UNIT 1: DEVELOPMENT OF ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY

UNIT STRUCTURE

1.1 Learning Objectives

1.2 Introdcution

1.3 Origin And Background

1.4 Nature Of Analytic Philosophy

1.5 Logical Atomism

- 1.5.1 Logical Positivism
- 1.5.2 Ordinary Language Philosophy
- 1.5.3 Common-Sense Philosophy

1.6 Contemporaty Analytic Philosophy

- 1.6.1 Philosophy Of Mind
- 1.6.2 Philosophy Of Language
- 1.6.3 Philosophy Of Science
- 1.6.4 Philosophy Of Religion
- 1.6.5 Political Philosophy
- 1.6.6 Ethics In Analyitc Philosophy

1.7 Let us sum up

1.8 Further Reading

1.9 Answers To Check Your Progress

1.10 Model Questions

1.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

- explain the nature of analytic philosophy
- describe the history of analytic philosophy
- discuss the views of some analytic thinkers
- explain the trend of contemporary development in analytical philosophy

1.2 INTRODCUTION

Analytic philosophy, also called **linguistic philosophy**, is an approaches to philosophical problems that dominanted Anglo-American philosophy from the early 20th century. The term 'analytic' conventionally indicates a method of philosophy that is characterized by an emphasis on argumentative clarity and precision.Central figures in this historical development are Gottlob Frege, Bertrand Russell, G.E. Moore, Ludwig Wittgenstein, and the logical positivists.

1.3 ORIGIN AND BACKGROUND

Analytic philosophy originated as a revolt against idealism most specifically in the work of Frege, Russell, Moore, and Wittgenstein. The English philosophy during the last decades of the 19th century was dominated by the German philosopher G.W.F.Hegel's absolute idealism. The strongest impetus of anlytic philosophy came from their reaction against British Idealism, and their rejection of Hegel and Hegelianism. Analytic philosophy criticized the absolute idealismdominant then in Britain that were exemplified in the works of F. H. Bradley and J. M. E. McTaggart.

The analytic philosophers overthrow the idealist view that physical world is only a world of appearance. The first break from the idealist view occurred when Moore, in a paper entitled "The Nature of Judgment" (1899), argued for a theory of truth that implies that the physical world does have the independent existence that it is naively supposed to have. the history of the analytic movement has a strong antimetaphysical strain, and its exponents have generally assumed that the methods of science and of everyday life are the best ways of finding out the truth.

1.4 NATURE OF ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY

The development of analytic philosophy is most specifically the development of the conception of logical analysis as the distinctive form of analysis . Both Frege and Russerl made use of logical analysis as a

central strand in the analytic movement . It started with Frege's work on the *function-argument analyses*. According to this argument, simple statement like " Socrates is mortal' is not analysed into subject-predicate joined by the copula, but a fuction –argument form ('Fa') where 'Socrates' is the argment and 'x is mortal' is the function. The argument indicated by the variable 'x' is filled by the name 'Socrates' . Frege calls this the 'judgeable content' of the statement. He further develop quantificational theory, enabling him to analyze complex mathematical statements.

Russell develop the inductive rather than deductive process of logical analysis. His theory of descriptions, first presented in 'On Denoting' remains one of the celebrated topic in analytic philosophy. In this theory, (Ka) is rephrased as (Kb), which can then be readily formalized in the new logic as (Kc):

(Ka) The present King of France is bald.

(Kb) There is one and only one King of France, and whatever is King of France is bald.

(Kc) *"x*[*Kx*&*"y*(*Ky* '! *y* = *x*) &*Bx*].

Following is an outline on the development of the nature of analytic philosophy.

1.5 LOGICAL ATOMISM

The philosophy of Logical Atomism originated in the early 20th century with the development of analytic philosophy. Its principal exponent was the British philosopher Russell and the early work of Wittgenstein. Its origin can be trace back in Frege's development of predicate logic. According to this logic, Frege's argues that represent simple statements such as 'Socrates is mortal' not in subject-predicate form ('*S* is *P*', i.e., analyzing it into subject and predicate joined by the copula) but in function-argument form ('*Fa*')—taking 'Socrates' as the argument and '*x* is mortal' as the function, which yields as value what Frege calls the 'judgeable content' of the statement when the argument indicated by the variable '*x*' is filled by the name 'Socrates'.

Following the line of thought, Russerl in 1911, coined the term

"logical atomism" and developed the theoy of logical atomism. The theory of logical atomism holds that the world consists of ultimate logical "facts" or "atoms" that cannot be broken down any further. Such atoms can be understood independently of other facts.

