

Introduction to Carvaka theory of Communication Importance of Perception and Criticisms

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Abstract—In the communication studies, there are many theories presented and focused on the western thoughts. However, there is good number of theories of communication from the Indian texts also. An attempt is made in the present research paper to understand the communicative theory as propounded by Carvaka's and know their thoughts. In this way, an epistemological study will be presented and highlight their domain of knowledge. The main research questions are-Who are Carvakas? What are main sources of knowledge according to them? What is the nature of the perception and varieties of it? What are immediate repercussions of it? The research methodology will be logical and philosophical by nature. It will be compared with the Caraka's theory building concept also. One may understand the differences between them and reach to an epistemological position wherein it may be highlighted on the manner in which the knowledge is gained for an individual. Apart from this, development of the language and a theory of communication will be presented in the paper. This will certainly help us to throw light on the Carvaka theory of communication with the special emphasis on direct perception. Few criticisms will be pin pointed from other schools of thought and observe the immediate consequences on the different branches of knowledge. Hence, an attempt is made to understand the theory of communication from the perspective of the Carvaka.

1. INTRODUCTION

There are many theories of communication introduced and developed in the western world. It is a general observation that these theories are not focusing in India. Our country has good number of traditional systems which are full of new knowledge. Thus, it is necessary to introduce atleast one theory of communication from India. In the current paper, an attempt has been made to understand the epistemology of Carvaka. Once one understands it, one may proceed further to comprehend their theory of communication. One must note that precaution has been taken to avoid the comparative studies from other theories of communication. Therefore, the aim of this research paper is to introduce and understand Carvaka's theory of communication. This may be called as "NATURALISTIC COMMUNICATION". In other words, one may also call it "MATERIALISTIC THEORY OF COMMUNICATION".

2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main questions that may be discussed in the paper are the following ones:

- Who are Carvakas?
- What are main sources of knowledge according to them?
- What is the nature of perception and varieties of it?
- What are immediate repercussions of it?

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The Carvakas are the first materialists from India. In order to understand their model and theory of thought, a mixed approach has been adopted in the paper. This will be mainly philosophical and logical by nature. Once this has been underlined in the paper, another attempt will be to understand and compare them with the theory building concept of Caraka also.

A comparison will certainly help us to know the epistemology of Carvaka and the process of knowledge that was prevalent in these times. With this, one is able to understand the systematic process and development of knowledge and communication.

