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Phenomenology and qualitative research

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The basic questions

- The application of phenomenology in qualitative research
- Is it possible?
- Is it worthwhile?
- How to do it?
- The answers to these questions differ widely
- Present aspects of the ongoing debate
- Offer some answers of my own

Applied phenomenology

- Phenomenologically informed qualitative research foregrounds the subjective perspective
- Rather than focusing on subpersonal causes and correlates, the focus is on experience and meaning
- If faced with an individual with, say, cerebral palsy, the focus is not on the lesions of the upper motor neurons, but on what it is like for the individual to live with that condition, how does it affect his or her experiential life
- Human experience is a topic worthy of extensive exploration
- The experiential claims and concerns of the participating subjects must be taken serious
- What is the relation between philosophical phenomenology and qualitative research?

Contemporary qualitative research

- Smith: *Interpretative phenomenological analysis*
- Van Manen: *Hermeneutic Phenomenology*
- Giorgi: *Descriptive phenomenological method*
- Applied psychology, nursing studies, educational research
- Controversies:
 - *Should phenomenological qualitative research remain purely descriptive or employ interpretation?*
 - *Should it seek to disclose essential structures or rather focus on the particularity of individual persons?*
 - *Should it embrace and adopt part of Husserl's philosophical methodology, or should it rather let its research be guided by various phenomenological concepts and distinctions?*

Jonathan Smith

- Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) is phenomenological since it aims to “explore the participant’s view of the world and to adopt, as far as is possible, an ‘insider’s perspective’ of the phenomenon under study”
- Idiographic focus
- No interest in essential structures, but in microanalyses of concrete cases
- How does George experience being homeless, or how does Anna experience being a mother
- Departure from Husserlian phenomenology
- No reference to reduction, and no restriction to description
- Human beings are always already engaged in interpretative meaning-making activities
- According to IPA, the primary role of the researcher is: (i) to invite the participant to share an episode of sense making; (ii) to act as a witness to its articulation; (iii) and then, in turn, to make sense of it.
- This is what aligns IPA with Heidegger’s hermeneutic phenomenology.

Jonathan Smith

- Is it sufficient to consider the perspective of the agent/patient/client in order to make the approach phenomenological?
- Is this sufficient to make the approach distinct from other approaches in qualitative research?
- IPA claims to be phenomenological because it seeks to examine experience according to its “own terms, rather than according to predefined category systems”
- Is there not more to phenomenology than this?
- Reply: “Philosophy does not own phenomenology”
- Philosophers have simply formalized something all of us were already doing
- Van Manen:
 - *Smith has hijacked the term phenomenology to gain more readers*
 - *Smith’s methodology is “hopelessly misrepresentative of phenomenology in any acceptable sense”*
 - *The program of IPA is far too shallow and superficial to qualify as phenomenological in the original sense of the term*

Max van Manen

- Van Manen is explicit about the philosophical character of phenomenology and about the need to return to the origin and consult “the primary literature, tradition, and movements of phenomenology”
- He insists on including a hermeneutical, interpretative component
- The aim of phenomenology is to study the lived meaning of experience
- The basic phenomenological question is “what is this experience like”
- The “basic method of phenomenological analysis consists of the epoché and the reduction”
- Phenomenologists engage in the epoché and reduction in order to grasp “the phenomenological meaning of a human experience”
- “Phenomenology is the study of the phenomena, and the phenomena are someone’s experiences”

Max van Manen

- *Phenomenology of practice* (2014) has been praised as offering a substantial clarifications of the central phenomenological concepts and a particularly enlightening treatment of what it actually means to do phenomenological research
- Stressing the importance of not presenting the project and methodology of phenomenology in an overly technical manner
- “the heuristic reduction, the hermeneutic reduction, the experiential reduction, and the methodological reduction”.
- “the eidetic, ontological, ethical, radical, and originary reduction
- the revocative, evocative, invocative, convocative and provocative method
- reduction, deduction, induction, preduction, production, abduction and seduction
- Complete hodgepodge of self-invented and/or incompatible concepts
- Does who do phenomenology and does who study phenomenological philosophy
- The latter are often unwilling “to look phenomenology in the face”

Amedeo Giorgi

- Giorgi's phenomenological psychology is an adaption of Husserl's philosophical method – with particular focus on Husserl's lectures on Phenomenological Psychology
- Applied phenomenology requires an understanding of the philosophical underpinnings
- Overarching aim: To offer a faithful description of the essential structures of lived experience
- Three elements:
 - Phenomenological reduction: Resist from positing as existing any object or state of affairs. Maintain the focus on what is given, and explore that, without being pulled in by the object
 - Descriptive, rather than explanatory or interpretative. Focus on what is being experienced by the experiencer without adding or subtracting anything
 - Search for essential invariant structures