Logical atomism is the theory that the world is composed of independent facts. Knowledge is a copy, or a representation of these atomic fats. Knowledge of the world is gain only in limited bounded parts. This atomic knowledge or knowledge of this atomic facts is the most precise or accurate, for they constitute the simple, the smallest part of which the complex is comprised. A propsotion asserting an atomic fact is called an atomic propsotion. It is independent of any other atomic propostion.

Russell's theory of logical atomism consists of three interworking parts: the atomic proposition, the atomic fact, and the atomic complex. An atomic proposition, also known as an elemental judgement, is a fundamental statement describing a single entity. Russell refers to this entity as an atomic fact, and recognizes a range of elements within each fact that he refers to as particulars and universals. A particular denotes a signifier such as a name, many of which may apply to a single atomic fact, while a universal lends quality to these particulars, e.g. color, shape, disposition. Atomic complex is the system that consists of the corresponding atomic facts of the many atomic propsotins.

Wittgenstein in his *Tractatus* expanded and developed Russell's logical atomism into a comprehensive system. He explains his version of logical atomism as the relationship between proposition, state of affairs, object, and complex, often referred to as "Picture theory". He believed that these states of affairs can be expressed in the language of first-order predicate logic. So a *picture* of the world can be built up by expressing atomic facts in atomic propositions, and linking them using logical operators. He says that the objective of philosophy is not to arrive at theories, but to engage in activity, that is the logical clarification of thoughts and propositions. The *Tractatus* is based upon the doctrine of Logical Atomism, the belief that statement are reducible by analysis to

their simplest component, the ultimate of analysis and the apex of linguistic precision, thereby enabling one to construct an ideal language, eliminating confusion. The task of philosophy according to Wittgesntein was to clean up linguistic mistakes.

1.5.1 logical positivism

Logical positivism also known a logical empiricism is a philosophical movement that combines positivism with formal logic. It started in Vienna in the 1920s. The term “logical positivism” itself originated in the Vienna Circle in the 1920s. The Vienna Circle, was led principally by Moritz Schlick. Other prominent figures are Otto Neurath, Hans Hahn, and Rudolf Carnap.

Greatly influenced by the German philosopher Immanuel Kant’s distinctiob between analytic and synthetic statements, as *a priori* and *a posteriori* ones respectively, the logical positivist denied the existence of any such synthetic *a priori* statements (as developed by Kant) and held that all *a priori* statements are analytic. According to the logical positivists, there are only two kinds of statements, analytic and synthetic, with all the first being *a priori* and all the second being *a posteriori*. The logical positivist has also been influenced by emperisist like George Berkeley and David Hume.

Philosophy, according to logical positivist should provide strict criteria for judging sentences as true, false and meaningless. And this judgment should be made by the use of formal logic coupled with empirical experience.

The development of logical positivist was highly influenced by the view that scientific knowledge is the only kind of factual knowledge. As scientific knowledge is empirical knowledge, logical positivism developed its best known theory of verifiability as the criterion of meaning. Also known as verification theory, it

asserts that a statement is meaningful if and only if it is empirically verifiable.Accordingly only statements that bare verifiable either by their analyticity or by empiricism were *cognitively meaningful*. As statements of metaphysics, ontology, and ethics, fail's this criterion, they were found *cognitively meaningless*. The logical positivist thereby rejected the metaphysical doctrines as not only false but also meaningless. They further conclude that while ethics and aesthetics were subjective preferences, theology and other metaphysics contained 'pseudostatements', that is neither true nor false.

A.J. Ayer's book, *Language, Truth, and Logic* can be thought of as a summary statement of and introduction to logical positivism for the English-speaking world. Ayer sets out the distinction between 'strong' and 'weak' verification. He says that a proposition is said to be verifiable, in the strong sense of the term, if, and only if, its truth could be conclusively established by experience.

Developments in logic and the foundations of mathematics, especially in the *"Principia Mathematica"* by the British philosophers Bertrand Russell and Alfred North Whitehead, also impressed the more mathematically-minded Logical Positivists. Another influential essay by Quine's, "Two Dogmas of Empiricism," (1951) makes a disposition of the supposed *analytic-synthetic distinction,* and of *reductionism.* According to Quine,each meaningful statement is equivalent to some logical construct upon terms which refer to immediate experience. This was central to the demise of logical positivism .

1.5.2 Ordinary Language Philosophy

Ordinary language philosophy also known as Linguistic Philosophy or Natural Language Philosophy is a philosophical "theories" that uses non-technical everyday "ordinary" language to

solve philosophical problems. According to ordinary language philosophy, philosophical problems frequently arise through a misuse or misunderstanding of ordinary speech.