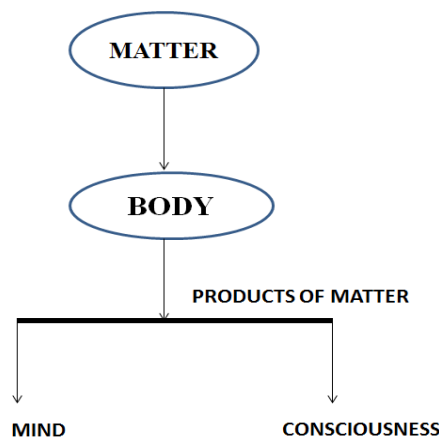


FIGURE 1

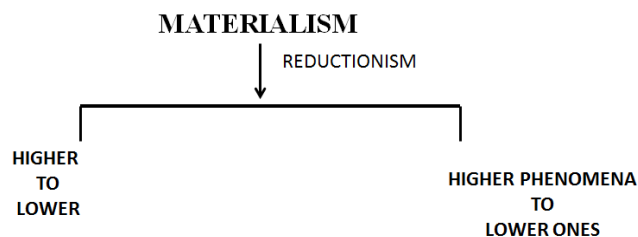


FIGURE 2

CARVAKA THEORY

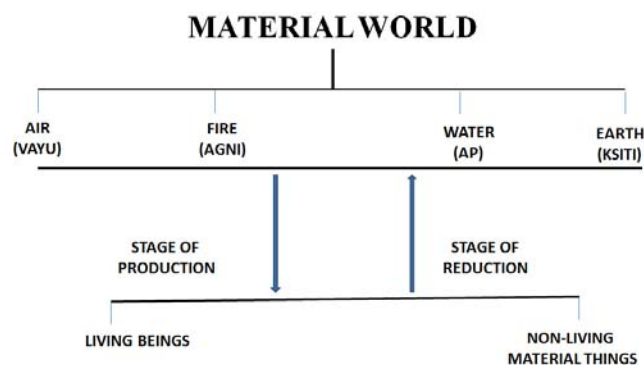
VS

SPIRITUALISTIC INTERPRETATIONS OF THE UNIVERSE

FIGURE 3

FIGURE 4

CARVAKA=MATERIALISM=LOKAYATA



4. CARVAKA'S MATERIALISM

Carvaka's world is known to be purely materialistic by nature. They are the propounders of MATERIALISM. They did not differentiate between the material and spiritual domains. Everything is conceptualized with the matter only (See Figures 4 for more information). According to them,

1. Everything is matter.
2. There are only four basic elements existing in the world viz. earth, water, air and fire.
3. Each and everything existing in this world is made or produced from these four elements only in a specific combination and merge back into these after their destruction or perishment.
4. Human body is formed from this combination of the four elements.

5. Consciousness is a quality of human body and is not a separate entity.
6. Every external object has its own SVABHAVA or nature.

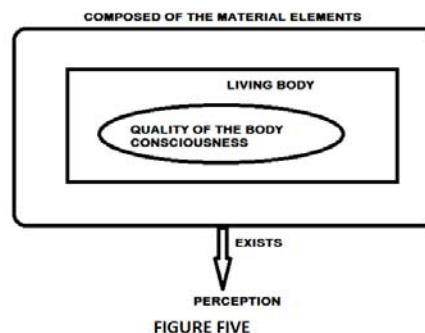
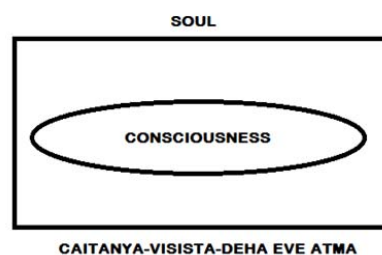


FIGURE FIVE

FIGURE 6



5. EPISTEMOLOGY

According to the Carvakas, the only source of knowledge is *PERCEPTION*. They do not believe in the validity of the inferential, comparative and testimonial sources of the knowledge. The epistemology of Carvaka is purely based on the universally recognized perception called "PRATYAKSA PRAMANA".

The knowledge is divided into JNANA and PRAMA. They claim that all kinds of knowledge are either true or false. The truth is the reality and it reveals the true knowledge. This knowledge is called PRAMA and is valid by nature. The different sources of valid knowledge are the means of cognition through which one is able to see the external world.

The perception is classified into two forms viz.:

1. External Perception and
2. Internal Perception

With the help of the five sense organs, one is able to perceive the external object. In other words, it is the sense organ which comes in contact with the external object and perceives it. This is said to be the state of PURE CONSCIOUSNESS or PURE EXPERIENCE. This is the immediate knowledge of the object.

Apart from this, there is the internal perception called as the MENTAL STATES.

