

# PHENOMENOLOGY, INTENTIONALITY AND COGNITION

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# Introduction

In this thesis I examine the relation between phenomenology and intentionality in cognition. Phenomenology is a feature of our mental states. A mental state is a phenomenal state if there is something it is like for the subject of the state in question to be in. The phenomenal character of these phenomenal states is their what-it's-likeness. Intentionality is also a feature of our mental states. Mental states are about or represent things, properties and states of affairs. It seems that phenomenology and intentionality pervade our mental life. To achieve a general understanding of either phenomenology or intentionality is a primary aim of philosophy of mind. A fruitful way to move closer to this goal is to investigate the relation of these two features. Can intentionality be derived from phenomenology, or vice versa? Or are they independent from each other?

In the second part of the thesis I argue for phenomenal intentionality of cognition. According to this view cognitive phenomenology constitutes its intentionality. We can summarize the theses of phenomenal intentionality of cognition:

- (1) Cognitive intentionality is grounded in phenomenal character.
- (2) Phenomenology and intentionality are inseparably intertwined.
- (3) Phenomenal intentionality is a narrow property, i.e. it is only dependent on one's mind.
- (4) Phenomenal intentionality is subjective. This means that the phenomenal character (the subjective element of the mind) of an intentional state determines that it represents something to someone.

In this paper I argue for a moderate version of cognitive phenomenal intentionality that all intentionality in occurrent cognitive states is phenomenal intentionality. I support this claim by two main arguments. The first argument is the argument from introspection. Via introspection it becomes clear that some of our mental states have both intentionality and phenomenology. I argue that introspection reveals that the former is grounded in the latter. The second argument is the argument from content determinacy. Since cognitive states have determinate intentionality and cognitive states have determinate intentionality only if cognitive states have phenomenal intentionality, therefore, cognitive states have phenomenal intentionality.

To argue for phenomenal intentionality in cognition I first need to prove that there is cognitive phenomenology. Cognitive phenomenology includes three theses: (i) that there are certain kinds of experience associated with cognitive states (as opposed to eliminativism); (ii) cognitive phenomenology is independent of sensory phenomenology, i.e. what it is like for us to be in a cognitive state is distinct from what it is like for us to be in any other kind of mental state; (iii) what it is like to be in a cognitive state with a content that p is distinct from what it is like to be in the same type of cognitive state with different content.

In the recent decades there has been an ongoing debate in philosophy of mind on whether there is a specific *cognitive phenomenology*. Almost everyone can agree that there are certain kinds of experience associated with cognitive states. Understanding a sentence, getting a joke or having a thought on the tip of the tongue are cognitive states that bear phenomenology. The question that has given rise to much controversy is whether there is a phenomenology associated with cognitive activities that is *independent* of sensory phenomenology? There are several main strategies to support an affirmative answer.

First I elaborate on the argument from phenomenal contrast cases. I argue that on the one hand phenomenal contrast cases show us that phenomenal consciousness embrace both sensory and cognitive states. There is something it is like for us to understand or to consider something just as there is something it is like for us to sense. On the other hand phenomenal contrast cases make it plain that cognitive phenomenology is independent of sensory phenomenology, i.e. what it is like for us to get a joke or think a thought is distinct from what it is like for us to be in any other kind of mental state.

I examine the nature of phenomenal contrast cases, and argue that the only theory that can explain these cases is cognitive phenomenology. Neither eliminativism, nor other approaches can plausibly account for the contrast scenarios. Therefore, as long as the phenomenological principle holds, our best explanation of phenomenal contrast cases is to posit a new kind of phenomenology that is distinctive and independent of the canonical ones.

Second I support cognitive phenomenology with the phenomenal judgment argument. Phenomenal judgments are reports about our phenomenally conscious mental states and their contents. We

make similar judgments about our cognitive states and it testifies that cognitive states are phenomenal states as well.

Finally I present the argument from interestingness. It shows that the experiential richness in our mental life comes from cognitive phenomenology. There is an experiential difference when one reads Hamlet and when one reads the daily news. Both involve interestingness-experience but different ones since the cognitive content in the two cases are not the same. This argument shows that cognitive phenomenology exists because if it was not, our life would be boring and non-interesting at all.

## Chapter 1 – Cognitive phenomenology

### 1.1. Terminology

*Cognitive phenomenology.* In the late 19th and the early 20th century the philosophical community mostly accepted the view that cognitive states had phenomenology. According to Edmund HUSSERL, one of the most influential proponents of the phenomenological method, what is phenomenologically experienced by the subject is “...percepts, imaginative and pictorial representations, acts of conceptual thinking, surmises and doubts, joys and griefs, hopes and fears, wishes and acts of will, etc.” (HUSSERL 1900–01: V. 2) In his view thinking is as much a phenomenal mental state as perceptual states.

Also G. E. MOORE advocated cognitive phenomenology. He rejected the view that understanding involves internal imagery and argued that it involves a special kind of phenomenology. “I will now utter certain words which form a sentence: these words, for instance: Twice two are four. Now, when I say these words, you not only hear them—the words--you also understand what they mean. [...] Besides the mere hearing of the words, there occurs another act of consciousness—an apprehension of their meaning...” (MOORE 1910/1953: 57-59)

Later in the 20th century, however, a new view emerged after the works of Gilbert RYLE. In his book *The Concept of Mind* RYLE argued that phenomenology can only be intelligible when it refers to sensations. He posited a view that mental concepts must be interpreted in terms of public,

observable states. From this time it became widespread in the philosophical community to contrast sensory states with cognitive states, conceiving the former to involve qualities and the latter to be understood in functionalist terms. Phenomenology standardly has been taken to be restricted to sensory states, including perception, feelings, moods and emotions.

From the '90s, fortunately, cognitive phenomenology has been retrieving its force. It is now advocated by many influential philosopher, for example, GOLDMAN (1993), HORGAN and TIENSON (2002), PITT (2004), SIEWERT (1998), and STRAWSON (1994). They all claim that there is a more to phenomenology than perceptual experience, there is also cognitive experience or cognitive phenomenology.

Before discussing the arguments for cognitive phenomenology some concepts need clarifying. The first one is 'what-it's-likeness' or 'phenomenology'. I also use the terms 'experience'<sup>1</sup> and 'qualitative character' to refer to the same thing.<sup>2</sup> A mental state is a phenomenal state if there is something it is like for the subject of the state in question to be in it. To distinguish phenomenal states from each other we can also refer to what-it's-likeness. What it is like to taste salt differs from what it is like to taste sugar, and both of them differ from what it is like to have a pain in one's back or to grasp a metaphor. The most fashionable way to understand what it's likeness is to grasp it from the subject's point of view, viz. what it is like for the subject itself to be in that state. In this view we can distinguish between entities that have phenomenal states and entities that lack phenomenology. For instance there is nothing it is like for a beer bottle to be a beer bottle. (see BLOCK 1995: 230-236)

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<sup>1</sup> There are two uses of the term 'experience'. According to the first every sensory state is an experience, i.e. to experience something is to be acquainted with it in perception rather than thought. According to the second sense 'experience' is interchangeable with 'what-it's-likeness'. (BAYNE & MONTAGUE 2011:12, SMITHIES 2013b:744) In the following I use the term experience only in the second sense.

<sup>2</sup> A term I try to avoid in the present discussion is '*consciousness*'. First it has been used in too many ways to be stable, second neither of its senses are necessary for understanding the issue about phenomenal contrast. It has been used to mean phenomenology, to refer to access consciousness and also to distinguish occurrent and dispositional mental states. Of course in the last sense it has relevance with respect to cognitive phenomenology or even more so to its related theory of phenomenal intentionality. (see KRIEGEL 2011) Nevertheless I do not use the term 'consciousness' in this paper.

