PHILOSOPHY OF LOGICAL EMPIRICISM
Also known as Logical Positivism

Plato – 1st philosopher tried to get people to think clearly.

Main Objective
Practice science as objectively as possible
Try to verify all statements

Main Divisions
Linguistic Analysis
Logical Symbolism
Empiricism

Teaching & Learning
Theory of behaviourism
Objectives and results
Reinforcement – Positive & Negative

Main Ideas
Verification
Experience
Analysis
Measurement

Main Proponents

A. LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS
A philosophy that concentrates on finding the exact meaning of words. Focus was on Logic, Linguistic Meaning, Verifiable Facts

Date of movement:
Early 20th Century philosophy

Based on:
Ludwig Wittgenstein
Bertrand Russel

Claims:
Almost all philosophical problems can be dispensed with once their underlying linguistic basis is exposed.

Popular Exponents:
Bertrand Russel
AJ Ayer

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Linguistic Analysis helps us to…</th>
<th>Can’t help us with…</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Think more clearly</td>
<td>✓ Moral problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Be precise in what we mean</td>
<td>✓ Life choices</td>
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<td>✓ Spot hidden assumptions in arguments</td>
<td>✓ Facing our own mortality</td>
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<td>✓ Be aware of manipulation and dishonesty (Propaganda &amp; Mass Media)</td>
<td>✓ Seeing loved ones suffer</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓ Our own suffering</td>
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**B. LOGICAL SYMBOLISM AND ARGUMENT**
Focus was on linguistic analysis as well as logic.

**Aim**
To get to the “bare bones” of truth, it’s basic structure.

Logic makes deductions with precise rules – even a computer program can be used to verify valid arguments. Math statements are logical statements. Values do not fit in the paradigm of logical positivism.

Any statement that is true or false by definition can be expressed in the form of symbolic logic.

A logical idea is an idea that can be defined precisely.

**FACTS**

**What is a fact?**
Facts can be checked directly by what we see, feel, want, do – we use our senses. Our senses and experiences establish facts - the most reliable source of knowledge and info.

**C. EMPIRICISM**
The method of inquiry in philosophy that argues that experience gained through 5 senses gives us the most reliable form of information.

Modern science is based on the empirical belief that what is true is confirmed / disproved by sense experience.

**Dictionary Definition:**
“The theory that regards experience as the only source of knowledge” i.o.w real knowledge comes from experience.

**Origins:**
British and American Philosophy.

**Concerned with:**
Establishing the truth by means of scientific testing.
How do I know something is true? If it can be experienced through the 5 senses or can be tested scientifically.

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<th>Empericism helps us to…</th>
<th>Failings are…</th>
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<td>✓ Understand how our physical world operates</td>
<td>✓ It places too much emphasis on science</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Test the truth of certain claims</td>
<td>✓ It ignores human values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Refute what is false</td>
<td>✓ It views humans as machines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Respect the natural laws of the Universe</td>
<td>✓ It tends to ignore anything that can’t be explained scientifically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Learn from experience</td>
<td>✓ It confines truth to that which can be experienced through the 5 senses</td>
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**APPLICATION IN PRACTICE:**
Reduces humans to purely physical organisms, these scientists believe they can control human behaviour.
Logical empiricism gave birth to the theory of behaviourism. It claims that human beings are entirely physical; that our minds are no more than our brains and that our brains are simply complex electronic devices. Input – Output (response is our behaviour)
This theory applied with great success in teaching and training.
Basic purpose of human sciences is to solve problems by changing people’s behaviour. Positive and negative reinforcement (rewards/punishment-withholding) gets results. Objectives are important.