



The Debate About Aspect Perception Content

El Debate acerca del contenido de la percepción de aspectos

O debate sobre o conteúdo da percepção dos aspectos

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Abstract

In this paper, I analyse the discussion about perceptual conceptualism and non-conceptualism transferred to the phenomena of aspect perceptions presented by Ludwig Wittgenstein in the Part titled “Philosophy of Psychology” of *Philosophical Investigations*. In doing so, I will reconstruct these positions by collecting some of the main theses of those who have taken a position in the contest. I will focus on the contributions of Sonia Sedivy and Charles Travis on behalf of conceptualism and the non-conceptualist defence of Avner Baz about aspects of these phenomena. As a result, the examination calls into question the terms of the debate between conceptualism and non-conceptualism. In this sense, the primary purpose of this research is negative since I will limit myself to sustain that neither of the presented positions is an adequate characterisation of the content of Wittgensteinian aspect perception.

Keywords: Wittgenstein. Aspect Perception. Conceptualism. Non-conceptualism.

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Resumen

En el presente artículo analizo la discusión acerca del conceptualismo y el no-conceptualismo perceptual transferida al fenómeno de la percepción de aspectos presentado por Ludwig Wittgenstein en la Parte titulada "Filosofía de la Psicología" de las Investigaciones Filosóficas. Al hacerlo, reconstruiré estas posiciones colectando algunas de las tesis principales de aquellos que han tomado posición en el debate. Me enfocaré en las contribuciones de Sonia Sedivy y Charles Travis en representación del conceptualismo y en las propias de Avner Baz en su defensa no-conceptualista de los aspectos de estos fenómenos. Como resultado, este examen pone en cuestión los términos del debate entre conceptualismo y no-conceptualismo. En este sentido, el propósito primario de esta indagación es negativo, desde que me limitaré a sostener que ninguna de las posiciones presentadas es una caracterización adecuada de la percepción de aspectos wittgensteiniana.

Palabras clave: Wittgenstein. Percepción de aspectos. Conceptualismo. No-conceptualismo.

Resumo

Neste artigo analiso a discussão sobre o conceitualismo e o não-conceitualismo perceptual transferido para o fenômeno da percepção de aspectos apresentado por Ludwig Wittgenstein na parte intitulada "Filosofia da Psicologia" das Investigações Filosóficas. Ao fazê-lo, reconstruirei estas posições recolhendo algumas das principais teses daqueles que se posicionaram no debate. Centrar-me-ei nas contribuições de Sonia Sedivy e Charles Travis na representação do conceitualismo e nas de Avner Baz na sua defesa não-conceitualista dos aspectos destes fenômenos. Como resultado, este exame questiona os termos do debate entre conceitualismo e não-conceitualismo. Nesse sentido, o objetivo principal desta investigação é negativo, uma vez que me limitarei a sustentar que nenhuma das posições apresentadas é uma caracterização adequada da percepção de aspecto wittgensteiniana.

Palavras-chave: Wittgenstein. Percepção de aspectos. Conceitualismo. Não-conceitualismo.

Introduction

The conceptual or non-conceptual nature of perception content has been an ongoing debate in the epistemology arena for approximately forty years. The dilemma consists of affirming or denying that the perception of elements of the external world requires conceptual capacities. If we assert this, these perceptual contents have the same character we attribute to beliefs and propositions. Otherwise, they do not.

In this paper, I analyse the discussion about perceptual conceptualism and non-conceptualism transferred to the phenomena of aspect perceptions presented by Ludwig Wittgenstein in the Part titled “Philosophy of Psychology” of *Philosophical Investigations*.¹ In doing so, I will reconstruct these positions by collecting some of the main theses of those who have taken a position in the contest. I will focus on the contributions of Sonia Sedivy (2004) and Charles Travis (2003, 2015, 2016, 2018) on behalf of conceptualism and the non-conceptualist defence of Avner Baz (2020a; 2020b) about aspects of phenomena. As a result, this examination calls into question the terms of the debate between conceptualism and non-conceptualism. In this sense, the primary purpose of this research is negative since I will limit myself to sustain that neither of the presented positions is an adequate characterisation of the content of Wittgensteinian aspect perception.

