Article

Hermeneutic Phenomenology and Phenomenology: A Comparison of Historical and Methodological Considerations

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Abstract

Hermeneutic phenomenology and phenomenology have become increasingly popular as research methodologies, yet confusion still exists about the unique aspects of these two methodologies. This article provides a discussion of the essential similarities and differences between hermeneutic phenomenology and phenomenology from historical and methodological perspectives. Consideration is given to the philosophical bases, assumptions, focus of research and research outcomes that differentiate these approaches.

Keywords: hermeneutic phenomenology, phenomenology, Husserl, Heiddeger, Gadamer, ontology, epistemology, methodology

Introduction

"Only when our entire culture for the first time saw itself threatened by radical doubt and critique did hermeneutics become a matter of universal significance."
Gadamer, 1983, p.100

Historically, many areas of academic research have utilized quantitative or empirical methods. In general, the emphasis of this research is on what is observable and accessible, with researchers focusing primarily on those areas and questions that are amenable to the adherence of empirical methods of inquiry (Gergen, 1985; Valle, King, & Halling, 1989). While researchers continue to place a strong emphasis on these methods, the use of qualitative research methodologies has been growing. Osborne (1994) identifies the early 1980's as a time when greater disenchantment with the limits of logical-empirical research methodologies began. Increasing questions emerged about the focus of inquiry, as well as exploration of methodologies that emphasized discovery, description and meaning rather than prediction, control and measurement. For example, Klein and Westcott (1994) stated that the last 25 years have been a time of growing crisis for mainstream positivistic psychology as both the philosophies and the methodologies used in research are being rethought. Smith (1991) described this as a 'crisis of value' at work that cannot be resolved simply by appealing to traditional forms of logic and authority. In essence, there is a growing recognition of the limitations of addressing many significant questions in the human realm within the requirements of empirical methods and its quest for indubitable truth (Polkinghorne, 1983).

Out of this milieu, a variety of research methodologies have grown in popularity including phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory, and hermeneutic phenomenology (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). As this has occurred, concern has risen about the use of qualitative methodologies without sufficient understanding of the rigor necessary to ethically utilize them (Maggs-Rapport, 2001). More specifically, phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology are often referred to interchangeably, without questioning any distinction between them. The purpose of this article is to discuss the early philosophical development of selected key issues related to phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology and support the position that differences and similarities exist. This exploration will begin with the phenomenology of Husserl and then move to explore heremeneutic phenomenology through Heidegger and Gadamer. Exploration will be given to how these different philosophical perspectives have an impact on the practice of phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology as research methodologies.

As final preface, this exploration needs to be framed as a present understanding of these areas. Speigelberg (1960) described the historical roots of phenomenology as a movement rather than a discrete period of time. This distinction is important as it reflects the view that phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology, and our understandings of them, are not stationary, but rather dynamic and evolving, even today. The ideas presented herein, therefore, must to be viewed as changing and developing over time, not as static entities.

Phenomenology: Edmund Husserl

Often referred to as the father of phenomenology (Cohen, 1987; Koch, 1996; Polkinghorne, 1983; Scruton, 1995), Edmund Husserl's (1859-1938) initial work focused on mathematics, with his dissertation exploring the calculus of variations. Despite this emphasis, Jones (1975) reported that Husserl's interest in philosophy influenced his decision to abandon his plans to teach science and to complete his formal education in philosophy, under Franz Brentano. Husserl's work changed over time, moving from attention to mathematics to seeing phenomenology as equally objective and subjective, and finally having subjectivity dominate his pursuits (Cohen; Reeder,1987) This progression culminated in his interest in 'pure phenomenology' or working to find a universal foundation of philosophy and science (Scruton).

Husserl (1952/1980) criticized psychology as a science that had gone wrong by attempting to apply methods of the natural sciences to human issues. He charged that these pursuits ignored the fact that psychology deals with living subjects who are not simply reacting automatically to external stimuli, but rather are responding to their own perception of what these stimuli mean. Husserl seemed to believe that researchers who attended only to external, physical stimuli that could be isolated and correlated with other isolated responses, not only missed important variables but ignored context and created a highly artificial situation (Jones, 1975).

