



PERCEPTION AND ITS ESSENCE

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Abstract. The article analyzes perception and its essence from philosophical and psychological perspectives. The views of thinkers from antiquity, European philosophers, and Eastern scholars on this issue, along with their definitions of the concept of perception, are comparatively examined. Furthermore, the role perception plays in the life of the individual and society, particularly in the formation of youth consciousness, is illustrated through examples, and its new facets in the context of today's globalization and digital media are demonstrated.

Keywords. Theory of knowledge, sensation and thought, mental activity, neuropsychology, Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Kant, Hegel, Farabi, Ibn Sina, Ghazali, Beruni, Navoi, critical thinking, global information space, youth worldview.

The study of perception and its essence has been one of the important issues of human thought from antiquity to the present day. Perception occupies a special place in human knowledge of the world because it exists as an integrated form of human thought, sensation, and conscious activity, serving to comprehend existence. Perception is a relevant issue common to philosophy and psychology, as well as education, politics, and culture. In today's context of globalization, the issue of perception holds significant philosophical and practical importance in developing the consciousness of youth, nurturing them to be loyal to worldly and national values while simultaneously possessing a global mindset.

From antiquity, thinkers have expressed various ideas regarding the essence of perception and its role in the cognitive process. For instance, Aristotle





emphasized that "perception embodies the form of things in the mind, and through this, humans comprehend them" [1]. In European philosophy, R. Descartes analyzed intuition and perception based on doubt, writing that "for perception to be a reliable source of knowledge, it must be tested by reason" [2]. I. Kant explains perception in his theory of knowledge as an active process shaped by the categories of the mind, commenting, "Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind" [3]. This idea serves to express the unity of perception and thought.

The issue of perception has also been extensively covered in the traditions of Eastern philosophy. Al-Farabi considered perception the foundation of human knowledge, linking it to ethical and social activity: "Human perception serves not only for cognition but also for building a virtuous society" [4]. The complete understanding of this idea is considered very important for contemporary societies as well.

Imam Al-Ghazali interprets perception on religious and educational foundations, explaining it as the eye of the heart that leads to the comprehension of truth [5]. This demonstrates that Eastern thinkers connected perception not only with the theory of knowledge but also with the spiritual and ethical process.

Modern philosophy and psychology define perception as the most important cognitive process of the human mind. For example, the "Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy" explains perception as "the process of processing information received from the senses in the mind and comprehending it as a unified image," while the "Oxford English Dictionary" defines it as "the ability to consciously receive and understand objects and events in the environment" [6]. In psychology, various forms of perception - visual, auditory, tactile perception - and their significance in human life are studied separately. When analyzing the importance of perception in the life of the individual and society from a philosophical perspective, it can be assessed as the most crucial stage of knowing the world. This is because through perception, a person comprehends the external world, processes





it in their mind, and creates the basis for thought and knowledge. As Hegel put it, "Perception leads a person into the inner essence of things and events."

Beruni considered perception as the foundation of scientific knowledge, emphasizing the necessity of correctly understanding the world through experience and observation. A. Navoi, on the other hand, connects perception with spiritual perfection and purity of heart, stating that it can be shaped through literature and art, and we can say that he clearly demonstrated this in his works. These aspects show the unification of the scientific, ethical, and aesthetic dimensions of perception in Eastern thought.

In the era of current global processes, the significance of perception and its proper shaping (one might say, protection) is increasing even more. Digital media, the internet, and social networks create new opportunities, alongside dangers and problems, in how young people perceive the world. Therefore, it is necessary to develop the skill of correctly perceiving world events in the modern education and upbringing process. For instance, a UNESCO report states that "in the conditions of accelerating information flow, equipping youth with critical perception skills is the most important task of global citizenship education" [7]. Specifically, the correct perception of political, economic, and cultural events by young people broadens their worldview, develops independent thinking, and shapes an active civic stance. Modern psychological research also frequently mentions that the accuracy of perception is the most crucial factor determining success in human decision-making. Thus, perception is not only a theory of cognition but also a universal process that directly affects all aspects of the individual and society.

Literature Review and Methodology.

The issue of perception has been studied since ancient times as one of the oldest problems of philosophy. While ancient philosophers considered perception the central link in human cognitive activity, the views of Eastern philosophy, particularly Central Asian thinkers, interpreted the cognitive, ethical, and spiritual aspects of perception in an integrated manner.





In the history of European philosophy, the concept of perception has been interpreted differently. Descartes analyzed perception based on the concept of doubt, noting that sensations often provide false information. According to him, "for perception to be a reliable source of knowledge, it must be tested by reason" [3]. In the 20th century, the phenomenological movement deepened the issue of perception. Merleau-Ponty interpreted perception not merely as a product of consciousness, but as the "organic integration of the body with the world" [7].

In modern scientific literature, more attention is paid to the concept of perception from a psychological and cognitive perspective. For example, Neisser explains perception based on the theory of information processing, defining it as "a mechanism for filtering and recoding stimuli in consciousness."