Analytic philosophy during the late 1940s and 1950s, was possibly divided into two strains or camps, namely, ordinary language philosophy, led by John L. Austin, also known as 'Oxford philosophy,' and the later philosophy of Wittgenstein, which differed dramatically from his early work of the *Tractatus*. This break comes over the question whether analysis should be carried on primarily through and on ordinary language, or whether it should have a component of formal logic and formal language J.S. Austin in Oxford, emphasized the need to pay careful attention to our ordinary use of language. His speech-act theory, makes a distinction between locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts. According to Austin, linguistic analysis can be employed as a tool in the construction of theories of language. He considers for example the various uses of the verbs like 'appear', 'look' and 'seem' as the following:

(1) He looks guilty.

(2) He appears guilty.

(3) He seems guilty.

There are clearly differences here, and thinking through such differences enables one to appreciate just how crude some of the arguments are for theories of perception that appeal to 'sense-data'.

1.5.3 Common–Sense Philosophy

The first major work of common-sense philosophy appears in Moore's paper " A Defense of Common Sense" (1925). Moore argue in favour of "the common sense view of the world," and insisted that any philosophical system whose propositions contravene it can be rejected out of hand without further analysis.In this paper Moore argued against scepticism, that he and other human beings have known many propositions

about the world to be true with certainty. Among these propositions are: “The Earth has existed for many years” and “Many human beings have existed in the past and some still exist.” Because skepticism maintains that nobody knows any proposition to be true, it can be dismissed. Furthermore, because these propositions entail the existence of material objects, idealism, according to which the world is wholly mental, can also be rejected.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: When the theory logical atomism came into light?

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Q 2: Write the name of the propounder of logical atomism

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Q 3: What is meant by logical atomism?

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Q 4: Who is the author of Tractatus Logico Philosophicus

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Q 5: What is the other name of logical positivism?

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Q 6: When and where the term *logical positivism* was introduced?

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Q 7: What is meant by ordinary language philosophy?

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1.6 CONTEMPORARY THEORIES OF ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY

The notion of 'analytic philosophy' has largely expanded from the specific programs that dominated Anglophone philosophy before 1960 to a much more general notion of an 'analytic' style. Many philosophers and historians have attempted to define or describe analytic philosophy. During the 1950s, logical positivism was challenged influentially by Wittgenstein in the *Philosophical Investigations*, Quine in 'Two Dogmas of Empiricism', and Sellars in *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind*. After 1960, Anglophone philosophy began to incorporate a wider range of interests, opinions, and methods.

1.6.1 Philosophy Of Mind

One branch of analytic philosophy that has been especially concerned with what is usually known as philosophy of mind or cognitive science is motivated by the logical positivist's interest in verification. Also known as logical behaviourism some of the prominent figures here have been Paul Churchland, Patricia Churchland, and Daniel Dennett.

The major debate concerned the philosophy of mind centre around the question of which materialist theory of the human mind, if any, was the correct one. The main theories were identity theory (also called reductive materialism), functionalism, and eliminative materialism.

One of the prominent figure of philosophy of mind, John Searle, suggest that the analytic thinkers obsession with the philosophy of language during the 20th century has been superseded by an emphasis on the philosophy of mind . A central focus of research in the philosophy of mind has been consciousness.

1.6.2. Philosophy Of Language

Philosophy of language is a comptemporary study tradItion that investigate the relations between language, language users and the world. It also include an inquiry into the origins of language, the nature of meaning, the usage and cognition of language. It studies issues that cannot be addressed by other fields, like linguistics, or psychology. Major topics in the philosophy of language include the nature of meaning, intentionality, reference, the constitution of sentences, concepts, learning, and thought.

Philosophy of language in the Western tradition was strongly influenced by work of analytic thinkers like Gottlob Frege, Bertrand Russell, Ludwig Wittgenstein, J.L. Austin, Alfred Tarski, and W.V.O. Quine.

Kriper's for example, developed a philosophical theories of language by wedding the techniques of modal logic to a causal theory of reference. In his book *Naming and Necessity*, Kripeks put forth what has come to be known as "the modal argument" (or "argument from rigidity").He argued influentially that flaws in common theories of proper names are indicative of larger misunderstandings of the metaphysics of necessity and possibility.

1.6.3. Philosophy Of Science

Philosophy of science emerged as a distinct discipline only in the 20th century, as a rejction gainst the verificationism of the logical positivists, as well as the critiques of the philosopher of science. It was critical of the logical positivism movement, which aimed to formulate criteria for ensuring all philosophical statements' meaningfulness and objectively assessing them.