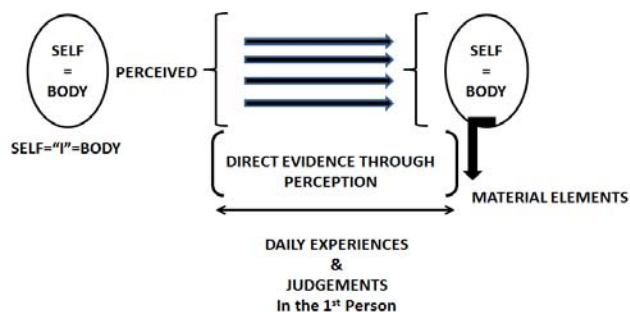


FIGURE 7

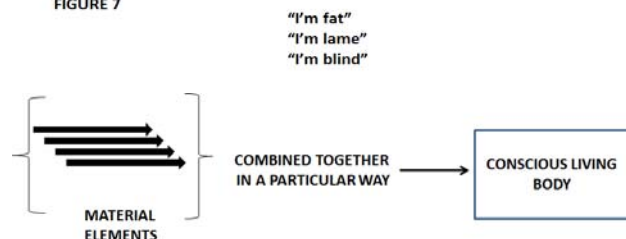


FIGURE 8

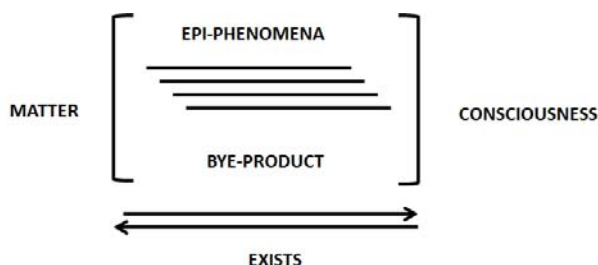


FIGURE 9

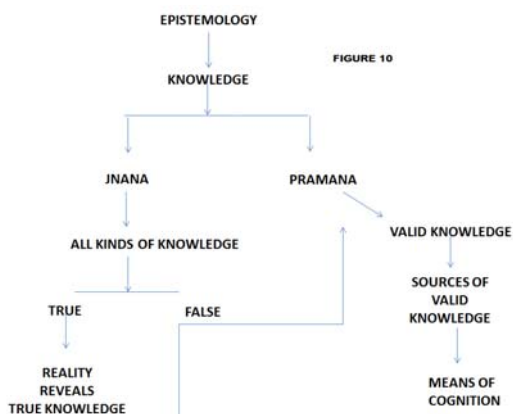


FIGURE 10

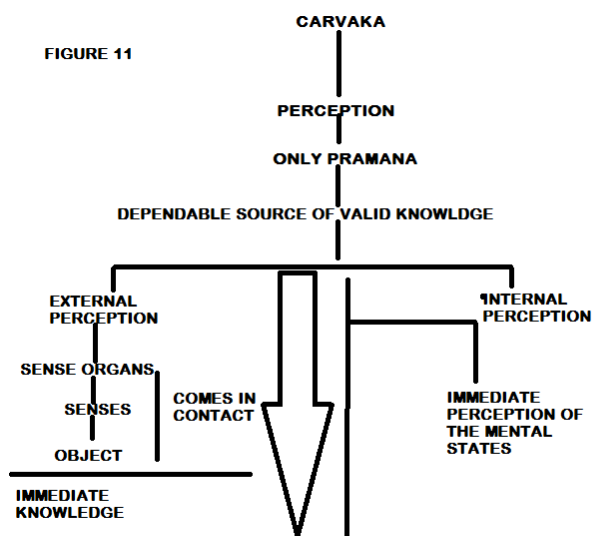


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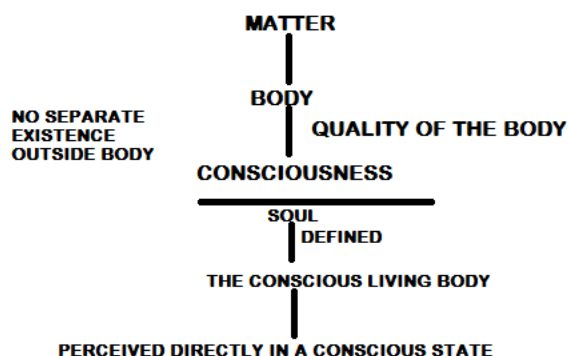


