Progress

11.8 Model Questions

11.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- explain the meaning of self-knowledge,
- explain and differentiate the two main criterions of personal identity,
- discuss the meaning of mental connectedness and physical connectedness in reference to personal identity,
- explain Hume's idea about personal identity.

11.2 INTRODUCTION: THE MEANING OF SELF-KNOWLEDGE

In philosophy, "self-knowledge" means knowledge of one's own sensations, thoughts, beliefs, and other mental states. Self is understood in terms of some internal existence. Mind is devoid of all physical characteristics. It does not have any color, shape or structure. To speak of mind is very difficult without body. Descartes introduced the rationalistic approach and Locke introduced the empiricist approach. Barkley confined that whatever is perceived.

In philosophy, self-knowledge usually means 1. Knowledge of one's particular mental states or knowledge of one's own nature. To have self-knowledge in the first of these senses is to know one's particular sensations, experiences, and propositional attitudes (beliefs, desires, and so on). 2. To have self-knowledge in the second sense is to know one's own ontological nature, or less abstract characteristics, such as one's own character, abilities, or values.

11.3 THE CRITERION OF PERSONAL IDENTITY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO LOCKE AND BERNARD WILLIAMS

This unit introduces you to the idea of personal identity. From the point of metaphysics, Personal identityis the problem of the nature of the identity of persons and their persistence through time.One makes a judgment of personal identity whenever one says that a person existing at one time is the same as a person existing at another time.Matters of great importance often turn on the truth of such judgments. Whether someone should be punished for a crime, for example, depends on whether he is the person who committed it, and whether someone is the owner of something now may depend on whether he is the person who purchased it at some past time. Whether there is personal immortality, or survival of death, depends on whether a person who dies can be identical with a person existing next to that person's death. Personal identity forms an important part of contemporary epistemology.The word 'identify' has two senses-To pick out and to recognize. Identification in the first sense may be called individuation. In the second sense it involves the judgment that two individuations are of one and the same person. The philosophical problem of personal identity is the problem of finding the basis in which an individual is regarded as the same person in spite of the changes. The problem of personal identity is connected with answering a basic question - what is it to remain one and the same person over a period of time. Everyone changes during his or her life time. Occasionally we meet an individual after a gap of many years and are amazed to know that he or she is the same person we met years ago.

This experience is connected with the philosophical problem of personal identity. Locke was one of the first philosophers who discussed the question of personal identity in certain details. He pointed out that there are differences between soul, person and man (woman). What does it mean to remain the same soul, to remain the same person and to remain the same man or woman are three different problems. In order to clarify the concept of personal identity Lockeconducted certain tough experiments also.

11.3.1 The Criterions of Personal Identity

Mainly there are two accepted criterions of personality. According to one view the criterion of personal identity is mental and on the other view accepts bodily identity as main criterion. If one holds that the mind can exist apart from the body, one would not make bodily identity a necessary condition of personal identity. In Cartesian dualism it is held that the body and the mind are mutually independent realities. So in Cartesian dualism bodily identity is not regarded to be a component of personal identity. But many philosophers tend to believe that personal identity involves both bodily identity and mental connectedness.

Many philosophers have adopted different approaches to personal identity. Wittgenstein was fully aware of the complexity of the problem of personal identity. Locke, Bernard Williams, Hume have offered different view regarding the idea of personal identity. Wittgensteinalso hold that our actual use of the fact that many characteristics which we use as the criteria to identify coincide here. So for Wittgenstein personal identity refers to not just to one criterion of identification. It refers to a number of criteria of identification. All these criteria converge and make possible the factors called personal identity. This is the impression that we get from Wittgenstein's The Blue and Brown Books (page 61). In this way philosophers have made various attempts to clarify the concept of personal identity.

So there are two section regarding the question of the criterion of personalidentity. One section believes that the criterion of personal identity

is mental and the other section believes that it is physical. Here we will try to see two different vies of two different philosophers.

The criterion of personal identity is mental : In Locke proposes that a conscious awareness of one's past, the like of which is contained in an individual's memory, is the key to identifying an individual at two different moments as the self same. According to Locke the privileged access that memory grants to an individual is the only clearly recognizable phenomena, cognitive or otherwise, which can tie an individual into one self same substance over time.

As Locke says:

..."tis plain consciousness, as far as it ever can be extended, should it be into Ages, unites v Existences, and Actions, very remote in time, into the same Person, as well as it does the Existence and proceeding moment: So that whatever has the consciousness of present and past Actions, is the same Person to whom they belong" (Locke, 2008; p.213)

Locke, for the first time in modern philosophy stated that the criterion of personal identity is mental. Locke sought to define personal identity in terms of mental connectedness. According to Locke to be the same person is to have the same set of memory. This idea was presented by Locke by considering the idea of the transmigration of the soul. According to Locke the soul is nothing other than the immaterial substratum. Our thoughts, feelings, desires, hopes, wishes etc are to belong to something. That something to which they belong, that something in which they inhere is the soul. We have only a vague idea of this immaterial substratum. Locke asked what would follow if his immaterial substratum inhabited the body of Socrates. Would it make him the same person as Socrates even though he could remember nothing of the life of Socrates? Locke argued that he could not be regarded as Socrates reborn. There must be a mental connectedness if we are to find the rebirth of Socrates, I would have been Socrates in a previous birth if I could remember the past life of Socrates as

Socrates would have remembered it. But because I cannot do that therefore I am not Socrates reborn. Because Locke cannot do that therefore Locke is not Socrates reborn. But if I have mental connectedness with Socrates, if I remember the past life of Socrates as Socrates would have remembered it then I am Socrates. A person will be the same person existing at an earlier time even with a different body if only he or she is conscious of the action of that person. Such a consciousness is theoretically possible in resurrection. In resurrection, Locke pointed out, the body may not be the same but there will be mental connectedness and this is enough for personal identity. Though memory criterion of personal identity is an important criterion yet on a number of grounds it is criticized. Some arguments against this view are -

1. **Keeping the same body:** Bertrand Russell wrote about an individual who was stating that Napoleon was not dead. When Russell asked for proof the man braced himself up and said, "Because I am Napoleon. Suppose someone remembers the life of Napoleon as Napoleon would have himself would have remembered it. In that case there would be a mental connectedness between the person and the Napoleon. By following the memory criterion of personal identity we would say that the person is Napoleon himself. Let us call this person A. we find another person who also remembers the life of Napoleon as Napoleon would have remembered it. Let us call this person B. by following memory criterion we will have to say that B is also napoleon. In this case A is identical with napoleon and b is also identical with Napoleon. But A is not identical with B. they are two different individuals. This situation implied that the memory criterion of personal identity cannot be the correct criterion. This is a very convincing argument. Philosophers like Reid, Bernard Williams and A.R Lacey employed this argument.

2. **Forgetting one's past:** It is possible to forget the past. There are many parts of my life which as a matter of fact I cannot remember. For example I cannot remember my birth. I cannot remember anything that happened to me till I was nearly 3 years old. There are many incidents that

happened to me much later which I don't remember. But it does not mean that I was not then the same person as I am now. So there is a factor called forgetting the past. I may forget the past and may lack the required mental connectedness with the past. But still I will be the same person. This factor of forgetting the past cannot be accounted for by the theory which accepts the memory criterion.

3. **Presupposition and circularity:** The charge that the memory criterion of personal identity involves the fallacy of personal circular reasoning was first put forwarded by Bishop Butler, who was a critic of Locke. Butler stated that the memory criterion presupposes personal identity and therefore it cannot be said that the mental connectedness constitutes personal identity.

LET US KNOW



Locke attempted to understand personal identity in terms of mental relationship. Hume attempted to dissolve the idea of personal identity. In his philosophy personal identity cannot be anything other than fictitious identity. Bernard Williams held that bodily identity is an important component of personal identity.

11.3.2 The Physical Criterion of Personal Identity

According to this view personal identity is not a matter of mental connectedness. According to this view to be the same person is to maintain the same body of course with renewed materials. Locke tried to explain personal identity in terms of mental connectedness. But philosophers like Thomas Reid, Bernard Williams and others tried to explain personal identity in terms of bodily identity. Bernard Williams and Thomas Reid offered certain arguments against the mental criterion of personal identity and stated that personal identity cannot be anything other than continuation of the same body.Williams expresses that relation in "Bodily Continuity and Personal Identity" as follows:

"The principle of my argument is, very roughly put, that identity is a one-one relation, and that no principle can be a criterion of identity for things of type T if it relies only on what is logically a one-many or many-many relation between things of type T. What is wrong with the supposed criterion of identity for persons which relies only on memory claims is just that '... being disposed to make sincere memory claims which exactly fit the life of...' is not a one-one, but a many-one, relation, and hence cannot possibly be adequate in logic to constitute a criterion of identity. Thus, logically, identity is a one-one relation. Any criterion of identity that does not appeal to the one-one relation fails the test of being such a criterion. "

The argument of Bernard Williams is found in his famous essay "Personal Identity and Individuation." We may present this argument here in a slightly amended form. Students of British history are familiar with the name of Guy Fawkesof the notorious Gun Powder Plot, the plot of blowing up the English Parliament. George remembers being Guy Fawkes. He remembers the life of Guy Fawkes as Guy Fawkes himself would have remembered it. By following the memory criterion we shall have to say that George is the same person as Guy Fawkes. He is Guy Fawkesreborn. Let us now imagine another person who is Henry. Henry remembers the life of Guy Fawkes. Let us imagine, in the same way in which Guy Fawkeswould have remembered it. By following the memory criterion of personal identity we have to say that Henry is Guy FawkesAt this point a problem arises. George is identical with GuyFawkes. We may say that he is Guy Fawkesreborn. Henry is identical with GuyFawkes. By following the memory criterion we shall have to say that Guy Fawkes and George are the same persons. Again by following the same criterion we have to say that Guy Fawkes and Henry are same persons, But George is not identical with Henry. Why? Because while George has one body Henry has another body. The bodily criterion of personal identity in this way comes to focus. We may say that having the same memory with Guy Fawkesmay be a necessary condition for being Guy Fawkes. But we cannot say that it is a sufficient condition for being Guy Fawkes. It seems that having the same body is a

necessary condition for being Guy Fawkes or any other person. George is not the same person as Guy Fawkesbecause they have different bodies. Similarly Henry is not the same person as Guy Fawkes because they have different bodies. One may remember here that in Christianity there is vague awareness of the need of the continuation of the same body for the identification of the individual as the same person. The doctrine of bodily resurrection is an important part of that Christian dogma. It seems that the bodily criterion is assumed here. The view that personal identity is to be understood in terms of bodily continuity faced certain problems. Some of these problems were raised by the distinguished philosopher Sydney Shoemaker. Shoemaker's arguments are very powerful and they require special consideration where he talked about quasi -memory and defended Lockean psychological continuity theory in his influential paper "Persons and their Pasts". Again the bodily theory and the immaterial-substance theory was rejected by the 17th-century English philosopher John Locke in his Essay Concerning Human Understanding (1689), which contained the first extended treatment of the topic in Western philosophy. Book II, chapter 27, of the Essay, "Of Identity and Diversity," introduces a famous example in which the soul of a prince, carrying with it consciousness of the prince's past life, is transferred to the body of a cobbler. Locke argued that the post-transfer cobbler-body person would be the same person as the prince, despite not having the prince's former body. He also held that consciousness can be transferred from one immaterial substance to another, so that the immaterial substance that was initially the mind of one person might become the mind of a different person.

LET US KNOW



Defenders of the psychological view, including Shoemaker, deny that they are committed to too many minds. Defenders also maintain that there is a good sense in which persons are animals, though not biologically individuated animals, and that animals in that sense can think. What

they hold against animalism is the same as what Locke held against a similar view, the bodily theory: animalism is committed to rejecting the highly plausible intuition that in a brain transplant (or in a Lockean soul transfer) the person goes with the brain (or soul).

11.4 HUME'S CONCEPT OF SELF- KNOWLEDGE AND PERSONAL IDENTITY

Before knowing what Hume thinks about personal identity we should know what a self is and what does Hume means by ideas and impressions. For Hume mind is a theatre. According to Hume a momentary is a very short time. According to him, mind just enters and goes out. It is not a physical thing. He defines self in terms of perception and these perceptions are momentary in nature. A perception exists for a single moment only. They enters into the mind in a rapid succession. The idea of self is only a creation of our mind. So for him it is an imaginary thing. According to Hume, (a) knowledge comes from experience (b) experience has two sources- ideas and impressions. (c) Impressions are momentary, discrete, independent, and separable from each other. (d) Self can be defined as a substance.