I will limit myself to two kinds of cases presented in Fragment xi of “Philosophy of Psychology” (Wittgenstein, 2009, fr. Xi). The first example is the ambiguous figure of Jastrow, known as “the duck-rabbit” (2009, fr. xi, 118). When asked, “What do you see there?” one could say, “I see it as a rabbit” or “I see it as a duck”, depending on the aspect that “dawns” on perception at a given moment. The second example of perceiving an aspect is: “I see a likeness in these two faces” (2009, fr. xi, 111). Wittgenstein says there may be two people in front of both faces and that one notices the similarity while the other does not. Also, I can contemplate a face and suddenly notice its likeness to another, like when I recognise a friend in a crowd or someone I have not seen for a long time.

The cases presented by Wittgenstein concerning aspect perception show a use of the verb “to see” that resists its separations from “interpretations”. He makes two important statements in this regard. The first: “I see that it has not changed, and yet I see it differently” (2009, fr. xi, 113). The second: “So we interpret it, and see it as we interpret it” (2009, fr. xi, 116). One way of delving into this relationship between ‘seeing’ and ‘interpreting’ turns out to note that in the cases of aspect perception, there is a fusion between a sensitive experience and a cognitive component. This last element indicates how a figure is being seen (expressed through the “interpretation”). In aspect perception, “interpretation” need not be considered an external method of projection or addition that indirectly describes a given visual experience. Therefore, interpretation and visual experience are internally related. In this sense, interpretation in perception is an inherent practice of perceptual behaviour.

This situation makes us wonder whether describing the content of aspectual perception within the established map of positions (i.e., the conceptual/non-conceptual one) is feasible, respecting a unified phenomenon between ‘seeing’ and ‘interpreting’ or between sensory information and a conceptual component of judgments. I will seek to highlight the simple character with which perception manifests itself in Wittgenstein’s descriptions, which do not reduce it to “propositionalism” (this is the name I will use to refer to understanding concepts primarily as part of propositions) nor to non-conceptualism.

¹ Previously known as “Part II”. I will focus mainly on Fragment xi of the Part entitled “Philosophy of Psychology”, citing it as follows: the publication year of the fourth edition, 2009, followed by “fr. xi” and the corresponding paragraph number: Wittgenstein (2009: fr. Xi, 3).

I will proceed as follows. First, I will present the readings on the content of aspect perception in conceptualist terms. Second, I will refer to some significant objections to conceptualism and delimit the non-conceptual aspect perception proposal. Third, I will propose some criticisms of the non-conceptual description of aspect perception. At this moment, I will argue that although the objections to conceptualism are accurate, non-conceptualism is not a better alternative for describing the content of aspect perception. Any positions indicated in the first and second sections can encompass such phenomena. Then, I will conclude that the shown map of positions is incompatible with Wittgenstein's proposal concerning aspect perception.

Conceptual Aspect Perception

Let us consider an example of aspect perception interpreted in the conceptualist way. Let us imagine a scenario where I perceive the similarity between two faces. In this case, I bring what is seen under a certain generality or concept that I impose on what is perceived. In perceiving the similarity between two faces, one visually perceives visible and common aspects between both faces. The aspect or similarity that surprises us is part of our environment. The aspect is there to be seen (Travis 2015, p.53; 2013, p.101,102). In addition, this way of seeing operates by bringing what is seen under certain generalities, responding to what is seen, and highlighting a specific aspect. This action belongs to thought and not to perception. As Travis points out, cases like this, in which we see something as something, invite us to abandon the traditional categories of "seeing" and "thinking" to start thinking about them in an amalgamated way.

One way to establish the motivations for defending a conceptualist view of aspectual perception is to explain its grammar in connection with two critical arguments from *Philosophical Investigations*. The first of these arguments is his famous private diary passage (2009, 243-271), the core case against the possibility of a private language. The second one is summarised under the expression "the visual room" (2009, 398-401) and complements the first argument by objecting to thinking of visual experiences as obtaining a replica or mental analogue of perceived external objects. According to Sonia Sedivy (2004), these two arguments point out that Wittgenstein was a critic of the model of perception as a "dual capacity" that brings together the capacities of sensation or visual impression (in charge of absorbing the non-conceptual impact of the world) and the conceptual structure of human thought. Following Sedivy's slogan, perception is not an "amalgam" of sensation and conceptualisation. It is, by contrast, entirely rational. In this sense, her position is more emphatic than Travis's, who, as I said in the last paragraph above, maintains that said amalgam makes the aspect perception exceptional compared to other perceptions of objects and properties. Let us see now how these two arguments (i.e. the private diary and the visual room) contribute to the conceptualist position regarding aspect perception.