Phenomenology is essentially the study of lived experience or the life world (van Manen, 1997). Its emphasis is on the world as lived by a person, not the world or reality as something separate from the person (Valle et al., 1989). This inquiry asks "What is this experience like?" as it attempts to unfold meanings as they are lived in everyday existence. Polkinghorne (1983) identified this focus as trying to understand or comprehend meanings of human experience as it is lived. The 'life world' is understood as what we experience pre-reflectively, without resorting to categorization or conceptualization, and quite often includes what is taken for granted or those things that are common sense (Husserl, 1970). The study of these phenomena intends to return and re-examine these taken for granted experiences and perhaps uncover new and/or forgotten meanings.

The attraction of the phenomenological method was, for Husserl (1970), in its promise as a new science of being. Through this methodology, disclosure of a realm of being which presented itself with absolute certainty, arising from experience, seemed possible. Husserl saw this method as a way of reaching true meaning through penetrating deeper and deeper into reality. Phenomenology, in this sense, was seen as a movement away from the Cartesian dualism of reality being something 'out there' or completely separate from the individual (Jones, 1975; Koch, 1995).

The main focus for Husserl was the study of phenomena as they appeared through consciousness. He purported that minds and objects both occur within experience, thus eliminating mind-body dualism. Valle et al. (1989) reported that Husserl viewed consciousness as a co-constituted dialogue between a person and the world. Moreover, he saw access to the structures of consciousness not as a matter of induction or generalization, but as a result of direct grasping of a phenomena. This grasping was seen as an intentional process, actively guided by human intention, not mechanistic causation (Polkinghorne, 1989). Koch (1995) identified that Husserl viewed intentionality and essences as key to our understanding of this phenomenology. Husserl saw intentionality as a process where the mind is directed toward objects of study. Conscious awareness was the starting point in building one's knowledge of reality. By intentionally directing one's focus, Husserl proposed one could develop a description of particular realities. This process is one of coming face to face with the ultimate structures of consciousness. These structures were described as essences that made the object identifiable as a particular type of object or experience, unique from others (Edie, 1987).

A number of different writers have described the process of phenomenological reduction or bracketing, which was developed by Husserl (Jones, 1975; Klein & Westcott, 1994; Osborne, 1994; Polkinghorne, 1983). Husserl proposed that one needed to bracket out the outer world as well as individual biases in order to successfully achieve contact with essences. This is a process of suspending one's judgement or bracketing particular beliefs about the phenomena in order to see it clearly. Jones challenged us to extend our understanding of bracketing beyond a suspension of belief to a cultivation of doubt to help open one's self to the work at hand. While Husserl reportedly did not deny the unusualness of this stance, he continued to support it as a viable pursuit (Edie, 1987).

How does one go about the process of bracketing? Klein and Westcott (1994) described this as a three-fold process including exemplary intuition, imaginative variation, and synthesis. In exemplary intuition, the researcher chooses a phenomena and holds it in his/her imagination. He/she then moves to develop examples of similar experiences through imaginative variation. Finally, integration of these variations is achieved through synthesis of the essences of interest. Polkinghorne (1983) described a two-fold process from Husserl's work. A method of free variation leads the researcher to a description of the invariant or essential structures of the phenomena, without which it would not exist. The use of intentional analysis then focuses on the concrete experience itself and describes how the particular experience is constructed. Osborne (1994) described bracketing as identifying one's presuppositions about the nature of the phenomena and then attempting to set them aside to see the phenomena as it really is. Husserl's goal in doing this was to actually see things 'as they are' through intuitive seeing. He sought to show the purely immanent character of conscious experience by means of careful description.

Hermeneutic phenomenology: Martin Heidegger

Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) was born in Germany and, like Husserl, began his career in a field other than philosophy. While Husserl's start was in science, Heidegger found his in theology. Jones (1975) reported that the philosophy that Heidegger first committed himself to was Husserlian, yet he was never a formal student of Husserl. While both men taught at Freiberg, Heidegger worked with Husserl, who trained him in the processes of phenomenological intentionality and reduction. Evidently, Heidegger

became so proficient in this endeavor that Husserl thought he had found the heir he had been seeking, and he ensured Heidegger succession to his professorship. Once established in Husserl's chair, however, Heidegger disassociated himself from Husserl and his work.