But here Hume said that we do not have any impression corresponding to the idea of self. There cannot be any simple idea without an impression. Such an idea cannot be a simple idea. But such an idea must be a complex idea. A complex idea may be a golden idea. This complex idea may have truth content and reliability like self.

Personal identity stands for personal identification of the person. The name is not sufficient for one's identification. One must refer to others also like parents. But the problem is Hume asks what makes a person same or give him the same identity throughout the life? Throughout the life the man undergoes different changes like physical, mental, circumstantial, environmental, cultural etc. But the main question is- "What is that which accounts for the sameness of the person even in the midst of all the changes

that he undergoes throughout his life? On the background of this question there is a pre-supposition that change and sameness cannot go together. They are not compatible. If they are identical then we will have to deny identity. Hume maintains that all our impressions are changing and momentary. There is no bond among them. So the question of the identity of a person is also not a real question. Hume says the personal identity is not a real thing. According to him, a person does not remain the same throughout his life. When the changes go on he or she is not the same person. Changes are so rapid that every moment we are changing. I am changing every moment so I am not the same person. Hume says that in reality there is no identity. Impressions come like the bogies of a train sorapidly that we impose that or think that this is the complete life. The only difference is the bogies of a train are connected with each other. But impressions are not connected. They are independent. This unification of impressions is only a fiction. So the concept of personal identity is a fiction. There is no bond among the perceptions also. Everything that we see that exist are perceptions. Beyond perception there is no perceiver and nothing perceived. But Hume's position is very queer. He said "I am a cluster of some perceptions only." Hume does not give any answer to the question what is there beyond perception. Only one's perception is real so a person is a cluster of perceptions. Hume's position is solipsist. This is the most important point of Hume's metaphysics. Fiction means imaginary things. Hume says that personal identity is not a real perception. It is a fiction. It is just an illusion or imagination or fiction. Hume uses the word imagination or fiction but never used the word illusion. What is the difference between the word illusion and imagination or fiction? Illusion is a word used by idealist philosophers. In case of illusion we are passive spectators. When we perceive the rope as a snake it is a case of illusion. But imagination is different from it. In case of imagination things are not exact representations of the real. According to Hume the concept of personal identity is an imagination. It is not real. Drama, novel, short stories are fiction because these are created by imagination. But history is not a fiction. Hume did not

conclude that world is fiction, although Hume was not satisfied with his own conclusion.

He wrote two important books-

1. A Treatise of Human Nature
2. An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding.

Hume replaced the second book in place of the first one. Hume is self-critical. He was not satisfied with what he had said earlier in the first book (personal identity is a fiction). He doubted his own position. He says that the conclusion is not correct. He also says that he does not know how to correct it. In his first book's appendix he stated that he finds himself in a dilemma regarding the conclusion. Hume says that so far his knowledge is concerned he knows that he has not committed any mistake. He says his conclusion is not final. He found no satisfactory answer from himself. So he dropped the concept of personal identity from the second book. Hume starts with the assumption that changes and identity do not go together. If there is identity there is no changes. It is said that there is a permanent entity which is self, which does not undergo changes. But Hume denies the concept of self. So he denies the concept of personal identity. If there were a personal self then we account the personal identity. He committed a mistake when he started with the assumption that personal identity and changes cannot go together. Hume fails to take note of the point that there is no need of a permanent self in order to account for personal identity. Time is identical with changes. Time cannot be determined without change.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1: What do you mean by self-knowledge?

Q.2: What are the two main criterions of personal identity?

Q.3: Is Hume's position of personal identity falls within solipsism? If yes, then why?



11.5 LET US SUM UP

- Self-knowledge" means knowledge of one's own sensations, thoughts, beliefs, and other mental states. Self is understood in terms of some internal existence.
- Mainly there are two accepted criterions of personality. According to one view the criterion of personal identity is mental and on the other view accepts bodily identity as main criterion.
- Locke, for the first time in modern philosophy stated that the criterion of personal identity is mental.
- Philosophers like Thomas Reid, Bernard Williams and others tried to explain personal identity in terms of bodily identity. Bernard Williams and Thomas Reid offered certain arguments against the mental criterion of personal identity and stated that personal identity cannot be anything other than continuation of the same body.
- According to Hume, (a) knowledge comes from experience (b) experience has two sources- ideas and impressions. (c) Impressions are momentary, discrete, independent, and separable from each other. (d) Self can be defined as a substance.
- Hume's position is solipsist
- Hume is self-critical. He was not satisfied with what he had said earlier in the first book (personal identity is a fiction). He doubted his own position.



11.6 FURTHER READING

1) Perry, John. Personal Identity
2) Strawson, Locke on personal identity
3) Sterrett, S.G. Locke, memory and personal identity,

4) Locke, John. An Essay Concerning Human Understanding; Volumes 1-3

5) Williams, Bernard. Bodily Continuity and Personal Identity, Analysis, 1960. (Article)

6) Personal Identity (standford encyclopedia)

11.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q. No.1: By self-knowledge we mean knowledge of one's own sensations, thoughts, beliefs, and other mental states.

Ans to Q.No.2: The two main criterion of personal identity are- 1. The mental criterion of personal identy. 2. The bodily criterion of personal identity.

Ans to Q.No.3: Yes, Hume's position is solipsist. Because he said "I am a cluster of some perceptions only." Only one's perception is real so a person is a cluster of perceptions.

11.8 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very short Questions

Q.1: Name the philosopher who stated that the criterion of personal identity is mental.

Q.2: Who is the author of the essay "Personal Identity and Individuation?"

Q.3: Who is the Author of the Book "An Essay Concerning Human Understanding?"

Q.4: Write down the name of the two books written by Hume

B) Short Questions (answer in about 150-200 words)

Q.1: What do you mean by the mental criterion of personal identity?

Q.2: What do you mean by the bodily criterion of personal identity?

Q.3: Why Hume is said to be self-critical?

C) Long Questions (answer about 300-500 words)

Q.1: Explain Locke's position of personal identity.

Q.2: Explain Bernard Williams' position of the bodily criterion of personal identity

Q.3: Explain Hume's idea about personal identity.

Q.4: Write the criticisms of Locke's theory of personal identity.

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UNIT-12: PROBLEM OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF OTHER MINDS

UNIT STRUCTURE

12.1 Learning Objectives
12.2 Introduction
12.3 Argument from Analogy
12.4 Philosophical Behaviourism
12.5 Wittgenstein's Linguistic Argument
12.6 Criteriological Argument
12.7 A Few More Comments
12.8 Let us Sum Up
12.9 Further Reading
12.10 Answers to Check Your Progress
12.11 Model Questions

12.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to

- define what is the epistemological problem of other minds
- analyse the different arguments offered by philosophers as solution to the problem
- discuss critically the feasibility of these arguments in overcoming the problem

12.2 INTRODUCTION

In this unit we shall discuss the philosophical problem called the problem of other minds. It is one of the classical problems of contemporary epistemology. In ordinary understanding the existence of other minds is not an issue to ponder over. Living in a human society, we quite easily accept it as a universal fact while communicating with others. But, there is a section of philosophers, the sceptics, who question the certainty of such knowledge. They question the possibility of the knowledge which entails us to belief that other human beings do have inner lives similar to us.

The problem gets its root in the philosophical ideas of Descartes, who draws a line of difference between mind and body. Through the process of methodical doubt Descartes arrives at the cogito which is a private consciousness. Farther, he asserts that the essence of the psychological consciousness or mind is thought and it is different from the physical existence or body the essence of which is extension. To establish the interaction between these two substances he brings in the concept of God who serves as a bridge between the two. Descartes' theory implies that each individual has a mind and only he can have access to his own mental states. It is strictly denied of public access. In this backdrop solipsism develops and the sceptics express doubt about the existence of other minds and it arises as an epistemological problem.

The problem may be formulated through the following questions.

a) How do we know that other individuals have thought or feeling?
b) How are we justified in believing that other individuals have thoughts and feelings?
c) What is the basis for our belief that other individuals have mental lives that resemble our own?

It is exactly a problem of the justification of our belief that others also have minds like our own. The epistemological problem of other minds is primarily based on the basic difference between our access to our own mental states and the mental states of others. We are always certain about our own mental states like, I am in pain, or I am depressed or happy and so forth. We know our mental states directly. We experience them. But, the same direct knowledge of others' mental states is not possible. We can never know directly in whatever mental states others are. The problem is between the directly known and directly not-known. However, it does not indicate lack of knowledge. It only indicates absence of direct knowledge. Hence, the arguments offered in support of the knowledge of other minds take help of the possibility of indirect knowledge of the inner life of others.

Here, we may take note of another point that in the contemporary philosophical analysis we come across another problem quite close to the problem of other minds that is the problem of the other. It is otherwise known as the problem of intersubjectivity. Sometimes both the issues are discussed with somewhat similar argumentations merging the differences between them. But, these differences are not to be overlooked. While one may be interpreted as epistemological problem, dealing with our knowledge of the existence other minds, the other dimension is said to be ontological, dealing with the issue of intersubjectivity as the fundamental aspect of our relation to the other. The difference between the problem of other minds and the problem of intersubjectivity is so thin that it often gets merged in some discussions. However, the ontological aspect is dealt with by the phenomenologists in particular and we find deeper analysis of the epistemological issues prominently in the discussion of the analytical philosophers.

There are various theoretical solutions offered by the analytic philosophers to the problem of other minds. We shall discuss them with critical estimations in the following.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Which trend of philosophy focuses on offering solution to the problem of other minds?

Ans.: ……..……..

Q 2: Who is known for advocating solipsism and dualism?

Ans.: ……..……..

12.3 THE ARGUMENT FROM ANALOGY

The most prevalent and oldest argument on the problem of other minds is the argument from analogy. The issue of the justification of the existence of other minds raised by the sceptics attracts the interest of the analytic philosophers who offer certain solution to the problem through a kind of inference on the basis of particular observations.

The argument claims that it is possible to have reasonable knowledge of other minds observing the similarity in behaviours of other individuals with that of mine in similar situations. The argument goes like this--I notice that the other's body is similar to me. Further, I see similarity between any of my experience and my expression of it. I also notice a similar expression in others and agree the existence of similar connection between their bodily behaviour and mental states related to that. Hence, from the observation of their publicly observable bodily behaviour I infer the existence their minds. For example, whenever I have a pain I cry or groan. Similarly, when someone else does the same I can infer that he is in pain.

The argument from analogy gets supported by different philosophers as an authentic solution to the problem of other minds. W. T. Stace holds that our justifiable belief in other minds depends only upon the argument from analogy from bodily behaviour. He claims that the argument is not a mere fiction or useless construction, but a logical justification for our belief in other minds. With different interpretations philosophers like H.H. Prince, Ledger Wood, Stuart Hampshire and A. J. Ayer supports the argument from analogy as a genuine solution to the problem of other minds.

However, Critics like Malcolm, point out that the argument being an inductive argument lacks strength in legitimately establishing the existence of the other minds as it proceeds from only one instance case, myself, as the basis for inference. This point is attempted to get nullified by A. J. Ayer with certain reformulation of the original argument. Ayer claims that we my take example of our more than one behaviour and their correlation with respective metal states. Observing our different behaviours correlated with different mental states, we find that mental states are causes of our bodily behaviours. Since it is evident in my case, we may legitimately infer that other's behaviours are also caused by their inner mental states and establish that other minds do exist. But, such reformulation of the argument also fails to get approved since there is always a possibility that other's behaviour may not be caused by their mental states but by mere brain states, which is again a part of the body. Further, critics point out that it is not possible to

legitimately infer the mental states of others on the basis of my own experiences as I cannot verify them to be true or false. I cannot verify the statement, "you are in pain". The emphasis is that the analogical argument is not sound as its conclusion is not capable of independent verification.

Max Scheler criticises the argument from analogy for underestimating the difficulties involved in self experience and overestimating the difficulties involved in experience of the other. Denying the need of any inference to get acquainted with the other he holds that while facing the other we do not confront a mere body or a mind but the other as a unified whole. However, though it does not provide a sufficient solution to the problem of other minds, the argument from analogy, at least, sustains the reason to believe in the existence of the Other and thus stands against the Cartesian isolated 'I'.

12.4 PHILOSOPHICAL BEHAVIOURISM

Against the indirect process of establishing the existence of other minds various arguments are offered by philosophers claiming its direct knowledge possible. These arguments appear as reply to or criticism of the argument from analogy. Philosophical behaviourism is such a reply. Gilbert Ryle is one of the exponents of this form of argument. Refuting the Cartesian dualism between mind and body Ryle holds that all psychological acts find expression in behaviour which is publicly verifiable. Hence, it is not necessary to make any inference regarding the inner mental states of other human beings. The knowledge of other minds no more remains a process from what is publicly observable to what cannot be publicly observed. Mental states are claimed to be fully understood in terms of behaviour. Though argument from analogy also proceeds from public behaviour to private mental life, behaviourism differs from analogy on the point that in behaviourism there is no need to infer the mental states. The theory considers mental states and behaviours as logically equivalent.

