

Indira Gandhi National Open University  
School of Interdisciplinary and  
Trans-disciplinary Studies

**MPYE – 014**

**Philosophy of Mind**

**Block 3**

**EXPRESSIONS OF MIND AND BRAIN**

**UNIT 1**

**Mind and Perceptions**

**UNIT 2**

**Mind and Dreams**

**UNIT 3**

**Mind and Emotions**

**UNIT 4**

**Mind and Language**

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## BLOCK INTRODUCTION

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In understanding the human mind and brain, philosophers of mind rely on the empirical data that are available such as perception, dreams, emotions and language. Perception is a process of the consciousness of an object. Languages incorporate values and beliefs. Hence perception is fundamental to the process of creating values and beliefs. Philosophers distinguish internalist accounts, which assume that perceptions of objects, and knowledge or beliefs about them, are aspects of an individual's mind, and externalist accounts, which state that they constitute real aspects of the world external to the individual. Anti-realist conceptions include idealism and skepticism. Emotions are conceived by few philosophers as responses to certain sorts of events of concern to a subject, triggering bodily changes and typically motivating characteristic behaviour. Mind and language are closely related; In western philosophical tradition, there has been a general consensus that mind and language are intimately related. In the middle ages, philosophers have started the debate on the ontological primacy of language *vis à vis* consciousness which was reflected in the discussion on the nature of 'universals and particular'. In the Enlightenment, both rationalists and empiricists have explored the nature of idea and given priorities to thought (consciousness) over language. Language is instrumental in expressing the thought. Phenomenologists were more interested to explore the structure and nature of consciousness; how consciousness constitutes the object of knowledge and at the same time how consciousness is constituted by the external objects. Analytical philosophers think that all philosophical problems arise due to misunderstanding of language. One of the major concerns of the Indian philosophical systems has been the relationship between language and reality. Almost in all Indian philosophical systems mind (*manas*) is considered as instrument that is an internal sense organ (*antahkarana*) for knowledge acquisition.

**Unit 1** defines and distinguishes sensation and perception. Perception is a process of the consciousness of an object. This phenomena can be expressed with the help of a three-link chain of stimulus perception-coordination-response to the stimulus. It must be remembered that in this three-link chain, the first cortical response is sensation and the second cortical response is perception. In practice, sensation and perception are so closely intermingled that is quite difficult to say when sensation stops and perception begins. We call this process as perception rather than sensation.

**Unit 2** deals with function of the mind in dreams. This had been a subject of curiosity and study for long. Scientific approach through Freudian psychoanalysis and the contemporary neurological studies have brought out recent wider understanding of the relationship between mind and the dreams.

**Unit 3** helps us understand the concept of emotions, their relationship with mind and brain, and some views of various philosophers on this concept. Human live is full of emotions such as love, happiness, envy, boredom and excitement, and they are central to our identities and our experience of the world. The emotional mind consists of subconscious, unconscious and subconscious components. The unit also brings out the views of various eminent scholars on the concept of mind.

**Unit 4** firstly discusses the different philosophical issues pertaining to the interface of mind and language such as intentionality of mind and language, basic structure and function of mind and

language, priority of language and mind, necessity and contingency in language from western perspective. Secondly, it analyses debates concerning the relationship of language and consciousness among Grammarian, Mimamsa and Buddhism in Classical Indian tradition.