First, like the Sellarsian "Myth of the Given", Wittgenstein agrees that thinking that purely sensory episodes can play an epistemic role in the conceptually articulated cognitive life is inconsistent. Sellars characterises sense data as mental entities that refer to the qualities of an object. The manner in which they are accessed is private and direct, unlike the indirect manner in which the physical object is accessed. The error revolves around the apparent independent basis and the given's epistemological work in justifying knowledge. Mere sensory impressions lie outside our conceptual sphere (of the logical space of reasons), and still, they justify beliefs with propositional content within

the sphere. If perceptual experiences must justify related beliefs, they must have propositional content like the beliefs.

The private diary of a sensation shows, according to Wittgenstein, that we cannot trace a sensation that we have only by our isolated capacities because the symbol I use to identify a multiplicity of sensations (as episodes of the same sensation) lacks a correction criterion to guarantee the correct application of the symbol to each one and hence the identity of the sensation. We should have a criterion independent of the resources of the individual perceiver, a classification or recognition criterion of what falls under a concept. These criteria are not exclusively innate or natural; instead, one acquires them through a process in a cultural and physical context. Sensations make up our experience only insofar as we can track or identify them, and this depends on independent criteria. When it happens, the episodes in question are already rational parts or, to put it as Sellars does, they integrate the logical space of reasons. Sedivy's position on this point is that Wittgenstein helps us appreciate that experience cannot have non-conceptualised or epistemic parts because the conditions for experience make them rational aspects.

Second, however, Wittgenstein advances non-epistemic conceptions of sensations. The dual perception model assumes that the perceptual experience comprises the propositional content and the sensory episodes. While propositional content is a function of our conceptual capacities, sense impressions are a function of our sensory capacities. While propositions are rational in inference and justification, the sensitive components are not conceptual and give a causal qualitative contribution to the experience.

Wittgenstein objects to thinking of visual experiences as obtaining a mental analogue of external objects in the "visual room" argument. According to the example, when observing a room in the real world, a person imagines a "visual room". The problem is that nothing remains of those elements that supposedly replicate the actual room in this internal mental replica. Wittgenstein (2009, 401) states: "You interpret the new conception as the seeing of a new object. You interpret a grammatical movement that you have made as a quasi-physical phenomenon which you are observing." So, I cannot use the expressions analogously because there are no common constituent aspects between both figures.

We can now see how Wittgenstein's argument from the private diary and the visual room impact the description of the content of the aspect perception. The case of aspect perception shows the confusion derived from analysing this phenomenon as a complex fact, i.e., the combination of sensitive experience and conceptualisations. Ambiguous figures are characterised by having alternate figures, which cannot be perceived simultaneously by both aspects of the figure. For example, in the case of the duck-rabbit, I see the figure as a rabbit, and I can only see it as a duck if the perception of the rabbit disappears, and vice versa. However, Wittgenstein insists that the switch in the aspect perception produces a total change in our perception, not just a part of it. Our report is, therefore, that of a change in what we perceive. We cannot separately report a visual impression that would remain stable despite the change. We cannot use means such as internal images that serve as an analogue to the external object described without an interpretation. Wittgenstein says:

And above all do not say "Surely, my visual impression isn't the drawing; it is this – which I can't show to anyone." Of course it is not the drawing; but neither is it something of the same category, which I carry within myself.

The concept of an 'inner picture' is misleading, since the model for this concept is the 'outer picture' [...]
Of course, this makes this object chimerical, a strangely vacillating entity. For the similarity to a picture is now impaired. (Wittgenstein, 2009, fr. xi, 132-134)

This conceptualist reading suggests that sensations are not a part of perception. They are not if we intend to give an epistemic role to sensations to justify perceptual beliefs. They are neither part of perception if we want to limit sensations to a non-epistemic, merely causal role concerning perceptual beliefs. Aspect perception is not the result of applying a double capacity: the one that gives me raw sensations and the capacity for conceptualization. Sedivy (2004, p. 33) affirms that aspect perception is fully epistemic and that "it involves the same type of capabilities that a person needs to have in order to understand, believe or know something."

Although Sedivy's (2004, p. 5) explicit aim is to compare Wittgenstein's and Sellars' views on the possibility that purely causal sensory events are a part of perception, she mentions that her research could integrate a broader topic that includes the study of how the problems diagnosed by Wittgenstein and Sellars resurface in later theories that support a non-conceptual content for perception. This investigation would progressively lead to a theory of perception consistent with the work of McDowell (1994).