But, critics find major drawbacks in this interpretation as well. They point out that there is no physical expression which can guarantee that I am

in pain. The first person psychological statements cannot be fully apprehended through mere physical behaviour. Because, when I say that I am in acute pain I do not assert it on the basis of my behavioural observation. What I feel and the way I behave are not identical. So is the case with others. Hence, it is not logically possible to give behaviouristic solution to the problem of other minds.

12.5 WITTGENSTEIN'S LINGUISTIC ARGUMENT

Wittgenstein offers a solution to the problem through his linguistic interpretation. His argument is against the advocates of private language. These linguists hold that mental states are essentially private and hence, not accessible to others. They claim that only I can know that I am in pain. Others can only make a guess without being able to know it. Wittgenstein criticises this doctrine of epistemic privacy and argues that there is no private language. In Philosophical Investigations he argues that it is not possible to have a private language because language is developed always with others, living and communicating with others in an intersubjective society. It is not possible to develop language being absolutely cut off from other human beings. So, when my personal experiences are expressed in words it becomes public.

If it is claimed that the inner is hidden from us and can never be known, the same argument should have been operative in case of the future. But, astronomers do not guess but certainly know when there will be eclipse. Hence, such claims are not valid. He argues that there is similarity between first person sensation statements and natural expression of emotions and sensations. When I say "I am in pain", that itself is the expression of pain. First person statements similarly operate in others as well. The view that the ego has the privilege over the knowledge of his mental state is a view of solipsists. There is no private language as such. Hence, the mental states of other persons can be known through their expression in language.

In our daily interaction the other people's being minded is as true as their being alive. We need not arrive at the belief in other minds through

some thought process. Rather, it is part of human nature. No proof, no inference is needed to establish it. Wittgenstein denies any dualism between body and mind and holds that we experience mind directly in bodily expressions. Seeing the red face and big eyes we see the anger of a person. Austin also subscribe to the same view. Angry looks and actions are not mere symptoms of anger; they are ways of expressing it.

12.6 THE CRITERIOLOGICAL THEORY

However, P.F. Strawson does not agree with this view and argues that Wittgenstein has a strong prejudice against the inner. The inner life of a person cannot be overruled. There is always a difference between self ascription of the mental life and other ascription of the same. While giving definition of person, Strawson insists on the ascription of both M-predicate and P-predicate to one and the same subject. While M-predicate is ascribed to material bodies, P-predicate is added to signify a subject as person having both physical and mental states. Farther, Strawson significantly claims that the condition, under which we ascribe mental states to ourselves, similarly operates on mental states to others. The necessary condition of first person use of P-predicates is their second and third person use. Hence, the problem of the knowledge of other minds does not have any significance. However, Strawson again insists on the significance of bodily criterion for ascribing P-predicates to others. For Strawson, other ascription can take place only on the basis of bodily behaviour. Thus, as John Pollock observes Strawson's theory again alternatively moves back to argument from analogy. While argument from analogy considers the bodily criterion as a contingent ground, Strawson considers it as logical.

12.7 A FEW MORE COMMENTS

Against the agenda of argument from analogy G.E. Moore, in Philosophical Studies comments that there is no necessity of any inference to establish the existence of other minds. Almost everyone believes that there exist other persons having similar thought and perception to his own.

This belief is based on our direct perception. We directly communicate and get effective response. Moore offers the example of presenting paper in public. He holds that when I read a paper to my audience, I have perceptions which I could not have unless they were hearing my voice. Such experience serves as significant ground for the belief in other minds.

J.L. Austin also says that the doubt about the knowledge of other minds is a philosopher's artificial doubt. To believe in other minds is natural. There is nothing to justify it. Rather its doubt may need justification.

Apart from the analytic philosophers the problem attracts the attention of some phenomenologists as well. Edmund Husserl and Heidegger are two prominent names from this trend who offer their argument in line of the problem of other minds. However, the specific problem emphasised by them is not related to the knowledge of the mental states of some other person existing beyond oneself. Rather, the focus is basically on a problem regarding the self-other relation or the problem of intersubjectivity i.e. the ontological dimension of the issue which discusses the fundamental aspects of our relation to the other.

Edmund Husserl, the father of the Phenomenological movement, is credited for introducing a serious turn into the discussion of the problem of the Other, through the mode of intersubjectivity. Husserl emphasises on the necessary existence of the Other as a meaning giver to this inter-monadic world. For him, the Other is the "veritable guarantee" of the object's objectivity. As both my psycho-physical self and the Other exist here in this world as phenomena, hence, the Other, according to Husserl, appears necessary to the very constitution of the self. As he holds, "My empirical Ego and the Other's empirical Ego appear in the world at the same time".

Again Heidegger, going totally against the argument from analogy, claims that the existence of the intersubjective world is primary and no individual exists alone to discover the Other in a later experience. According to him, "I do not exist first in order that subsequently a contingency should make me encounter the Other. I apprehend 'being-with-others' as an

essential characteristic of my being". Hence, according to him, the problem of the Other remains no more a problem to carry further.

Whatever said or done on the issue of other minds one point it brings to focus that other minds are never fully accessible in the same sense in which I can access my own mental states. But, the uncertainty about the specific beliefs or intentions of other persons does not put the very existence of the Other in question. As Merleau Ponty states that our relation to others is deeper than any specific uncertainty we might have regarding them. This constitutional imperfection, in knowing the Other, recognises the other as other with its distinctive nature from myself.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 3: State whether the following statements are true or false

a) Argument from analogy proceeds from the existence of body to mind/mind to body.
b) Mind-body dualism is accepted/ rejected by Behaviourism
c) Strawson assigns P-predicate/ M-predicate to material bodies

Q 4: State whether the following statements are True or False

a) Wittgenstein holds that inner mental states are not knowable. (T/F)
b) Argument from analogy is a deductive argument (T/F)
c) Descartes advocates mind body dualism. (T/F)

Q 5: Mention two differences between the argument from analogy and philosophical behaviourism?

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12.8 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have discussed the problem of other minds from the epistemological perspective. Let us review the unit through the following points:

- Any justified belief in the existence of other minds is questioned by the sceptics.
- The problem arises against the backdrop of Cartesian solipsism.
- The problem is of the justification of our belief that others also have minds like our own.
- Argument from analogy is the oldest and most prevalent argument that offers solution to the problem through indirect knowledge possible.
- It argues that there is a close connection between my mental states and bodily behaviour, since others have bodies similar to me and express bodily behaviours, they must also have also have mind.
- Against argument from analogy philosophers like Ryle, Wittgenstein, Austin and Strawson offers arguments claiming the possibility of direct knowledge of other minds.
- However, no theory is immune from drawbacks.
- There is a certain constitutional difference between the self and the other which cannot be merged claiming complete knowledge of other minds.



12.9 FURTHER READING

1) Chakravarty, D. K. (2000). Fundamental Questions of Epistemology and Metaphysics. New Delhi: Omsons Publication.

2) Moran, D. (2000). Introduction to Phenomenology. New York: Routledge.

3) Zahavi, D. (2005). Subjectivity and Selfhood, Investigating the First Person Perspective. Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press.

12.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans. to Q No 1: Analytic Philosophy

Ans. to Q No 2: René Descartes

Ans. to Q No 3:

a) Body to mind

b) Rejected

c) M-predicates

Ans. to Q No 4: a) False b) False c) True

Ans. to Q No 5: The difference between argument from analogy and philosophical behaviourism can be put forth in the following way.

Firstly, the argument from analogy operates on the possible difference between the mind and the body. Mind- body dualism is not overruled here. Whereas, in Philosophical behaviourism, mental states and bodily behaviours are considered to be logically equivalent. There is no difference between them.

Secondly, in argument from analogy the argument proceeds from the publicly observable behaviour to the probable inner mental states through inductive inference. But in philosophical behaviourism, there is no need of such inference since there is no gap between the two.

12.11 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very short questions

Q.1: Mention two advocates of the argument from analogy with their views.

Q.2: What is Wittgenstein's opinion on the doctrine of epistemic privacy?

Q.3: Mental states and behaviours are equivalent. Which theory holds this and in what reference?

Q.4: What are the two predicates formulated by the Strawson in context of the concept of person?

B) Short questions (Answer in about 100-150 words)

Q.1: Write a short note on Argument from analogy.

Q.2: Explain briefly the criteriological theory.

c) Long Questions: (Answer in about 300-50O words).

Q.1: Discuss the views which consider other minds to be directly knowable.

Q.2: Explain the criteriological theory.

Q.3: Discuss Wittgenstein's linguistic argument on private language.

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UNIT 13: KNOWLEDGE AND CERTAINTY OF COGITO

UNIT STRUCTURE

13.1 Learning Objectives

13.2 Introduction

13.3 Knowledge and Quest for Certainty

13.4 The Role of Reason: Rationalism

13.5 Descartes Method

13.6 The method of Mathematics

13.7 Intuition and Deduction

13.8 Descartes's Methodic Doubt

13.9 Cogito Ergo Sum

13.10 Criticisms

13.11 Let Us Sum Up

13.12 Further Reading

13.13 Answers to Check Your Progress

13.14 Model Questions

13.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- explain Descartes quest for true knowledge
- discuss the view that sense experience is not a reliable source of true knowledge
- describe the ability of human reason to discover the truth
- explain Descartes method of doubt
- explain Descartes cogito argument
- analyse the criticisms of Descartes theory of knowledge

13.2 INTRODUCTION

Rene Descartes (1596-1650) was born in the Touraine region of France, in the town of La Haye. He is widely known as the father and

originator of modern philosophy and as France's greatest philosopher. He studied in the Jesuit college of La Flèche where his education included mathematics, logic and philosophy. He was most impressed, during these years, with the certainty and precision of mathematics, as compared with philosophy whose teachings invariably produced doubts and disputes. Descartes criticised much of the scholastic-Aristotelian tradition as it was taught in the schools of his day. For a long time he attempted to break with the philosophical traditions of his day and start philosophy anew. Some of his principal works include Discourse on Method (1637), Mediations on First Philosophy (1641), Principles of philosophy (1644), and The Passions of the Soul (1649).



LET US KNOW

Truth is Descartes's passion. He says of himself:

I have always had an extreme desire to learn how to distinguish the true from the false, in order to see clearly how I should act and to be able to travel with assurance through this life.

13.3 KNOWLEDGE AND QUEST FOR CERTAINTY

Descartes realized that our sense experience cannot be the basis of true knowledge because the senses often deceive us and the information we get by relying on sense experience is constantly changing and is often unreliable. Sense experience cannot provide the certainty needed to guarantee that which we claim to know is true. Being a rationalist Descartes claims that knowledge (as opposed to opinion) is possible only if it is based on self-evident and absolutely certain principles. Such principles are not learned through experience; instead, they are implicit in the very notion of reasoning itself. So, like mathematicians, we have to rely on reason. Only with the help of reason we can determine whether our opinions are justified true beliefs (that is, knowledge). Descartes was much influenced by the progress and success of science and mathematics which are based on

the natural ability of reason. He wanted to provide philosophy with the exactness of mathematics.

13.4 THE ROLE OF REASON: RATIONALISM

He believed in the natural ability of human reason to discover the truth. He emphasized the rational capacity of the human mind as the source of truth both about man and about the world. Being a rationalist he assumed that what he could think clearly with his mind did in fact exist in the world outside his mind. He believed that certain ideas are innate in the human mind, that, given the proper occasion, experience would cause these innate truths to become self-evident. He, thus, set out to formulate clear rational principles that could be organized into a system of truths from which accurate information about the world could be deduced.

Descartes broke with the past and gave philosophy a fresh start. He was determined to discover the basis of intellectual certainty in his own reason. He, therefore, gave philosophy a fresh start by using only those truths he could know through his powers as the foundation for all other knowledge. His ideal was to arrive at a system of thought whose various principles were true and were related to each other in such a way that the mind could move easily from one true principle to another, but in order to achieve such an organically connected set of truths, Descartes felt that he must make these truths "conform to a rational scheme." With such a scheme he could not only organize present knowledge but could "direct our reason in order to discover those truths of which we are ignorant." His first task therefore was to work out his "rational scheme," his method.