Like phenomenology, hermeneutic phenomenology is concerned with the life world or human experience as it is lived. The focus is toward illuminating details and seemingly trivial aspects within experience that may be taken for granted in our lives, with a goal of creating meaning and achieving a sense of understanding (Wilson & Hutchinson, 1991). The way this exploration of lived experience proceeds is where Husserl and Heidegger disagreed. While Husserl focused on understanding beings or phenomena, Heidegger focused on 'Dasein', that is translated as 'the mode of being human' or 'the situated meaning of a human in the world'. Husserl was interested in acts of attending, perceiving, recalling, and thinking about the world and human beings were understood primarily as knowers. Heidegger, in contrast, viewed humans as being primarily concerned creatures with an emphasis on their fate in an alien world (Annells, 1996; Jones, 1975).

Consciousness is not separate from the world, in Heidegger's (1927/1962) view, but is a formation of historically lived experience. He believed that understanding is a basic form of human existence in that understanding is not a way we know the world, but rather the way we are (Polkinghorne, 1983). Koch (1995) outlined Heidegger's emphasis on the historicality of understanding as one's background or situatedness in the world. Historicality, a person's history or background, includes what a culture gives a person from birth and is handed down, presenting ways of understanding the world. Through this understanding, one determines what is 'real', yet Heidegger also believed that one's background cannot be made completely explicit. Munhall (1989) described Heidegger as having a view of people and the world as indissolubly related in cultural, in social and in historical contexts.

Pre-understanding is a structure for being in the world, according to Heidegger (1927/1962). This pre-understanding is the meanings or organization of a culture that are present before we understand and become part of our historicality of background. Pre-understanding is not something a person can step outside of or put aside, as it is understood as already being with us in the world. Heidegger went as far as to claim that nothing can be encountered without reference to a person's background understanding. Koch (1995) described this as an indissoluble unity between a person and the world. Meaning is found as we are constructed by the world while at the same time we are constructing this world from our own background and experiences. There is a transaction between the individual and the world as they constitute and are constituted by each other (Munhall, 1989).

Interpretation is seen as critical to this process of understanding. Claiming that to be human was to interpret, Heidegger (1927/1962) stressed that every encounter involves an interpretation influenced by an individual's background or historicality. Polkinghorne (1983) described this interpretive process as concentrating on historical meanings of experience and their development and cumulative effects on individual and social levels. Annells (1996) viewed hermeneutics as an interpretive process that seeks to bring understanding and disclosure of phenomena through language. Moreover, hermeneutics is the study of human cultural activity as texts with a view towards interpretation to find intended or expressed meanings (Kvale, 1996). Texts are understood to include things such as written or verbal communication, visual arts and music.

In Heidegger's (1927/1962) opinion, all understanding is connected to a given set of fore-structures, including one's historicality, that cannot be eliminated. One, therefore, needs to become as aware as possible and account for these interpretive influences. This interpretive process is achieved through a hermeneutic circle which moves from the parts of experience, to the whole of experience and back and forth again and again to increase the depth of engagement with and the understanding of texts (Annells,

1996; Polkinghorne, 1983). Kvale (1996) viewed the end of this spiraling through a hermeneutic circle as occurring when one has reached a place of sensible meaning, free of inner contradictions, for the moment.

Hermeneutic phenomenology: Hans-Georg Gadamer

Born in 1900, Hans-Georg Gadamer was a student of philosophy at Marburg and Freiburg in the 1920s. It was there that he was influenced by the work of both Husserl and Heidegger and moved to extend Heidegger's work into practical application (Gadamer, 1976; Polkinghorne, 1983). Gadamer saw the work of hermeneutics not as developing a procedure of understanding, but to clarify further the conditions in which understanding itself takes place: "Hermeneutics must start from the position that a person seeking to understand something has a bond to the subject matter that comes into language through the traditionary text and has, or acquires, a connection with the tradition from which it speaks" (1960/1998, pg. 295)

In agreement with Heidegger's view that language and understanding are inseparable structural aspects of human 'being-in-the world,' Gadamer stated "Language is the universal medium in which understanding occurs. Understanding occurs in interpreting" (1960/1998, p. 389). Gadamer viewed interpretation as a fusion of horizons, a dialectical interaction between the expectation of the interpreter and the meaning of the text (Polkinghorne, 1983). A 'horizon' is a range of vision that includes everything seen from a particular vantage point. A person with no horizon, in Gadamer's view, does not see far enough and overvalues what is nearest at hand, whereas to have a horizon means being able to see beyond what is close at hand. Questioning, he wrote, is an essential aspect of the interpretive process as it helps make new horizons and understandings possible:

Understanding is always more than merely re-creating someone else's meaning. Questioning opens up possibilities of meaning, and thus what is meaningful passes into one's own thinking on the subject...To reach an understanding in a dialogue is not merely a matter of putting oneself forward and successfully asserting one's own point of view, but being transformed into a communion in which we do not remain what we were. (pg. 375)

Gadamer believed that understanding and interpretation are bound together and interpretation is always an evolving process, thus a definitive interpretation is likely never possible (Annells, 1996). While Gadamer (1960/1998) was not opposed to use of methods to increase our level of understanding and to overcome limited perspectives, he was emphatic in his stand that methods are not totally objective, separate or value free from the user. He viewed bracketing not only as impossible, but attempts to do so manifestly absurd (Annells). Koch (1996) described Gadamer's position as one of supporting prejudice as the condition of knowledge that determines what we find intelligible in any situation. These understandings are based on our historicality of being and all understanding will involve some prejudice. He did not support the notion that a knower can leave his/her immediate situation in the present merely by adopting an attitude. His view acknowledged the unquestionable presence of historicality of understanding and he worked to extend the perspective that these positions play a positive role in the search for meaning (Gadamer, 1976).

Phenomenology/heremeneutic phenomenology: Similarities and differences

The phenomenology of Husserl and the hermeneutic phenomenology of Heidegger and Gadamer share some similar components. Both of these traditions arose out of German philosophy, with their creators having worked with and influenced one another. Moreover, each philosopher sought to uncover the life world or human experience as it is lived. They sought to reclaim what they perceived had been lost through the use of empirical scientific explorations within the human realm. Both Husserl and Heidegger were convinced that the world that scientists believed as the world, based on Cartesian dualism, is simply

one life world among many worlds. Both men called for a fresh look at our world and ourselves (Jones, 1975). Despite shared beginnings and common interest in lived experience from a perspective other than a Cartesian one, differences in direction arise between these two traditions. From my perspective, these differences emerge within ontological, epistemological, and methodological realms.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) described questions of ontology (what is the form and nature of reality and what can be known about it); epistemology (what is the nature of the relationship between the knower and what can be known); and methodology (how can the inquirer go about finding out whatever they believe can be known) as essential in critiquing and conducting research. Extensive literature exists comparing Cartesian or positivist to constructivist or interpretivist traditions of research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Gergen, 1985; Kvale, 1996; Packer & Addison, 1989; Pokinghorne, 1983). A brief review of these two traditions and their positions on these issues will help frame the discussion that will follow about differences between phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology.

From an ontological perspective, positivist frameworks view reality as something 'out there' to be apprehended (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). There is an assumption that the world is structured by law like generalities that can be identified, predicted, manipulated or controlled to yield universal statements of scientific theory (Munhall, 1989). Polkinghorne (1983) described this as a 'received' view of science, as something apart from ourselves that we receive and can study, rather than as something we create. From an epistemological stance, the positivist tradition saw a duality between the object of inquiry and the inquirer. Researchers are described as attempting to assume a stance of a disinterested scientist (Denzin & Lincoln). The researcher is seen as being able to obtain a viewpoint, devoid of values or biases (Polkinghorne). Methodologically, specific methods are utilized to try to ensure the absence of the investigator's influence or bias, as this is perceived as a threat to the validity of the results. Consequently, benchmarks of internal/external validity, reliability and objectivity have been developed to facilitate this process (Denzin & Lincoln).

