



# The phenomenology of Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger and Alfred Schütz

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**Abstract:** *The epistemology is how it originates and gets human knowledge, about the search for truth and understanding of reality, based on the relation object-subject studies. The objective of this test was to analyze the Perspective Epistemological Phenomenological, as well as its importance and applicability in scientific research, from the philosophical, ontological and epistemological view, in the view of Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger and Schütz Alfred, using a qualitative approach to documentary-bibliographic type, by using the hermeneutical method for interpreting the theoretical meanings. It is concluded that the phenomenological perspective, based his study on real objects and ideals and favors the subjectivity of the individual under study, through reflection and lived in everyday life experiences.*

**Keyword:** *epistemological perspective, phenomenology, object, scientific research.*

## INTRODUCTION

Epistemology is one of the few sciences that has allowed man to search and understand the surrounding world and the subject-object relationship from different perspectives, to generate, interpret and transmit new knowledge. Among the various epistemological currents is the "Phenomenology". This perspective, conceived as a method, is a new way of seeing the world as it contributes significantly to a subjective experience of the facts in their natural state, as they are perceived, establishing an epistemological-ontological methodology to achieve and reach knowledge (Morales, 2011).

The objective of this essay was to analyze the Phenomenological Epistemological Perspective, as well as its importance and applicability in scientific research, from the philosophical, ontological and epistemic point of view, according to the thinking of Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger and Schütz Alfred, supported In a documentary review on the subject, using exhaustive documentary research as methodology. Motivated by the growing demand from the academic and research world, to unify criteria regarding: epistemological positions and / or styles of thought, construction of the object of study and its corresponding methodological procedures used in the scientific field.

## EPISTEMOLOGICAL, ONTOLOGICAL AND INVESTIGATIVE APPROACH TO THE PHENOMENOLOGY

Epistemological science has been characterized by a plural view of the world, in relation to the trinomial subject-object-reality, due to the different paradigmatic approaches emanating from it, a product of the various techniques, theories and methods employed by man, For the explanation of the phenomena and facts that occur around us, and which influence considerably, on the perspective that the individual has of himself and the external environment that surrounds him. In this way, man, when trying to understand the world, conforms to his nature through the production of new ideas (scientific research) (Morales, 2011).

In the development of the understanding of phenomenology as an epistemological perspective, it is important to compare the reflections of thinkers such as Husserl (1859-1938), Heidegger (1889-1976) and Schütz (1899-1959). In this sense considerations about phenomenology based on Husserl's thinking are referred to as philosophy and are outlined as method. Heidegger, directs his natural logic towards discovering concepts and relations in raw data, with the ultimate aim of organizing them into theoretical explanatory schemes, through non-quantitative procedures, which finds a counterpoint in Schütz's thesis, where knowledge Can be interpreted in different ways, depending on the criterion, the paradigm or the epistemological perspective that we decide to assume(Leal, 2006).

This approach, leads to know part of the life of the research participants, as well as their own world, related to the phenomenon under study, that is, their starting point is people's lives, focusing on how experiences, Meanings, emotions and situations of the individual being studied are perceived, learned and conceived. This new perspective provides a novel feature, we are not only present in the descriptive character of phenomenology, but we have the interpretive essence of hermeneutics, which puts us in front of the need to appropriate the meaning that underlies the lived experiences by the individual, all through a new vision of thought oriented to destruction and construction to be able to interpret it as its truth, this truth consists in revealing hidden phenomena and their meanings.

The phenomenological line through which Husserl seeks the nature and basis of knowledge, is through refusing to make all judgment of existence following a descriptive method that retains a rest of positivism by not leaving out any aspect of ideal objects (those that Are not affected or changed by any circumstances) (Colomer, 1990).

The negation of all existence judgment is what is called epokhe in Greek, abstention from any existential position, is not affirmed, denied, or doubted, because in doing so the quality of the act is changed. In phenomenology, perception equals judgment and it is accompanied by belief in what is perceived. On the other hand, doubt is a position of skepticism that also changes the quality of the act. Both the disciples of Husserl and Heidegger did not practice the epokhe, which they reject like theoretical assumptions that later has a posthumous recognition. For Husserl, the reality "relative to the nothing" is the conscience, taking a step in the thought to eliminate the impossibility of epokhe (Marias, 2012).

For Barbera e Inciarte (2012), Phenomenology is the empirical study of a limited number of different qualitative forms, through which we experience, conceptualize, and / or understand a particular phenomenon, seeking to establish the differences between Husserlian and Heideggerian positions. The first is based on the perspective of descriptive, transcendental and idenetic phenomenology and the second from the phenomenological-hermeneutical or interpretative approach based on the historicity and linguistics of being. For this reason, the richness of the focus is on the possibility of obtaining individualized descriptions of the experiences about the phenomenon under study, as the subjects live them. This occurs through inter-subjective collaboration and validation, which seeks to reveal its structural foundations in terms of meanings.