Amedeo Giorgi

- Adopting the phenomenological method in the human sciences requires that the researcher “brackets or disengage from all past theories or knowledge about the phenomenon” and “withholds existential assent of the phenomenon” (1994: 206).
- It is essential that the researcher assumes the “attitude of the phenomenological reduction which means that she must resist from positing as existing whatever object or state of affairs is present to her. The researcher still considers what is given to her but she treats it as something that is present to her consciousness and she refrains from saying that it actually is the way it presents itself to her” (2012: 4).
- The scientific research cannot claim phenomenological status unless it is supported by some use of the reduction

Transcendental philosophy

- Husserl introduced the epoché and the reduction in order to highlight the distinct transcendental philosophical nature of phenomenology
- In order to make it clear why phenomenology was not a form of descriptive psychology?
- Philosophy is faced with a number of basic epistemological and metaphysical questions
- It cannot engage with these questions in a sufficiently radical manner unless it suspends certain core metaphysical assumptions
- The purpose of the epoché is to bracket the *natural attitude*, suspend our automatic belief in and reliance on the mind-independent existence of the world
- The purpose of the epoché and reduction is to liberate us from our natural dogmatism and make us aware of our own constitutive involvement, make us realize to what extent consciousness, reason, truth, and being are essentially interlinked
- In this way, we will eventually, according to Husserl, be able to accomplish our main, if not sole, concern as phenomenologists, namely to transform “the universal obviousness of the being of the world—for him the greatest of all enigmas—into something intelligible” (Husserl 1970: 180).
- Is it really crucial for physiotherapists, nurses, occupational psychologists and educators who want to use phenomenology in the research and clinical practice that they perform the epoché and reduction?

Phenomenological psychology

- Phenomenology can provide psychology with a solid eidetic foundation
- This is obvious the moment it is realized that psychology is the science of consciousness (and not of behaviour)
- The first step of a scientifically rigorous psychology is to obtain detailed descriptions of its own subject matter
- In order to obtain these descriptions, psychology must employ a particular method, the phenomenological-psychological reduction
- You can only attain your subject matter as a psychologist if you employ a universal epoché of validity (*Geltungsepoché*)
- Does this not prove Giorgi's point?

Ambiguities I

- Two very different arguments in Husserl
- First argument
- Every science, including physics, must employ an epoché (understood as a certain abstraction) in order to focus on its own distinct subject matter
- Reduction in the sense of a narrowing rather than expansion of focus
- They all have to engage in what Husserl calls an *abstraktive Einstellungsänderung*
- This kind of epoché and reduction is in short not distinctive to phenomenological psychology
- The psychological-phenomenological epoché and reduction have very little in common with the real epoché and reduction
- The psychic phenomena remain worldly facts that belong to animals and human beings inhabiting a pre-existing and taken for granted world
- The psychological epoché and reduction take place within the natural attitude
- The phenomenological-psychological epoché is 'uneigentlich', 'unecht'

Ambiguities II

- Second argument
- The psychological reduction is the first step, and it has to be completed by the transcendental reduction
- “Thus we see with surprise, I think, that in the pure development of the idea of a descriptive psychology, which seeks to bring to expression what is essentially proper to souls, there necessarily occurs a transformation of the phenomenological-psychological epoché and reduction into the *transcendental*” (Husserl 1970, 256).
- In the end there is no such thing as a pure non-transcendental psychology
- “pure psychology in itself is identical with transcendental philosophy as the science of transcendental subjectivity” (1970, 258).

Interim conclusion

- It is questionable whether the (real) epoché and reduction are essential to phenomenological psychology understood as a distinct non-transcendental human science
- First reading: the psychological epoché and reduction have little in common with the phenomenological epoché and reduction
- Second reading: They have a lot in common, but this very fact undermines the very independence of phenomenological psychology, which by necessity is absorbed into transcendental phenomenology

Descriptive focus

- New strategy
- Let us focus on the early Husserl
- It is by performing the epoché that we can make our conscious life a proper theme of investigation, and explore the how rather than the what of experience
- It is by performing the epoché that we are able to bracket and suspend our various theoretical presuppositions and prejudices and thereby turn to things themselves
- Both claims are mistaken
- Consider Husserl's descriptive phenomenology in *Logical Investigations*
- It contained no reference to the epoché and reduction
- Consider Reinach's 1914 lecture *What is phenomenology?*
- It discussed the phenomenological attitude, the return to things themselves, the fine-grained description of experience and the nature of the eidetic intuition.
- It contains no reference to the epoché and reduction
- Explanation: The early Husserl and Reinach are not engaged in transcendental phenomenology, and consequently have no need for the epoché and the reduction