The research methodology in the article relied on a comparative-analytical approach.

Results.

Ancient Greek thinkers interpreted perception as the initial stage in human understanding of existence, considering it alongside thought. While Plato emphasized the necessity of reason in transforming impressions received from sensation into true knowledge, Aristotle interpreted perception as the process that embodies the form of objects and phenomena in the mind. These approaches laid the foundation for understanding perception as an intermediary between sensation and thought.

European philosophy, starting with Descartes, analyzed perception based on the concept of doubt, emphasizing that senses can be deceptive sources, and considered it necessary for the reliability of knowledge to be verified by reason. I. Kant's theory of cognition, connecting perception with the active categories of the mind, explained it as the main mechanism in the formation of knowledge. His definition, "Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind," clearly expresses the dialectical unity between perception and thought [6]. Hegel interpreted perception as a stage of the spirit's self-awareness and assessed it





as the process that leads humans to the inner essence of objects and phenomena. These views present perception not just as a sensory process, but as a philosophical category intrinsically linked to the activity of consciousness.

Eastern thinkers, particularly the scholars of Central Asia, offered a unique approach to the issue of perception. Al-Farabi valued perception as a tool serving the construction of a virtuous society. Ibn Sina distinguished between sensory perception and intellectual perception, deeply analyzing it from a psychological point of view and defining its place in the human cognitive process [9]. Al-Ghazali connected perception with the eye of the heart, illuminating the religious and spiritual basis for understanding truth. Al-Biruni explained perception as the foundation of scientific knowledge based on observation and experience. Navoi strived to prove that human spiritual perfection depends on the correct formation of the perception process. In the views of Eastern thinkers, perception is approached as a phenomenon intrinsically linked to ethical, religious, and aesthetic aspects.

In modern psychology and cognitive science, perception is studied as one of the most important processes of consciousness. Specifically, in neuropsychological research, perception is viewed as a central process of brain activity, emphasizing its crucial role in processes such as decision-making, concentration, and social adaptation. These studies illuminate the scientific-empirical aspects of perception, beyond its philosophical essence.

Today's global processes make the issue of perception even more relevant. Especially under conditions of escalating digital media and information flow, correctly perceiving events, identifying fake news, avoiding manipulative actions, and critically analyzing information are becoming vital necessities for young people. UNESCO has designated this process as the most important task of 21st-century education. Thus, perception today is interpreted not only as a philosophical or psychological problem but also as a practical skill that ensures a person's independent and conscious activity in the global information space.

Discussion.





Although the views on the issue of perception expressed in different periods have differed significantly, in the general sense, the importance of perception as a crucial stage in human cognitive activity has always been emphasized. In antiquity, Plato interpreted perception as a means of transition from sensation to thought, emphasizing that true knowledge can only be formed through thought. Aristotle, on the other hand, described perception as the process by which the form of objects is embodied in the mind. From these views, it is clear that ancient Greek thinkers attempted to understand perception through the unity of the sensory organs and reason. This idea also had a strong influence on subsequent philosophical thought.

In European philosophy, Descartes, I. Kant, and Hegel understood perception in their views not only as a product of sensation or imagination but also as a process demonstrating the activity of consciousness. In European philosophy, perception held a special place as the most important stage of human thought.

The philosophy of the East, especially Central Asian philosophy, interpreted perception in a unique way, that is, not only as a theory of knowledge but also in organic connection with ethical and spiritual processes. This Eastern approach enriched the concept even further and shaped it into a broad philosophical concept.

Modern scientific research has proven that perception is as important a philosophical category as it is a central topic in psychological and neurobiological studies.

The significance of the issue of perception at the societal level deserves special attention. As UNESCO emphasizes, in the context of accelerating information flow, if young people do not possess critical perception skills, they cannot be sufficiently active participants in global citizenship education. An OECD report states that perception is a necessary cognitive competence for an individual's successful socialization. The development of the global information space and digital media processes have brought the issue of perception to a new level. Today, it has become a vital necessity for young people to perceive events correctly, recognize fake news, and critically analyze information. Therefore, the issue of





perception is now viewed not only as a philosophical and psychological problem but also as a socio-practical process that ensures young people find their place in the global information flow and develop independent thinking.

The most important aspect emerging from the comparative analysis of the issue of perception is that it is always presented in historical and modern sources as the central stage in human cognition of the world. Perception is a process that holds decisive significance in human cognitive activity, as well as in their spiritual and social life. It shapes an individual's worldview, ensures their active participation in social institutions, and plays a fundamental role in societal stability and progress.

Conclusion

In conclusion, perception is one of the central processes of human thought, and its essence has been interpreted differently from ancient times to the modern era. However, in all perspectives, perception has been recognized as the most crucial stage in knowing the world. It is of decisive importance in the intellectual, spiritual, and social development of the individual. In the context of globalization and digital media, the correct formation of perception remains the most important factor shaping the independent thinking, creative development, and active civic position of young people.

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