Conceptual perception theories (McDowell, 1994; Sedivy, 1996; and others) apply this characterisation to perceptual experiences about objects and properties. This position holds that when the subject has a perceptual experience of a particular object with specific properties, she must have the concepts of the object and the properties in question to use them in the perception. Therefore, this form of conceptual constraint suggests that perceptual experiences are like the content of beliefs understood in the indicated terms. Nevertheless, according to the John McDowell version, we must safeguard the idea that beliefs respond to the given experience and commit ourselves to a "minimal form of empiricism" that guarantees our thoughts' truth or falsehood depends on something foreign to us. Conceiving experience as nurtured by concepts is how we can use it as evidence in favour of a belief.

To end this section, let us return to the initial example of perceiving a similarity between two faces to note the peculiar character of aspect perception. According to the conceptualist position (Travis 2018, p.366-367), there is no other way to draw attention to the similarity that I perceive between two faces than to suppose that they instantiate some generality or concept, such as the colouration of the cheekbones or the structure of their faces. This kind of perception that I have is also compatible with the fact of someone who, even when standing in front of those same two faces, does not notice such a similarity, although he can register the scene accurately. Therefore, this last person sees the faces. Hence, perceiving a certain similarity between two faces cannot consist simply in representing a fact adequately to myself. According to Travis, what is needed is "to notice or register, to be aware, of the fact of dual instantiations of this kind" for the faces we look at and to be able to "isolate in each case only that which falls under the relevant generality". So, I can tell someone who does not see the similarity between the two faces what I perceive to do this or that to achieve it. For example, I can tell her to pay attention to the structure of both faces and that this way perhaps things will appear to her under the aspect that I am seeing them. According to Travis's position, this visual phenomenon of aspect perception gives generality, or concepts, a role not developed in routine cases of perception. The perception of aspects understood in this way explains why Wittgenstein (2009, fr. xi, 144, 187) sometimes suggests that these are cases that are a fusion of seeing and thinking.

Travis emphasises the non-representationalist character of aspectual perception, understood from a Wittgensteinian perspective. According to his reconstruction, Wittgenstein removes the idea of an interior image (a *Vorstellung*) to discuss the perception of aspects in ambiguous figures. We do not perceive an internal object of which only the perceiver is aware. Travis collects passages from Wittgenstein's work that are consistent with the selection made by Sedivy. For example: "Someone who classifies the organisation of a visual impression with shapes and colours is thinking of a visual impression as an inner object. Of course the object becomes thereby an absurdity, a peculiar wavering picture. For the similarity with a picture is now disrupted" (Wittgenstein, 1998: 443).

Travis's position differs from Christopher Peacocke's (2001, p.240-241), who imputes representational content to aspect perception. For Peacocke, this kind of case involves the occurrence of a mental state in the perceiver, manifested through a predicate, which is also part of the mental state itself. We return here to the reconstruction carried out by Sedivy's position. In that case, we see how unsuccessful this attempt is, given that internal mental states cannot explain visual aspect perception. Travis respects this Wittgensteinian position in his explanation of visual aspectual perception.

The difference between seeing and not seeing an aspect lies in the ability to respond to the object in view, a capacity that allows us to place the aspects under a concept that behaves in a certain way. The essential function of perceiving aspects is not to achieve a predicative mental structure that reflects the structure of the facts. On the contrary, for Travis (2018, p. 369), the role of language is to achieve recognition of the expressed thought. Whether the thought expressed is a truth or a falsehood is incidental to his task. Nevertheless, seeing an aspect, we stick somewhat to how things are. The idea of responding to the context is present. This context makes sense to answer why you see it differently.

Non-conceptual Aspect Perception

Let us now imagine the case of perceiving the similarity between two faces from a non-conceptualist perspective. In this scenario, I look at two faces and am surprised by their similarity, although I cannot describe what I notice exactly. No concept quickly suggests where this relationship of similarity appears to me in the experience of seeing both faces. If I wanted to use a concept and speak, for example, of "bearing a similar structure to a particular face", it would constitute a very rudimentary way that would not adequately represent the richness of the aspect. Nor is it clear how deeply rooted my perception with the faces in question is since another may not notice them without being mistaken.