On the other hand, the interpretivist framework of inquiry supports the ontological perspective of the belief in the existence of not just one reality, but of multiple realities that are constructed and can be altered by the knower. Reality is not something 'out there', but rather something that is local and specifically constructed. Realities are not more or less true, rather they are simply more or less informed (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Polkinghorne (1983) described this paradigm as an attitude about knowledge, not a school of thought. Knowledge is seen as the best understandings we have been able to produce thus far, not a statement of what is ultimately real. Epistemologically, this framework sees a relationship between the knower and the known. The notion of value-free research has been challenged as questionable and it is believed that attempts to attain such a stance have resulted in the loss of certain kinds of knowledge about human experience, such as meaning making (Cotterill & Letherby, 1993; Jagger, 1989). Polkinghorne viewed research as a human activity in which the researcher as knower is central. Denzin and Lincoln viewed the investigator and the investigated as interactively linked in the creation of findings, with the investigator as a passionate participant. Methodologically, the interpretivist perspective may evolve, for example, in a process of interpretation and interaction between the investigator and research participants. The primary aims are understanding and the reconstruction of experience and knowledge. Issues of reliability and validity or the quality of this type of research have been addressed through the examination of rigor, trustworthiness, credibility, and authenticity (Beck, 1993; Denzin & Lincoln; Hall & Stevens, 1991).

Ontology and epistemology issues

Similarites and differences exist within the realms of ontology and epistemology for phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology. While Husserl focused more on the epistemological question of the

relationship between the knower and the object of study, Heidegger moved to the ontological question of the nature of reality and 'Being' in the world. As stated earlier, both Husserl and Heidegger took exception to the Cartesian split between mind and body (Jones, 1975). Husserl believed that while such a sharp distinction does not exist, individuals were capable of a direct grasping of consciousness, the essences of whose structures could be seen in intentionality and bracketing (Polkinghorne, 1983). Heidegger, on the other hand, further erased any distinction between the individual and experience, interpreting them as co-constituting each other and unable to exist without the other. From this perspective, he saw bracketing as impossible, as one cannot stand outside the pre-understandings and historicality of one's experience (Heidegger, 1927/1962).

While Husserl is not seen as falling exactly within the positivist frameworks of ontology and epistemology, his early educational focus in the scientific paradigm is seen as a continuing influence in his conceptualizations of philosophy. His conceptualizations of consciousness and the relationship of the knower to it have been described as Cartesian in flavor and focus (Allen, 1995; Koch, 1995). Gadamer (1960/1998) critiques Husserl:

> In a series of many investigations he [Husserl] attempted to throw light on the one-sidedness of the scientific idealization of experience....To me, however, he still seems dominated by the one-sidedness that he criticizes, for he projects the idealized world of exact scientific experience into the original experience of the world, in that he makes perception, as something directed toward merely external physical appearances, the basis of all other experience. (pg. 347)

At heart, he seemed to have a deep need for certainty that pushed him in the direction of making philosophy a rigorous science. There appeared to be an unresolved conflict at the heart of his thought between phenomenology as describing experience and phenomenology as a quest for certainty (Jones, 1975; Madison, 1988).

Heidegger, on the other hand, is critiqued for perhaps going too far in the other direction. Jones (1975) credited Heidegger's move toward questions of ontology, but questioned, as Heidegger also reportedly did, whether this path quickly ended. The extension of Being and Time (Heidegger, 1927/1962) was eventually abandoned and Heidegger's later writing became more obtuse and less technical in nature. Scruton (1995) identified much of Heidegger's work to be incomprehensible and questions how much of it was about his personal spiritual journey rather than philosophy. He also questioned if Heidegger did not also fall prey, as did Husserl, to a quest for universal truths, specifically looking at the human condition and the world.

Methodological issues

Shifting our focus away from Husserl and Heidegger, in particular, and moving toward a broader review of phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology, important distinctions are apparent in methodology. Phenomenological research is descriptive and focuses on the structure of experience, the organizing principles that give form and meaning to the life world. It seeks to elucidate the essences of these structures as they appear in consciousness - to make the invisible visible (Kvale, 1996; Osborne, 1994; Polkinghorne, 1983). Hermeneutic research is interpretive and concentrated on historical meanings of experience and their developmental and cumulative effects on individual and social levels. This interpretive process includes explicit statements of the historical movements or philosophies that are guiding interpretation as well as the presuppositions that motivate the individuals who make the interpretations (Barclay, 1992; Polkinghorne). While Allen (1995) argued that a clear distinction between phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology does not exist, he describes phenomenology as foundationalist, as it seeks a correct answer or valid interpretation of texts not dependent on the

biographical, social or historical position of the interpreter. Hermeneutic phenomenology, in contrast, is described as non-foundationalist, as it focuses on meaning that arises from the interpretive interaction between historically produced texts and the reader.

