

Indirect Realism

What is it?

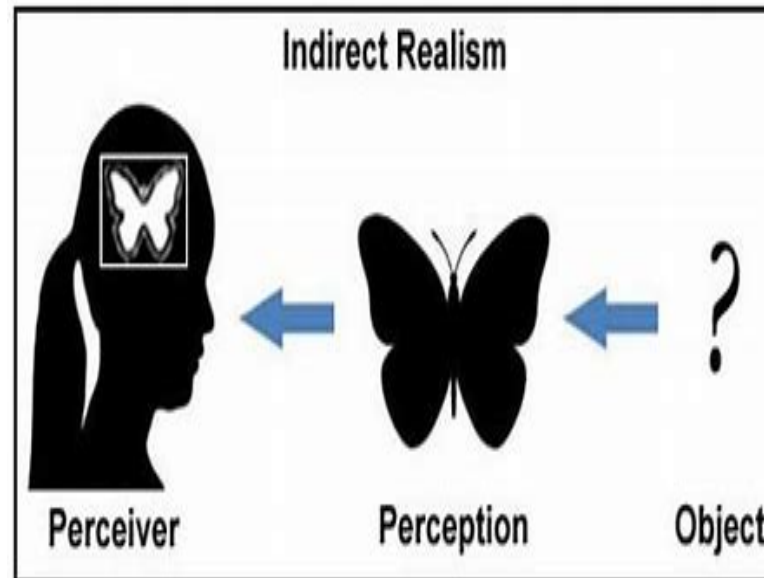
- Due to the criticisms of direct realism, many philosophers embrace indirect realism.
- It is a realist theory, so maintains the belief that material objects exist independently of the mind.
- But, there is a distinction between the reality of these objects and the way they appear.
- 3 elements in perception 1: the perceiver. 2: the real object. 3: the appearance of the object/s to the perceiver.
- We are directly aware of appearances, which Locke terms ideas and Russell, sense data. These are representations of reality.
- We infer, on the basis of sense data, the nature of reality, due to this inference, perception is indirect.

Locke Primary and secondary qualities

- Locke: ideas = what the mind perceives in itself, the immediate objects of perception, thought, or understanding is what Locke calls 'ideas'.
- Qualities = the power to produce any idea in our mind
- Primary qualities = Real properties are primary qualities, when I look at a tree, my sense data of its size, shape position and motion.
- Secondary qualities = such as colour, taste and sound do not correspond directly to the object as these qualities are produced by my mind as they produce a sensation within us or an idea within us.
- Primary qualities are inseparable from the object, its parts remain the same no matter if we divide, pound an object, its parts must retain some shape, size, position and so on, even if we can no longer see the parts as without these qualities it would not be material at all.
- So primary qualities must be essential to material objects and are retained by them whether or not they are perceived.
- Secondary qualities do alter and vanish when not being perceived. Odours are only visible in light and change depending on the light. A pounded almond changes its colour and taste
- If we block our noses, or eyes, or do not put an object in our mouths, then it will not make a sound or have any odour or taste.
- Secondary qualities depend on the primary qualities and require a mind to appear and so are not in the object themselves as we perceive them.
- REMEMBER THE HAND IN THE LUKEWARM WATER EXAMPLE AS THIS EXPLAINS LOCKE'S VIEWAS DOES PERCEPTUAL VARIATION.

Support for Indirect Realism

- 1: It accounts for perceptual variation, illusions, hallucinations, and time-lag.
- 2: What we directly perceive need not be an accurate representation of reality.
- 3: Perceptual variations can occur while the real object remains unchanged.
- 4: Illusions occur when there is no real object corresponding to our sense data, and the time-lag can be explained because what I immediately aware of is not the same as what is really there, so strengths over Direct Realism.



Criticism of Locke's Primary and secondary qualities

- Locke's examples show that primary and secondary qualities can change.
 - When an almond is pounded, the shape, taste, smell and colour change. So if change is supposed to show that a quality is secondary, then by Locke's logic we should regard the shape and size of the pieces of almond as mind-dependent.
 - If secondary qualities depend on the texture of the almond, this does not show that they are purely mind-dependent.
- P1: certain properties disappear if we block our senses.
C: So these qualities depend on our sense organs and do not exist as perceived in reality.
- But, if we close our eyes, both the primary and secondary qualities disappear.
 - We can handle objects to feel their shapes, but if we let go then these sense experiences stop, so it looks like primary qualities behave the same as secondary qualities.