The non-conceptualist interpretation describes aspect perception as a sensory experience that does not cover, at least necessarily, the subsumption of what is perceived under a concept. The content of aspect perception therefore preserves a non-conceptualised phenomenal dimension. Avner Baz (2020a; 2020b) has vigorously defended this approach. In his view, aspect conceptualists have explicitly or implicitly strayed from their position on aspectual perception by identifying aspects with concepts. The following formula summarises the identification: when perceiving x as y , " y " must be understood in terms of the concept of y (Baz, 2020a, p. 11). I believe that Baz's development of this critique of conceptualism has successes, two of which I am interested in mentioning.

The first success of the non-conceptualist critique is that conceptualists place "concepts" in a place and function different from the way Wittgenstein understands them. Mastering a concept is not only having the ability to make judgments. For Wittgenstein, a concept must be tied to its meaning determined in the occasions of its use. A concept is suitable for some uses and not for others. Therefore, to possess a

given concept is to possess the ability to use that concept competently in various contexts, not just a judicative one. As Baz (2020a, p. 12) says, however, aspect conceptualists do not use this meaning of “concept”. They speak of concepts as if they were a propositional component that “permeates”, “radiates”, or “penetrates” the visual experience. Thus, when they affirm “I see an *x* as a *y*”, “*y*” represents a concept that gives rise to a perceptual judgment where “*y*” functions as a concept under which I subsume the object “*x*”. From this perspective, the concepts are applied paradigmatically in objective judgments.

The second success of Baz’s (2020a, p. 8, 14, 18) critique of aspect conceptualism follows from the first by pointing out the drawbacks of limiting concepts within the capacity to make judgments or ascribe propositions. To have a propositional attitude (like a perceptual belief) implies being in a particular relationship with a proposition. A proposition, in turn, is directed to objects, properties or relations to which it conforms or not, thus determining its truth-value. In this sense, concepts apply in objective, either true or false, judgments. However, it is unclear whether the aspect experience must have this kind of attachment to the object. The perception of aspects is neither true nor false because I do not commit myself epistemically in the way that I do when I judge something to be the case. I do not expect others to notice, for example, that one face resembles the other, as I perceive it. From their commitment to propositions, conceptualists must derive effects that hardly fit the perception of aspects. These commitments focus on how the content of the propositions represents facts, to which they adjust and according to which they determine their truth-condition.

These two successes lead the criticism to a third triggering moment. Baz (2020a, p.14, 15) claims that the conceptualist description does not fit what happens when we experience some aspects where no concept is conveniently suggested. For example, I may be surprised by an expression on a face, or the atmosphere at a party, without being able to put it satisfactorily into words or describe it exactly. In these cases, “no description, no particular ‘and’, and therefore no candidate concept, is readily suggested”. We do not find any obvious generality that allows us to subsume what is perceived: “There is only this face and that other”.

This third moment of non-conceptualist criticism can be described by saying that the aspect perception does not comply with the conceptual constraint of the Fregean tradition. One way of making this requirement explicit holds that the content specifications of a statement or propositional attitude must only use concepts that the utterer or thinker possesses. From a conceptualist perspective, therefore, perceiving an aspect is a function of the concepts one possesses. However, Baz postulates the existence of ways of representing the world (and therefore the existence of a type of content) through aspect perception that goes beyond the concepts the perceiver possesses. The aspect has a particular non-conceptual form that transcends and connects the perceived object with other objects. When we perceive aspects, we outstrip the concepts under our possession.

This line of reasoning holds to non-conceptualist objections about perception in general, also in a sense that emphasises the phenomenological dimension of perception. On the one hand, the magnitude with which the experience informs its contents is greater than the determination possibilities of a proposition (Dretske, 1981, p. 142). On the other hand, perceptual experiences can be considered more precise; they have a better definition. The “fineness of grain” linked to the perceptions of different shades of colours, for example, could not be adequately discriminated by the related concepts (Evans, 1982, p. 229).² The advantage of holding a non-conceptualist position is that it achieves

² This is a disputed point between conceptualists and non-conceptualists. Cf. McDowell (1994, p.57); Tye (2006, p.16).

greater attention to the phenomenology of aspect perception in both mentioned senses. The concepts employed in describing aspect perception are only a non-exact approximation of the experience in question (Baz, 2020a, p. 15).