Second, cognitive states can be divided into two categories that are relevant for the current discussion. One category involves *dispositional* cognitive states. These are standing states that do not occur within a definite interval. For example I have a thought for many years that the blue whale is the largest existing animal, but this thought has not been accessed for a long time, i.e. it has not played a role in an actual cognitive process, it was in my mind dispositionally during this time. The second category includes *occurrent* cognitive states. Occurrent cognitive states occur, they have datable beginnings and endings, and there is some definite interval within which they occur. One paradigm case is that in which one wonders whether *p* is the case. Also *P* can be involved in other types of cognition, such as occurrently believing that *p*, doubting that *p*, hoping that *p*, and so on. This category also includes *propositional* or *categorical perception*, viz. seeing that, hearing that, etc. (see ROBINSON 2005: 535-536, KLAUSEN 2008: 447) Since dispositional cognitive states do not have a phenomenological aspect they are left out of the present discussion.

Finally I would like to say some words about cognitive phenomenology. The phenomenologically most impressive mental states we have are visual and somatic mental states, such as color perception or a toothache. There are mental states with milder phenomenology, such as olfactory, proprioceptive states and also cognition. However it is not obvious what we mean by cognitive phenomenology. There are three different views of cognitive phenomenology in the literature: (i) that there are certain kinds of experience associated with cognitive states (as opposed to eliminativism); (ii) cognitive phenomenology is independent of sensory phenomenology, i.e. what it is like for us to be in a cognitive state is distinct from what it is like for us to be in any other kind of mental state; (iii) what it is like to be in a cognitive state with a content that *p* is distinct from what it is like to be in the same type of cognitive state with different content.<sup>3</sup> In this paper I assume that the theory of cognitive phenomenology holds all of (i)-(iii) and I argue that phenomenal contrast arguments support all of these theses.

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<sup>3</sup> It can be argued that there is a thesis that is stronger than (i) but weaker than (ii): the associated phenomenology with cognitive states is only partly dependent on sensory phenomenology. Nonetheless this claim seems controversial. If it claims that in understanding a sentence by reading it we are in a mental state that has visual phenomenology, then it states nothing new to (i). If it claims that cognitive phenomenology is partially independent, i.e. what it is like for us to be in a cognitive state is partly dependent on what it is like for us to be in another kind of mental state, then it has to tell a story about this partial dependence relation. (see CHUDNOFF fc.:9)

## 1.2. Conservative and liberal views

In contemporary philosophy of mind basically there are two different conceptions of phenomenal thought. The *conservative* approach holds that sensory states, bodily sensations, emotions and moods have a distinctive phenomenal character, while cognitive states do not.

Should we include any mental states that are not feelings and experiences? Consider my desire to eat ice cream. Is there not something it is like for me to have this desire? If so, is not this state phenomenally conscious? And what about the belief that I am a very fine fellow? Or the memory that September 2 is the date on which I first fell in love? Is there not some phenomenal flavor to both of these states? In the former case, some phenomenal sense of pride and ego, and in the latter some feeling of nostalgia? It seems to me not implausible to deal with these cases by arguing that insofar as there is any phenomenal or immediately experienced felt quality to the above states, this is due to their being accompanied by sensations or images or feelings that are the real bearers of the phenomenal character. Take away the feelings and experiences that happen to be associated with the above states in particular cases, and there is no phenomenal consciousness left. (TYE 1995:4)

The conservatives conceive of sensory phenomenology as the only kind of phenomenology there is. According to this view cognitive states lack any kind of distinctive non-sensory phenomenal character. Most of these philosophers argue that cognitive states should be explained by a *functionalist* analysis.

In the conservative approach we can distinguish two directions. The first allows that some cognitive states possess phenomenal character but only in virtue of the associated sensory states. The second and more radical view claims that cognitive states are non-phenomenal states.

The *liberal* view –cognitive phenomenology– holds that cognitive states possess distinctive and proprietary cognitive phenomenology. The proponents of the liberal approach hold that phenomenology extends beyond the sensory states.



The tendency of the last fifty years of analytic philosophy has been to separate the notion of conceptual content sharply from the notion of experience, and this fact, combined with the insubstantiality property of conscious thought, may make it seem odd to many to say that the experience of seeing red and the experience of now seeming to understand this very sentence, and of thinking that nobody could have had different parents, are alike in respect of having a certain qualitative character. And yet they are. They all fall into the vast category of experiential episodes that have a certain qualitative character for those who have them as they have them. (STRAWSON 2010:194)

The liberal view relies on a *basic intuition*. There is something it is like to see a red tomato or to feel hunger, these states have a distinctive quality. Also there is something it is like to see that Brazil scored in the opening game in the world cup or to conclude that  $5+7=12$ . Nevertheless in the first case it is apparent that the distinctive quality is essential to the mental state, without the phenomenal character there is no mental state at all. In the second case it is not so clear. Nevertheless, as KLAUSEN argues, it seems obvious that the subjective identification of the cognitive states is also based on their distinctive phenomenal character. “We seem to have an immediate access to the nature of the state we are in. I become aware that I am concluding that the square root of 256 is 16 just by doing it.” (KLAUSEN 2008:446-447) When one has a thought she immediately knows what she thinks and also how she thinks about it. Cognitive states are complex entities that involve propositional content and an attitudinal aspect. Both of them are accessible for us through subjective identifications that shows that both the content and the attitudinal aspect has a distinctive phenomenal character.

The other basic support of the liberal view is the denial of functionalism. The conservative views rely on the functionalist conception of the cognitive states, hence any successful argument against functionalism would weaken their position. Functionalism is the view that

...ordinary people understand each common mental state descriptor to pick out a distinctive "functional role," that is, a set of causal-functional relations to stimulus inputs, behavioral outputs, and other mental states. If this is correct, then the task of

categorizing one's own mental states must involve deciding which functional roles are instantiated by one's current states. (GOLDMAN 1993:376)

Functionalism holds that cognitive states are individuated by their relational properties, how they relate to and depend on one another. GOLDMAN argues that the functionalist view is implausible. We can easily classify our mental states without knowing the causal ancestry and subjunctive properties of them. The classification of our mental states depends on the intrinsic properties of these states rather than relational ones.<sup>4</sup>

### 1.3. Phenomenal contrast

In the recent decades there has been an ongoing debate in philosophy of mind on whether there is a specific *cognitive phenomenology*. Almost everyone agrees that there are certain kinds of experiences associated with cognitive states. Understanding a sentence, getting a joke or having a thought on the tip of the tongue are cognitive states that bear phenomenology. The question that has given rise to much controversy is whether there is a phenomenology associated with cognitive activities that is *independent* of sensory phenomenology? One of the main strategies to support an affirmative answer relies on *phenomenal contrast cases*.

In this part I elaborate on the nature of phenomenal contrast in these scenarios. I argue that on the one hand phenomenal contrast cases show us that phenomenal consciousness embraces both sensory and cognitive states. There is something it is like for us to understand or to consider something, just as there is something it is like for us to sense. On the other hand phenomenal contrast cases make it plain that cognitive phenomenology is independent of sensory phenomenology, i.e. what it is like for us to get a joke or think a thought is distinct from what it is like for us to be in any other kind of mental state.