LET US KNOW

THE WAX ARGUMENT:

Descartes asked, "How is it that we know the essential qualities, for example, of a piece of wax?" At one time a piece of wax is hard, has a certain shape, colour, size, and fragrance. But when

we bring it close to the fire its fragrance vanishes, its shape and colour are lost, and its size increases. What remains in the wax that permits us still to know it is wax? "It cannot," says Descartes, "be anything that I observed by means of the senses, since everything in the field of taste, smell, sight, touch, and hearing are changed, and still the same wax nevertheless remains." It is nothing but my understanding alone which does conceive it, solely an inspection by my mind" which enables me to know the true qualities of the wax. Descartes says, " what I have said here about the wax can be applied to all other things external to me".



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1: Who is known as the father of modern philosophy?

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Q.2: Why was Descartes impressed with mathematics?

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Q.3: What is the problem with knowledge based on sense experience?

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Q.4: What is rationalism?

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Q.5: What according to Descartes are the characteristics of true knowledge?

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13.5 DESCARTES'S METHOD

Descartes's method consists of harnessing the powers of the mind with a special set of rules. He insisted upon the necessity of method, upon systematic and orderly thinking because if one aimlessly seeks for truth it will lead to confusions and blind our mental powers. He believed that our minds naturally possess two powers, namely, intuition and deduction by which we are able to arrive at knowledge of things. But by themselves these powers can lead us astray unless they are carefully regulated. Method consists therefore in those rules by which our powers of intuition and deduction are guided in an orderly way.

13.6 THE METHOD OF MATHEMATICS

Descartes looked to mathematics for the best example of clear and precise thinking. He was convinced that mathematical certainty is the result of a special way of thinking, and if he could discover this way, he would have a method for discovering true knowledge of whatever lay within the compass of our powers. Mathematics is not itself the method but merely exhibits the method Descartes is searching for. Mathematics was the basis of his own method. In mathematics he discovered something fundamental about the operation of the human mind. He believed that our minds are capable of knowing some ideas with absolute clarity and distinctness. Moreover, mathematical reasoning showed him that we are able to discover what we do not know by progressing in an orderly way from what we do know. To him all the various sciences are merely different ways in which the same powers of reasoning and the same method are used. In each case it is the orderly use of intuition and deduction.

13.7 INTUITION AND DEDUCTION

According to Descartes these two methods are the most certain routes to knowledge. By intuition he means our understanding of self-evident principles, such as the axioms of geometry or the arithmetic equations. These statements are self-evident in that they prove themselves to reason.

To understand them is to know that they are absolutely true and no one can doubt them.

By deduction he means orderly, logical reasoning or inference from self-evident propositions. Thus, by intuition we grasp a simple truth completely and immediately, whereas by deduction we arrive at a truth by a process.

Descartes's goal as a philosopher was to build a system of philosophy based upon intuition and deduction which will remain as certain and as imperishable as geometry.

Descartes wanted to test knowledge upon a starting point that had absolute certainty in the individual's own mind. Knowledge requires the use, therefore, of intuition and deduction, where 'first principles are given by intuition alone while the remote conclusions... are furnished only by deduction."

Descartes method does not consist only of intuition and deduction, but also in the rules he formulated for their guidance. The chief point of his rules is to provide clear and orderly procedure for the operation of the mind. He gave four precepts in his work the Discourse on Method:

1. 'the first is never to accept anything as true if I did not have evident knowledge of its truth'

2. 'to divide each of the difficulties under examination into as many parts as possible'

3. 'to direct my thoughts in an orderly manner, by beginning with the simplest and most easily known objects in order to ascend little by little...to knowledge of the most complex'

13.8 METHODIC DOUBT

Descartes used the method of doubt in order to find an absolutely certain, starting point for building up our knowledge. He hoped to find a self

evident principle which serves as the foundation from which an absolutely certain philosophy can be deduced. He lays down three requirements for such a foundational belief:

1. Its certainty must be such that it is impossible to doubt, it is self evident to reason, it is clear (in itself) and distinct (from every other belief).

2. Its certainty must be ultimate and not dependent upon the certainty of any other belief.

3. It must be about something which exists (so that from it beliefs about the existence of other things may be deduced).

Thus Descartes put all his earlier beliefs to doubt. By the method of doubt Descartes shows how uncertain our knowledge is, even of what seems most obvious to us. But to doubt all his beliefs individually would be interminable. So, he examines them by classes or groups to see if there is any one belief which defies doubt by meeting the above three criteria. So, class by class, group by group, he goes though all his beliefs. After examining his beliefs of sense perception, then the belief about the existence of the physical world, then the beliefs from the natural sciences and finally to mathematical beliefs. Even mathematics can fall into error sometimes. He supposes that an evil demon may always deceive him in all the things that he believes to be true even the propositions of mathematics like 2+3=5. Descartes raises the question, "can any belief withstand my doubting all beliefs?"

13.9 COGITO ERGO SUM

Descartes now presents his famous triumphant reply: He says that even if I am deceived in all my beliefs, including those of mathematics, there is one belief that cannot be doubted. Every time I doubt, I must exist to doubt. In doubting the truth of every other belief, I cannot doubt the belief that I am doubting, therefore I exist. He thus establishes the fact that I exist as a thinking thing.

And so Descartes has found his absolutely certain, self evident and indubitable first principle which he formulates in Latin as Cogito, Ergo Sum: I think, therefore I am.

Thinking for Descartes includes any act of consciousness that we are immediately aware of. It includes doubting, understanding, affirming, denying, willing, refusing, feeling.

13.10 CRITICISM

1) The cogito proof establishes that I exist as a mind with my own thoughts, and that this is all that I can know with certainty. This is the position of subjectivism. However Descartes falls into the philosophical position of solipsism, the view that my mind with its thoughts is the only thing that exists, the only reality and that other persons and the physical world are only ideas within my mind.

2) Although Descartes later moved on to prove the existence of god and the physical world yet his philosophy erected a split or a duality between two different kinds of reality: between mental, spiritual, thinking substance on one hand and physical, extended, spatial substances on the other. These two kinds of substances constitute two different and separate realities between which there is a gap which can never be closed.

3) Although Descartes emphasizes self-evident ideas but such ideas provide no new knowledge about the world. Though sense experience may not be certain, it provides us with information which is as reliable as we need. The fact that a belief is not absolutely certain should not disqualify it for knowledge. Why not say that something is known as long as there is no good reason to doubt it?

After proving his own existence, Descartes moves further and proves the existence of God and the external world.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.6: Fill in the blanks:

a) Descartes believed that our minds naturally possess two powers, namely, ...and .....

b) Descartes looked to ..... for the best example of clear and precise thinking.

c) Descartes used the ..... in order to find an absolutely certain, starting point for building up our knowledge.

d) Descartes establishes the fact that I exist as a ..... thing.

e) Descartes's self evident and indubitable first principle is.....

f) Descartes's philosophical position leads one to .....

Q.7: State whether the following statements are true or false:

a) Every time I doubt, I must exist to doubt. (T/F)

b) Descartes method consists only of intuition and deduction. (T/F)

c) Descartes emphasizes self-evident ideas but such ideas provide no new knowledge about the world. (T/F)

d) Only with the help of reason we can determine whether our opinions are justified true beliefs that is, knowledge. (T/F)

Q.8: Why did Descartes use his method of doubt?



13.11 LET US SUM UP

We have discussed in this unit Descartes idea of knowledge and the certainty of the Cogito. The most important points are:

- Descartes realized that our sense experience cannot be the basis of true knowledge.

- Descartes claims that knowledge (as opposed to opinion) is possible only if it is based on self-evident and absolutely certain principles.
- Such principles are not learned through experience; instead, they are implicit in the very notion of reasoning itself.
- He was determined to discover the basis of intellectual certainty in his own reason.
- He believed that our minds naturally possess two powers, namely, intuition and deduction by which were able to arrive at knowledge of things.
- Descartes method does not consist only of intuition and deduction, but also in the rules he formulated for their guidance.
- Descartes used the method of doubt in order to find an absolutely certain, starting point for building up our knowledge.
- In doubting the truth of every other belief, I cannot doubt the belief that I am doubting, therefore I exist. He thus establishes the fact that I exist as a thinking thing.
- So Descartes has found his absolutely certain, self evident and indubitable first principle which he formulates in Latin as Cogito, Ergo Sum: I think, therefore I am.
- After proving his own existence, Descartes moves further and proves the existence of God and the external world.



13.12 FURTHER READING

1) **Skirry, J.** (2008). Descartes: A Guide for the Perplexed. London: Continuum.

2) **Lavine, T.** (1984). From Socrates to Sartre: The Philosophic Quest. United States.

3) **Sorell, T.** (2000). Descartes: A very short introduction. New York: Oxford University Press.

13.13 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans. to Q. No. 1: Rene Descartes

Ans. to Q. No.2: Descartes was most impressed with mathematics because of its certainty and precision as compared with philosophy whose teachings invariably produced doubts and disputes.

Ans. to Q. No. 3: Knowledge based on sense experience often deceive us and the information we get by relying on sense experience is constantly changing and is often unreliable. Sense experience cannot provide the certainty needed to guarantee that which we claim to know is true.

Ans. to Q. No. 4: Rationalism is the philosophical movement which regards reason as the ultimate source of knowledge. It is usually associated with the introduction of mathematical methods into philosophy. It relies on the idea that reality has a rational structure in that all aspects of it can be grasped through mathematical and logical principles, and not simply through sensory experience.

Ans. to Q. No. 5: Certainty and indubitability.

Ans. to Q. No. 6:
a) Intuition and deduction
b) Mathematics
c) Method of doubt
d) Thinking
e) I think therefore I am
f) Solipsism

Ans. to Q. No. 7:
a) True
b) False
c) True
d) True

Ans. to Q. No. 8: Descartes used the method of doubt in order to find an absolutely certain, starting point for building up our knowledge. He hoped to find a self evident principle which serves as the foundation

from which an absolutely certain philosophy can be deduced. Thus Descartes put all his earlier beliefs to doubt. By the method of doubt Descartes shows how uncertain our knowledge is, even of what seems most obvious to us. After putting all his beliefs to doubt he finally reached the principle which he could not doubt. This was the famous principle of Cogito Ego Sum or I think therefore I am.



13.14 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very short questions:

Q.1: Who is known as the father of modern philosophy?

Q.2: What was Descartes's passion?

Q.3: What according to Descartes is the source of true knowledge?

Q.4: What was Descartes's problem with knowledge based on sense experience?

B) Short questions: (answer in about 150-200 words)

Q.1: Why did Descartes want to start philosophy anew?

Q.2: What led Descartes to believe that reason is the sole source of true knowledge?

Q.3: Explain Descartes's method of doubt.

Q.4: Critically discuss Descartes's philosophy of the Cogito.

C) Long questions: (answer in about 300-500 words)

Q.1: Who was Descartes? Discuss Descartes's quest for true knowledge.

Q.2: Distinguish between rationalism and empiricism. Why did Descartes regards reason as the sole source of knowledge?

Q.3: Explain Descartes's method of doubt. How did he arrive at the principle of Cogito Ergo Sum through this method?

Q. 4: Critically examine Descartes's theory of knowledge.

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UNIT 14: CERTAINTY OF A PRIORI KNOWLEDGE OF KANT

UNIT STRUCTURE

14.1 Learning Objectives

14.2 Introduction

14.3 The problem of Synthetic Judgement a Priori

14.4 Synthetic Judgement a Priori Mathematics

14.5 Synthetic Judgement a Priori in Physics

14.6 Synthetic Judgement a Priori in Metaphysics

14.7 Main Division of Kant's System

14.8 Space and Time are a Priori Percepts

14.9 Criticism

14.10 Let Us Sum Up

14.11 Further Reading

14.12 Answers to Check Your Progress

14.13 Model Questions

14.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- explain the certainty of a priori knowledge of Kant
- explain the problem of synthetic judgement a priori knowledge.
- explain the certainty of synthetic judgement a priori knowledge in Mathematics, Physics and Metaphysics.
- explain the main division of Kant's system
- explain the concept of Kant's space and time as an a priori percept.
- describe critically Kant's certainty of a priori knowledge.

14.2 INTODUCTION

Immanuel Kant is generally regarded as the greatest of the modern philosophers. Though he lived through the Seven Years War and the French Revolution, he never interrupted his teaching of Philosophy at Konigsberg

in East Prussia. His most distinctive contribution was the invention of what he called the 'critical' philosophy, which assuming as a datum that there is knowledge of various kinds, and inquired how such knowledge comes to be possible. Kant undoubtedly deserves credit for two things: first, for having perceived that we have a priori knowledge which is not purely 'analytic'; and secondly, for having made evident the philosophical importance of the theory of knowledge.