Epoché and reduction

- Not only theoretically unjustified but responsible for the generation of a lot of misunderstandings
- Paley claims that Husserl tried to “break out of experience (into the realm of pure consciousness) through the phenomenological reduction”
- Langdrige writes that Husserl sought to “take a ‘God’s eye view’ on experience”
- Gaudet and Robert have recently argued that Husserl’s aim was to “adopt a point of view ‘from nowhere’” and erase his own presence from the analytical work, for which reason his pursuit is similar to that of the positivists

Summarizing the findings

- 3 dangers in much existing research
 - *Too superficial (it is just about paying attention to experience)*
 - *Too philosophical (using too many technical concepts whose relevance remains obscure)*
 - *Misplaced methodological requirements (qualitative researchers should adopt a specific philosophical attitude)*
- How then to proceed?
- Learn from other successful applications of phenomenology
- Classical phenomenological psychology, phenomenology psychiatry and naturalized phenomenology
- Data gathering
- Data interpretation

The phenomenological interview

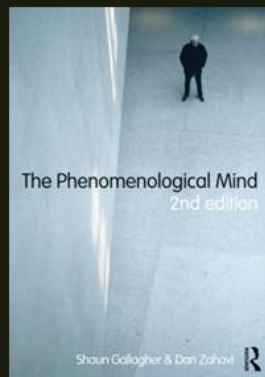
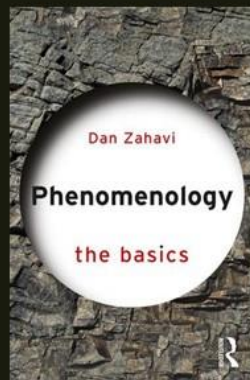
- The phenomenological interviewer is not supposed to ask questions or as few questions as possible, in order not to exert undue influence on the subject
- Hands-off approach – turn on the microphone and wait...
- But what if the participants who are being interviewed have nothing to say or are only able to offer very coarse and superficial descriptions?
- Phenomenological psychiatrists working on schizophrenia pursue a very different strategy
 - EASE – checklist consisting of 57 items inspired and informed by philosophical phenomenology
 - Support a systematic clinical exploration and assessment of experiential anomalies
- Using the checklist to conduct semi-structured interviews, they engage proactively and exploratively with the patient
- They ask questions about specific dimension and structures of experience and are thereby able to elicit descriptions concerning domains considered to be of particular relevance
- Applied phenomenology is not simply about eliciting first-person reports from the patients. It is about actively employing a comprehensive theoretical framework in the investigation

Minkowski's *Lived Time*

- Insights from phenomenology is of crucial value for the clinical practice
- By employing phenomenological ideas and a phenomenological framework and approach, it is possible to gain some access to the otherwise impenetrable world of the patient and to expand the scope of psychiatric knowledge
- Mutual enlightenment
- Some of the relatively abstract phenomenological considerations can not only become more concrete and tangible as a result of their application in psychopathology, but psychopathological research can also lead to a refinement of the phenomenological analyses, insofar as they call attention to specific aspects or dimensions that have hitherto been disregarded
- "It was never a question of transposing purely and simply the data and methods used by a given philosopher into the realm of psychopathological facts. That would have led inevitably to a 'hyperphilosophizing' of psychopathology, a danger I carefully avoided and against which I warned my young colleagues who were following in my path; it would have risked deforming psychopathology entirely".

Recommendations

- Look beyond the three positions from qualitative research
- Look to existing successful applications of phenomenology: classical phenomenological psychology, phenomenological psychiatry, naturalized phenomenology
- Applied phenomenology is not simply about eliciting first-person reports from the patients. It is about actively employing a comprehensive theoretical framework in the investigation
- There are other features of philosophical phenomenology that are of far more relevance to the qualitative researcher than the epoché and the reduction
- Consider, for instance, phenomenology's criticism of scientism and its recognition of the importance of the lifeworld.
- Its insistence on developing an open-minded and non-biased attitude.
- Its careful analysis of human existence, where the subject is understood as an embodied and socially and culturally embedded being-in-the-world.
- Productive use of phenomenological concepts (empathy, lifeworld, pre-reflective experience, embodiment)
- The phenomenological tools being employed must show their pertinence, must make a valuable difference, must allow for, say, new insights or better therapeutic interventions
- Avoid excessive orthodoxy: Assess the value of the procedure on the basis of the results it deliver and not on whether it accords with what Husserl or Heidegger had to say about the matter.



Thanks for your attention!