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<sup>4</sup> When BONJOUR argues against the *symbolic conception* of thought he arrives at a similar conclusion. The symbolic view claims that “the existence of the appropriate causal-historical relation constitutes the symbol’s having a certain content, so that the content is realized only in the entire complex situation that includes the obtaining of the relation.” It implies that one has to have access to the entire situation that constitutes the content of the thought in order to have access to this content. This conclusion is obviously false, since most of the time an access to the entire situation is not available to the subject, and this would lead to the absurd situation that we have no internal grasp of what we are thinking. (BONJOUR 1998:168)

### 1.3.1. Phenomenal contrast cases

The way it seems to auralize or hear a sentence by which one means or understands something as the utterance is made—and thus the way it seems to one to think noniconically—differs from the way it seems to one to auralize or hear an utterance made or heard “senselessly,” just as a pattern of (real or auralized) sound. [...] I believe you can appreciate the relevant sort of contrast in phenomenal character if you think of circumstances in which you are reading or speaking a language you are just learning or of which you have only modest knowledge. You can easily find yourself just sounding out a sentence, or speaking it silently to yourself, without just then understanding or meaning anything by it. And it seems different to have the experience of this, than it does to have the experience you have when you read or speak the sentence and “get it”—when it then means something to you. (SIEWERT 1998:275)

One of the indirect appeals to support the view of cognitive phenomenology is the *phenomenal contrast argument*. The argument includes two mental states that differ in phenomenal character but not in sensory features. Following SIEWERT’S example two subjects hear the same sounds but have different phenomenal characters because one of them experiences the sounds as signs and she understands them, while the other hear only senseless sounds. (also STRAWSON 2010:6) Consequently there is something it is like to understand a sentence.

HORGAN & TIENSON (2002) and PITT (2004) set another example for phenomenal contrast. When a single speaker first hears or reads sentences, which contain a sequence of iterated tokens of an orthographic or phonological type, such as

- (1) Dogs dogs dog dog dogs, or
- (2) Buffalo buffalo buffalo buffalo buffalo buffalo buffalo,

probably she does not realize that it is an English sentence. After she hears or reads it as a sentence in English and understands it, the what it’s likeness of her mental state changes. Pitt also uses grammatically well-formed sentences with multiple center-embeddings, such as

- (3) The boy the man the girl saw chased fled,

garden path sentences, such as

(4) The boat sailed down the river sank,

to demonstrate phenomenal contrast situations. (HORGAN & TIENSON 2002:523, PITT 2004: 27)

In phenomenal contrast cases two mental states with qualitative character are presented such that (i) there is a difference between the phenomenology of the two, (ii) it is not clear whether this difference comes about in virtue of a difference in sensory phenomenology.

Basically there are two types of phenomenal contrast. In the first type two mental states differ in that one of them has a certain qualitative component, while the other does not. In the second type two mental states differ in virtue of a difference in a certain qualitative component. In both cases there is a difference between the phenomenology of the two mental states, and it is not clear whether this difference comes about in virtue of a difference in sensory phenomenology. I give two examples for each type of phenomenal contrast cases.

*Type I – Case I:* A monoglot Hungarian and a monoglot Englishman are reading the quote below.

„Lenni vagy nem lenni: az itt a kérdés.  
Akkor nemesb-e a lélek, ha túri  
Balsorsa minden nyűgét s nyilait;  
Vagy ha kiszáll tenger fájdalomja ellen,  
S fegyvert ragadva véget vet neki?”<sup>5</sup>

The Hungarian reader understands the text, while the English reader does not. The overall phenomenology of their mental states differs, nevertheless they are in the very same visual mental state.

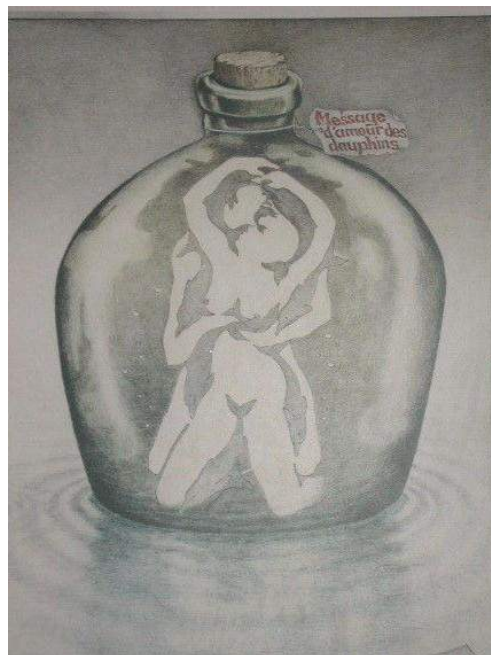
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<sup>5</sup> “To be, or not to be? That is the question—  
Whether ’tis nobler in the mind to suffer  
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,  
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,  
And, by opposing, end them?” (Shakespeare: Hamlet, translated by Arany János)

*Type I – Case II:* Two friends are watching a game of the Football World Cup on the television. One of them is a football fan, familiar with all of the game’s rules. Her friend, however, has never seen a game, and hardly knows anything about the sport. In the middle of the game the expert viewer says: “Ronaldo is offside.” After some seconds the referee stops the game because a player was offside. Meanwhile the other viewer has no idea what happened. In this case the expert recognized the situation as offside, while the other spectator saw the same picture, nevertheless she could not interpret it. The overall phenomenology of their mental states differs, nevertheless they are in the very same visual mental state.

*Type II – Case I:* In a Chinese restaurant after your soup was served the waitress says ‘I hope the food is not too hot for you’, first you think she means hot in temperature, but in the next moment you realize she means spicy. In this example where the subject switches her interpretation of an ambiguous sentence the sensory phenomenology is clearly unchanged, still the overall phenomenology of your mental states changes.

*Type II – Case II:* Look at the picture of the vase below.



When someone first looks at the figure on the vase she probably sees a cuddling couple. But after she is told that the only thing an average 6-year-old child could see in this picture is 9 dolphins, she can switch her interpretation and count the dolphins. The overall phenomenology of her mental states differ, nevertheless she is in the very same phenomenal state.

### 1.3.2. Interpretations of phenomenal contrast cases

In this section I argue that the best explanation of the phenomenological difference in phenomenal contrast cases is that one mental state exhibits a cognitive phenomenology that the other does not. First I focus on approaches from the opponents of cognitive phenomenology: eliminativism and anti-realism. I show how they fail to account for phenomenal contrast cases. Second I investigate the cognitive phenomenologist strategy.

Eliminativism claims that there are no experiences associated with cognition. Two approaches can lead to this conclusion. The first is to endorse the most radical philosophical proposal of all time, namely to deny the existence of any kind of experience. For the purposes of this paper I ignore this obviously false claim.

The second approach is less radical in a sense that it “only” denies the existence of experience associated with cognition. One way to hold that there is no associated experience in cognitive states is to argue that we are *disposed to overestimate* the richness of the phenomenology in our mental lives. Just as our visual experiences are not as they intuitively seem to be, our cognitive experiences are also illusions. (see DODD 2013:23)

...much less information is available in vision than our subjective impression leads us to believe. Our stable visual world may be constructed out of a brief retinal image and a very sketchy, higher-level representation along with a pop-out mechanism to redirect attention. The richness of our visual world is, to this extent, an illusion. (BLACKMORE 1995:1)

According to this view our intuitions about phenomenology are unreliable and full of illusions. A main region where we fail to reliably introspect our mental lives is our cognitive states. There is

in fact no phenomenal difference in the cases discussed above; our introspection deceives us in these scenarios.

The problem with this approach is twofold. First overestimation regarding visual sensory states is supported by experiments on change blindness and intentional blindness. In the case of cognition we have no such evidences. And without this independent support the claim of overestimation of phenomenology in cognition seems *ad hoc*, since it violates the *phenomenological principle* according to which,

If it seems to me (or you, or any rational subject) that there is a difference between what it is like for me (or you, etc.) to token any two familiar types of mental events, then this seeming generally ought to be explained by positing that there actually is a difference between what it is like for me (or you, etc.) to token those types of mental events. (DODD 2013:25)

The existence of the associated phenomenology with cognition in the contrast cases is apparent with respect to the phenomenological principle. The overestimation claim cannot work without any independent evidence.