Can we raise Metaphysics to the status of a science through a revolution in the mode of our thought? This is the great question of Kant. He thinks that he has brought about such a revolution, and he compares his achievement to the revolution brought about by Copernicus in astronomy. People before Kant thought that our knowledge had to conform to its objects. Kant tried the hypothesis that the objects conformed to our ways of knowing. By this hypothesis he could explain how we could have a priori knowledge of objects. So long as one supposed that knowledge conformed to, or simply copied objects which were given ready-made in our experience could not explain how any a priori knowledge was possible. But if the objects conformed to our ways of knowing, i.e, if they were determined by our faculty of knowledge, then to the extent they were so determined, they might be known even prior to experience.

According to Kant, proper knowledge is a joint venture of sense and understanding. Apart from sense and understanding there is reason which uselessly tries to constitute knowledge. However the Ideas of reason are not constitutive but regulative principles of knowledge. Hence, according to Kant, "knowledge begins with sense, proceeds thence to understanding and ends in reason"

There are a priori or universal and necessary elements in any empirical knowledge are a crucial point raised by Kant. According to Kant, any epistemology should have occupied itself with the enquiry of a priori elements involved in knowledge. These elements are independent of any experience whatsoever. Unless these a priori elements be operative, no

experience of any object would arise at all. So, Kant is not so much concerned with any specific objects of knowledge as with the universal or a priori ways of knowing any object. Hence, Kant has called his epistemological enquiry"TRANSCENDENTAL". Kant wrote" I entitle transcendental knowledge which is occupied not so much with objects in so far as this mode of knowledge is to be possible a priori" Kant's philosophy is known as a criticism as opposed to dogmatism. Dogmatism, according to Kant, is the presumption that it is possible to make progress with pure knowledge from concepts alone, without having first investigated in what way and by what right reason has come into possession of these concepts.



LET US KNOW

According to Kant, knowledge begins with sense, proceeds thence to understanding and ends in reason.

14.3 THE PROBLEM OF SYNTHETIC JUDGEMENTS A PRIORI

Kant held that Hume and others simply went wrong because they did not analyse cognitive statements sufficiently enough. Kant stated that knowledge for him always meant scientific knowledge, the clearest example of which is found in Mathematics and Physics. According to Kant an analysis of knowledge in Mathematics and Physics reveals that it consists of synthetic judgement a priori.

A proposition is said to be 'analytic' when its predicate is already contained in the connotation of the subject. For e.g., "All bodies are extended". If we understand the meaning of the term "material body" whose connotation was taken by Descartes, Spinoza and Leibnitz to be "extension", then certainly the predicate "extended" is already contained in the subject. A synthetic judgement, on the other hand, is one in which the predicate does not belong to the subject either as its part or whole. For e.g., "Material bodies are heavy". Whether a body is heavy or not is known through experience.

Again, a proposition is said to be a priori when it is independent of any experience whatsoever. Necessity and strict universality are the two criteria of a priori propositions and both of these criteria are inseparable. By 'strict universality' is meant 'true in all possible worlds'. A posterior propositions are those which are possible through experience.

Kant does not take pains to distinguish analytic from a priori proposition. For him a priori necessity is different from analytic necessity. Again, a posterior proposition is all synthetic. But Kant does not maintain that all synthetic propositions are a posterior. According to him there are propositions which are a priori and yet which add to knowledge. A priori propositions arise from pure reason or pure understanding. As such they are valid independently of any experience whatsoever. A posterior proposition, on the other hand, is derived from experience. They, therefore, require experience for validation.

For most of the empiricists a priori and the analytic propositions and a posterior and the synthetic propositions are identical. For Kant, synthetic propositions instead of being a posterior may be a priori and are most significant in scientific cognition and are found in Mathematics and Physics.

14.4 SYNTHETIC JUDGEMENTS A PRIORI IN MATHEMATICS

Hume, who preceded Kant accepting the usual view as to what makes knowledge a priori, discovered that in many cases which had previously been supposed analytic and notably in the case of cause and effect, the connection was really synthetic. Before Hume, rationalists had at least supposed that the effect could be logically deduced from the cause, if only we had sufficient knowledge. Hence, he inferred the far more doubtful proposition that nothing could be known as a priori about the connection of cause and effect. Kant endeavoured to find an answer to it. He perceived that not only the connection of cause and effect, but all the propositions of

Arithmetic and Geometry are 'synthetic'. Propositions of Mathematics are universal and necessary. Being universal and necessary such propositions will be called a priori. His stock instance was the proposition "7+5=12". He pointed out quite truly that 7 and 5 have to be put together to give '12'. The idea of '12' is not contained in them, nor even in the idea of adding them together. According to Kant the subject '7+5' simply connotes a process of adding and in itself it does not refer to the product. Here, according to Kant, the product '12' is very easy to calculate. This obviousness of the product gives one the impression that the predicate is already contained in the subject '7+5'. However if we take sufficiently large numbers of six and seven digits each, then of course by adding on fingers we cannot reach the product. Thus, Kant was led to the conclusion that all pure mathematics, though a priori, are synthetic and this conclusion raised a new problem which he endeavoured to find a solution.

Again, Kant observed that geometrical judgements are also synthetic. For eg, ' The straight lines between the two points is the shortest'. Here the predicate ' the shortest' could not be contained in the subject 'the straight lines'. Since, according to him, 'the straight line' is a qualitative notion while 'the shortest' is a quantitative concept. The quantitative predicate cannot be contained in the qualitative subject. Therefore, according to Kant geometrical propositions are synthetic.

14.5 SYNTHETIC JUDGEMENTS A PRIORI IN PHYSICS

Pure Physics, according to Kant contains synthetic judgements a priori. For e.g., "Every Event has a Cause", according to Kant is a synthetic judgement. Kant regards such judgements to have a priori necessity. By 'event' is meant any succession of two or more happenings. By 'cause', on the other hand, is meant a necessary connection between two or more successive happenings. Consequently, the element of necessary connection is not contained in the subject 'event' which means mere successive happenings. Thus, the predicate 'cause' is not contained in the

subject 'event'. Hence, according to Kant, 'Every Event has a Cause' is a synthetic judgement. Kant emphasized with all his might that no scientific judgement which is valid for all persons can be produced without resorting to the principle for causality. So, causality for Kant is a must for every Physicist. Kant regards causality as an a priori necessity in Physics. Hence for Kant, 'Every Event has a Cause' is a priori.

For Kant, knowledge means scientific knowledge which is found in Mathematics and Physics. An analysis of scientific judgement found in Mathematics and Physics shows that they are constituted by synthetic judgements a priori and Kant in his Critique of Pure Reason tried to solve the problem, how synthetic judgements a priori are possible.

14.6 SYNTHETIC JUDGEMENTS A PRIORI IN METAPHYSICS

Kant was most anxious to show that there are a priori elements in knowledge which are not derived from experience yet which help in increasing empirical knowledge. This is the real meaning of synthetic judgement a priori, that is, according to Kant, there are elements which increase our knowledge(i.e., synthetic) without being empirical (i.e., a priori). However, the central point of Kant lies in the point that a priori knowledge serve to increase empirical knowledge. This condition is not observed in Metaphysics, according to Kant. Because in Metaphysics we deal with the super sensible entities like God, immortal self, the cosmos etc. None of these objects can be experienced. So, the a priori elements are not applicable to them. Therefore, according to Kant, Metaphysics as a science is not possible. The attempt at extending knowledge with the help of a priori elements alone, without reference to empirical objects, lands us, according to him, into hopeless illusions. However, though we realize the illusory nature of metaphysical objects, yet we can never completely shake them off. Metaphysics, according to Kant is not a science but is supported by a natural disposition in man.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1: What is analytic proposition?

.....

.....

Q.2: What is synthetic proposition?

.....

.....

Q.3: What are a priori propositions?

.....

.....

Q.4: What is dogmatism?

.....

.....

Q.5: **Fill in the blanks:**

a) Propositions of mathematics are.....

b) According to Kant a geometrical judgement is.....

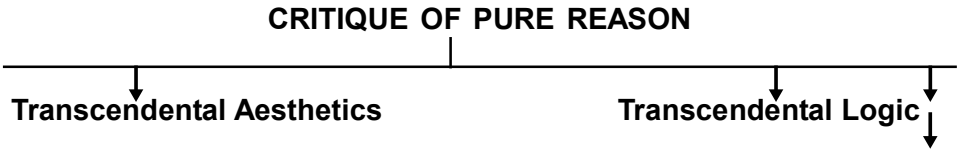
c) For Kant knowledge means.....
knowledge serves to increase empirical knowledge.

d) Metaphysics, according to Kant is not a.....

e) Kant regard.....as an a priori necessity in Physics.

14.7 MAIN DIVISION OF KANT'S SYSTEM

Kant was meditative and methodical. A desire for thoroughness has made him highly analytic. It was Kant who introduced the tripartite division of mental processes into cognition, cognation and affection. Corresponding to these three divisions there are three Critiques, namely, 'Critique of Pure Reason', 'Critique of Practical Reason' and 'Critique of Judgement'. In the history of Philosophy, 'Critique of Pure Reason' has played an important part than any other Critiques. Here the cognitive process has been divided into three, namely, sensing, understanding and reasoning. But of course Kant was concerned with a priori forms of sensing, understanding and reasoning. Kant divides his 'critique' in the following ways:



- **Transcendental Analytic.**
- **Transcendental Dialectic.**

TRANSCENDENTAL AESTHETICS: Here, Kant shows that there are a priori forms of sensibility. Everything to be perceived must be spaced and timed as the very condition of its being perceived at all. Propositions of Mathematics can be synthetic only when space and time are a priori percept. Here, Kant tries to answer the question, 'How are synthetic judgements a priori possible?' He tried to show that mathematical propositions were really derived from perceptual experience and also added that they were based on a priori perception of space and time.A percept can be either empirical or pure. An empirical percept is one which has been derived from some sense experience. For e.g., the table before me or the blackboard in front of the students is an empirical percept. A pure percept, on the other hand, is not the sense experience of this or that object given in our present consciousness, but is at the basis of any perception whatsoever. Thus, for Kant, this pure percept is also a priori. According to Kant, space and time are the a priori percept on which all other empirical perceptions are based. Hence, for him the statements that judgements of Mathematics are synthetic means that ultimately they are based on the a priori percept of space and time. Further, for Kant space meant primarily Euclidean space, which according to him was unalterable and all-pervasive feature of any perception of outer things. Keeping these things in mind, Kant proceeds to show that space and time are not concepts but are percept. They are not empirical percept but a priori or pure percept.

TRANSCENDENTAL LOGIC: Transcendental Logic is concerned to determine the limit, origin and the validity of our a priori knowledge of objects. It deals with the laws of understanding in so far as they apply a priori to objects. Kant makes a sharp distinction between sensing and

understanding. In sensing an object, the mind remains passive, as Locke's view of the mind as 'tabula rasa' had presented. But this is not enough for the explanation of the knowing process. The manifolds of sense are discrete and passing impressions. Obviously a proposition is a combination of two or more ideas. This knowledge consists of judgements which are the combination of two ideas. Hence, the knowing process consists in combining the ideas. For Kant knowing consists in thinking about percept. To think means to combine the percept into judgements with the help of concepts. Ordinarily, we combine the ideas in judgements which have been empirically acquired and associated. For e.g., 'This grass is green.' We have already acquired the empirical concepts of 'grass' and 'green'. Further, this combination of 'grass' and 'green' appears to us to be objective, i.e., the same for all the persons. The question is how can this objectivity of empirical judgements be explained? There are only two ways in which we can explain this: (i) the combination involved in objective empirical judgements is really so in its own right in nature, independent of any knower, (ii) this combination is a priori, being introduced by the faculty of thinking called 'understanding'. Hence, for Kant, the objectivity of empirical judgements can ultimately be explained only if we could show that they are a priori forms of thinking which are also termed as 'categories'. Thus, thinking need to be confined to percept and may be applied to concepts also, and when it does so it leads to transcendental illusions. Hence, Transcendental Logic has two parts, viz, Transcendental Analytic and Transcendental Dialectic.

14.8 SPACE AND TIME ARE A PRIORI PERCEPTS

According to Kant, space and time are a priori percept on which all empirical perceptions are based. Hence, for him, statements that judgements of mathematics are synthetic mean that they are based on the a priori percept of space and time. For Kant, space meant primarily Euclidean space, which according to him was unalterable and all-pervasive feature of any perception of outer things. According to Kant, if there were no

notion of space then certainly there could be no experience of things as outside or alongside one another. The idea of space is prior to any perceptual experience and hence it is a priori. Kant pointed out that if the idea of space or time were derived empirically, then it could be imagined to be non-existing as is the case with colour, taste or smell etc. But though we can imagine a particular object not to have this colour or that, or even not to have any colour at all, yet we can never think of an object not to have spatial character at all. Because space can never be thought away, therefore, for Kant it is an a priori form of perception without which there can be no perception whatsoever.