FIGURE 12

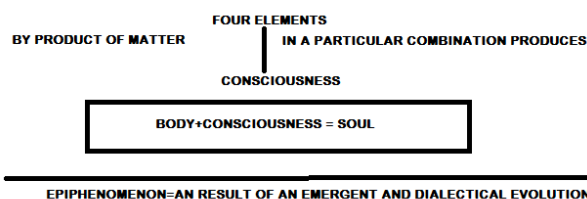


FIGURE 12

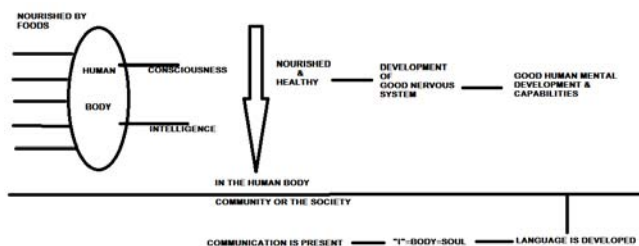
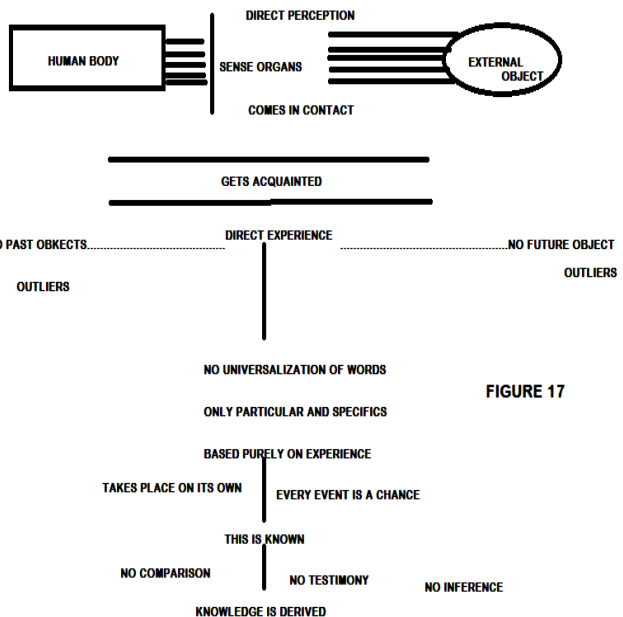
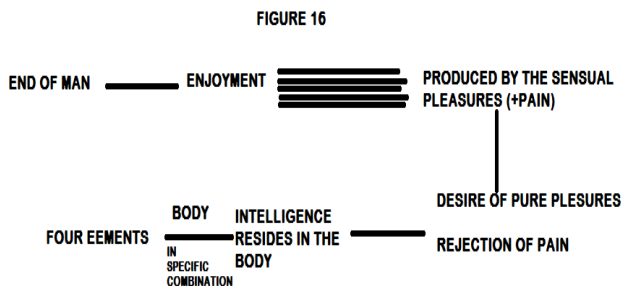
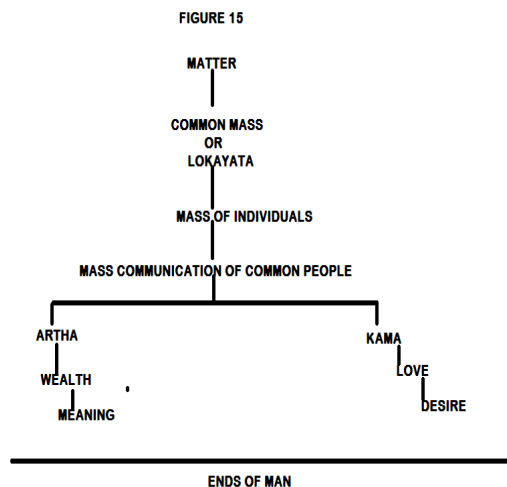
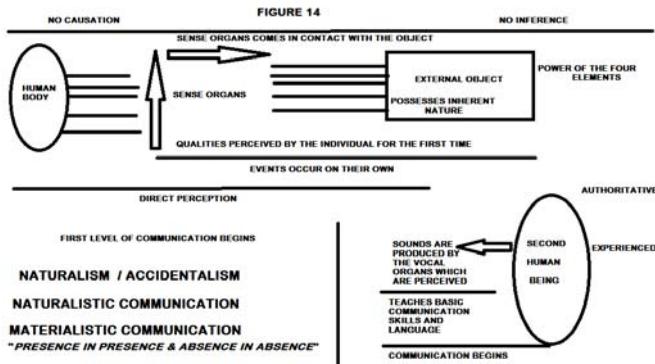