Bunge (2002), explains that phenomenology originates, motivates and develops as a doctrinal attempt to found a science, or to gather the fundamental principles of an objectively valid knowledge, specifically about the objective consciousness that unlike the merely subjective, which was the object Of psychology and naturalistic gnoseology, this is designated with the name of "transcendental or transcendently purified," being conceived under the general and paradigmatic guidelines of idealism. For this reason, the research-object relationship of study is concomitant, since there is a democratic and communicative participation between the researcher and the subjects of the study, where the observation, supposes a mental operation in which the subject puts the world between parentheses, That is, pure observation of the phenomenon, excluding any judgment of value on the phenomenon itself.

Being the reflection, the instrument, procedure or phenomenological method, which makes possible the objective treatment of transcendental consciousness, since it is a knowledge that exerts consciousness on its own contents, immediately after they have been acquitted of their reference To the transcendent. Considering the interview, systematic observation and case study, as the knowledge production model. Its logic, is the knowledge that allows the researcher to understand what is happening with his object of study, from the illustrated interpretation. Therefore, it does not seek the verification of knowledge, only the discovery and interpretation of the same, from its versionants. In other words, the qualitative search for meanings of human action.

### **Conception by Edmund Husserl: The Methodological Influences of Phenomenology in 20th Century Philosophy**

Phenomenology was conceived in 1913 by Husserl as a method of philosophy to describe the meaning of what is experienced as a phenomenon of consciousness. Husserl was interested in discerning what consciousness is, which, in order to analyze it, turned the subject's consciousness into an object since consciousness belongs to the subject. It assumes the thesis that consciousness is intentionality and is directed outside itself. Consciousness comes first; Is in the line of Descartes "first I think, therefore I exist".

For Husserl the science of philosophy derives from the greek "appearance" and "treated", and is based on the phenomena or essence of things, the main characteristic is "going to the things themselves". For this, it is necessary to put before the conscience because, because in it is where you can grasp the reality or truth of things (Lambert, 2006).

In the analysis of the contents of consciousness from Husserl's phenomenological perspective, he differentiates between the act of thinking and the objective content of thought. To corroborate this García (2007), writes:

*"Husserl uses to differentiate a <<noetical>> aspect from a «noematic» aspect, respectively: (a) the experience or fact of the consciousness itself, and (b) the meaning or content of the experience of the consciousness, That whether it is real or ideal (p. 96-97)".*

From this it is interpreted that there are two kinds of objects, the real objects and the ideal objects. The above is expressed because we can not describe ourselves because we have no essence according to Husserl, which he called "eidetic intuition."

Also, Marías (2012), says:

"Husserl tries to describe precisely those objects that are of intuitive knowledge, of knowledge with evidence, with universal validity, that are not affected, which he will call ideals", while also pointing to "real objects; who are affected by time, have an individual character, have reality which does not possess ideal objects that simply have a permanent value, never changes or is affected by any particular circumstance "(p.2), and also says "... this is what is fundamental: the unreality of ideal objects "(p.3).

### **The point of view of Martin Heidegger**

Analyzing the philosophical nature of Martin Heidegger, is to try to understand the theoretical approach so as to guide the research vision of the social and human sciences; To seek a new way of looking at and thinking about phenomena, to act in accordance with the epistemological and methodological bases of these sciences. His thinking focuses on the thing itself; Phenomenology from intuition, hermeneutics from the understanding of being in its historicity and linguistics (Barbera and Inciarte, 2012).

The context of this perspective also has a social relevance that is contained in the contributions of research to man and society, because the study offers a way of thinking the new science, to create a conceptual framework that allows to conceive the complex reality Social and human from the experience and daily life of man himself, in order to attend to this human being in its set of interactions; Is, therefore, a theoretical perspective guided by a "going the same thing" (Lambert, 2006).

What determines the human being is the understanding of the being in function of the interests and habits of its culture. Without seeking to establish knowledge about the experience of one's own existence, Heidegger favors what is related to "being there" (Dasein); Being itself and human reality is what can answer the question what is being? This is why García (2007) asserts that "Heidegger's philosophy has phenomenological roots (p.97)," this means that the consciousness of being is firmly and steadily linked to its habitual antecedents, interests and affections. , It is clear that it is the works of Heidegger who proposes to configure his own project of thought to recover the ontological dimension and to clarify with phenomenological means the historical phenomenon and the historicity of the way of thinking of being and its own concepts. In this sense, phenomenology-hermeneutics is a philosophical methodology that seeks to discover the meaning of being or existence of human beings, through the description and understanding of

their experiences or daily life, since this everyday is the form, or current mode And ordinary as the "Dasein".

