

At the end of this lecture, you are going to learn the following :

- What philosophy is?
- What are its main subfields?
- Which topics or problems philosophers are working on or to solve?
- What are the main aims of the philosophical studies?
- Who are the famous names of this field?
- What importance philosophy has in our lives?
- What relation philosophy has to language studies?

- *The Definition of philosophy :*

The word "philosophy" comes from the [Ancient Greek](#) (*philosophia*), which literally means "love of wisdom". The introduction of the terms "philosopher" and "philosophy" has been ascribed to the Greek thinker [Pythagoras](#).

- *Its sub fields :*

Philosophy is divided into many sub-fields. These include epistemology, [logic](#), metaphysics, ethics, and aesthetics.

- *Its main Topics :*

Philosophy is the study of general and fundamental problems, such as those connected with [reality](#), [existence](#), [knowledge](#), [values](#), [reason](#), [mind](#), and [language](#). Philosophy is distinguished from other ways of addressing such problems by its critical, generally systematic approach and its reliance on [rational argument](#). In more casual speech, by extension, "philosophy" can refer to "the most basic beliefs, concepts, and attitudes of an individual or group".

- *Philosophical problems:*

These are the most common problems raised by philosophy and most philosophers are concerned with:

- [logic](#): what are the foundations and principles of sound reasoning
- [science](#): what are the foundations of our scientific and technological knowledge
- [language](#): what does language have to do with human thought
- [meaning](#): what is meaning and how do we succeed in representing one thing by another
- [ethics](#): what are the foundations of the judgments that acts or the men who commit them are good or bad, and in what sense are such judgments true or different from mere matters of taste ;
- **and other topics (Return to Wikipedia)**
- **- aesthetics: what makes beautiful things appear beautiful or ugly, and what is the use of having an aesthetical capacity**

- self: whether there is a self, and if so, what it is and what is its foundation, or, if
- not, what is the reason for this popular delusion
- - free will: whether human beings are in any sense free to act as they please and
- responsible for the consequences, or only determined to falsely believe they are
- free to believe as they please
- - death: whether death indeed is final, what is the point of fearing something one
- will never experience, and whether there is anything else than selfcontradiction
- in the belief in a life or a judgment after death
- - happiness: what is happiness; how does one find it; and why should one look
- for it, especially if everyone seems naturally to know what feels good and what
- does not feel good
- - the good life: what a human individual should and should not do, believe and
- desire to lead a good life
- - the good society: what relations between human individuals contribute to the
- good life.
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- *The main aims of the philosophical studies :*

- It is a study that seeks to *understand the mysteries of existence and reality*.
- It tries to *discover the nature of truth and knowledge* and to *find what is of basic value and importance in life*.
- It also *examines the relationships between humanity and nature and between the individual and society*.
- Philosophy arises out of *wonder, curiosity, and the desire to know and understand*.
- Philosophy is thus a *form of inquiry--a process of analysis, criticism, interpretation, and speculation*.

- *Greatest Philosophers in History:* Epicurus : Zeno of Citium : Avicenna : Thomas Aquinas : Confucius : Rene Descartes : Plato : Aristotle :

- *The Importance of Philosophy :*

- All human beings *orient their lives around ideas about what reality is like*, that they *believe explain their experiences and ideas about what reality and human beings should be like*, that *they use to guide their behaviour*.
- Philosophic thought is an *inescapable part of human existence*. Almost everyone has been *puzzled from time to time by such essentially philosophic*

questions as "What does life mean?" "Did I have any existence before I was born?" and "Is there life after death?"

- By studying philosophy, people can *clarify what they believe*, and *they can be stimulated to think about ultimate questions*.
- Philosophy has had *enormous influence on our everyday lives*.

Philosophy & Language Studies

1. Philosophical interest in language is *maintained by foundational and conceptual questions in linguistics, quintessentially philosophical problems about the connections between mind, language and the world, and issues about philosophical methodology*.
2. IT is concerned with four central problems: **the nature of meaning, language use, language cognition, and the relationship between language and reality**.
3. Topics in that vein include the nature of *synonymy*, the *origins of meaning* itself, and how *any meaning can ever really be known*.
4. The investigation into the manner in which sentences are composed into a meaningful whole out of their meaningful parts; and how or if the meanings of such complexes are derived from the meanings of parts thereof.
5. Philosophers of language seek to better understand what speakers and listeners do with language in communication, and how it is used socially.
6. Specific interests may include the topics of language learning, language creation, and speech acts.
7. They would like to know how language relates to the minds of both the speaker and the interpreter. Of specific interest is the grounds for successful translation of words into other words.
8. They investigate also how language and meaning relate to truth and the world.

Ref :

- www.wikipedia.com
- <http://www.ke nt.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate/353/philosophy-and-english-language-and-linguistics>
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophy_of_language
- <http://www.re p.routledge.com/article/U017>
- http://www.unexplainable.net/info-theories/the_importance_of_philosophy_in_human_life_1182.php