

Philosophy

Student's Name

Institutional Affiliation

## Philosophy

**Why is it important to Descartes to maintain the interaction of the mind and the body (as is evident in the case of human beings) even though this claim is in contradiction with the other claim of Descartes about the dualism of mind and body?**

Descartes aims at developing objective criteria for rational and a priori correct investigation of the world. He claims that thinking is the basis for human existence because it is the only attribute that is necessarily present in people's perception of themselves. Imagination, sensation, and perception are possible only because they are caused by material things. Consequently, they are not a reliable source of knowledge. Therefore, Descartes concludes that the mind and body are fundamentally different.

At the same time, he recognizes that they are closely interrelated as the mind can make its judgments on the basis of perceptions as well as it can influence further human actions or feelings. It seems that Descartes recognizes the interrelations of the mind and body for several reasons. First, he wants to show that his system corresponds to the real world and may be applicable to all real-life situations. Second, the interactions of the mind and body help to understand the reasons of human misunderstanding and incorrect knowledge in many fields. As people do not examine the external reality only through their pure reason and a priori reasoning, they can make unsupported statements or conclusions influenced by their subjective sensations or perceptions. Descartes explains that "I consider that this power of imaging... is not required for my own essence" (Meditation 6, paragraph 3). Therefore, people should strictly separate the mind and body at a theoretical level in order to minimize the risks of deception. At the same time, they should understand that they are closely interrelated, and their daily perception of the world is neither objective nor correct. It requires further rational investigation.

In my opinion, this case does not present any real contradiction in Descartes' claims. On the contrary, it allows integrating his idea of arriving at objectively correct knowledge with the typical daily problems of subjective perceptions and incorrect interpretation of objective facts.

## References

Descartes, R. (2010). *Meditations on first philosophy*. Retrieved from [http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/pdfs/descartes1641\\_1.pdf](http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/pdfs/descartes1641_1.pdf)