Dan Zahavi (2018): "Getting it quite wrong: van Manen and Smith on phenomenology" *Qualitative Health Research*

Dan Zahavi and Kristian Martiny (2019): "Phenomenology in nursing studies: New Perspectives" *International Journal of Nursing Studies*

Dan Zahavi (2019): "Applied phenomenology: Why it is safe to ignore the epoché" *Continental Philosophy Review*

Some Thoughts on Conducting Phenomenological Qualitative Research

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Zahavi's recent writings concerning phenomenological methodology

- Zahavi, (2018). Getting it quite wrong: van Manen and Smith on phenomenology. *Qualitative Health Research*. DOI: 10.1177/1049732318817547
- Zahavi, (2019). Phenomenology in nursing studies: New perspectives. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*. DOI: 10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2019.01.014

My own writings on phenomenological methodology

- 李維倫 (2016)：〈從實證心理學到實踐心理學：現象學心理學的本土化知識之道〉。《台灣心理諮商季刊》。8卷2期，1-15。
- Lee, W.L. (2016). Phenomenology as a method for indigenous psychology. In C. T. Fischer, L. Laubscher, and R. Brooke (eds.) The Qualitative Vision for Psychology: An Invitation to a Human Science Approach, 156-172. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press.
- Lee, W.L. (2014). Bracketing into Face-to-Face Encounters: The Conjunction of the Epistemological and Existential Dimensions of Phenomenological Methodology. In G. Y. Lau and C. C. Yu (eds.) Border-Crossing: Phenomenology, Interculturality and Interdisciplinarity. Würzburg : Königshausen & Neumann. 115-129.
- 李維倫、賴憶嫻 (2009)：〈現象學方法論：存在行動的投入〉。《中華輔導與諮商學報》。25期，275-321。
- 李維倫 (2004)：〈以「置身所在」做為心理學研究的目標現象及其相關之方法論〉。《應用心理研究》。22期，157-200。

The question:

What entitles a qualitative research to be named as phenomenological?

- The empirical researchers who engage themselves in phenomenological approach are those who do not satisfied with the mainstream scientism and seek for alternatives to have a better understanding of the target phenomena in order to advance their goal of helping people, taking the helping professions as example.
- Recently Zahavi (2018) raised the issue that *“phenomenologically informed qualitative research has different aims than phenomenological philosophy, but it is questionable whether the former can qualify as phenomenological if it either ignores or misinterprets the latter.”*
- Indeed, since phenomenology is originally a philosophical school, one may wonder what is that which makes an empirical qualitative research to be claimed as phenomenological?

The question:

What entitles a qualitative research to be named as phenomenological?

- Speaking differently, the question is how the method used and the result presented in a qualitative research can qualify as phenomenological if it is claimed to be so.
- One may tend to think that getting familiar with the philosophical works in phenomenology is basic and necessary.
- I agree with that getting familiar with the original thinkers' works in phenomenology is very helpful for conducting phenomenological qualitative research, but knowing phenomenology, however, does not equal to doing phenomenology.
- Besides, the familiarity along is not enough for handling empirical data and the various aspects of empirical research properly.

The question:

What entitles a qualitative research to be named as phenomenological?

- The key then is not just getting familiar with philosophical phenomenology but how to conduct empirical phenomenological research in accordance with philosophical phenomenology in a distinctive sense.

The question:

What entitles a qualitative research to be named as phenomenological?

- In the field of philosophy, phenomenology has been recognized as an umbrella term covering the thoughts of Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Sartre as so on.
- While there must be identifiable common characteristics of these thinkers that bring them together under the term of phenomenology, their thoughts, nonetheless, sometimes appear not just incoherent but even contradictory to each other.
- What is, then, that of philosophical phenomenology which a phenomenological qualitative research has to be in accordance with?
- How can this “accordance” be properly achieved?

One answer:

The lifeworld accepted and the reduction rejected

- To this question, Zahavi (2018, 2019) suggested that an empirical qualitative research can be qualified as a phenomenological one if it employs notions such as the lifeworld, the lived body, spatiality or temporality to elucidate the empirical data.
- It seems that the use of phenomenological notions derived from philosophical phenomenology are the criteria for an empirical research to be phenomenological.
- Surprisingly, beside this what to do, Zahavi also suggested a thing not to do, i.e., there is no need for empirical qualitative researchers to perform epoché and phenomenological reduction in their studies.

The lifeworld accepted and the reduction rejected

- Zahavi's suggestions, both the thing to do and the thing not to do, reminds me a debate within the circle of empirical phenomenological researchers.
- The debate stemmed from the hesitation toward bracketing/epoché and phenomenological reduction.
- The debate is about how to incorporate ontological phenomenological understandings about human existence into the operation of phenomenological method since the core of the latter is bracketing, that is, the suspension of presuppositions, which may include any ontological understanding.

The lifeworld accepted and the reduction rejected

- While some scholars insist on the rigorousness and doability of bracketing/epoché and phenomenological reduction, others also point out the inevitability of presuming the ontological status of the lifeworld, and the necessity to employ ontological phenomenological understandings, such as spatiality, temporality, and embodiment.
- Correspondingly, as the notion of lifeworld is welcomed by the researchers in empirical phenomenological studies, most of them hold the view that Husserl's transcendental reduction is impossible and incompatible with their interest in mundane experiences.