In light of the descriptions given of these two traditions and their philosophical bases, what impact does this have on their use as research methodologies? Polkinghorne (1983) supported the use of the term methodology rather than method to describe the use of phenomenological and hermeneutic phenomenological traditions. A methodology is not a correct method to follow, but a creative approach to understanding, using whatever approaches are responsive to particular questions and subject matter. Madison (1988) supported the notion that method focuses the researcher on exact knowledge and procedure whereas methodology uses good judgement and responsible principles rather than rules to guide the research process. This use of methodology requires the ability to be reflective, insightful, sensitive to language, and constantly open to experience (van Manen, 1997). Whenever phenomenology or hermeneutic phenomenology is pursued in the research endeavor, however, Osborne (1994) was emphatic that the methodology used needs to follow from and reflect the philosophy chosen as it carries on throughout the project.

In comparing phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology as research methodologies, similarities and differences exist that arise out of the philosophical bases of these traditions. It is interesting to note that while the focus and outcomes of the research, including data collection, subject selection, and the understanding of the lived experience, may be similar, the position of the researcher, the process of data analysis, and the issues of rigor or credibility can provide striking contrasts between these methodologies. While the methodological issues described herein are presented in a structured or step-by-step fashion, it is important to note that the process itself is more often than not cyclical rather than linear in both phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology.

When a decision to engage in research of a particular experience from a hermeneutic or phenomenological perspective is made, the researcher begins a process of self-reflection. For the phenomenologist, this is typically part of the preparatory phase of research and might include the writing down of these reflections for reference during the analysis process (Colazzi, 1978; Polkinghorne, 1989). The purpose of this reflection is to become aware of one's biases and assumptions in order to bracket them, or set them aside, in order to engage the experience without preconceived notions about what will be found in the investigation. This awareness is seen as a protection from imposing the assumptions or biases of the researcher on the study.

In contrast, a hermeneutical approach asks the researcher to engage in a process of self-reflection to quite a different end than that of phenomenology. Specifically, the biases and assumptions of the researcher are not bracketed or set aside, but rather are embedded and essential to interpretive process. The researcher is called, on an ongoing basis, to give considerable thought to their own experience and to explicitly claim the ways in which their position or experience relates to the issues being researched. The final document may include the personal assumptions of the researcher and the philosophical bases from which interpretation has occurred (Allen, 1996; Cotterill & Letherby, 1993). Researchers keep a reflective journal that will assist them in the process of reflection and interpretation. Hertz (1997) outlines examples of the different selves or roles one might bring or represent with them to the research endeavor that are likely to influence the process. The overt naming of assumptions and influences as key contributors to the research process in hermeneutic phenomenology is one striking difference from the naming and then bracketing of bias or assumptions in phenomenology. Both of these positions, however, can be traced to the philosophical beliefs of Husserl and Heidegger.

In both phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology, data can include the researcher's personal reflections on the topic, information gathered from research participants, and depictions of the experience from outside the context of the research project itself, including the arts, such as poetry and painting (Polkinghorne, 1989). Participants for research projects are generally selected based on different criteria than those used to meet statistical requirements. The aim in participant selection in phenomenological and hermeneutic phenomenological research is to select participants who have lived experience that is the focus of the study, who are willing to talk about their experience, and who are diverse enough from one another to enhance possibilities of rich and unique stories of the particular experience (Polkinghorne; van Manen, 1997). The number of participants necessary for studies of this type will vary depending on the nature of the study and the data collected along the way. Researchers may continue, for example, to engage in interviews with participants until they believe they have reached a point of saturation, in which a clearer understanding of the experience will not be found through further discussion with participants (Sandelowski, 1986).

The interview process in both of these traditions works within an environment of safety and trust, that needs to be established at the outset and maintained throughout the project. The interaction in the interview takes place within the context of a relationship, that is central to what is ultimately created (Polkinghorne, 1983). Marcel (1971) supported the presence of a caring relationship as critical to this type of exploration:

> When I say that a being is granted to me as a presence....this means that I am unable to treat him as if he were merely placed in front of me; between him and me there arises a relationship which surpasses my awareness of him; he is not only before me, he is also with me" (pp. 24-26)

It is within the embodied relationship that the text or data will be generated and interpreted in these types of research.