Leaving the muddy terrain of eliminativism, another option to oppose cognitive phenomenology is to defend the view that the phenomenological difference in contrast cases comes about in virtue of a difference in sensory phenomenology. Proponents of this approach acknowledge that (i) there are certain kinds of experience associated with cognitive states. But they deny that (ii) cognitive phenomenology is independent of sensory phenomenology, i.e. what it is like for us to be in a cognitive state is distinct from what it is like for us to be in any other kind of mental state; and they also deny that (iii) what it is like to be in a cognitive state with a content that p is distinct from what it is like to be in the same type of cognitive state with different content

Certainly there are cases when cognitive states are associated with perceptual imagery or inner speech, but this is not always the case. SIEWERT (1998) and HURLBURT & AKHTER (2008) give examples where thinking occurs without any associated sensory states. In their experimental study HURLBURT & AKHTER emphasize the significance of *unsymbolized* thinking that occurs without any linguistic or perceptual imagery.

Unsymbolized thinking—the experience of an explicit, differentiated thought that does not include the experience of words, images, or any other symbols—is a frequently occurring yet little known phenomenon. Unsymbolized thinking is a distinct phenomenon, not merely, for example, an incompletely formed inner speech or a vague image, and is one of the five most common features of inner experience (the other four: inner speech, inner seeing, feelings, and sensory awareness). Despite its high frequency, many people, including many professional students of consciousness, believe that such an experience is impossible. However, because the existence of unsymbolized thinking indicates that much experienced thinking takes place without any experience of words or other symbols, acknowledging the existence of unsymbolized thinking may have substantial theoretical import. (HURLBURT & AKHTER 2008:1364)

Also, SIEWERT argues that there is a phenomenal difference between *iconic* and *non-iconic* thinking. In non-iconic thinking a thought occurs to you and you do not image the content or object of your thought, you do not verbalize your thought silently or aloud and you are not understanding someone else's words. SIEWERT'S first example is about a sudden realization of a forgotten appointment. One is sitting in her room in the morning and suddenly remembers an important appointment she is supposed not to forget. She wonders when it begins, looks at her watch and realizes that she has missed it. This thought of the missed appointment is an occurrence of experience, but not a verbalized one. She has not said her thought silently or aloud. This little wordless episode of noniconic thinking—your suddenly recalling that you had an appointment—is experiential, and the way it seems to you to have this thought differs from the way it would seem to you to have imagery experience of some sort. A similar example: one is walking on the street and checks his pants for his phone. He finds his pocket empty and feels a sudden panic that he has lost his mobile phone and cannot call his client. He tries to remember where he could have lost his phone, or where he put his it. Suddenly he recalls that he put it in his coat pocket, and finds it. Such episodes often do not involve any imagery experience; one needn't have pictured his lost phone or the important client. (see SIEWERT 1998:276-277)



Another maneuver to reject cognitive phenomenology is to explain contrast cases in ‘feeling’ terms.<sup>6</sup> The phenomenal surplus in the case of understanding is the result of the ‘Aha! feeling’ that is a kind of emotional state and has nothing to do with cognition. This view is implausible because understanding in these cases cannot be explained in terms of a generic feeling since the mental state of understanding varies depending on the intentional content that is understood. SIEWERT (1998) and HORGAN & TIENSON (2002) illustrate this by examples of Type II cases (see Section II) where the subject switches her interpretation of an ambiguous sentence. These are occasions when someone utters a sentence with ambiguous meaning and you grasp one of its meanings then you realize that actually she meant something else. In a Chinese restaurant after your soup was served the waitress says ‘I hope the food is not too hot for you’, first you think she means hot in temperature, but in the next moment you realize she means spicy. Another example where you can switch between interpretations when you hear the sentence ‘Time flies’. First time you interpret it as a senseless platitude about the passage of time, then you realize that it is a standard command at the insect races. (SIEWERT 1998:278, HORGAN & TIENSON 2002:523, SMITHIES 2013b:750)

Cognitive phenomenology claims the best explanation of the phenomenological difference in phenomenal contrast cases is that one mental state exhibits a cognitive phenomenology that the other does not. In contrast cases the sensory phenomenology is constant, and it is the cognitive features of the mental states that are responsible for the difference in the phenomenal character. The argument is based on an inference to the best explanation: since there is no difference in the sensory features of the mental states the phenomenal contrast can be only explained by non-sensory features of the mental states. (see SIEGEL 2007:135, DODD 2013:21)

In phenomenal contrast cases two mental states with qualitative character are presented such that (i) there is a difference between the phenomenology of the two, (ii) it seems that the difference does not come about in virtue of a difference in sensory phenomenology. As we see, eliminativism tries to avoid (i), while other strategies try to deny (ii), nonetheless proponents of these views failed

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<sup>6</sup> Some philosophers argue that it is the emotional experiences of familiarity that is responsible for the phenomenal contrast. Others hold that the phenomenal contrast is caused by the experiences of fluency. (see CARRUTHERS & VEILLET 2011) However familiarity is not always present in cognitive states, e.g. getting a joke one never heard is typically associated by qualitative character that has nothing to do with familiarity. The same holds for fluency.

to posit a plausible counterargument. Hence the argument for cognitive phenomenology is the following:

- (1) Phenomenological principle: If it seems to me (or you, or any rational subject) that there is a difference between what it is like for me (or you, etc.) to token any two familiar types of mental events, then this seeming generally ought to be explained by positing that there actually is a difference between what it is like for me (or you, etc.) to token those types of mental events. (DODD 2013:25)
- (2) It seems that there is a difference between the phenomenology of the two, and the difference does not come about in virtue of a difference in sensory phenomenology.
- (3) We have no independent evidence to deny (2).
- (4) There is a difference between the phenomenology of the two, the difference does not come about in virtue of a difference in sensory phenomenology. (From (1) and (2))
- (5) CP can explain (4) by positing a distinctive, independent phenomenology of cognition.
- (6) CP is true.

#### 1.4. The phenomenal judgement argument

KLAUSEN (2008) offers an innovative argument for the phenomenology of cognitive states. His starting point is our introspective reports about our cognitive states. Often people say sentences like ‘I can see that!’, ‘I have a feeling that this is not right’, ‘it strikes me that...’ According to KLAUSEN these reports take the form of *phenomenal judgments*.

Phenomenal judgments are reports about our phenomenal mental states and their contents. We are not in an ‘isolated phenomenal void’, when we are aware of our experiences we form judgments and make claims about them. For instance when I have a visual experience about a red tomato I often form a belief that I have a visual experience about a red tomato, and I can easily express it verbally. These judgments about our phenomenology are phenomenal judgments, they are ‘phenomenal’ because they involve phenomenal states and not because they are phenomenal states themselves. We often say things like ‘I have a throbbing pain now’ or ‘this beer made me feel dizzy’, etc. These claims are intimately connected to our phenomenology and reliable reports of our phenomenally conscious states. (see CHALMERS 1996:173-174)

KLAUSEN argues that we make similar claims about our cognitive states and it testifies that cognitive states are phenomenal states as well. These reports are caused by a propositional content of a cognitive state. (see KLAUSEN 2008:449-452)

There is, however, a strong conservative objection to this argument. These phenomenal judgments does not support the liberal view, it is an argument for the conservative view that cognitive states are *regularly accompanied* by certain sensory states. The explanation of the claims like ‘I have a feeling that this is not so’ can be found in the sensory states associated with the thought. The phenomenology these judgments are about is actually inessential to the cognitive state and can be accounted for sensory features. (see CARRUTHERS 2005, ROBINSON 2005)

One way to defend the phenomenal judgment argument from this objection is to find independent arguments for the denial of the conservative view in question. First if the subjective identification of the cognitive states depends on their phenomenal character, then their phenomenal character must be essentially connected to their content. If their phenomenal character would not be essentially connected to their content there could be cases where our subjective identification would deceive us. In these cases of subjective misidentification we would not know our own thoughts in the first-person psychological sense, and this is clearly an untenable conclusion.