Kant maintained that in all our experience there are two elements to be distinguished. The one due to the object (i.e., what we have called the 'physical object'), and the other due to our own nature. He considers that the crude material given in our sensation- the colour, hardness etc- is due to the object and that what we supply is the arrangement in space and time and all the relations between sense-data which result from comparison or from considering one as the cause of the other or in any other way. His chief reason in favour of this view is that we seem to have a priori knowledge as to space and time and causality and comparison but not as to the actual crude material of sensation. We can be sure, he says, that anything we shall ever experience must show the characteristics affirmed of it in our a priori knowledge, because these characteristics are due to our own nature, and therefore, nothing can come into our experience without acquiring these characteristics.

The physical objects which he calls the 'thing-in-itself', he regards as essentially unknowable. What can be known is the object as we have it in experience which he calls the 'phenomenon'. The phenomenon being a joint product of us and the thing-in-itself, is sure to have those characteristics which are due to us and is sure to conform to our a prior knowledge. Hence, this knowledge though true of all actual and possible experience must be supposed to apply outside experience. Thus, in spite of the existence of a priori knowledge, we cannot know anything about the thing-in-itself or about

what is not an actual or possible object of experience. In this way Kant tries to reconcile and harmonize the contention of the rationalists with the arguments of the empiricists.



CHCHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.6: What are the three divisions of mental process of Kant?

.....

.....

Q.7: Name the three 'Critiques' of Kant?

.....

.....

Q.8: What is an empirical percept?

.....

.....

Q.9: What is a pure percept?

.....

.....

Q.10: What are the classification of Kant's Critique?

.....

.....

14.9 CRITICISM

Many objections have been raised against Kant's certainty of a priori knowledge. Objections have been raised concerning Kant's distinction between Analytic and Synthetic judgements. In the first instance, it has been pointed out that Kant's distinction is not logical but Metaphorical. He thinks of subject and predicate as containers and contained. Secondly, Kant refers to the distinction only when judgements can be expressed in terms of subject-predicate theory.

Further, it has been pointed out that analytic necessity is quite clear to anybody by a mere inspection of the terms employed. For eg, 'A rainy

day is a wet day' is necessarily true by a mere inspection of the terms 'rainy day' and 'wet day'. In contrast a priori necessity of causality, substance or of the two forms of sensibility requires a very detailed demonstration and even then it may be above doubt and further discussion.

The explanation offered by Kant regarding arithmetical judgments as synthetic judgement a priori has not been found to be satisfactory. It has been pointed out that in his explanation, he, indirectly appears to be referring to the psychological process of adding, since he refers to large numbers to support his case. However, the consideration is logical. We have to decide whether the predicate '12' is not already contained in the subject '7+5'. Here, Kant should not have confused logical issues with a psychological one. It appears that Kant was aware of this difficulty and he resorted to the poor explanation regarding arithmetical judgements as synthetic. Kant also fares no better with regard to geometrical judgements. Nobody would accept the explanation of Kant, since, 'the straight line between two points is the shortest' is a primitive proposition of geometry and as such will never be taken as synthetic.

Another objection raised against Kant's view is that Kant took for granted the Newtonian view of science, according to which space and time were regarded as the absolute receptacles of events and causality as the fixed and unalterable law of Nature. From this Kant derived the conclusion that space, time and causality are the a priori and the fixed ways of ordering the discrete data of sensibility. These a priori forms of sensing and of understanding for Kant were also synthetic in as much they applied to matters of fact. Hume asks: "Granted that there are fixed and unalterable modes according to which the mind orders the data. Is this conclusion concerning the ordering function of the mind analytic or synthetic, deductive or inductive? If the conclusion is inductive, then this is only probable in character and hence cannot be called a priori (i.e., necessary). If, on the other hand, these principles be deductive, then the conclusion concerning them cannot be analytic and would not be applicable to matter of fact and so will cease to be synthetic.

For Kant, all representations, i.e., percept get connected through the faculty of understanding alone. Today the meta-scientist would not agree with Kant. Hence the question of explaining necessary connection between events would not arise for the modernist. Kant was just concerned with the problem of exhibiting the indispensible presence of the a priori factors involved in empirical knowledge. Kant has unduly limited the scope of a priori propositions in addition to failing in the attempt at explaining their certainty.

In spite of many criticisms raised against his certainty of a priori knowledge, it may be concluded that Hume, by his criticism of the concept of causality awakened Kant from his dogmatic slumbers, so at least he says, but the awakening was only temporary, and he soon invented soporific which enabled him to sleep again. Kant's philosophy is to be judged not in terms of logic and statements of science alone. They remain subordinate to his philosophical vision. And the vision of Kant is as living today as it was to him and to his contemporaries. Besides the nature of synthetic judgements a priori was first stated by Kant and today its logical analysis is a fruitful enquiry. The contention of Kant concerning synthetic judgement a priori can be formulated afresh to remain valid and significant even now. For Kant the contentions at the root of scientific pursuit arise from the creative insight of man and without such creative forms there can be no knowledge proper. Emended thus the teaching of Kant with regard to a priori forms is as pertinent today as it was in the days of Kant.



14.10 LET US SUM UP

- According to Kant proper knowledge begins with sense, proceeds to understanding and ends in reason.
- An analysis of knowledge in Mathematics and Physics reveals that it consists of synthetic judgement a priori.
- Necessity and strict universality are the two criteria of a priori knowledge.

- A priori propositions arise from pure reason or pure understanding and as such they are valid independently of any experience whatsoever.Kant regards causality as an a priori necessity in Physics.
- For Kant knowledge means scientific knowledge which is found in Mathematics and Physics.
- According to Kant, Metaphysics as a science is not possible.
- Kant introduced the tripartite division of mental process into cognition, cognation and affection.
- According to Kant space and time are a priori percept on which all empirical perceptions are based.



14.11 FURTHER READING

1) Kant, Immanuel. Crititique of Pure Reason
2) Russell , Bertrand. Problems of philosophy
3) Masih, y A Critical History of Western Philosophy



14.12 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans. to Q. No 1: A proposition is said to be analytic when its predicate is already contained in the connotation of the subject. For eg, 'All bodies are extended'. If we understand the meaning of the term 'material body' whose connotation is taken to be 'extension' then certainly the predicate 'extended' is already contained in the subject.

Ans. to Q. No 2: A synthetic proposition is one in which the predicate does not belong to the subject either as its part or whole. For eg, 'Material bodies are heavy', whether a body is heavy or not is known through experience.

Ans. to Q. No 3: A proposition is said to be a priori when it is independent of any experience whatsoever. Necessity and strict universality are

the two criteria of a priori proposition. A priori proposition arises from pure reason or pure understanding.

Ans. to Q. No 4: Dogmatism is the presumption that it is possible to make progress with pure knowledge from concepts alone, without having first investigated and by what right reason has come into possession of these concepts.

Ans. to Q. No 5:
i) Universal and necessary
ii) Synthetic
iii) A priori
iv) Science
v) Causality

Ans. to Q. No 6: Three division of Kant's mental process are: i) cognition, (ii) cognation, (iii) affection.

Ans. to Q. No 7: Three 'Critiques' of Kant are: (i) Critique of Pure Reason, (ii) Critique of Practical Reason, (iii) Critique of Judgement.

Ans. to Q. No 8: An empirical percept is one which has been derived from some sense experience. For eg, the table before me or the blackboard in front of the students is an empirical percept.

Ans. to Q. No 9: A pure percept is not the sense experience of this or that object given in our present consciousness, but is at the basis of any experience whatsoever. This pure percept is a priori according to Kant. According to him, space and time are the a priori percept on which all other empirical perceptions are based.

Ans. to Q. No 10: Kant divides his Critique into the following ways:

(a) Transcendental Aesthetics, (b) Transcendental Logic. Transcendental Logic is of two parts, viz, (i) Transcendental Analytic and (ii) Transcendental Dialectic.

14.13 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very short questions

Q.1: What are the criteria of a priori propositions?

Q.2: Is Metaphysics a science according to Kant?

Q.3: What are a posterior propositions?

Q.4 What did Kant call his epistemological enquiry?

Q.5: What is Transcendental Logic?

B) Short questions(Answer in about 150-200 words)

Q.1: Write short notes on:

a) Transcendental Aesthetics

b) Space and time are a priori percepts

Q.2: Distinguish between analytic proposition and synthetic proposition.

Q.3: Distinguish between a priori proposition and a posterior proposition.

Q.4: Why does Kant say that 'Metaphysics as a science is not possible?' Discuss briefly.

C) Long question (Answer in about 300-500 words)

Q.1: Discuss in brief Kant's certainty of a priori knowledge.

Q.2: Discuss briefly the certainty of synthetic judgement a priori in Mathematics, Physics and Metaphysics.

Q.3: Explain the main division of Kant's system.

Q.4: Discuss the critical comment raised against Kant's synthetic judgement a priori knowledge.

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UNIT 15: WITTGENSTEIN ON CERTAINTY

UNIT STRUCTURE

15.1 Learning Objectives

15.2 Introduction

15.3 General discussion on Certainty

15.4 Certainties of a world-picture: The Epistemological Investigation of On Certainty

15.5 Knowledge and Certainty

15.6 Let Us Sum Up

15.7 Further Reading

15.8 Answer to Check Your Progress

15.9 Model Questions

15.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to know.

- explain the Concepts of a world picture
- discuss briefly about the epistemological investigation of On Certainity.
- discuss the relation between Moore and Wittgenstein
- explain the relation between knowledge and Certainty
- discuss the position of Wittgenstein on Cetainty
- explain the problems of Certainty in Knowledge
- discuss ostensive definition
- explain picture theory

15.2 INTRODUCTION

Philosophy is preoccupied with the problem of Certainty. Modern philosophy, which begun with Descartes is concerned with the discovery of a solid foundation of knowledge. Philosophy does not want to remain satisfied with probable knowledge. It attempts to discover that knowledge with which can't be assailed by doubt what ordinarily passes for knowledge seldom satisfies a metaphysician.

On Certainty is a series of notes Wittgenstein took toward the end of his life on matters related to knowledge, doubt, scepticism and certainty. Although the notes are not organised into any coherent whole, certain themes and preoccupations recur throughout.

15.3 GENERAL DISCUSSION ON CERTAINTY

A metaphysician generally discovers self-contradictions in ordinary knowledge and as a result a metaphysician always seeks to go beyond ordinary knowledge. The discovery of the limitations of ordinary knowledge then goes hand in hand with the quest for certainty.

In one sense the quest for certainty begin with Plato. Plato distinguished among four levels of knowledge or thought. Among these four levels the first two are called by him opinion and the last two knowledge. Opinion is constituted of conjecture and belief. Conjecture is the so called knowledge of reflections, shadows, dream objects, images etc. Belief is the so called knowledge obtained by the senses. Plato did not consider the senses to be capable of providing the necessary certainty which is the mark of true knowledge. Understanding and the rational insight were called by Plato, knowledge proper. Knowledge proper is the knowledge of the essences or the ideas or the forms. Such knowledge is characterised by certainty and stability. The quest for certainty has thus played a very significant part in the history of philosophy. Many philosophers assume that without a claim of certainty all our knowledge must be suspect.

LET US KNOW



Plato(427-347 BCE): Greek philosopher who draw a strict distinction between appearance and reality, developed the histry of forms as an account of immutable truth, and argued that only the wisest member of a society should be trusted to rule.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: What are the four levels of knowledge according to Plato?

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15.4 CERTAINTIES OF A WORLD-PICTURE: THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF ON CERTAINTY

In his philosophical writings Wittgenstein was mainly concerned with questions concerning language and its various uses. But he was also always aware of the fact that any account concerning the limits and / or the foundations of what can be known (compare, for instance, TLP, 5.5561, 5.6,51, 6.53 with OC, 80, 114, 369-70, 514, 528). As he never questioned the possibility of knowledge, his critical attitude toward traditional philosophical theories and problems included a sceptical attitude toward scepticism as well. This became obvious in particular in his notes of 1949-51 which have been compiled and published under the title On Certainty.

