

# **The Logical Analysis of Psychology**

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# Central Points

1. "Is Psychology a natural science, or a science of mind and culture?"
2. Wants to bridge "impassable gap" between natural sciences and mind and culture sciences
3. Logical Empiricism/Behaviorism

# Language

- "the meaning of a statement is established by the conditions of its verification" (167)
  - The temperature in this room is 65 degrees Fahrenheit
  - statements that have no way of being verified whatsoever are meaningless pseudo-statements
- Psychological statements can be verified with physicalist sentences
  - Paul has a toothache ---> Paul is crying, has decaying teeth, shows such and such physiological changes
  - Mr. Jones has feelings of inferiority ---> can be verified by observing Jones in situations,
  - statements which can be translated into language of physics are physicalist statements

# Contd.

- Psychological Concepts are just abbreviations for some physical functions
  - Temperature = atomic motion
  - A watch "running well" is an abbreviation of describing how its hands move in relation to the planet and sun.
  - Psychological concepts are just their physical manifestations

# On Psychology

- all meaningful psychological statements can be translated to sentences that only involve physical concepts
  - difference between psychology and physics is purely point of view for practicality, not principle
- all psychological understanding tied physically to the one being understood
  - inferiority complex case- introspective analysis only provable by physical test

# Logical Behaviorism

- minds, feelings, inferiority complexes, in practical use, are just abbreviations of physicalistic statements
- Every meaningful question should have a scientific answer
- All sciences are branches of physics- the unitary science. They only differ in research procedure and direction of interest

# Criticisms

- one could fake mental illness, or not show pain, so observation would be invalid
  - Response: ideal testing would test all symptoms of illness (including neural)
  - if all symptoms were that of illness, it could not be a fake illness, for there would be no difference between the fake and real illness(logical contradiction)
    - Pain is defined as exhibiting physical symptoms X. If person P is able to fake all symptoms X, then they are in pain by the definition of pain, however, they are faking the pain, so they are not in pain. One cannot be both in and not in pain at the same time. This is a logical contradiction. By exhibiting X, P must be in pain.
- Locke's Inverted Spectrum
  - If two people saw colors entirely different, our behaviour towards them would be the same, but our mental states would be different.