### 1.5. Argument from interestingness

When someone reads a book or thinks a thought often she finds or experiences them very interesting. For instance reading this section one can be interested in how the argument goes. Being interested in a reading is always a result from the content the reading includes. It is the content that is fascinating to us. We can ask: why did we continue to read? Is it the sensory content of your visual experience? Clearly it is not. It is not the colors and shapes that one finds interesting in her reading. It is the cognitive-experiential content of one`s experience as she grasped the cognitive content of the sentences.

Doubts can arise with this argument. Philosophers who attempt to account for our experiences merely in sensory or feeling terms can claim that we have certain feeling or emotive states associated with our cognitive states and the former states give rise to our experience in reading. However these accounts need to explain how the experience of looking at some marks on a paper,

or of hearing particular sounds, can make someone be interested in them. They can response like this:

These people do indeed experience powerful feelings, and this explains their behavior. And they experience these feelings because the sounds or marks affect them, and because they affect them as things that have a certain meaning, a meaning that it is correct to say that they understand. All this is true. But what we call their understanding is wholly a matter of their non-conscious or sub-experiential processing of the sounds or marks. (STRAWSON 2011:13)

Put this response aside for a bit and take a closer look on the argument from interestingness. We can reconstruct the argument from interestingness for cognitive phenomenology in this form:

- (1) If cognitive phenomenology did not exist, life would be boring.
- (2) Life is interesting and various.
- (3) Cognitive phenomenology exists.

Our non-cognitive phenomenal states, such as perception, seem to occur without our interest. It does not matter how intense the sensual sense or feeling pleasures we are in they lack the kind of interestingness we experience in our cognitive states.

Proponents of the sense/feeling view, however, argue that this is not so. According to them we can explain the interestingness-experience in this way. We can non-phenomenally register conceptual contents in the same way as computers do. This conceptual content is usually associated with a particular sense/feeling experience. Nonetheless this sense experience is not the experience of a certain cognitive content.

However this approach is implausible. It implies that our interestingness-experience is monotonic since it is not influenced by the particular cognitive content. The difference in experiences depends on two things: (i) the experience-type and (ii) the experience intensity. This can produce lots of varieties in experience, nevertheless this account cannot explain the fact that experience varies in virtue of different contents. Grasping two equally interesting propositions  $p$ ,  $q$  involves different experience based on their different contents. Reading sentences containing  $p$  and  $q$  involve the

same experience-type and the same experience-intensity, nonetheless they result in distinct phenomenal states.

Let me present here STRAWSON`s (2011) thought experiment that is meant to show that our phenomenology extends beyond sense and feeling. Consider Lex, who reads and understands 100 great works of literature, and experiences an enormous variety of feelings and emotions. And consider Lux, her sister, who is inexhaustibly fascinated by colors and shapes, and who has, let us suppose, the same rich variety of feelings and emotions on watching an amazing light show, day after day. We can allow that the content of Lux`s experience is far from boring, but the dimensions of its possible interestingness (change and movement of color and shape) are relatively limited. On the cognitive phenomenology view, Lex`s experience is vastly richer than Lux`s. It contains more differences than Lux`s. But the sense/feeling view must presumably think the balance is in Lux`s favor, for on the basic sensory side, the color combinations are much more fun and more varied than the black marks on white background, and—on the mood-emotion side—we`ve supposed that Lux and Lex have similar amounts of surprise-feelings, delight-feelings, and so on, all of which are presumably monotonic in the sense just given. The sense/feeling view allows that future neuroscientists might take epistemic-emotion readings from Lex`s brain and generate matching epistemic emotions in Lux directly, in such a way that Lux experiences them as caused by the light show. Lux`s experience is then just as good as Lex`s, from the point of view of interestingness, according to the sense/feeling view. The neuroscientists may also constantly alter Lux`s non-phenomenal dispositional set in all the ways in which it would have been altered if Lux had understood what Lex had understood. But the non-visual experiential difference between them will remain: Lex will have a vast range of terrific experiences that Lux won`t have at all. (STRAWSON 2011:14)

The experiential richness in human life is brought about by both sense/feeling and cognitive phenomenology. There is a realm of experience, cognitive phenomenology that appears beyond our sensory states. There is an experiential difference when one reads Hamlet and when one reads the daily news. Both involve interestingness-experience but different ones since the cognitive content in the two cases are not the same. This argument shows that cognitive phenomenology exists because if it was not, our life would be boring and non-interesting at all.

# Chapter 2 – Phenomenal intentionality

## 2.1. Phenomenology and intentionality

Before discussing the theory of phenomenal intentionality I introduce the basic questions and problems regarding the relationship between phenomenology and intentionality. One way to address the problem of their relation is to isolate the so-called hard and easy problems of philosophy of mind. In this respect explaining phenomenology is the hard problem, while explaining intentionality is the easy one.

Explaining phenomenology is considered as a hard problem since there is an explanatory gap between physical facts and phenomenal states. It is possible to conceive scenarios where the same physical states could produce different phenomenal states or none at all. In the absence of an explanatory bridge between phenomenology and the physical world any kind of physical theory will fail to explain phenomenology in terms of physical or functional<sup>7</sup> basis alone.

When it comes to conscious experience, this sort of explanation fails. What makes the hard problem hard and almost unique is that it goes beyond problems about the performance of functions. To see this, note that even when we have explained the performance of all the cognitive and behavioral functions in the vicinity of experience—perceptual discrimination, categorization, internal access, verbal report—there may still remain a further unanswered question: Why is the performance of these functions accompanied by experience? A simple explanation of the functions leaves this question open. (CHALMERS 1995:5)

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<sup>7</sup> *Functionalist* theories in particular rely heavily on the notion of *realization* to explicate the relation between phenomenology and the physical. According to functionalism, a state or process counts as being of a given mental or conscious type in virtue of the functional role it plays within a suitably organized system. A given physical state realizes the relevant conscious mental type by playing the appropriate role within the larger physical system that contains it. (See VAN GLUCK 2014)

The functionalist analysis of mind fails since it cannot explain the phenomenal character of mental states. Why does phenomenal experience arise when certain functions are performed? The explanatory gap between the functions of the mind and phenomenology is still a mystery.

In contrast with experience it is often told that the explanation of intentionality is just an easy problem. According to these scholars intentionality does not result in an explanatory gap between the physical and the intentional. We cannot imagine a situation where the same physical facts could produce different intentional states or none at all. Hence intentionality shall be explained in physical terms such as causal role, inputs and outputs, functions, and so on. The easy problem in this case is about finding out the right physical analysis of intentionality.

Because of this distinction (easy vs hard problem) until the last two decades the most dominant view held that phenomenology and intentionality are totally distinct and their presence in our mental states is a contingent fact, i.e. our mental states which are intentional and phenomenal could lack phenomenology and still have intentionality, and vice versa. Their explanations are isolated since one of them needs to deal with the hard problem, whilst the other has to solve the easy problem.

Recently, however, a different view has started to spread around that claims there is a necessary connection between experience and intentionality. There have been several views regarding this relation. First of all there is a division in the nature of this connection: is it a supervenience<sup>8</sup> relation, some kind of dependence, or identity, etc. Of course the strongest theories argue for an identity relation which can have two directions. On the one hand intentionalism<sup>9</sup> claims that phenomenal characters of our mental states are identical with particular intentional properties. On the other hand phenomenal intentionality holds that intentionality is derived from phenomenal properties. In these theories explaining intentionality becomes an old new hard problem.