Due to an unhappily written preface by the editors of that text, many readers have come to believe that Wittgenstein admired G.E. Moore's Defense of Common Sense and Proof of an External World and that he was commenting in his notes on these two papers with intention of showing Moore to have been right in his philosophical attitude, but wrong in the way he argued for it. This is, however, not the case. Norman Malcolm reports' that while Wittgenstein liked Moore as a decent man and felt stimulated by "Moore's Paradox" (PI, pp.190-91), he was not at all impressed by Moore's attempts to refute or reject idealism and / or scepticism. It is true that the two discussed these subjects after Wittgenstein's return to Cambridge in 1929, but these issues were scarcely mentioned, even less scrutinized in Wittgenstein's writings. He hardly ever read the works of other philosophers carefully (Russell and W. James any have been the only exceptions), and

this certainly was the case with Moore's papers. While Wittgenstein was visiting Malcolm in Ithaca, New York, in 1949, the two were discussing portions of Malcolm's recently completed paper Defending Common Sense, and it was these discussions which caused Wittgenstein to think about scepticism and the foundations of knowledge again. It can be shown that examples in On Certainty which are not invented by Wittgenstein himself were all taken from Malcolm's paper rather than directly from Moore's essays. In criticism of Moore, for example, Wittgenstein emphatically points out that it is not only Moore who knows that the earth has existed for millions of years, but that we all know it (OC, 84, 93, 100, 116, 137, 389, 440, 462), while Moore made this one of his main theses, that is not mentioned anywhere in Malcolm's paper. It is, of course, true that especially the beginning of On Certainty echoes Malcolm's account of Moore and scepticism, however, Wittgenstein's remark "Anyone who is unable to imagine a case in which one might say 'I know that this my hand' (and such cases are certainly rare might say that these words were nonsense," which undoubtedly aims at Malcolm's way of arguing, citizens this kind of approach very well.

Many interpreters believe that Wittgenstein actually dissolves scepticism in On Certainty along lines he had adumbrated in the Tractates and in the Philosophical Investigations. Whether or not that is correct depends on what kind of scepticism one has in mind, but with regard to a 'strong' version of scepticism that is simply wrong. It seems to me, indeed, hopeless to try to refute a 'strong' scepticism by means of Wittgenstein's philosophy. I want to show here that the main outcome of On Certainty is not dissolution of scepticism, but a philosophically illuminating picture of the epistemic structure of language-games and their epistemically relevant settings.

After indicating which aspects of knowledge and certainty concerned Wittgenstein and combining several epistemologically relevant concepts into one systematic account, it is elucidated Wittgenstein's notion of "world-picture" and show that it is a label for all the kinds of knowledge a community

may share. Wittgenstein's approach to the acquisition of knowledge, which is supposed to explain why we hold fast to our certainties and knowledge claims, will then be laid out. After that, what is taken to be certain has normative force, insofar as it sets up truth-and rationality-standards. It is also important to discuss Wittgenstein's conception of truth and its idealistic consequences. The problems of understanding alien culture and how a world-picture can change will then be discussed with the assessment of Wittgenstein's fully developed epistemological account in the face of scepticism.

LET US KNOW



Scepticism: Belief that some or all human knowledge is impossible. Since even our best methods for learning about the world sometimes fall short of perfect certainty, sceptics argue, it is better to suspend belief than to rely on the dubitable products of reason. Classical sceptics include Pyrrho and Sextus Epmpiricus. In the modern era, Montaigne, Bayle and Hume, all advocated some form of sceptical philosophy. Fallibilism is a more moderate response to the lack of certainty.

G.E. More (1873-1958): English philosopher who developed the practice of philosophical analysis as a method for preserving the dictates of common sense against the absurd claims of professional philosophers.

Russell, Bertrand (1872-1970): English mathematician and philosopher whose work ranged widely, including attention to formal logic and the philosophy of mathematics, epistemology and metaphysics, and vigorous commitment to unpopular political cause.

James, William (1842-1910): American psychologist and philosopher. James was born in a wealthy New York family and surrounded frm an early age by a humanitarian, literary and scholarly family life(his father was a theologician, and his brother the novalist Henry James). James had already spent years in Europe and began an education as an

artist when he entered Harvard medical school in 1863 and he travelled in Brazil and Europe before he graduated with a medical degree in 1869. There followed years lecturing both on psychology and philosophy. James's first major work was the two-volume Principles of Psychology(1890), a work that does justice both to the scientific, laboratory study of experimental psychology and the importance of a sound phenomenology of experience.



ACTIVITY - 15.1

Try to find out the difference between Moore and Wittgenstein's view on Certainty

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CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 2: Who is the author of TLP?

Ans:.....

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Q 3: Who is the author of PI?

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Q 4: What is scepticism?

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Q 5: Who is the author of "On Certainty"?

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Q 6: Who is the author of both the books " Defense of Common Sense" and " Proof of an External World".

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15.5 KNOWLEDGE AND CERTAINTY

Different philosophers have meant different things by 'metaphysical'. Kant also attacked metaphysics: but Kant would not have called 'Every rod has a length', or 'Time is one-dimensional and has only one direction', metaphysical in the sense in which he attacked metaphysics; whereas for Wittgenstein they are so.

The criticism of sentences as expressing no real thought, according to the principles of the Tractatus, could never be of any very simple general form; each criticism would be ad hoc, and fall within the subject-matter with which the sentence professed to deal. For example, if someone says that time moves only in one direction, we investigate this by asking him what processes he is comparing.

One frequently used tool in such enquiries is: 'What would it be for it to be otherwise?' - when, e.g. someone has said: 'Time has only one direction.' Here we are asked for an intelligible description of a state of affairs in which the asserted proposition- let it be, say, 'the future comes after the past' - does not hold. As far as sensible verification is concerned, the asserted proposition and the alternative to it that is being asked for are, or may be, on the same level; the relation of actual sense-experiences to each is not necessarily being investigated. What is operative here is evidently not a sensible verification theory, but the picture theory of the significant description: both the proposition and its negation are supposed to describe a possibility, otherwise the status of the proposition is other than that of a significant description.

'Psychology is no more akin to philosophy than any other natural science. Theory of knowledge is the philosophy of psychology' (4.1121). In this passage Wittgenstein is trying to break the dictatorial control over the rest of philosophy that had long been exercised by what is called theory of knowledge-that is, by the philosophy of sensation, perception, imagination, and, generally, of 'experience'. He did not succeed. He and Frege avoided

making theory of knowledge the cardinal theory of philosophy simply by cutting it dead; by doing none, and concentrating on the philosophy of logic. But the influence of the Tractatus produced logical positivism, whose main doctrine is 'verificationism' and in that doctrine theory of knowledge once more reigned supreme, and a prominent position was given to the test for significance by asking for the observations that would verify a statement. Further, in the period between the Tractatus and the time when he began to write Philosophical Investigations, Wittgenstein's own ideas were more closely akin to those of the logical positivists than before or after.

We can see how the Tractatus generated logical positivism, although the two philosophies are incompatible, by studying Moritz Schlick's essay, Meaning and Verification: 'Whenever we ask about a sentence, "What does it mean?" what we expect is instruction as to the circumstances in which the sentence is to be used; we want a description of the conditions under which the sentence will form a true proposition, and of those which will make it false.' Here Schlick seems to follow the Tractatus, except in the last clause of his statement: the Tractatus says that I 'determine the sense' of a proposition by 'determining in what circumstances I call it true' (4.063

Schlick calls the 'description of the conditions' under which a word has application, or a sentence is true, the 'rules for the use' of the word or sentence. These 'rules' will consist partly of 'ostensive definitions', of which the simplest form will be a pointing gesture combined with the pronouncing of the word; this can be done with words like 'blue'. For words like 'immediate', 'chance', 'because', 'again', Schlick says, the ostensive definition is of a more complicated kind: 'in these cases we require the presence of certain complex situations, and the meaning of the words is defined by the way we use them in these different situations.' All rules for use 'ultimately point to ostensive definitions'. 'This,' Schlick says, 'is the situation, and nothing seems to me simpler or less questionable. It is this situation and nothing else that we describe when we affirm that the meaning of a proposition can be given only by giving the rules of its verification in experience. This shows us the transition from the Tractatus to

'verificationism' very clearly. What Schlick says leads immediately (a) to the quick test for significance; 'What experience would verify this?' and (b) to the maintenance of theory of knowledge as the cardinal theory of philosophy.

In the Tractatus, the 'determination of the circumstances in which I call a proposition true' must be a statement of its truth conditions. This is a completely different thing from a 'rule for the use' of a sentence, if this takes the form of an 'ostensive definition'. There could be no statement of the truth-conditions of an elementary proposition, other than a restatement of it; and for all non-elementary propositions there can always be statements of truth conditions. If, then, Schlick is following the Tractatus, 'ostensive definition' can only be relevant to the elementary proposition.

Further, Schlick insists that our 'rules for use' are 'arbitrary'; we give what rules we like; all that is essential is that we give some. The only arbitrariness in the Tractatus is in the assignment of names. There is no arbitrariness about the fact that a certain type of arrangement of names is capable of representing such-and-such a situation; it can do that only by reproducing in its own structure the arrangement of objects in the situation, and we cannot make it do so at will. Therefore, on the Tractatus view, there is no room for criticizing a sentence on the ground that we have not stipulated what situation it describes; but only on the ground that we have not assigned a reference to some of the words in it. The utterance of a sentence in a context in which it is true does not take the place of a stipulation of truth-conditions; the most that it can do is to show someone the reference of the words; he will then understand the propositional sign, in its positive or negative sense, by meaning the objects named in it. Then 'you have said something meaningless' could only mean 'you have not assigned a reference to this expression', and never 'you have not shown what observations would establish the truth of this'.

On the Tractatus view, then, one could not ask what observations would establish the truth of a proposition unless the 'structures' of possible

observation statements already stood in certain internal relations to the 'structure' of the proposition. In the presence of these internal relations, the question of meaningfulness cannot arise, except in the form of a question about the reference of the individual signs; if these signs are not given a reference, the proposition could not be 'given' a sense, even by stipulating that its truth would be established if and only if such-and-such observation statements were verified. An alleged 'proposition' that was so 'given a sense' would necessarily be, not a proposition, but the simple sign of a complex; and then the sentences in which the 'proposition' occurred would have to stand in internal relations to the 'observation statements'; these internal relations would then supply us with the description of a complex, and the definition of a simple sign for that complex; and the 'observation statements' would give the truth conditions of propositions in which that sign occurred. This doctrine is quite different from Schlick's.

In Philosophical Investigations, where Wittgenstein makes an extensive investigation of psychological concepts, his object was to shew that it is not necessary to introduce the problems of epistemology of -i.e. of perception, imagination, and generally of 'experiencing' - into the discussion of other problems of philosophy. That is to say, we can discuss e.g. the problems implicit in the expression 'the process of time', without laying foundations by giving an account of the ways in which we apprehend time-memory, expectation, experience of succession, and so on.

Knowledge and certainty, however, are topics for the philosophy of logic. In doing logic we are not indeed interested in what is the case, or in what things are certainly known, or in the conditions for certainty in practice. But logical theory must allow for the certainty of propositions which are not logically necessary. Otherwise logic would have no application. For 'It is clear in advance that the logical proof of a significant proposition and proof in logic (i.e. proof of a logical proposition) must be two quite different things. 'The significant proposition asserts something, and its proof shows that it is so' (6.1263, 6.1264). Thus the proof of a significant proposition is not hypothetical. If its proof proves that it is the case, it is presupposed that

those propositions from which it is proved are known to be true; for if they were uncertain, the conclusions would be equally uncertain. The only 'certainty' would then be hypothetical- that if the premises are true the conclusion is; but that is not what Wittgenstein calls a significant proposition; it is a proposition of logic, and proof of it nothing but a 'mechanical expedient to facilitate the recognition of it as a tautology' (6.1262). Thus, if we are to speak of proving significant propositions, 'A knows p' cannot be an ideal form of description without specifiable instances, nor one exemplified only in 'knowledge' of tautologies.

It is easy to misunderstand certain remarks in the Tractatus which have to do with this question and to suppose that Wiltgenstein calls only tautologies certain. At 4.464 he says: 'The truth of tautology is certain, that of a proposition is possible, and of contradiction impossible. (Certain, possible, impossible: here we have a hint of that gradation which we need in probability theory.)' And at 5.525: 'Certainty. possibility or impossibility of a state of affairs are expressed, not by a proposition, but by an expression's being a tautology, a significant proposition or a contradiction: It would be natural at first sight to take these remarks as implying that certainty belongs only to tautology. But the 'state of affairs' whose certainty is expressed by an expression's being a tautology cannot be a state of affairs described by a tautology; for Wittgenstein is insistent that tautology describes no state of affairs- is true for every possible state of affairs (4.466). Again the 'significant proposition asserts something, and its proof shows that it is so'; but there will be no such proof if certainty belongs only to a tautology.

Now if we take the hint given by the parenthetical remark at 4.464 and examine the theory of probability as it is described by the Tractatus, we find that the first impression perhaps conveyed by these propositions is mistaken, as it must be if Wittgcnstein is consistent.

