Discussion question 3

Explain carefully why Descartes believes that "I think, therefore I am."  Could "I am" be dubitable for Descartes, could the Demon fool him about it?  Why/Why not?

First ,Explain what is “i think, therefore I am”, the subject of think is mind, so it could be considered as mind think, so as long as I have mind and it's capable to think, I am exist.

First, mind and body is separated. The function of mind: and the function of body:

The Meditator reasons that imagination and sensory perception are modes of thought. He could conceive of himself without imagination or sensory perception, so they are not essential to him, but imagination and sensory perception could not exist without a mind to contain them.

mind and body are intermingled to form one unit

This sentence is composed of two parts, the cause “I think” and result “therefore I am”. The subject of think is mind, so it could be considered as “mind” thinks something. As long as I have mind(which is capable to think), I exist.

In the ***First Meditation*** *,* Descartes depicts a skeptical scenario that all of our understanding of this world is dubitable. One possibility among this scenario is the exist of Evil Demon who deceives me about all my knowledge. However, even if all the world is a deception, at least “I” have to be true otherwise there is no receiver of Demon’ deception. Thus Descartes acquires his one certain thing which is the exist of myself(“I”).

In ***Fifth Meditation***, Descartes finally proves the existence of God.

In the ***Sixth Meditation***, Descartes concerning the *Real Distinction of Mind and Body.*  For describe his assumption, he firstly proves the exist of the world outside himself, since they are “subject-matter of pure mathematics ” and “since in this regard I clearly and distinctly perceive them”. Then he gives a situation to imagine and understanding a triangle and a chiliagon. After that he finds out that it is difficult to imagine a chiliagon however easy to understand. So in this case Descartes proposes that “the power of imagination is distinct from the power of understanding, which is not essential to the nature of myself”. Since the subject of understanding is mind and imagine could depends on other mind-conjoined subject which is body. In this part Descartes also evaluates the necessity of understanding(mind). After that Descartes gives some attributes of mind and body. Body is essentially extended whereas mind is non-extended and essentially thinking. For the reason that body and mind are different and “I” can exist with understanding(mind) without imagine(body), Descartes thinks himself is a thinking thing. Which means as long as he has mind , he exist.

It is likely that Demon can fool him about it. Based on my explain about the worst situation that Demon gives the deception to us, at least there should be a receiver to get Demon’s cheat. Although the exist of mind is certain, there is another possibility that Demon can fool is the truth that the exist of ‘I’ is not only depends on the mind, but also need the space in the physical world which need the exist of body because only body has the property of extend. Descartes already proves the exist of the physical world and all outside things, maybe a necessary attribute of those things is the interaction within all the objects. If one individual has no impact to others, it is hard the prove the exist of himself/herself.

Another reason is about the necessary of “imagine”. It is reasonable to imagine if there is one individual whose brain is good enough to handle and imagine a chiliagon. After all triangle is kind of difficult to understand for an infant, so if someone can not understand the triangle, how to know there is no one can imagine the chiliagon.