FIGURE 13



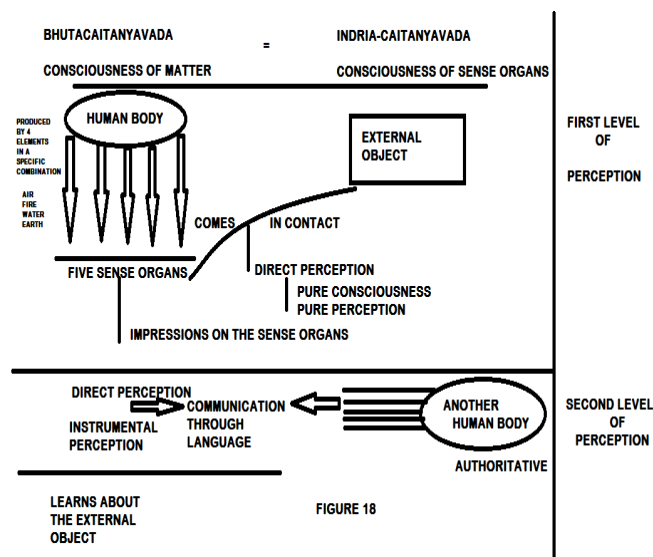
the body. Therefore, consciousness is within the human body.

- b. **SUSIKSHIT CARVAKAS:** These are also called as **EDUCATED CARVAKAS**. According to them, soul or consciousness has eternal knowledge. It perishes with the body. There is no migration of the soul. Therefore, their theory is called **DEHATMAVADA**. Another version of this theory is known as **INDRIYATMAVADA**. According to them, senses are identified with the soul or consciousness.
- c. **PRANAVADIN CARVAKAS:** According to them, consciousness or soul is the vital principle and is called as PRANA. With the presence of prana, the human body is said to be existing or living in the world. Once it leaves the body, there is no life or consciousness ceases to exist in the human body or the living being.
- d. **ATMAMANOVADIN CARVAKAS:** According to them, there is no difference between the mind or soul or consciousness. All are identical by nature and exist within the human body. They are necessarily playing a main role in the theory of the epistemology.

6. CARVAKA'S MODEL OF HUMAN BODY

According to the Carvakas, there are four different kinds of them and they are enlisted in the following manner (See Figure 18):

- a. **DHURTA CARVAKAS:** They are known to be the CUNNING kind of Carvakas. According to them, conscious body is identified with the soul. In other words, if the body exists, then only the soul exists in the world. If the body perishes, then it is essential that the soul also perishes and does not exist anymore in the world. They support the fact that consciousness is experienced only in



7. THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE AS PER THE CARVAKAS

According to the Carvakas, it is the direct perception which plays a major role in the process of gaining knowledge. There is a knower (who seeks the knowledge), re-collector and enjoyer of all experiences and they all are present in the same individual. However, there are different stages for the above mentioned states in the perception of the external object.

The theory of pramana is based on two types of perception and may be analyzed in the following manner:

1. There are two kinds of pramana viz. Instrumental and Authoritative Perception.
2. The main differences between are the following-

INSTRUMENTAL PERCEPTION	AUTHORITATIVE PERCEPTION
It is the source of the true cognition	It is the authoritative by nature and is authoritative means of knowledge or there is an authority to claim the knowledge.
It need not necessarily yield true cognition. It may be false also.	It is a means or source of knowledge which always yields true cognition only.
This is called the instrumental sense of pramana.	This is called the authoritative sense of pramana.
This takes place at the rudimentary levels only.	This takes place in the second level of the perception especially when one has to intervene and teach or train through the medium of language. It is only the expert who may teach or acquaint the language to the first time.

Pratyaksa is also divided into two forms and called-

- a. Nirvikalpaka –Non-judgmental: It is known to be truly source of immediate cognition

And

- b. Savikalpaka- Judgmental: This may give rise to false cognitions.

The Instrumental Perception is the one on which our focus will be laid upon in order to understand the knowledge of an object. One may see that there are two proposals stated by the Carvakas.