Another question is whether this relation can be intelligible also in cognition or it is restricted to perception, sensations, emotions, etc. The answer depends on the existence of phenomenology of

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<sup>8</sup> The core idea of supervenience is that there cannot be an *A*-difference without a *B*-difference, viz. *A*-properties supervene on *B*-properties if and only if a difference in *A*-properties *requires* a difference in *B*-properties

<sup>9</sup> According to a survey performed by BOURGET & CHALMERS (2013), intentionalism has 31% acceptance rate among philosophers of mind.

cognition. As we see in the previous part of this thesis we have strong evidence to claim that cognitive phenomenology is true. Hence the appropriate investigation of the relation between phenomenology and cognition has to include cognitive phenomenology and cognitive intentionality. In the following I examine the theory according to which cognitive intentionality has its source in cognitive phenomenology.

## 2.2. Background

Phenomenal intentionality has a similar history to cognitive phenomenology. It starts with Brentano who took intentionality to be the mark of the mental, and he also held that intentionality is coextended with phenomenology. This view implies that a state is intentional iff it is phenomenal, hence phenomenal intentionality is the only intentionality. This notion of intentionality was later taken up and brought into analytic philosophy by Chisholm (1957), nevertheless until the late '80s it remained unpopular. Since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century the main approach for understanding intentionality has focused on naturalizing it by identifying a natural relation between certain brain states and world states where the former represent the latter.

The phenomenal intentionality approach, according to which a mental state exhibits intentionality purely in virtue of its phenomenal character, has its new origin in Brian LOAR'S *Subjective Intentionality* (1987) where he first discusses phenomenal intentionality. From the late '90s phenomenal intentionality has been becoming more and more popular among philosophers of mind, for example LOAR (1995, 2003), SEARLE (1990, 1991, 1992), GOLDMAN (1993), STRAWSON (1994), SIEWERT (1998, 2011), HORGAN and TIENSON (2002), Pitt (2004, 2009, 2011), FARKAS (2008), BOURGET (2010), KRIEGEL (2007, 2011, 2013), HORGAN and GRAHAM (2012).

The main idea or program behind phenomenal intentionality is that theories of philosophy of mind are supposed to start from phenomenology. Phenomenology should be the starting point in trying to work out what the nature of our mind is rather than physical behavioral facts or other metaphysical claims<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> Actually I am sympathetic towards the approach that the whole mind-body problem should be reconsidered in this way. That would mean that we are not presupposing the existence of two distinct substance (mind and body) but we start from our phenomenology and define matter in phenomenological terms.



Phenomenology is the subjective-qualitative aspect of our mental states. The phenomenal character of a mental state is its particular ‘what it’s likeness’. Mental states with the most vivid phenomenal character are visual experiences, pains, emotions, but there are also less intense phenomenal states like thinking.

Phenomenal intentionality is the view that mental states that are intentional, i.e. they represent their object in a way, and they acquire their intentional properties from their phenomenal properties. Intentional properties are identical to or grounded in some phenomenology. In the debate about the relation between phenomenology and intentionality the proponents of phenomenal intentionality claim that phenomenology comes first and intentionality comes only in the second place. Phenomenology in some sense prior to intentionality. In case of perception when one has a state with a reddish phenomenal character that state represents that particular red shade.

There is, however, a disagreement between the advocates of phenomenal intentionality regarding its extent. Many argue that only perceptual states have phenomenal intentionality. Some also argue that occurrent cognitive states also have phenomenal intentionality. The most problematic mental states in this debate are non-occurrent cognitive states like beliefs that are not currently entertained. The usual strategy to accommodate these states in a phenomenal intentionality theory is to endorse an additional claim that all non-occurrent forms of intentionality are derived from phenomenal intentionality. Although there is the option to extend phenomenal intentionality to these dispositional states, nevertheless it seems an untenable claim. Most phenomenal intentionality theorists hold the moderate version of phenomenal intentionality according to which all mental states get their intentionality from phenomenology except dispositional mental states which gain their intentionality indirectly from phenomenal intentionality.<sup>11</sup> In this thesis my goal is to set sound arguments for phenomenal intentionality of cognition.

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<sup>11</sup> Some claim that non-occurrent states exhibit non-phenomenal intentionality that derives from their connections to phenomenal intentional states (HORGAN & TIENSON 2002, KRIEGEL 2011), but there are others who deny that such states are intentional at all (MENDELOVICI 2010; STRAWSON 2011).

### 2.3. Argument from introspection

Before exposing the argument I introduce the concept of introspection in general. There is an epistemic asymmetry between first-person and third-person perspectives. Everyone has a private and distinct way of knowing one's mind that is not available to anyone else. Introspection is this private and distinct way of knowing our mind. I know by introspection whether I am feeling pain or pleasure and whether I am visually experiencing red or green. There are of course other ways to know about one's mental states. We can rely on inference of sensory perception but these are different methods from introspection in several aspects. My argument aims to show that the phenomenal character of our (cognitive) experience explains how we know these things.

One can easily and immediately get to know whether she is in pain or pleasure, or seeing red or green. This is because the phenomenal characters of her mental states differ. This also holds for cognitive states. Cognitive states have phenomenology, thus one knows by introspection whether she is thinking about her hobbies or her upcoming final exams. This is because the phenomenal characters of her thoughts are different since their cognitive content is different. PITT (2004) and GOLDMAN (1993) argue that we cannot explain introspective knowledge of which thoughts we are thinking except by appealing to the phenomenology of thought. They claim that the intentional properties of cognitive states are identical to certain phenomenal properties of that state. Their argument can be formed in this way:

- (1) We have introspective knowledge of intentional properties of cognitive states.
- (2) We have introspective knowledge of intentional properties of cognitive states only if cognitive states have phenomenal intentionality.
- (3) Therefore, cognitive states have phenomenal intentionality. (see Smithies 2013a:10-11)

The argument is obviously valid, so if the premises are true, then it is sound. The premise in question is (2) that one should argue for. Premise (1) is basically says that we know the contents of our cognitive states, i.e. we have decide whether we are thinking about a horse or a political theory. However not everyone accepts this simpler proposition.

One way to deny (1) is to claim that we do not have introspective knowledge at all. This was Gilbert RYLE's (1949) strategy who straightforwardly argued for the view that we know our own

minds in the same way that we know the minds of others. In his view we know about our mental states and their content by inference from observation of physical behavior. The problem with his theory (and later with many other theories in philosophy of mind in the 20th century) is that they did not want to acknowledge the presence of phenomenology in our life. Their account cannot explain how one knows what she is thinking where her thoughts do not involve behavioral change.

Another objection against (1) was raised by CARRUTHERS (2011). This is a less radical claim in the sense that it leaves place for introspection but only in case of perception. In this view one cannot have introspective knowledge of intentional properties of cognitive states. Carruthers argues that intentional properties of cognitive states can be known by inference from the introspective knowledge of perception and perceptual knowledge. Unlike RYLE he allows that knowledge of cognitive content has a source in introspection but only from perceptual introspection. This move, however, does not solve the crucial problem that also emerged in RYLE'S theory. There is no way in this view to explain how we know what we are thinking in cases where our thoughts are causally inert with respect to physical behavior.