The lifeworld accepted and the reduction rejected

- As a result, most of the empirical researchers in phenomenological approach are inclined to a modified version of partial reduction which aims at bracketing, or “bridling” as Dahlberg (2006) proposes, our presuppositions in order to achieve a kind of openness to the lifeworld.
- It is partial because it still holds the impossibility in suspending the presumption of the lifeworld.
- In other words, some presuppositions are seen as blockages to our openness and the lifeworld is the presumed goal of investigation.
- For these researchers, the purpose of performing the phenomenological reduction is to avoid prejudices and enter the lifeworld.

The way I see it

- As a clinical psychologist and an empirical researcher in phenomenological approach, I am on the same page with those who are concerned with human existences in worldly contexts. However, I also agree with Husserl's worry about the vicious circle of tautology: if we hold the existential conditions as un-bracketable, how can we know they are not only perspectives but indispensable essences?
- It is clear that Husserl would not accept this modification and insists on securing the ground of knowledge. (Dahlberg, 2006; Naberhaus, 2005)

The way I see it

- As I disagree with both the idea of partial reduction and the function of reduction as avoiding prejudices (Lee, 2014), I am also hesitate to agree with Zahavi's suggestions for the things to do and not to do regarding what a phenomenological empirical research should be.
- I will address my view, corresponding to Zahavi's suggestions, in terms of the following topics:
 - The problem of employing the notion of lifeworld within natural attitude.
 - The necessity of bracketing/epoché and phenomenological reduction
 - What can be achieved with a “phenomenologically-informed” interview method?

The problem of employing the notion of lifeworld within the natural attitude

- Even one believe those existential conditions such as the lifeworld, embodiment and so on, are indispensable essence of human existence, does this guarantee one's understanding of "lifeworld," for example, being proper to the "lifeworld" proposed by Husserl?
- Is it possible that one takes the notion of lifeworld as the world of natural attitude?
- How can we help someone to differentiate the notion of lifeworld from the world of natural attitude? Can we do it without appealing to phenomenological reduction?

The problem of employing the notion of lifeworld within the natural attitude

- In addition to the danger of trapping in the natural attitude, the meaning of lifeworld could not be properly grasped if one fails to understand the phenomenological reduction.
- According to Husserl, The lifeworld as pre-given can be accessible “*only through a total change of the natural attitude.*” (Husserl, 1970) That is, the lifeworld is not about actual beings but about the constituting process of beings revealed after the transcendental phenomenological reduction. The lifeworld is thus transcendental.

The problem of employing the notion of lifeworld within the natural attitude

- On the other hand, Husserl also indicates that, *“among the objects of the lifeworld we also find human beings, with all their human action and concern, works and suffering, living in common in the world-horizon in their particular social interrelations and knowing themselves to be such.”* (Husserl, 1970) That is to say, the lifeworld is where human beings find their own existence as social-cultural, historical, interpersonal, and bodily. The lifeworld is, therefore, also existential.

The problem of employing the notion of lifeworld within the natural attitude

- In other words, those notions such as intentionality and the lifeworld are to be discovered after epoché and phenomenological reduction; we can only see those structures after the reduction, not before.
- It then becomes clear that the presumptions to be set aside by epoché are not epistemologically the same with the pre-givenness of our being in the lifeworld.
- There is, therefore, no contradiction in accepting both the lifeworld and the reduction; the reduction is a necessity for understanding the lifeworld.

The necessity of phenomenological reduction

- Although Zahavi (2019) rightly noted that “... *the performance of the epoché and reduction can make us aware of our own constitutive contribution, ... (and) the extent to which our own subjective accomplishments are at play when worldly objects appear in the way they do and with the validity and meaning that they have, ... ,” he nonetheless suggested that the empirical qualitative researchers have no need to perform epoché and the phenomenological reduction when they conduct phenomenological research.*

The necessity of phenomenological reduction

- “By contrast, my recommendation is that the qualitative researcher should not only forget about the epoché (there is no need for a general suspension of our natural attitude) but should also approach and investigate the phenomenon (or conduct the interview) in light of quite specific prior ideas and notions, namely, notions taken from phenomenological theory.” (Zahavi, 2018)
- “Here is our surprising advice. Qualitative researchers should forget about getting the epoché and the reduction right, since those methodological steps strictly speaking are irrelevant for the purpose at hand.” (Zahavi, 2019)

The necessity of phenomenological reduction

- By stating that “*there is no need for a general suspension of our natural attitude*” and that “*since those methodological steps strictly speaking are irrelevant for the purpose at hand,*” Zahavi seemed to suggest empirical research should stay in the realm of natural attitude and accept all the world presumptions of realism.
- Yet, what is the scientism criticized by phenomenological thinkers? Isn't it the view taking the world essentially as being material, objective and causal reality? Isn't it the scientific materialism rejected by phenomenology?