Participants are generally asked to describe in detail their experience of the topic being investigated. The specific question asked is generally very open in nature, with follow up discussion being led not so much by the researcher, but by the participant. Openness is critical and the exchange may be entirely open, with few direct questions asked (Koch, 1996). The reason for this is to encourage the interview process to stay as close to the lived experience as possible. Geertz (1973) described this process as getting at what participants really experienced, from the inside out, not simulations of what they thought they experienced. Kvale (1996) cautioned, however, that it is important to look for not only what is 'said', but what is said 'between the lines'. Hence, verbatims do not necessarily capture all of what is 'really said' in interviews. As well, van Manen (1997) supported the importance of paying attention to silence, the absence of speaking, the silence of the unspeakable and the silence of being or life itself, as it is herein that one may find the taken for granted or the self-evident.

The process of data analysis can proceed in a number of ways in phenomenological research. The following examples demonstrate the diversity possible, but should not be read as a comprehensive exploration of all options. VanKaam (1966) utilized expert judges to review the analysis of the researcher and kept only those that were consensually validated through intersubjective agreement among the judges. This validation was followed by a written description of the phenomenon being studied, that was then applied to randomly selected cases of the sample. Necessary revisions were made and the process occurred again, until the description reached a point of validation. Colazzi (1978) supported reading all research participants descriptions and then returning them to each participant with significant statements extracted by the researcher. Following a 'spelling out' of the meanings of each significant statement, meanings were formulated into cluster themes. A process of validation again occurred, noting discrepancies and integrating new information throughout the process. Once as exhaustive a description

as possible was rendered, it could be returned once again to each research participant for final validation. Giorgi (1985) relied predominately on the insights of the researcher who worked through all data collected to get a sense of the whole and then discriminated meaning units from the descriptions of the phenomenon being studied. Further analysis would yield a synthesis of all meaning units into a consistent statement regarding the participant's experiences, known as the structure of the experience. In each of these methodologies, one can see a working toward meaning through a structured process that is pre-determined, yet influenced by the data. The goal of this analysis is to reach a place of understanding of the experience through the development of an integrated statement about the experience.

In contrast, hermeneutic phenomenology might take a somewhat different approach to data analysis. This process involved one of co-construction of the data with the participant as they engage in a hermeneutic circle of understanding. The researcher and participant worked together to bring life to the experience being explored, through the use of imagination, the hermeneutic circle and attention to language and writing. Koch (1995) stated "Hermeneutics invites participants into an ongoing conversation, but does not provide a set methodology. Understanding occurs through a fusion of horizons, which is a dialectic between the pre-understandings of the research process, the interpretive framework and the sources of information." (p. 835)

The result of this process includes the self-interpreted constructions of the researcher and each participant, thus reflecting many constructions or multiple realities. Allen (1995) stressed the importance of reading and writing as core to the production of meaning in hermeneutic strategy. There cannot be a finite set of procedures to structure the interpretive process, because interpretation arises from pre-understandings and a dialectical movement between the parts and the whole of the texts of those involved. What was called for is an obligation to understand the context under which the text or dialogue was being produced and to bring forth interpretations of meaning. These interpretations arose through a fusion of the text and its context, as well, as the participants, the researcher, and their contexts.

Key aspects of the process are the use of imagination, the hermeneutic circle and attention to language and writing processes. Smith (1991) described hermeneutic imagination as asking for what is at work in particular ways of speaking or acting to help facilitate an ever-deepening appreciation of the world or lived experience. This requires an attentiveness to ways in which language is used, an awareness of life as an interpretive experience, and an interest in human meaning and how we make sense of our lives. To see something in a new imaginative way is to see it other than it has been seen before and to integrate it into a new semantic context (Madison, 1988).

Gadamer (1960/1998) understood hermeneutics as a process of co-creation between the researcher and participant, in which the very production of meaning occurs through a circle of readings, reflective writing and interpretations. Through this process, the search is toward understanding of the experience from particular philosophical perspectives, such as feminist or postmodern positions, as well as the horizons of participants and researcher. Hermeneutic research demands self-reflexivity, an ongoing conversation about the experience while simultaneously living in the moment, actively constructing interpretations of the experience and questioning how those interpretations came about (Hertz, 1997). The use of a reflective journal is one way in which a hermeneutic circle can be engaged, moving back and forth between the parts and the whole of the text (Heidegger, 1927/1962). van Manen (1997) believed writing forces an individual into a reflective attitude in which one writes themselves in a deeply collective way.