The aspect dawning is a perceptual experience with a distinctive phenomenology. However, Baz recognises that there is no phenomenological development in the proposals of Wittgenstein, who prefers the grammatical study. He proposes to supplement Wittgenstein's contributions with a phenomenological clarification, introducing the idea of a "pre-reflexive perceptual experience", which is neither private nor internal, and does not require introspection. This pre-reflective experience that characterises the aspect perception is related to a "phenomenal world" (Baz, 2020a, p. 2). This world is the perceived one to which one responds before any thought or description, that is, prior to its conceptualisation.

According to Baz's perspective, the perception of aspects involves a type of internal relationship in two directions: between the perceived aspect and other aspects or objects, on the one hand, and between the aspect and its background, on the other hand (this would not be the case, for example, of the duck-rabbit or the Necker cube, which lack context). I have not brought any concept into the perception in question by perceiving the similarity between two faces. Instead, I perceive the aspect directly, connecting the experiences of perceiving the old face with the new one, for example.

This internal relationship reveals the "gestalt or holistic nature of the world as pre-reflectively perceived" (Baz, 2020a, p. 7; also p. 24). On the one hand, Baz emphasises that the aspectual experience occurs as a perception of significant wholes and this includes internal relationships in the indicated sense. On the other hand, the inner nature of this relationship is a sign that we are dealing with phenomenal aspects before any conceptualisation of them. When perceiving the similarity between two faces, for example, the perceived Gestalt of the face you are looking at changes, and the internal relationship between one face and the other shines through, two "perceptually individual things" that do not have a concept that transcends them. What both similar faces share is not a particular empirical concept on which both faces can be judged as their instances.

Next, I will critically consider the non-conceptualist perspective of aspect content to argue that, despite its successes, it is inconvenient to describe the content of the perception of aspects.

The Non-conceptualist Failure

In the previous section, I referred to two successes of the critique of conceptualism. The first success is pointing out that conceptualist positions give a place and function to concepts alien to Wittgenstein's proposal. They mistakenly locate concepts as propositional contents or parts of judgments. The second success of the critique of conceptualism is that once concepts imply propositions, perceptions conceptualised in this way have difficulty in explaining aspectual content since they must determine a completely objectified world. These ascribed propositions are either true or false in a determining sense. After these two successes, I pointed out a third triggering moment, which is the core of the characterisation of the content of aspects in non-conceptual terms. This moment consists of the idea that aspectual perception embodies a pre-conceptual experience related to a phenomenal world that is also pre-conceptualised.

Having already pondered the first two successes that make conceptualising aspects difficult, I propose to show how non-conceptualism, in its version defended by Baz, misses its path when advancing to the third triggering moment. I will focus, in particular, on three related issues of the

non-conceptualist position. The first objects to the proposal of a pre-conceptualised phenomenal world, the exact complement for a non-conceptualised sensitive capacity. The second question is the gestalt explanation of the internal relations that characterise what happens when I perceive an aspect in non-conceptual terms. The third question points to the lack of a role for the so-called "interpretations" in perceiving aspects when trying to stick to the non-conceptualist perspective.

In the first place and from a metatheoretical point of view, Wittgenstein analyses aspect perception from a grammatical point of view, taking into account the use of the concept. He accompanies this task with a series of warnings, for example: "Do not try to analyse the experience within yourself" (2009, fr. xi, 188). Baz, for his part, acknowledges that there is no development of the phenomenology of aspect perception in Wittgenstein and affirms that he will complete the grammatical investigation with an analysis of the pre-reflective experience. Without questioning the value of phenomenal studies on perceptual experiences of various kinds, it is begging the question concerning the approach of the aspect perception to assume that the phenomenal analysis will show us the pre-conceptual dimension, that this experience field must be pre-reflexive. In any case, it is worth the initial clarification of Wittgenstein's proposal that what the phenomenal analysis discovers differs from Wittgenstein's discussion.

Baz's phenomenological project simultaneously supports two ideas that are in tension. On the one hand, he presents the idea of phenomenal content that is inseparable from the perceived objects, which allows him to distance himself from the disconnected, abstract nature of concepts. On the other hand, he separates the phenomenal component from his attachment to the object. Who perceives an aspect "makes it clear that how she sees the object is not something she necessarily takes to be such" (Baz, 2020a, p. 2, 10). This affirmation is partially correct if, for this reason, we want to affirm that aspect perception is not tied to the bivalence criterion of propositions. However, inviting someone to see an aspect is not the same as giving it a capricious, hypothetical or somewhat doubtful character. The invitation is to see the aspect perceived; in this sense, a particular direction of adjustment from mind to world seems appropriate. The similarity between the two faces is there to be perceived, and I can give instructions to those who do not see it what to pay attention to so that this aspect fulgurates for them too.