According to the first proposal and by the Susiksitara Carvakas, the inferential knowledge which is empirically testable and proved to be true one needs to be accepted as a valid source of knowledge. Thus, anumana is pramana.

This anumana or the inferential knowledge is bifurcated into two parts:

UTPANNAPRATITI ANUMANA	UTPADIYAPRATITI ANUMANA
Inference of fire from the smoke	Inference of transcendental entities like God, soul after death, rebirth, etc.
This is acceptable as pramana.	This is not acceptable as pramana.
One may include that which is experienced in the past.	Here one may include that which is yet to be experienced in the world.

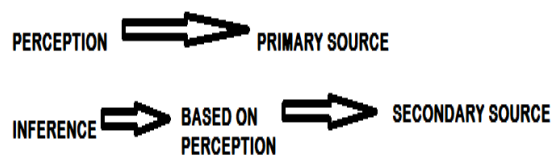
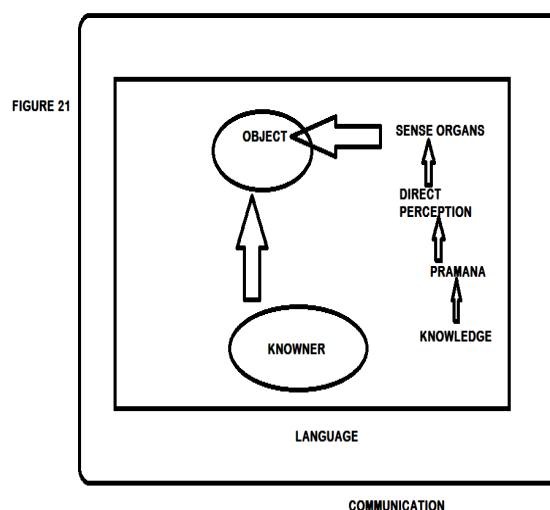
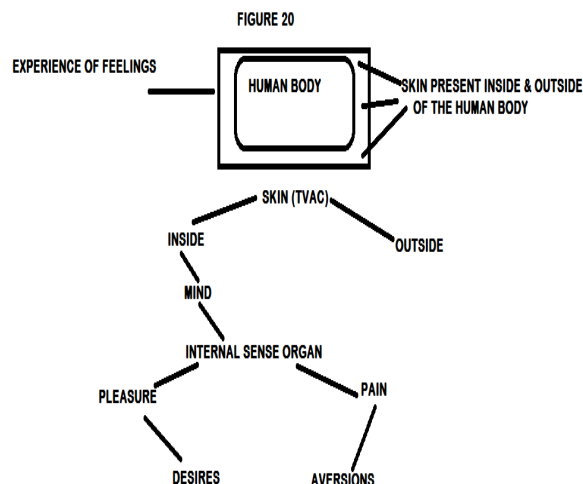
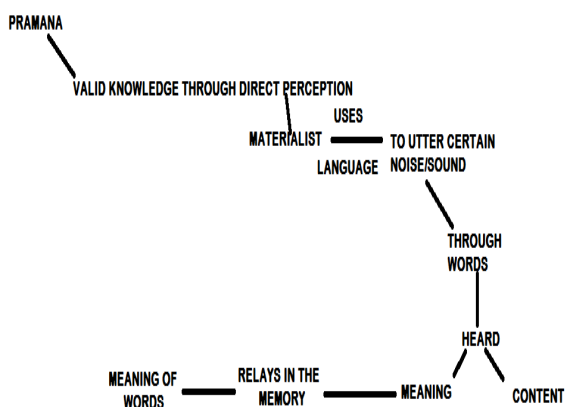
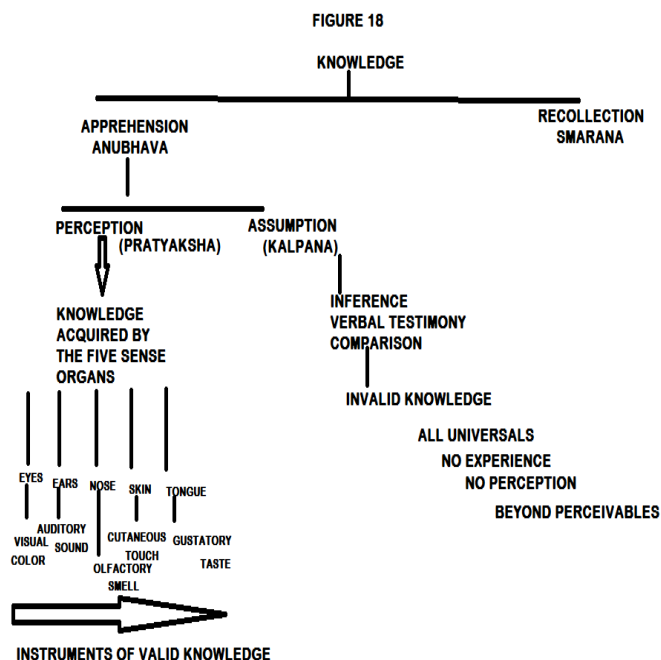
The instruments are called as SADHYA. These are the objects of the inference or the anumana. There are two ways in which it may be understood in the theory of the Carvaka:

UTPANNAPRATITI ANUMANA	UTPADIYAPRATITI ANUMANA
When the object of the inference is equal to an object of the same kind as that of the object of the anumana. This is the object of one's experience.	The object of anumana is not identical to that with which one has already experienced in the past. However, it is identical to "experience" of it is supposed to be generated through the anumana itself.
This is empirically testable and verified by the individuals.	This is not experienced and one is not sure of the experience also. This becomes the inferential judgment-something which one is going to generate through the experience itself. And this is not acceptable as the source of the knowledge.

According to the second proposal, the inferential knowledge does not transgress the worldly framework. The pramana is divided into two categories:

LOKAPRASIDDHA PRAMANA	LAUKIKA MARGA
This is an inference which is acceptable within the framework of our mundane life. Examples are existence of material objects, existence of other people, etc. These are called as lokaprasiddha anumanas.	This is generic by nature.
This is only in the instrumental sense and not in the authoritative manner.	This is not instrumental by nature.

There is a jump or leap from empirical to metaphysical level. However, it is called the COMMONSENSE VIEW OF THE WORLD. This is because the perception is based upon the sense organs and is pure experiential by nature. It is also called "COMMON SENSICAL WORLDLY METAPHYSICS TO THE OTHER WORLDLY METAPHYSICS NON-SENSE".	There is no jump and is the path followed by all in the world.
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8. CARVAKAS THEORY OF COMMUNICATION

Following points need to noted:

1. A society with the individuals wherein there are individuals who are purely experiencing and perceiving the external objects. And there are other individuals who are authoritative or experts of the objects existing in the world.

2. Naïve individuals are at the levels of the pure experience or direct perception. The authoritative individuals are experts and know the worldly objects due to their experience and knowledge. They are experts of the language also.
3. The external objects are present in the world and possess their own “**SVABHAVA**” or “**NATURE**”.
4. There are accidental events and they are natural in the world.
5. Each individual is in possession of the sense organs and produced by the four basic elements in a specific and in a particular combination.
6. These sense organs are attracted towards the objects placed externally to their bodies.
7. There is a contact between the sense organs and external objects.
8. The exact contact between the senses and objects is called **DIRECT PERCEPTION**.
9. This perception is known to be **PURE EXPERIENCE** and **IN PURE CONSCIOUSNESS**.
10. This is the first level of the perception.
11. However, one must not forget that there are other individuals existing in the world. These individuals are those who are experienced and gained the knowledge of these objects. In other words, they are well versed with the objects existing in the world. However, it is not necessary that they had experienced with all the objects present in the world. These individuals are authoritative and experts present in the society.
12. It is through these individuals that the naïve ones receive the first lessons of the language or the communication. Thus, the second level of perception begins from this level.
13. It is through the sense organs that the naïve individuals perceive the “Authoritative Individuals” and hear their vocal sounds. This is the direct perception of the sound.
14. Consequently, they enter into the zone of the language and the community with strong beliefs based on the common sense. Thus, the initiation into the **WORLD OF LANGUAGE AND LANGUAGE LEARNING**.
15. As a result, one may observe the beginnings of the **NATURALISTIC COMMUNICATION**. This may be called the **MATERIALISTIC COMMUNICATION** as everything depends upon the matter and perception of the matter.

9. SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CARAKA AND CARVAKA

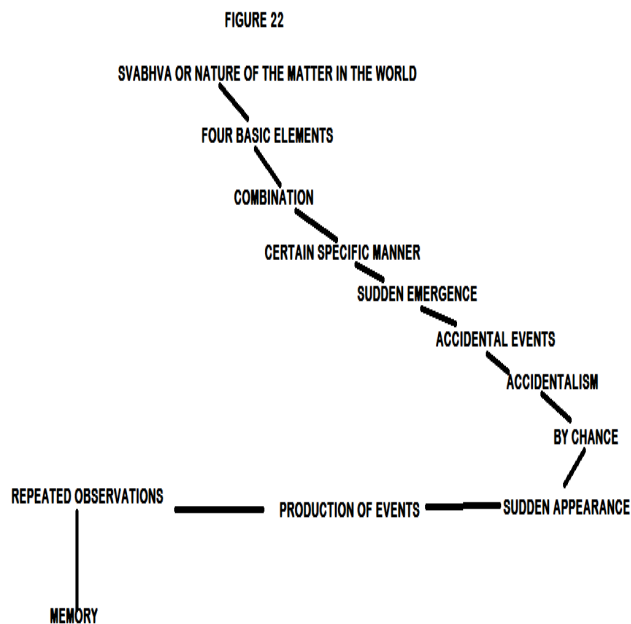
The similarities are the following:

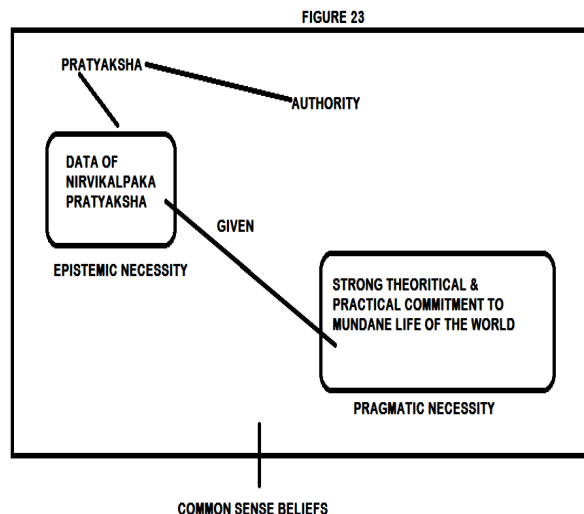
1. Both of them give importance to the human body.
2. Both of them recognize perception or Pratyaksa to be the valid source of knowledge.
3. Both of them emphasize on the importance of the sense organs and their role in the epistemology.

4. Both of them give the importance and significance of the good and hygienic food in the development of the body and intelligence of the human being.
5. The well-being of the human being is necessary for both of them.

The differences are the following:

CARAKA	CARVAKA
They propound the medicinal doctrines and principles.	They are materialists or hedonists.
They believe in God and religious practices.	They do not believe in God or the religious practices.
They believe in the sacrifices and rituals associated to them.	They do not believe in the sacrifices and rituals.
Their theory is more towards the pragmatic necessity.	Their theory is more towards the epistemic and pragmatic necessity and it has to be verifiable and tested by the individuals.





10. CONCLUSION

In the end, it may be concluded that the Carvakas base their theory of communication on direct perception and with the help of the sense organs. However, they do give importance to other individuals who are experts and authoritative in their own areas. It is through these individuals that the naïve ones learn to communicate and flourish in the world. Thus, there is an importance of MASS COMMUNICATION through NATURALISTIC AND MATERIALISTIC COMMUNICATION of the language whose foundation is laid upon the sense organs, working of the senses and external objects.

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