The necessity of phenomenological reduction

- Without appealing to phenomenological reduction, how can one step out of the tautology of “*our constitutive contribution*,” i.g., scientific materialism, when conducting an empirical qualitative analysis?
- How can a empirical research be qualified as phenomenological if it founds itself on scientific materialism?
- Without performing the reduction, a researcher with natural attitude will treat the notions taken from phenomenological theory just like other pre-established theoretical concepts to be superimposed on the phenomena of investigation.

The necessity of phenomenological reduction

- While we address the necessity of phenomenological reduction, an inevitable question then would be, what is the reduction that can be performed in empirical research?
- Furthermore, should the meaning and definition of the reduction be only confined in Husserl's transcendental phenomenology when phenomenology is recognized as an umbrella term and as a movement?

The necessity of phenomenological reduction

- In the Preface of *Phenomenology of Perception* (2005) Merleau-Ponty wrote:
- “Far from being, as has been thought, a procedure of idealistic philosophy, phenomenological reduction belongs to existential philosophy: Heidegger’s ‘being-in-the-world’ appears only against the background of the phenomenological reduction.” (p. xvi)
- Doesn’t it mean that there are various versions of phenomenological reduction among those original thinkers in phenomenology?

The necessity of phenomenological reduction

- I would suggest, however, that there is no need to argue which version of reduction is the “right” one, since, through taking up the project of reduction differently, the thinkers all achieved significant understanding to human experience and expanded the scope of phenomenology.
- With this view, there appears a horizon of the possibility of phenomenological reduction.

The necessity of phenomenological reduction

- I will further suggest that, it is this methodological horizon of phenomenological reduction that the empirical qualitative researchers should step onto if they are attracted to the phenomenological approach.
- This step-onto can be done by articulating the researcher's own way of performing the phenomenological reduction in accordance with the given conditions of an empirical research.

The reduction expanded

- For example, Høffding and Martiny (2015) provided their understanding about the interviewed description of experience as: *“in a phenomenological interview the experience is co-generated by interviewee and interviewer together. ...Therefore, the object of analysis in our case is the co-generated description of experience,... .”* (Høffding and Martiny, 2015)

The reduction expanded

- I welcome that the authors adhered to the principle of phenomenological “evidencing” in admitting the data faced by a phenomenological empirical researcher is “*the co-generated description of experience.*”
- I will then suggest further, in accordance with the principle of evidencing, that “*the co-generated description of experience*” is recorded in a written text when it is brought to the researcher.
- That is to say, what a researcher comes to a face-to-face encounter is neither with the interviewee’s “intact” experience nor with the event of the interview, but the written text bearing the interview conversation which thematizes the interviewee’s experience.

The reduction expanded

- Accordingly, the researcher should develop a series of steps for phenomenological reduction that is able to deal with written interview conversation.
- This would be a process from text to existence, as Paul Ricoeur would suggest.

The reduction expanded

- Regarding this matter of dealing with written interview conversation, I have developed a method of reduction based on Heidegger's understanding of language, Ricoeur's hermeneutic phenomenology and pragmatics in linguistics. (李維倫, 2004)
- Another example of mine in founding research on the basis of phenomenology is that, I examined and modified Giorgi's protocol analysis with the phenomenological principle of evidencing in order to have the analysis on first-person description of experience. (李維倫、賴憶嫻, 2009)

The reduction expanded

- In addition, to search for a feasible way of performing Husserlian reduction in psychological research, I clarified the confusing ideas surrounding the epoché and the reduction among empirical researchers, and suggested that the natural attitude to be bracketed in the transcendental phenomenological reduction is the belief of causal temporality in everyday knowing. (Lee, 2014).

The reduction expanded

- Furthermore, to my concern with indigenous psychology, I discussed how phenomenology can be a method to achieve the goal of indigenous psychological research, and how the scope of phenomenology gets expanded when it joins the empirical research concerning culture and ethnicity. (Lee, 2016)

What can be achieved with a “phenomenologically-informed” interview method?

- To improve interview technique is not just welcome but also necessary for phenomenological qualitative research.
- The detailed and thorough interview data can serve as a solid foundation for further phenomenological analysis.
- Nonetheless, an interview method designed with the phenomenological notions is not sufficient to produce phenomenological understandings.
- With the prevailing of the natural attitude, there is no guarantee that this kind of interview method can grant the researcher the phenomenological attitude.

What can be achieved with a “phenomenologically-informed” interview method?