The more problematic premise to defend is (2). The opponents of phenomenal intentionality can argue that (1) is true, i.e. we have introspective knowledge of intentional properties of cognitive states, although they deny that it should be explained by phenomenal intentionality. Instead of appealing to the claim that intentional properties are identical to certain phenomenal properties in cognition, they explain introspective knowledge of cognition in terms of the operation of a reliable introspective mechanism. Some argue that

...our knowledge of belief can be explained by a “monitoring mechanism” that takes as input a representation that p in the “belief box” and yields as output a representation that I believe that p in the belief box by means of a non-inferential process. Similarly, our knowledge of what we're thinking can be explained by a mechanism that takes as input a representation that p in the “thinking box” and yields as output a representation that I am thinking that p in the belief box. The claim is that such a mechanism generates introspective knowledge even if the representations that it takes as input lack phenomenal intentionality. (SMITHIES 2013a:12)

This kind of objection calls for a more sophisticated answer. In the following part of this section I refuse this view from several different directions. GOLDMAN (1993) attacks this view on the basis of cognitive attitudes. He argues that it fails to explain the introspective knowledge of cognitive attitudes, because the reliable introspective mechanism is not able to determine whether the content is located in, for example, a thinking box or a desire box. His argument relies on Jackson's knowledge argument, he claims that

“...just as someone deprived of any experience of colors would learn new things upon being exposed to them, viz., what it feels like to see red, green, and so forth, so (I submit) someone who had never experienced certain propositional attitudes, e.g., doubt or disappointment, would learn new things on first undergoing these experiences. There is 'something it is like' to have these attitudes, just as much as there is 'something it is like' to see red. In the case of the attitudes, just as in the case of sensations, the features to which the system is sensitive may be microfeatures of the experience.” (GOLDMAN 1993:6)<sup>12</sup>

Another answer to the functionalist view is that it cannot explain the distinctive phenomenal character of our introspective knowledge of cognition. Pitt (2004) argues that introspection of cognition is analogous to perceptual knowledge of objects since both are forms of knowledge by acquaintance. Knowledge by acquaintance is knowledge that is a result of phenomenal acquaintance that phenomenally presents its object as being in some way. When one has a visual experience about a red tomato this object is phenomenally presented in her mind. Similarly when one introspects her thought the thought is also phenomenally presented for her. This phenomenal acquaintance rules out the functionalist analysis.

Finally SMITHIES (2013a) offers a quite different answer. His objection is that the functionalist account relies on an implausible form of reliabilist epistemology. According to Smithies the

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<sup>12</sup> Goldman has a related argument involving cognitive attitudes: the argument from the introspective discriminability of attitude strengths. Subjects' classificational abilities are not confined to broad categories such as belief, desire, and intention; they also include intensities thereof. People report how firm is their intention or conviction, how much they desire an object, and how satisfied or dissatisfied they are with a state of affairs. This again can hardly be explained in functionalist terms. (GOLDMAN 1993:8)

reliability of a belief-forming mechanism is not sufficient to explain knowledge. He demonstrates this by the following case,

...we can imagine a reliable clairvoyant mechanism that is activated by the movements of the President of the United States and yields beliefs about his current location. The existence of such a mechanism is not sufficient to yield knowledge or justified belief about the current location of the President. But if the reliability of a belief-forming mechanism is not sufficient to explain knowledge about the external world, then why suppose that the reliability of an introspective mechanism is sufficient to explain introspective knowledge of one's own mind? (SMITHIES 2013:14)

Just because these beliefs are formed on the basis of a reliable mechanism does not make them justified. Since these mechanisms lack experience it implies that the beliefs in question are not justified. The conclusion is that we cannot avoid the appeal to phenomenology in explaining introspective knowledge of cognitive states. Since both premise (1) and (2) are true, the argument from introspection is sound, hence cognitive states have phenomenal intentionality.

One challenge that phenomenal intentionality has to defeat is that that we have introspective knowledge of intentional properties that seem to be externally determined by their extrinsic properties between them and the environment. One knows by introspection that she thinks that fire is warm, but the intentional properties of her fire-thoughts depend not only on their phenomenal character, but also on the physical properties of fire outside her mind. The proponents of phenomenal intentionality have two options here. First is to deny that cognition has externally individuated intentional properties. Second is to deny that we know these intentional properties by introspection. Third is to argue that our introspective knowledge of the externally individuated properties of cognition can be explained in a way that depends upon our introspective knowledge of the phenomenal properties of cognition.

Other challenge for phenomenal intentionality is to explain the relationship between phenomenology and introspection. One way is to explain the relationship by the nature of phenomenology, i.e. first they need to investigate what phenomenology really is. In this strategy

phenomenology is the source of introspective knowledge. Horgan and Kriegel (2007) argue that phenomenology is a self-presenting feature of one's mind, viz. phenomenal states essentially represent themselves. Second is to argue that we need to examine introspective knowledge in itself.

As we see the phenomenal intentionality debate has a subsidiary but beneficial effect that it has a great impact on the studies of introspection. The sharp contrast between the liberal and conservative philosophers implies some serious methodological questions about the nature and role of introspection. Questions concerning phenomenal consciousness are expected to be settled on the basis on introspection. Although the basic intuition for cognitive phenomenology relies essentially on introspection, nevertheless it hardly can resolve the debate. (SMITHIES 2013a:9-16) SCHWITZGEBEL (2008) argues that introspection is unreliable. As long as we cannot agree even about our phenomenology, we cannot ground philosophical theories of introspection.

#### 2.4. Argument from content determinacy

Semantics includes the level [of description] at which we express beliefs and desires in our intentional utterances, at which we mean things by sentences and mean quite specific things by words inside of sentences. . . . It is part of the persistent objectivizing tendency of philosophy and of science since the seventeenth century that we regard the third-person objective point of view as preferable to, as somehow more “empirical” than, the first person, “subjective,” point of view. What looks then like a simple declaration of scientific fact—that language is a matter of stimulations of nerve endings—turns out on examination to be the expression of a metaphysical preference and, I believe, a preference that is unwarranted by the facts. The crucial fact in question is that performing speech acts—and meaning things by utterances—goes on at a level of intrinsic first-person intentionality. (SEARLE 1987:145)

Following Searle's idea Horgan and Graham (2012) in their seminal paper *Phenomenal Intentionality and Content Determinacy* argue that we cannot explain intentionality of cognition without appealing to phenomenal intentionality. They agree with Searle in the commonsensical idea that one can immediately tell what the content is of her own thoughts and other cognitive states. But Searle's account does not explain what it is that fixes content determinacy and how can

we know about the contents of our thought in this special first-person way. They want to say more about what it is exactly that determines content determinacy in our thoughts. Their argument is:

- (1) Cognitive states have determinate intentionality.
- (2) Cognitive states have determinate intentionality only if cognitive states have phenomenal intentionality.
- (3) Therefore, cognitive states have phenomenal intentionality.

The first premise is about that we know from introspection the contents of our cognitive states and also we know from introspection that their contents are not indeterminate. Despite this apparent phenomenological fact there have been worries about whether the content of thought is radically indeterminate. QUINE (1960) argued for the indeterminacy of translation and that indeterminacy extends through language and is also present in thought contents. Following QUINE, DAVIDSON argued for the indeterminacy of radical interpretation that implies indeterminacy in intentional mental states like beliefs and desires.

It seems obvious that there is a problem with these claims but it is difficult to explain what exactly is mistaken in them. For the purposes of this paper I am satisfied with the reply by HORGAN and GRAHAM:

From the perspective of pre-theoretic common sense, radical indeterminacy theses are wildly implausible. It seems just obvious—as obvious as anything—that the sentences uttered by oneself and others normally have determinate content, that thought itself normally has determinate content, and that sincerely uttered sentences normally are the content-determinate. [...] Also, radical indeterminacy theses seem to confront pragmatic paradoxes so severe that these theses seem well-nigh unintelligible on their face: the very articulation of a thesis of radical indeterminacy seems to presuppose the determinate content of the thesis as thus articulated—contrary to the content (sic!) of the thesis itself. (HORGAN & GRAHAM 2012:321-322)

Before discussing premise (2) let me introduce recent alternative proposals about contents of cognition that fails because of content indeterminacy. These theories are the so-called strong

externalist theories which hold two main theses: (i) intentionality is grounded in a relation between states of the mind and states of the external world, and (ii) without the proper connection between the mind and the wide environment there can be no intentionality at all.

