



Unit 3: Lesson 1 - Day 2 [Teacher's Edition]

Physicalism, Modern Science, and Consciousness Assessment

Section 1: Multiple Choice - Choose the correct answer for each of the following questions.

1. According to Ibn Sina's Floating Man Experiment, what does self-awareness primarily depend on?
 - a. Sensory experiences
 - b. Memories and past experiences
 - c. External stimuli
 - d. Inner cognition
2. What is the Glasgow Coma Scale primarily used for?
 - a. Assessing motor skills
 - b. Evaluating neurological disorders
 - c. Describing consciousness levels
 - d. Measuring brainwave activity
3. Which philosopher is associated with the statement "Cogito, ergo sum" (I think, therefore I am)?
 - a. Francis Crick
 - b. Friedrich Nietzsche
 - c. René Descartes
 - d. David Chalmers
4. What is the primary criticism against the neuroscientific reductionist view of consciousness?
 - a. It overemphasizes the role of the soul.
 - b. It disregards physicalism.
 - c. It doesn't allow room for subjective experiences.
 - d. It cannot explain neurological disorders.
5. Which brain regions are closely associated with the neural correlates of consciousness (NCC)?
 - a. Frontal lobes
 - b. Cerebellum
 - c. Parietal, occipital, and temporal lobes
 - d. Brainstem
6. What is the Hard Problem of Consciousness concerned with?
 - a. Explaining neurological disorders
 - b. Defining qualia
 - c. Accounting for subjective experiences
 - d. Demonstrating physicalism



7. According to the Knowledge Argument, what does conscious experience provide that cannot be attained through physical facts?
 - a. Qualia
 - b. Objective knowledge
 - c. Neurological patterns
 - d. Subjective reasoning
8. What is the primary purpose of the Mary's Room thought experiment?
 - a. To refute Ibn Sina's theories
 - b. To support physicalism
 - c. To illustrate the limitations of knowledge/information
 - d. To demonstrate the existence of qualia
9. What is a philosophical zombie?
 - a. A conscious being with no physical properties
 - b. A physically identical being without conscious experience
 - c. A being with both physical and conscious properties
 - d. A theoretical concept irrelevant to consciousness studies
10. What is the central issue with the reductionist view of consciousness?
 - a. It overemphasizes subjective experiences.
 - b. It lacks empirical evidence.
 - c. It disregards physical explanations.
 - d. It doesn't explain why consciousness exists or how it can exist.

Section 2: Short Answer - Write a well-formulated response for each of the following.

1. Explain Ibn Sina's Floating Man Experiment and its implications regarding self-awareness. (Answer should cover the idea of self-awareness without sensory experiences or external stimuli, emphasizing inner cognition as the source of self-awareness.)
 - Sample Answer: Ibn Sina's Floating Man Experiment entails imagining a person devoid of sensory experiences, memories, and connections to the external world. Despite this sensory deprivation, Ibn Sina argues that the individual would still possess self-awareness. The essence of self-awareness, in this case, doesn't rely on external stimuli or past experiences but stems from inner cognition. This experiment implies that self-awareness or consciousness doesn't solely depend on sensory inputs but is an innate feature of the thinking self, existing independently of external stimuli or memories.
2. Discuss the contrasting views of consciousness between the neuroscientific reductionist perspective and the Islamic perspective. (Answer should cover the fundamental differences in their interpretations, addressing consciousness as an illusion in the neuroscientific perspective and as an essential aspect of the soul in the Islamic perspective.)



- Sample Answer: The neuroscientific reductionist perspective regards consciousness as an illusion, attributing it solely to brain functions and neuronal activities, dismissing any metaphysical or spiritual significance. In contrast, the Islamic perspective views consciousness as an integral part of the soul, connecting it to a deeper spiritual realm. While neuroscience reduces consciousness to physical processes, Islam attributes consciousness to the soul's existence beyond the physical body, emphasizing its continuity beyond bodily functions and material existence.
3. Evaluate the limitations of the neuroscientific reductionist view in explaining consciousness, considering subjective experiences and the Hard Problem of Consciousness. (Answer should explore the challenges faced by this perspective in accounting for subjective experiences and the inherent difficulty in explaining why consciousness arises.)
- Sample Answer: The neuroscientific reductionist view encounters limitations in explaining consciousness due to its inability to account for subjective experiences and the "Hard Problem of Consciousness." Subjective experiences, such as qualia, present a challenge as they are inherently personal and cannot be fully described or explained by physical facts alone. The "Hard Problem" pertains to understanding why and how consciousness arises from physical processes, posing a challenge for reductionist theories that attempt to solely explain consciousness in terms of neuronal activities without addressing its fundamental nature. This view also ignores the purpose of a soul/consciousness.
4. Describe the neural correlates of consciousness and their association with brain regions, highlighting their significance in understanding consciousness. (Answer should cover the brain regions associated with consciousness and their role in determining different levels of conscious awareness.)
- Sample Answer: Neural correlates of consciousness (NCC) are specific neural activities associated with conscious awareness, primarily located in the parietal, occipital, and temporal lobes of the cerebral cortex. These regions exhibit complex neural excitations corresponding to different conscious experiences. Understanding NCC is crucial in determining levels of conscious awareness and assessing impairments in disorders such as locked-in syndrome, vegetative states, and minimally conscious states.
5. Explain the concept of qualia and its relevance to the debate about consciousness, incorporating its unique subjective nature and why it poses a challenge to reductionist views. (Answer should define qualia and discuss how it presents difficulties for theories that attempt to reduce consciousness to purely physical explanations.)
- Qualia refers to the subjective, individual experiences or qualities of conscious perception that cannot be fully described or measured objectively. They include the subjective aspects of sensations, emotions, and perceptions that are unique to each person. Qualia present a challenge to reductionist views of consciousness as they cannot be fully explained by physical facts alone. Their subjective nature and the

difficulty in quantifying or describing them solely through physical terms suggest that consciousness transcends mere physical explanations.