- For example, the term “pre-reflective” used by Petitmengin (2006) who proposed an interview technique named by Zahavi (2019) as “the micro-phenomenological interview,” only indicates the state not-yet being focused by the consciousness.
- “To Petitmengin, the pre-reflective is that which is ‘not yet conscious’ (Petitmengin 2007, 55, Note 1). A strong interpretation of this statement is that pre-reflective experience is not conscious at all, but this would be a misunderstanding of the notion ‘pre-reflective’ (Zahavi 2011a, 9–10).” (Høffding and Martiny, 2015)

What can be achieved with a “phenomenologically-informed” interview method?

- Another example is that, the Examination of Anomalous Self-Experience (EASE) can be said as phenomenologically-informed symptom checklist, a tool for identifying various anomalous self-experience. It is a result of the application of phenomenological understandings rather than a phenomenological method itself.

What can be achieved with a “phenomenologically-informed” interview method?

- The result of this kind of improvement of interview for detailed and thorough description of subjective experience is, at its best, phenomenal but not phenomenological, not to mention the presumptions it holds like “inner cognitive operation” and the central theory of neurology.
- It might be fair to say that the “phenomenology” here actually means “symptomology,” as used in the field of psychiatry.

Interview as a guided tour

- How could, then, a proper way of conducting interview be for a phenomenological qualitative research?
- Surely the interview is a dynamic process in which the interviewer need to head toward his/her goal without obstructing the flow of unfolding as the interviewee verbalizes his/her experience.
- The sequence of unfolding of the interviewee's verbalization should be respected for it might reveal how the interviewee lived through that experience.

Interview as a guided tour

- Accordingly, my metaphor for interviewing would be that, the interviewee is like our tour guide to the field of a particular human experience. We follow the guide with the preparation for a kind of phenomenological “sightseeing”, i.e., not just being open-minded or wondering but seeing with imagining the experiential scene.
- This is surely an active participation rather than passive hand-off recording.

Interview as a guided tour

- In this way, the interviewee is allowed to describe his/her experience within the natural attitude, for it is too demanding to expect the interviewee to enter the phenomenological attitude while being interviewed..
- The responsibility of a research being phenomenological is not put onto the shoulders of the interviewer or interviewee (though the interviewer should be able to conduct good interview), but onto that of the researcher who analyzes the data with the method incorporating phenomenological reductions.
- In other words, the researcher who engages the phenomenological reductions within the method of analysis would allow the interviewee to address the experience in his/her own way.

- The subjective experience?
- How wild it affects?
- Personal or “essential structure”?
- Wounded in Temporality: An Existential-Phenomenological Analysis of the Lived Experience of Girls with Childhood Sexual Abuse and Broken Family Relationship
- The lived experience of Chi: The bodily manifestation in perceiving the changing space
- IPA or narrative research?

- The phenomenological-psychological reduction
- The transcendental-phenomenological reduction

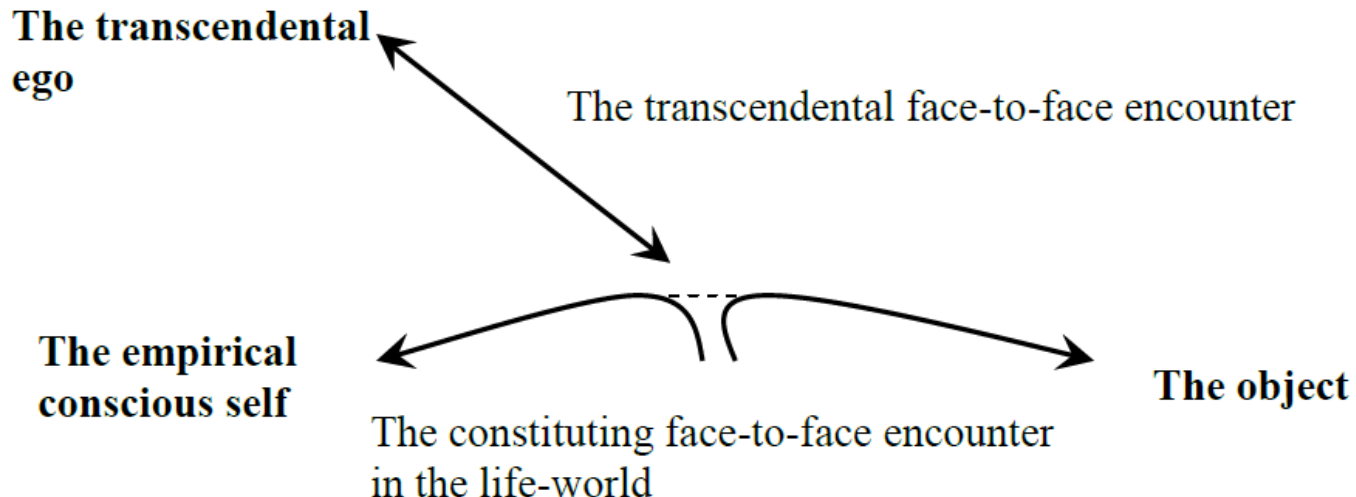
The phenomenological description in empirical studies

