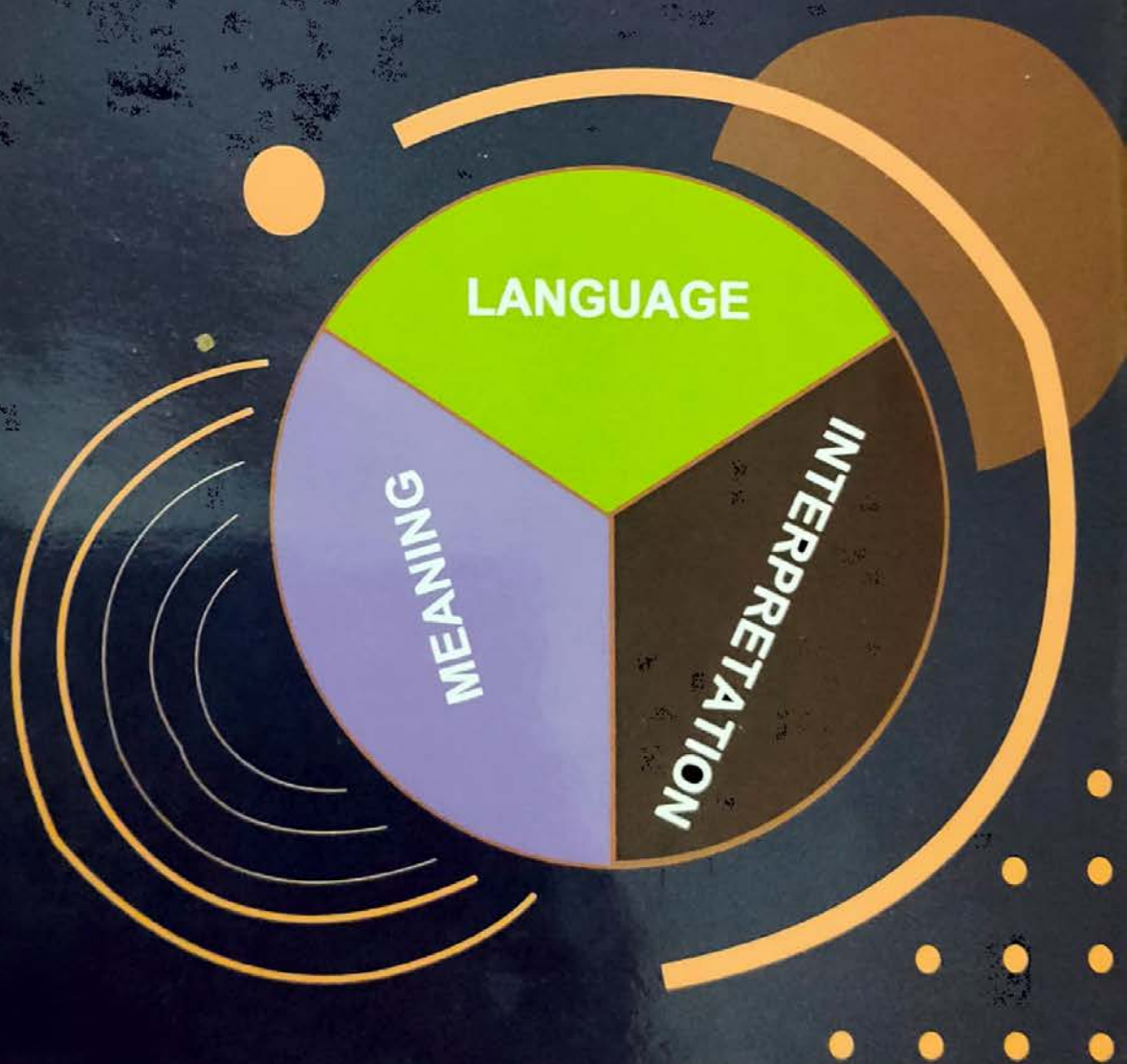


LANGUAGE, MEANING, AND INTERPRETATION: EAST AND WEST



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Gettier's Objection and Lehrer's Solution Concerning the Problem of Knowledge: An Analysis based on the Logical Structure of Cognition

Swagata Ghosh

Knowledge and its Issues

Knowledge provides the foundation to all our endeavours in life. Nothing could be accomplished without knowledge. Thus, knowledge is undoubtedly regarded as the most valuable asset by one and all. Philosophers too hold congruence at this point. However, there seems to be innumerable debates among them regarding the nature of knowledge. To be more precise, the contention extends to the fact that what at all could be designated as knowledge. Thus, the study into the criteria of knowledge appears to be very important and an intriguing matter of philosophical concern. It is indeed indispensable for a student of Philosophy to investigate and know the conditions that determine something as knowledge and hence, the traditional problem of identifying a particular idea as knowledge continues to be relevant in all ages. However, there arises various objections regarding the determination of the criteria of knowledge and a deeper look into the arguments involved depict that the objections and the respective solutions are all founded on the logical structure of the cognition. So, it is interesting to study how the logical structure of the traditional definition of knowledge inheres in it the possibility of non-attainment of knowledge at all, as pointed out by Gettier and again a revised logical structure of cognition, as proposed by Lehrer, helps to resolve the above issue satisfactorily. So, the entire study of the nature and even more importantly, the possibility of the attainment of cognition is based on the study of the logical structure of the concerned cognition.

and hence, could not be regarded as knowledge. So the question arises that whether at all such a solution as proposed by Lehrer would be adequate enough to include all sorts of propositional knowledge as in the case of formal logical systems.

In response, it may be argued over here that the issue raised above lies at the interface of language and logic. Lehrer's solution is concerned about the epistemic justification of truth in case of propositional knowledge, where truth is necessarily a semantic notion. On the contrary, truth in case of formal logical systems denotes a value assigned to the syntax of a proposition, which in turn helps to determine the validity or invalidity of an argument form. That is why, a true proposition could be derived from one or more false proposition(s) without hampering the validity of the argument. Hence, we might claim that there is no inconsistency between Lehrer's solution and the considerations of a formal logical system. Rather Lehrer's analysis of knowledge clearly portrays the cases of tautology and sound arguments in formal logics. This renders the structure of knowledge, as proposed by Lehrer, to be absolutely rigorous and in the sense that its denial would necessarily lead us to a contradictory position.

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