This interpretive process continues until a moment in time where one has reached sensible meanings of the experience, free from inner contradictions (Kvale, 1996). However, Caputo (1987) cautiously noted that coming to a place of understanding and meaning is tentative and always changing in the hermeneutic

endeavor. It is therefore necessary to account for one's position and trace one's movement throughout the research process using a hermeneutic circle.

Finally, reliability and validity can be discussed in these traditions as issues of rigor. In phenomenological research, bracketing, which is incorporated into intentional focusing on the experience, is one factor that is central to the rigor of the study. For a hermeneutic phenomenological project, the multiple stages of interpretation that allow patterns to emerge, the discussion of how interpretations arise from the data, and the interpretive process itself are seen as critical (Koch, 1995).

A complete review of issues of rigor in qualitative research is beyond the scope of this article. A wide variety of conceptualizations exist in this area, and in some cases, these concepts may be used in hermeneutic phenomenology or phenomenological research. Hall and Stevens (1991) described adequacy as occurring when the whole process of inquiry is reflected, relative to the purposes of the study. This may be achieved through use of reflexivity, the construction of texts that are credible to the experience and that can be understood by insiders and outsiders, coherence of research conclusions that reflect the complexity of the situation, and lack of deception. Beck (1993) viewed credibility lying in how vivid and faithful the description is to the experience lived. When this occurs, the insight is self-validating and if well done, others will see the text as a statement of the experience itself (Husserl, 1970). Lincoln and Guba (1985) described the goal of credibility as demonstrating that the inquiry was conducted in a manner to ensure the topic was accurately identified and described. The use of in-depth description of complexities of experiences and interactions needs to be embedded in the data and the final text. Use of a decision trail, for example, which documents rationale, outcome and evaluation of all actions and prolonged persistent engagement with the data may facilitate these goals (Creswell, 1998).

When conducting phenomenological or hermeneutic phenomenological studies, researchers need to ensure the credibility of the study. Issues of rigor in interpretive inquiry are confusing to discuss, at times, as there is not an agreed upon language used to describe it or one universal set of criteria used to assess its presence. The rigor concepts presented above may be utilized by researchers in hermeneutic phenomenology or phenomenology or other avenues may be developed which more clearly articulate the quality of the study and ensure its credibility.

Conclusion

A comparison of phenomenology as understood by Husserl and hermeneutic phenomenology as understood by Heidegger and Gadamer has formed the basis of this article. Initial thoughts were given about the increased attention these traditions have received as well as descriptions of the positivist/Cartesian and interpretivist/constructivist paradigms of inquiry. The philosophical underpinnings of these two qualitative traditions, incorporating the assumptions and vocabulary used, were traced and similarities and differences in ontology, epistemology and methodology were highlighted.

Appendix

Husserlian Phenomenology	Heideggerian Phenomenology
Transcendental phenomenology	Philosophical hermeneutics Hermeneutic phenomenology
Epistemological	Existential-ontological

Husserlian Phenomenology	Heideggerian Phenomenology
Epistemological questions of knowing	Questions of experiencing and understanding
How do we know what we know?	What does is mean to be a person?
Cartesian duality: mind body split	Dasein
A mechanistic view of the person	Person as self-interpreting being
Mind-body person live in a world of objects	Person exists as a 'being' in and of the world
Ahistorical	Historicality
Unit of analysis is meaning giving subject	Unit of analysis is transaction between situation and the person
What is shared is the essence of the conscious mind	What is shared in culture, history, practice, language
Starts with reflection of mental states	We are already in the world in our pre-reflective states
Meaning is unsullied by the interpreter's own normative goals or world view	Interpreters participate in making data
Participants' meanings can be reconstituted in interpretive work by insisting data speak for themselves	
Claim that adequate techniques and procedures guarantee validity of interpretation	Within the fore-structure of understanding interpretation can only make explicit what is already understood
Bracketing defends the validity or objectivity of the interpretation against self-interest	Establish own criteria for trustworthiness of research
	The hermeneutic circle (background, co-constitution, pre-understanding)

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