- The transcendental reduction that brackets the causal temporality in the natural attitude does not lead us away from the lifeworld; it is the entry into the lifeworld.
- What the transcendental reduction leads us to see is precisely the constitutiveness of the lifeworld.
- That is to say, with the transcendental reduction, we do not separate ourselves from our worldly environment but get close to the world as the “worlding” rather than the “worlded.”
- This “worlding” includes not only about things but also the empirical egos which are also grounded in the causal temporality in the natural attitude and are therefore suspended so as to seeing them not as factual but as constituted.

The phenomenological description in empirical studies

- From the Figure below, we can see in the transcendental encounter the structural position of the life-world.

Figure 2. Structure of the Transcendental Face-to-Face Encounter

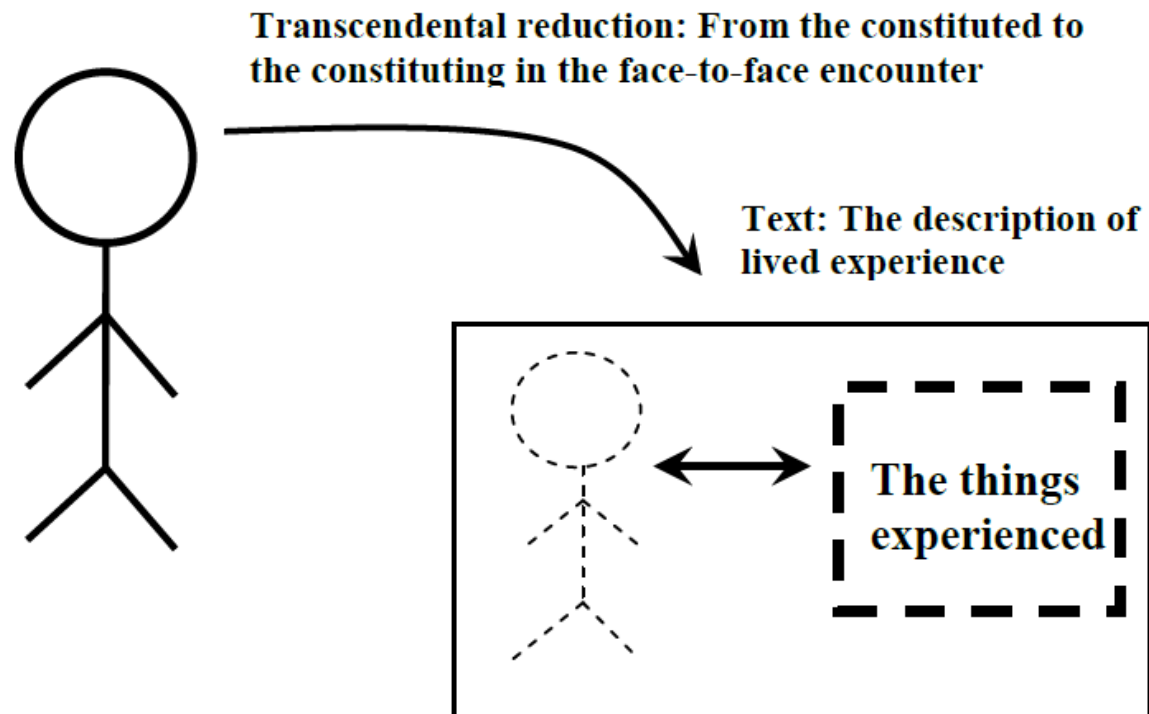


The phenomenological description in empirical studies

- With the life-world thus understood, to describe it, as the empirical researchers intend to do, should not be about the facts or the reality or the worlded, but the constituting or the worlding manifested in a particular face-to-face encounter.
- How is the task of describing the life-world taken accordingly

The phenomenological description in empirical studies

Figure 3. The Related Positions in Reading a Text Phenomenologically



The phenomenological description in empirical studies

- As we the researchers perform phenomenological reductions, we suspend the causal temporalities in the natural and naturalistic attitudes, and thus enter the presence of the face-to-face encounter with the text in which a particular lived experience is described.
- At this moment, there are two kinds of face-to-face encounter. The first is between the researchers and the text, and the other is between the experiencing agent and the things experienced both described in the text.

The phenomenological description in empirical studies

- Due to the suspension of the causal temporalities, the text is not seen by the researchers as a product from a particular person, but as the text bearing the constituting phenomena of the life-world.
- The researchers are thus concerned with and attend to the second face-to-face encounter for the constituting relatedness between the experiencing agent and the things experienced.