According to Horgan and Graham strong externalism that could be an alternative to phenomenal intentionality has problems also regardless content indeterminacy. This approach is objectionable since we can conceive scenarios where their claims seem highly counterintuitive. We can imagine a case where an accidentally produced, non-evolved and non-designed, brain in a vat has a mental life that includes beliefs about the external world. It seems that this creature entertain thoughts about the external world, nevertheless the suitable causal connection is missing. (see HORGAN, TIENSON and GRAHAM 2004)

The more serious problem for strong externalism about intentional content is that it falls into radical indeterminacy. “Let R be whatever externalist connection, between an inner state of a creature and an object or kind in the creature’s environment, that constitutes mental reference according to a given strongly externalist theory. In general, if there is one R-mapping from a creature’s inner states to objects and/or kinds in the creature’s environment, then there are apt to be numerous other such R-mappings as well.” (Horgan & Graham 2012:327) What is crucial in this argument against strong externalism is that whatever causal connection it posits it always leaves place for indeterminacy. Also what is clearly wrong with this view is that it ignores the first-person perspective about our thoughts,

Now I continue on with defending premise (2) that cognitive states have determinate intentionality only if cognitive states have phenomenal intentionality. As we see in the previous part intentionality of cognition is underdetermined by standard attempts to explain it in terms of its physical-causal basis. According to Horgan and Graham these indeterminacy problems arise in these externalist theories because they do not take phenomenology into their account. Phenomenology is the only thing that can produce the determinate intentionality of cognition. Searle (1987) recognized that we know the content of our cognitive states but did not explained it how we know about it. Horgan and Graham claims that cognitive states have determinate intentionality in virtue of their determinate phenomenal character.



Horgan and Graham argue that our mental states have phenomenal characters such that there is something it is like to undergo them. On their view phenomenal character is distinctively self-presenting to the subject. Self-presenting means that it

...figures directly in the content of higher-order beliefs about one's current phenomenal states: phenomenal character figures in such beliefs as a self-presenting mode of presentation — thereby giving such a belief a specific content that is directly fixed by the phenomenal character of the first-order state itself. The phenomenal character is functioning in the higher order belief as a content determining, self-presenting mode of presentation. This higher-order introspective belief cannot be mistaken or doubted by the subject since it has this special phenomenological connection. (Horgan & Graham 2012:333)

According to their view phenomenology is narrow. It does not depend on external factors (outside one's mind). It is intrinsic, since it is only dependent on phenomenology itself. Also phenomenology is richly intentional, i.e. intentionality is entirely constituted by phenomenological features. They distinguish different aspects of phenomenal intentionality. First phenomenology of perception: "the enormously rich and complex what-it's-like of being perceptually presented with a world of apparent objects, apparently instantiating a rich range of properties and relations—including one's own apparent body, apparently interacting with other apparent objects which apparently occupy various apparent spatial relations as apparently perceived from one's own apparent-body centered perceptual point of view." Second the phenomenology of agency : "the what-it's-like of apparently voluntarily controlling one's apparent body as it apparently moves around in, and apparently interacts with apparent objects in, its apparent environment." Third the cognitive phenomenology: the what-it's-like of phenomenally undergoing various occurrent cognitive states, like occurrent thoughts. They also draw distinction between the phenomenological aspects of cognitive phenomenology. There is a phenomenology of attitude type and a phenomenology of content. The phenomenology of attitude type involves different phenomenal characters in different attitude types. For example there is a phenomenological difference between occurrently hoping that p and occurrently wondering that p. In the case of phenomenology of content there is a phenomenological difference between occurrently thinking

that p and occurrently thinking that q. What is important for the present discussion is the phenomenology of cognitive content. (Horgan & Graham 2012:334)

The phenomenology of cognitive states is intentional and also it is determinately intentional. There is something it is like to occurrently think that 'There is a rabbit' which is different from what it's like to to occurrently think, 'There is a rabbit-stage' or 'There is an undetached rabbit-part'. The determinacy of thought derives from the determinacy of phenomenal intentionality. Cognitive states have determinate intentionality only if cognitive states have phenomenal intentionality. Phenomenal character is available in a first-person perspective on the world. It can only be reached in one's own case. Searle was right to emphasize the role of the first-person perspective, as essential for securing content-determinacy. Horgan and Graham supplemented his thesis by the determinate intentionality of phenomenal character. One knows what she is thinking and there is a determinate phenomenological fact about what she is thinking, because there is something it is like to think a determinate thought.

## 2.6. Implications

How does phenomenal intentionality affect physicalist metaphysics? How could phenomenal intentionality be materialistically naturalized, i.e., located within the natural world as described by the physics? Until we cannot naturalize it, why should we believe that there is such a phenomenon at all? The problem of naturalizing phenomenology still remains a problem. As David Chalmers (1995) indicates locating phenomenal consciousness within the natural order is a very difficult task that is why he called it the hard problem. What phenomenal intentionality teaches us, however, is that from the two central features of our mind –phenomenology and intentionality- it is not only the phenomenal character that raises hard problem but also intentionality involves hard problem.

To the question why should we believe in phenomenal intentionality if we have no hope to naturalize it the answer is that phenomenal intentionality is not just a theoretical tool to reconstruct the nature of our mind. Indeed it has many positive theoretical advantages (it explains both content determinacy itself and also the introspective obviousness of content determinacy) but phenomenal intentionality is also a datum. It is an introspectively evident fact that one can experience. We have to recognize that physicalist naturalization in philosophy can be useful but it needs to take

into account all the relevant introspective data, not just the data that one already has some fairly clear idea how to explain in physicalist terms.

## Summary

*Phenomenology* and *intentionality* are two of the central notions of philosophy of mind. It is often told that not all of our mental states are phenomenally conscious. The most prominent view holds that sensory states, bodily sensations, emotions and moods have a distinctive phenomenal character, while cognitive states do not. One of my goals in this thesis is to defend the view of *cognitive phenomenology* according to which phenomenology cannot be restricted to perception, bodily sensations, emotions and moods, and cognitive states have a *distinctive, essential* and *proprietary* phenomenal character.

After showing that there is indeed phenomenology in cognition my second goal is concerned with the relation between *intentionality* and *phenomenology* in cognition. Many philosopher considered these two features of the mind as metaphysically independent and separated. They held that some mental states possess phenomenal character and lack intentional content and vice versa. In the recent decades, however, the attention for the connection between intentionality and phenomenology remarkably increased. In this thesis I argue for the phenomenal intentionality of our cognitive states. According to phenomenal intentionality all intentionality is exhibited by phenomenally conscious states in virtue of their phenomenal character, i.e. intentionality has its source in phenomenology. My claim here is that cognitive states are intentional in virtue of their phenomenal character. Defending cognitive phenomenology in the first place makes phenomenal intentionality a plausible account of cognition.

A great implication of this approach is that the phenomenal intentionality account of cognition could close the way for metaphysical separatism, since the separatist theories about intentionality and phenomenology rely on the fact that thoughts have no distinctive phenomenal character. By positing a plausible account of cognitive phenomenology and phenomenal intentionality of cognition we are one step closer to find the *mark of the mental*.

The aim of my thesis is twofold. First I argue for cognitive phenomenology and present arguments in more detailed way than they were presented before. Cognitive phenomenology is a crucial premise of cognitive phenomenal intentionality. After defending cognitive phenomenology I argue for phenomenal intentionality in cognitive states. I show that all intentionality in occurrent cognition is derived from phenomenology.

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