Thomas Samuel Kuhn formulation of paradigm shifts challenges the view of scientific progress as steady, cumulative acquisition of knowledge based on a fixed method of systematic

experimentation. In his book The Strcuture of Sceince (1962) Kuhn argue's that any progress is relative to a "paradigm," that is, the set of questions, concepts, and practices that define a scientific discipline in a particular historical period. moved on from positivism to establish a modern set of standards for scientific methodology.

Karl Popper on the other hand move on from positivism to establish a modern set of standards for scientific methodology. He rejected the classical inductivist views on the scientific method in favour of empirical falsification, according to which empirical sciences can never be proven, but can be falsified. He suggested the falsifiability criterion to judge the demarcation between science and non-science.

1.6.4. Philosophy Of Religion

While the early analytic philosophy tended to largely dismissed the subject of "religion" as part of metaphysics and therefore meaningless, some forms of contemporary analytic philosophy have proven very sympathetic to the philosophy of religion. Philosophers like William Alston, John Mackie, Alvin Platinga, Antony Flew, etc not only re-introduce new problems, but also re-study classical topics such as the nature of miracles, theistic arguments, the rationality of belief in God, concepts of the nature of God, and many more. Whereas Plantinga, Mackie and Flew debated the logical validity of the *free will defense* as a way to solve the problem of evil, Alston, worked on the nature of religious language.

1.6.5 Political Philosophy

A systematic study of contemporary analytic political philosophy started with the work of John Rawls book "A Theory of Justice" (1971) .His other notable work includes "Two Concepts

of Rules" and "Justice as Fairness". Rawls argued for a sophisticated defence of a generally liberal egalitarian account of distributive justice.

Analytic Marxism is another development of political philosophy that emerge as the school of work that seek to apply techniques of analytic philosophy modern social science such as rational choice theory to clarify the theories of Karl Marx and his successors. The best-known member of this school is G.A. Cohen. Cohen in his work*Karl Marx's Theory of History : A Defence* (1978) used logical and linguistic analysis to clarify and defend Marx's materialist conception of history.

1.6.6 Ethics in Analyitc Philosophy

Whreas analytic philosophy focus on symbolic logic and empiricism, with no enthusiasm for doing ethics, ethics become a tpic of interest wih the emergence of ordinary language philosopher. Thereafter philosophers working with the analytic tradition have gradually come to distinguish three major types of moral philosophy.

- Meta-ethics: it is a 20th century study of ethics that origated from the work of G.E.Moore's invitigation into the nature of ethical terms like 'good' and its theory of naturalistic fallacy on the one hand and Hume's distinction of is/ought on the other hand.

  Meta ethics is a study of ethics which investigates moral terms, statements and judgments. According to them , all statement about values both ethical and aesthetic are non-cognitive , that is they cannot b objectively verified or falsified. They are merely expression of emotion. Hence they are also called emotivist theory. Emotivism later evolved into more sophisticated non-cognitivist theories such as the expressivism of Charles Stevenson, and the universal prescriptivism of R.M. Hare.

- Normative ethicsis a study which examines and produces normative ethical judgments. Analytic philosopher was sceptical of this theory . According to analytic philoosphers, utilitarianism was the only non-skeptical type of ethics to remain popular. Other schools like virtue ethics, and deontology had renewed interest in ethics, against normative ethics.
- Applied ethicsas a significant feature of analytic philosophy developed during 1970s as an investigates into how existing normative principles should be applied to difficult or borderline cases, often cases created by new technology or new scientific knowledge. Topics of special interest for applied ethics include environmental issues, animal rights, and the many challenges created by advancing medical science.



1.7 LET US SUM UP

- Analytic philosophy is a philosophical movement that emphasizes the study of language and the logical analysis of concepts. It often make use of formal logic, conceptual analysis, and, to a lesser degree, mathematics and the natural sciences.
- Analytic philosophy began near the turn of the century with the workd of Russerl, Moore and Wittgenstein. They analysed complex concepts and ideas through the use of symbolic logic that was codified by Russerl, Whitehead, and Frege.
- The development of analytic philosophy is marked by subsequent extensive work in later analytic and post-analytic philosophy that includesthe work carried out by Philippa Foot, R. M. Hare, J. L. Mackie, Alasdair MacIntyre, and others; political philosophy as done most notably by John Rawls and Robert Nozick; aesthetics as investigated by Arthur Danto; philosophy of religion as studied