Wittgenstein (1990a, 899) affirms that "aspects do not tell us anything about the world". This expression refers to the difference in respect of the perception of objects, in the sense that the perception of aspects involves the particular way we perceive it and reveals, to a certain extent, our degree of creativity or expressiveness in perception. For this reason, as Wittgenstein says, someone can perceive an object and, nevertheless, suffer from "aspect blindness" in the sense of not being able to perceive the particular expressive aspect that shine there. The aspects manifest our will in a way that cannot appear when we say, for example, "This is red" in the presence of an object of that colour. However, this does not mean that the aspects are not there to be perceived. I think this is what Wittgenstein says when he says, "I see it, and I see it as I interpret it." Therefore, we must not conclude that aspects have no roots in objects.

Finally, Baz (2020a, Chapter 6) appeals to a "phenomenal world" as the world of indeterminate perception prior to all judgment and conceptualisation. This world distinguishes itself from the "objective world". In this sense, the proposal resorts to the duplicity of worlds of Kantian resonance, awarding for the first world different perceptive capacities to the second. I believe that a better alternative to the duplicity of "phenomenal world" and "objective world" is the Wittgensteinian (2009, 125; 1978: *Part V*, 2) expression of a "civil world" (*der bürgerlichen Welt*), permeated by our everyday,

shared behaviours with which we must keep in touch and be coherent. It is not a bare reality entirely alien to our experiences, nor a merely perceptive, individual or conventional experience. Similar to how Wittgenstein pays attention to mathematics in non-mathematical contexts and functions, aspect perception caters to the civil world insofar as its use is not an arbitrary form of perception. This meaning of “world” as “civil” is clearly in line with the statement that forms of life are the given, the ultimate background that we must accept (Wittgenstein, 2009, fr. xi, 345). It is about the life of a subject who is not “without a world”, without constraints, but develops within an already given, contextualised plane of shared and objectified meanings to which one must respond.

Secondly, I do not find appropriate Baz’s idea that the internal relations that occur in aspectual perception bring out the gestalt nature of the pre-reflectively perceived world. Köhler’s research proposes to give a homogeneous explanation of the content of visual perceptions in terms of the physiological functioning of the brain, thus explaining how neuronal activity is related to and determines perceptual mental content. The ambiguous figures were the empirical tool chosen by the psychologist to corroborate his theory since the perceptual processes would turn out to be more active, unlike the “stationary visual perceptions” of things like a tree, a stone or a book. In the perception of ambiguous figures, the fluctuating neural activity could be separated more clearly from the object of constant perception, thus showing how neural oscillations caused perceptual changes and determined perceptual organisation.

In her illuminating paper, Gloria Ayob (2009, p. 264-266) suggests that Wittgenstein had in mind to demolish the “principle of isomorphism” of Köhler’s Gestalt psychology in the aspect perception passages. This principle proposes that there are neural correlates of the conscious perceptual experience that determine its content. Assuming that the perceptual changes in the face of an ambiguous figure imply a change in its perceptual organisation in the face of a reorganisation of lines and figures, these changes occur at a physiological level.

Köhler does not propose that perceptual change could not occur without an accompanying neural process but rather that neural oscillations caused or fixed such changes. However, from Wittgenstein’s perspective, the mere perceptual organisation is not enough to account for the perceptual experiences of the duck-rabbit, for example. Wittgenstein rejects the idea that the organisational aspects indicate that, if the aspect switches, the organisation of my visual impression is modified. He points out that we would be mistakenly locating the visual organisation at the level of an inner picture. Furthermore, no change would appear if we wanted to specify the change in the organisation, for example, by an exact copy (2009, fr. xi, 125, 131, 133). There is a normative aspect here, not a physiological one, which delves into how we see an aspect. According to Wittgenstein (2009, fr. xi, 216, 222), “only someone conversant with the shapes of the two animals can ‘see the duck-rabbit aspects’”. Also: “Only of someone capable of making certain applications of the figure with facility would one say that he saw it now this way, now that way. The substratum of this experience is the mastery of a technique.”

This normative dimension leads us to the third objection to the non-conceptualist approach to the perception of aspects, which points out that there is no plausible role for interpretations from a non-conceptualist perspective, despite Wittgenstein naturally seeing interpretations as playing a role: “But how is it possible to see an object according to an interpretation? —The question presents it as a strange fact; as if something had been pressed into a mould it did not really fit into. But no squeezing, no pressing, took place here” (Wittgenstein 2009, fr. xi, 164).

