



REPRESENTATIONALISM

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Linguistic Representation- There are many things which cannot be represented through pictures for which we need words or sentences.

- But the fact is that: words do not represent things in any natural way; rather they represent by *convention*.
- There is a convention among speakers of a language that the words they use will mean the same thing to one another; when speakers agree or come together in their conventions, they will succeed in communicating and when they don't they won't.
- Problem with linguistic representation theory- suppose when I say a word 'dog' then I have a particular image of a particular dog, Fido. But if this is so then when we utter the word dog then why does it only mean a dog rather than Fido?
- It is hard to imagine what an image of 'dogness' in general would be like.
- Linguistic representations are basically the representations of the **mental representations** which are more complex in nature. Therefore linguistic representations cannot be a fundamental theory of representationalism.

Thought and Consciousness- Thoughts are not necessarily taken to be conscious states.

What is consciousness?: Consciousness is what makes our waking lives seem the way they do... that means we are aware about our own doings...

- Many of our thoughts are conscious and many of them are unconscious. that means there are things we think but we are not aware that we think them.

- Something has never consciously occurred before it is asked because we have never been aware of thinking it. But when it is asked we seem to reveal what we think.

- As **Socrates** said , knowledge is recollection.

- **Freud** also has viewed that we have unconscious thoughts. As he recognized that many of the things that we do cannot be fully accounted for by our conscious mind. What does account for these actions are our conscious beliefs, desires, many of which are 'buried' so deep in our minds that we need a certain kind of therapy - psychoanalysis-to dig them out.

- But **Descartes** do not accept that we have unconscious thoughts. As he believes that thoughts are episodes in the conscious mind, so must be conscious by definition.

Intentionality-

The technical word that is used for the representational nature of states of mind is 'Intentionality'.

- Intentionality is the power of minds **to be about**, to represent, or to stand for, things, properties and states of affairs.
- The word itself, which is of medieval Scholastic origin, was rehabilitated by the philosopher **Franz Brentano** towards the end of the nineteenth century. 'Intentionality' is a philosopher's word. It derives from the Latin word *intentio*, which in turn derives from the verb *intendere*, which means **being directed towards** some goal or thing.
- Intentionality means **directedness** on something, it is **aboutness**.
- Brentano claims that what distinguishes mental phenomena from physical phenomena is that, whereas all mental phenomena display this directedness, no physical phenomenon displays it. So intentionality is the 'mark of the mental'.

- Intentionality is not intention.
- Intentionality is not intensionality. Intensionality is a logical and linguistic concept. It is a feature of sentences and linguistic items.
- Do all mental states exhibit intentionality?
- For example 'pain' in my spine. Although we would not say that my back pain is about anything, it does have some representational character in so far as it feels to be in my back. I could have a pain that feels exactly the same 'pain-wise', e.g. I could have two pains, one in each hand, which felt exactly the same, except that one felt to be in my right hand, and the other felt to be in my left hand. This felt location is plausibly a difference in intentionality- in what mental state is 'directed on'-so it is not true that pains (at least) have no intentionality whatsoever.
- Similarly in the case of depression. Suppose a person who is in depression cannot identify what is that they are depressed about.
- But this by itself does not mean that such depression has no object that it has no directedness.

- Here the mind is directed upon world, i.e. depression is a way of experiencing the world in general-everything seems bad, nothing is worth doing, the world of the depressed person ‘shrinks’. Thus generalized depression is a way in which one’s mind is directed upon the world, and therefore intentional, since the world in general can be the object of a state of mind.
- So Brentano argued that all mental states exhibit intentionality.
- But as against this, there are certain mental states which are not intentional. Like “Qualia”. For example- my toothache does have a intentional directedness upon my tooth,
- it may have a distinctive quality of naggingness which is not intentional at all.
- the naggingness is not directed on anything, it is just there. This kind of apparent properties are called “Qualia”.
- So there is something residual element in sensation which is not intentional.

- The second question : Do only mental states exhibit intentionality? (Are minds the only things in the world that have intentionality?)
- If we say that minds are not the only things that have intentionality then we need to give an example of something that has intentionality but doesn't have a mind.
- For example say 'Books'. Book contains many sentences, all of which have meaning, represent things and therefore have intentionality in some sense. But the book doesn't have mind.
- Reply: books's sentences do not have intentionality intrinsically, but only have it because they are reinterpreted by the readers of the book. The interpretations provided by the states of mind of the reader, however, do have intrinsic intentionality.
- A distinction sometimes made between **original and derived intentionality**.
- The intentionality present in a book is merely derived intentionality, it is derived from the thoughts of those who write and read the book. But our minds have original intentionality, and their intentionality does not depend on, or derive from, the intentionality of anything else.