This fact, gives a turn to phenomenology with his thinking. This revolve reflects the negation of the idea that hermeneutics constitutes a technique or an interpretive art whose goal is the simple foundation of a methodology for the sciences of the spirit (Bunge, 2002).

### **Schütz and phenomenology in the social sciences**

Since the 1960s, theories and practices have emerged that have been inspired by phenomenology, promoting the development of non-philosophical proposals from sociocultural disciplines, that is, the cultural state of a society or social group; In this sense it is from Schütz's point of view that phenomenology was introduced in the social sciences, so that in the words of Toledo (2003), it is promising "a rational reconstruction in terms of a program of postpositivist scientific research that proposes to be called socio-phenomenological" (p.2).

According to Schütz, the "everyday world" is where research is born, since it establishes social relations and shares knowledge of lived experiences, arising the need to analyze sociologically human consciousness, that is, that actor who lives in that routine world (Toledo, 2003).

From the above, Schütz highlights two concepts: the actor and the observer, both living in the same everyday world. The actor comes to be the one who generates the actions and the observer who studies those actions. But the actor can at any moment pass to fulfill the role of observer and be the one who analyzes and in turn the observer is who generates the action to study. That is to say, each role requires different functions, where the gnoseological demands come to distinguish the new meaning and character that the new functions that the actor and observer plays.

For sociologists, phenomenology matters by its application in sociology through Schütz's attempt to show the relevance of Husserl's phenomenology in the social sciences. For this reason, Toledo says that "sociology is one of the non-philosophical disciplines where - in recent decades - the influence of phenomenology has been manifest" (p.6), which is assumed as postgraduate studies in various Universities in Latin America and Europe.

Schütz's phenomenology; is to analyze the antinomy between the description of individual consciousness (phenomenology) and the explanation of social being (sociology). Extending the analysis to a plurality of consciousness that emerges from intersubjectivity and facilitates the thematization of sociality; Like the evolution from an introspective subjectivity to an extrospective subjectivity without it being an encounter of subjective consciences. About this particular Toledo (2003), writes:

*"Orthodox phenomenologists conceive of sociality as a kind of lower forms of consciousness, because according to a limited and simplified interpretation of intersubjectivity, they express their resistance to accepting that sociality is a meeting of subjective consciences" (p. 7).*

This compromises the constitution of the object in dilemma with the foundations of social phenomena, which undermines the positivist tradition of the methodology and research techniques of the social world.

Owever, Schütz's theory has certain weaknesses (Lambert, 2007):

- a) Excesiva subjetividad en detrimento del análisis de los componentes objetivos del mundo social.
- b) Centrality in the treatment of the constitutive processes of the social, neglecting already constituted aspects of the world of life.
- c) Reduction of the phenomenological tradition to a sociology of knowledge.

Truth arises from everyday life and the actions of each actor over it, but what is outstanding and critical is how each actor interprets, shares and observes those actions. The fundamental thing is that each one has a different view of truth, but that it can be shared.

## CONCLUSION

The phenomenological current has been a walk that involves three logics of investigative action: for Husserl, the natural attitude, phenomenological reduction and description of the meaning. In Heidegger, a walk through the reduction, destruction and construction of Dasein. While in Schütz, the way is traveled by understanding, interpretation and application. Likewise, it can be seen that the three visions, through their epistemic basis, guide the methodological route through different routes, but which seek to attend to the essence of being or of the thing itself in order to understand the complex social and human reality where man interacts.

Therefore, this perspective is based on the subjective analysis of the reality in which man is immersed and according to his experience and particular vision of the event, will give an explanation of the facts. However, this approach is widely used in research where triangulations are applied to explain the results of the study, based on the experiences of the actors involved in the study and the researcher's vision. Therefore, it is directly related to the style of experientialist thinking and opens the way to a deep understanding of social phenomena. Likewise, it is not hypothesized for verification, since all assumptions are estimable, on the contrary, it is oriented toward the discovery and understanding of human behavior from the point of view of the subjects of study, therefore, it does not treat of establishing laws or theories but of constructing meanings based on the lived experiences of the subjects.

Phenomenology can no longer be treated as descriptive psychology, that is, the intentions of thought can not aim only to clarify or detail the problems involved in our knowledge, to apply only a logical investigation, it is necessary to point towards a new idea of the Philosophical science as such, starting from the enigma of knowledge.

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