The account of probability is closely connected with the view that all the propositions are truth-functions of elementary propositions. At 5.15 we are told: 'If Tr is the number of truth-grounds of the proposition "r", Trs the

number of the truth-grounds of the proposition "s" which are at the same time truth-grounds of "r", then we call the ratio Trs: Tr the measure of the probability given by the proposition "r" to the proposition "s" , (5.15). That is, if we assume 'p' and 'q' to be elementary, since 'p or q' has 3 possible combinations of the truth-values of 'p' and 'q' which make it true, and only 1 in common with 'p and q', the measure of the probability given by 'p or q' to 'p and q' is 1 :3.

This account of probability has been criticized as resting upon the arbitrary dogma that all elementary propositions are equally probable. 'Two elementary propositions give one another the probability ½' (5.152). Now Wittgenstein also says: 'Propositions which have no truth-arguments in common with one another, we call independent of one another' (5.152). This is not an author's 'we'. Turning it round we might say: 'When we speak of propositions as independent of one another, what this really means is that they have no truth-arguments in common, i.e. are truth-functions of quite separate sets of elementary propositions.' With this we get some light on what is meant by saying 'the application of logic decides what elementary propositions there are' (5.557). That is to say: if in the application of logic- i.e. reasoning not 'in logic' but from facts- we (rightly) say 'even if this is so, that would not have to be so, it is not even made probable, they have nothing to do with another': then we have found propositions that are truth-functions of quite separate sets of elementary propositions. But he goes on to say at this place: 'Logic cannot anticipate what resides in its application' and 'Logic and its application must not overlap.' Thus the question what are the elementary propositions does not belong to logic at all.

These passages show the doubtfulness of part of Wittgenstein's criticism of the Tractatus in Philosophical Investigations. He jeers at the idea that when I say 'The broom is in the corner' I really mean 'The broomstick is in the corner and so is the brush and the broomstick is stuck in the brush.' But I shall recognize the negation of any of those propositions as constituting an objection to 'The broom is in the corner'; and that is all that

the Tractatus theory requires. If I understand a proposition, I shall know what more detailed statements are inconsistent with it; these will then be more elementary than it is.

To return to the probability theory: 'If p follows from q, then the proposition "q" gives the proposition "p" the probability 1. The certainty of the logical conclusion is a limiting case of probability' (5.162). This can readily be seen from the Tractatus account of probability together with its account of inference, according to which what follows from a proposition is already staled by it (5.14-.141).

Now, however, we are in a position to understand the proposition: 'Certainty, possibility, or impossibility of a state of affairs is expressed not by a proposition, but by an expression's being a tautology, a significant proposition, or a contradiction.' Since an expression that is a tautology (or contradiction) does not answer to any 'state of affairs', what expresses the certain (or impossible) 'state of affairs' itself, as opposed to expressing its certainty (or impossibility), will not be the tautology (or contradictory) expression, but rather one of the propositions that occur as components of this tautology (or contradiction). Moreover, in order to get 'a hint of that gradation which we need in probability theory', 'possibility' must here be taken as excluding both certainty and impossibility. Take a case where 's' is a significant proposition and 'r' expresses something we know. Then the 'state of affairs' expressed by 's' will be certain if 'r. ~ s' is a contradiction (i.e. if 'r s' is a tautology); it will be impossible if 'r.s' is a contradiction (i.e. if 'r ~ s' is a tautology); it will be, relative to our knowledge, merely 'possible' if 'r.s' and 'r.~s' are both significant propositions (each of them must be either a significant proposition or a contradiction, if 'r' and 's' are both significant propositions).

This raises the question how we know that r; does the same account apply as would apply to 's' if it were 'certain' that s, and does this go on indefinitely, or do we come to a stop somewhere? Wittgenstein's view is at this point obscure; but he refers to 'being completely acquainted with a fact' (5.156), and presumably held that here we do come to a stop.

Thus Wittgenstein offers an extraordinarily over-simplified account of knowledge, which would presumably have to be filled out with an account of 'acquaintance with facts', 'A knows p', he remarks at 5.1362, 'is senseless if p is a tautology.' (We should notice that the word is 'senseless', not 'nonsensical'; that is to say, the knowledge that p, when 'p' is a tautology, is treated as he treats the truth of 'p'.) But he has just said that the connection between knowledge and what is known is that of logical necessity. He is not referring to the mere fact that 'A knows p, but p is not true' is a contradiction; but to his theory, which would be the foundation for that fact, that the certainty of a state of affairs comes out in an expression's being a tautology, That is to say, if A knows p, then, for some q, the fact that q is a fact that A is 'acquainted' with, and q p is a tautology.

The remark: 'Certainty, possibility and impossibility of a state of affairs are expressed, not by the proposition but ...' stands as a comment on 'It is incorrect to give "It is possible" as the verbal rendering of (Ex) (fx), as Russell does.' Russell held that necessity, possibility (contingency) and impossibility belong not to propositions, but to propositional functions, such as 'fx'. ' "fx" is necessary', he says, means that all values of fx are true.

In the passage we have been considering, Wittgenstein discusses not necessity, possibility and impossibility, but certainty, possibility and impossibility. This might seem insignificant, from his saying 'the truth of tautology is certain'; but, as we have seen, he cannot hold that only the truth of tautology is certain. His objection to Russell's account of necessity (and hence of logical impossibility) is made elsewhere, at 6.1231: 'The mark of logical propositions is not general validity; For to be general only means: to be accidentally valid for all things. An ungeneralized proposition can be tautologous just as well as a generalized one.'

'That precedent,' Wittgenstein concludes 5.525, 'to which one would always like to appeal, must reside in the very symbol itself.' He evidently refers to a reason why it is especially tempting to equate '(Ex)(fx), and 'fx is possible'. The most fundamental motive for adopting Russell's views is

that it would be one way of getting rid of the puzzling character of 'necessary', 'possible' and 'impossible'; Wittgenstein has his own way of doing that. There remains, however, the feeling that a case will guarantee possibility, and thus give the assertion of possibility a sense, as nothing else could; this is like the lawyer's feeling that the best way of showing a procedure to be legal is to cite a precedent for it. So Russell thought that 'fx' is possible only if there is an actual case of an f.

Now Wittgenstein acknowledges this desire for 'a precedent', but says that this precedent resides in the symbol itself. The 'symbol itself' will be the significant proposition. For 'in the proposition a situation is as it were put together experimentally' (4.031). It is as if the construction of small models of mechanisms were used to make reports on what machines there were in some place, and one also constructed hypothetical models, say in order to ask whether there are any of these in that place. If the models are in clay and do not move, one might want to know what makes them express possible hypotheses. But if the models are themselves working mechanisms, the 'precedent' to which one would want to appeal would be in the models themselves. And so it is, Wittgenstein says, with significant propositions.

No 'precedent' is to be found in tautology and contradiction; Wittgenstein's remark has sole application to significant propositions. For 'sentences which are true for every state of affairs cannot be connections of signs at all, for otherwise only particular connections of objects will correspond to them. (And there isn't any logical combination to which there corresponds no combination of the objects.)' (4.466). To regard tautologies (logically necessary propositions) as descriptions is as if one were to regard the empty space where the mechanism was to go as itself a model for all possible mechanisms. But the significant proposition is a logical working model of the situation it asserts to exist.



LET US KNOW

Kant Immanual(1724-1804): German philosopher who revolutionised modern philosophy, in an effort to counter the sceptical arguments of Hume and provide a firm basis for human knowledge and morality. Kant used transcendental arguments to show that human beings apply synthetic a priori judgements as the preconditions for any possible experience.

Metaphysics: Branch of philosophy concerned with providing a comprehensive account of the most general features of reality as a whole, the study of being as such. Questions about the existence and nature of minds, bodies, God, space, time, causality unity, identity and the world are all metaphysical issues. From Plato onwards, many philosophers have tried to determine what kinds of things (and how many of each) exist. But Kant argued that this task is impossible. He proposed instead that we consider the general structure of our thought about the world. Strawson calls former activity revisionary and the latter descriptive, metaphysics.

Frege, Gotlob(1848-1925): German mathematician and philosopher of mathematics. Frege was born in the small town of Wismar in Pomerania and was sent to the university of Jena when he was twenty-one. He obtained his doctorate at Gottingen and worked almost the whole of his life in the mathematics department at the university of Jena. His first important work , the Begriffsschrift (Concept Writing, 1879)is also the first important example of formal system in the sense of Modern Logic.

Verifiability Principle: the claim that the meaning of a proposition is just the set of observation or experiences which would determine its truth, so that an empirical proposition is meaningful only if it either actually has been verified or could at least in principle be verified.

(Analytic statements are non-empirical, their truth or falsity requires no verification.)

Knowledge: Justified true belief. Since Plato, nearly all western philosophers have accepted this deceptively simple statement of the three necessary (and jointly sufficient) conditions for knowledge. That is, I know a proposition if and only if : I sincerely affirm the proposition, the proposition is true and my affirmation is genuinely based upon its truth. The correct analysis of each element of the definition, however, is open to question. Philosophers have held different views about the nature of belief and have proposed many different theories of truth.

Logical Positivism: Twentieth Century philosophical movement that used a strict principle of verifiability to reject as meaningless the non-empirical statements of metaphysics, theology and ethics. Under the influence of Hume, Russell and the early Wittgenstein, the logical positivists regarded as meaningful only statements reporting empirical observations taken together with the tautologies of logic and mathematics. Prominent logical positivists included members of the Vienna circle and Ayer.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 7: What is picture Theory?

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Q 8: What is Ostensive Definition?

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Q 9: What is theory of Knowledge according to Wittgenstein?

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Q.10: Knowledge and Certainty are topics of What?

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15.6 LET US SUM UP

Philosophy looking for certainty has presented a number of conclusions. But in these conclusions, it must be noted that these are not unanimous in the sense in which scientific conclusions are unanimous.

- First, analytic statements are certain. Analytic statements are wholly independent of sense experience.
- Secondly, deductions made from such analytic statements are also capable of giving certain knowledge.
- Thirdly, the ego or the self is so foundational that it can not be doubted. The very process of doubting presupposes the ego
- Fourthly, according to the empiricist philosophers the propositions, which are the records of the immediate experiences are also beyond all doubt.
- The quest for certainty has led philosophers to explore the nature of standard of justification. These explorations have opened new area in epistemology.



15.7 FURTHER READING

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15.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans. to Q No 1: Plato distinguished among four levels of knowledge or thought. Among these four levels the first two are called by him opinion and the last two knowledge.

Ans. to Q No.2: Wittgenstein.

Ans. to Q No 3: Wittgenstein.

Ans. to Q No 4: Scepticism is a belief that some or all human knowledge is impossible. Since even our best methods for learning about the world sometimes fall short of perfect certainty, sceptics argue, it is better to suspend belief than to rely on the dubitable products of reason. Classical sceptics include Pyrrho and Sextus Epmpiricus. In the modern era, Montaigne, Bayle and Hume, all advocated some form of sceptical philosophy. Fallibilism is a more moderate response to the lack of certainty.

Ans. to Q No 5: Wittgenstein.

Ans. to Q No 6: G.E. Moore.

Ans. to Q No 7: The picture theory of language is also know as the picture theory of meaning, is a theory of linguistic reference and meaning articulated by Wittgenstein in TLP. Picture theory of language states that statements are meaningful if they can be defined or pictured in the real world.

Ans. to Q No 8: Ostensive definition coveys the meaning of a term by pointing out examples. It is usually accompanied with a gesture pointing to the object serving as an example, and for this reason is also often referred to as "definition by pointing".

Ans. to Q No 9: 'Psychology is no more akin to philosophy than any other natural science. Theory of knowledge is the philosophy of psychology' (4.1121). In this passage Wittgenstein is trying to break the dictatorial control over the rest of philosophy that had long been exercised by what is called theory of knowledge-that is, by the philosophy of sensation, perception, imagination, and, generally, of 'experience'.

Ans. to Q No 10: Knowledge and certainty, however, are topics for the philosophy of logic.

15.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions:

Q 1: What is metaphysics?

Q 2: What is knowledge?

Q 3: What is the full form of TLP

Q 3: What is the full form of PI

Q 4: Is psychology a branch of philosophy?

B) Short questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: What is metaphysics according to Kant

Q 2: What is Plato's view on certainty?

Q 3: What is certainty?

Q 4: What is verification theory?

Q 5: What is ostensive definition?

Q 6: Write short notes on:

a) Knowledge and Certainty

b) Wittgenstein and Certainty

c) Wittgenstein and G.E. More on certainty

d) Plato and Certainty

e) Descartes and Certainty

C) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q 1: What is the epistemological investigations On Certainty?

Q 2: How Plato related with Certainty?

Q 4: What is the view of Descartes on scepticism and certainty?

Q 5: What is certainty according to Wittgenstein?

Q 6: Explain Certainty from the point of epistemology.

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