There has been no forcing of the object because, on the one hand, Wittgenstein removes the interpretation of its traditional role of judicative event, which consists in giving a subsequent description of reality, and locates it in the broader context of shared, situated, and directed actions, for the most diverse and often unspoken purposes. On the other hand, reality is not forced in this way because perception is not the stronghold of sensory passivity either. For example, to see a fearful or shy or sad face, I must be able to make conceptual distinctions: “We react to a facial expression differently from someone who does not recognize it as timid... But I do not want to say here that we feel this reaction in our muscles and joints, and that this is the ‘sensing’. No, what we have here is a modified concept of sensing” (Wittgenstein, 2009, fr. xi, 231).

Wittgenstein (1990a, 961) says that, in the case of aspect perception, “it is as if one brought a concept to what one sees, and one now sees the concept along with the thing”. Baz (2020a, p. 11) thinks the quote is only tentative and metaphorical and then considers that what happens in aspect perception is quite the opposite. However, this “as if...” may want to tell us that it is something like that, but not exactly like that, that there are conceptualisations in the experience but that I do not bring them with an *a priori* or decontextualised meaning when recognising an aspect.

According to my reading, Wittgenstein says that we should not divide the experience as an experience that we subsume under a concept within a proposition. Nor should we see the perception of aspects as an experience that forms a crude informational state, which we later transform into a conceptual cognitive state thanks to a process of judgment. Wittgenstein (2009, fr. xi, 117) opposes considering interpretation as an indirect description of a direct experience. Therefore, interpretations do not imply the making of a judgment or its subsequent addition to the visual experience.

The crucial difference between (propositional) conceptualism and non-conceptualism is that, while the former extends this general characterisation of propositional attitudes to perceptual experiences, the latter denies that this is necessary or even possible if one wants to explain the nature of perceptual experience. Non-conceptualism is summarised in that the perceptual experience has no conceptual content. However, if this is the case, it becomes difficult to account for the role of interpretations in aspect perception. And as we saw, aspect perception is a simple phenomenon where conceptual capacities and sensory experiences are inseparable.

Objections to non-conceptualism should not push us back to the initial conceptualist position since Baz is accurate in his criticisms of the latter. The two successes in Baz’s critique of aspect conceptualism continue to be valid premises of the argument, and, therefore, it is worth going back to them to find the lost path in the attempt to characterise the content of the perception of aspects. The “first hit” marks how Wittgenstein understands concepts and shows the difference in the meaning conceptualism gives them. The “second hit” mentions that aspect perception does not involve a judgment that determines truly or falsely how things are. We can now see two paths remain. One was the journey through Baz, which deduced that the perception of aspects does not involve concepts. As established in this section, this path is equally unsuccessful as the one that understands the content of aspectual perception in terms of propositions. The other way is to return to the first hit and notice that there is already a way out of the conflict. There is another way of understanding concepts. After all, the initial step has been taken by Baz himself, albeit abandoned at the time.

I propose that a “knowing-how” is present in perceiving aspects rather than a “knowing-that”. A fundamental difference between both types of knowing is that, while in the latter case, one claims to know that something is the case in terms of a relationship between a thinker and a true proposition,

in the former case, it is about knowing how to do something. "Knowing-how" is, in this sense, more similar to a skill (cf. Ryle, 1971: 212-225). In the case of Wittgenstein, this skill or ability involves the previous acquisition of already normative, shared and stable employs of meaning that allow us to use expressions in a variety of different particular contexts. "Knowing how" does not essentially ascribe propositional knowledge but implies a relationship between who holds it and the actions he or she carries out (cf. Carr, 1979).

The distinction between "knowing that" and "knowing-how" is compatible with the establishment of two types of seeing that Wittgenstein proposes at the beginning of frame xi of "Philosophy of Psychology". There he says:

Two uses of the word "see".

The one: "What do you see there?" - "I see *this*" (and then a description, a drawing, a copy). The other: "I see a likeness in these two faces" -let the man to whom I tell this be seeing the faces as clearly as I do myself.

What is important is the categorial difference between the two 'objects' of sight. (Wittgenstein, 2009, fr. xi: 111)

The aspect perception refers to uses of "seeing-as," which are distinguishable from "seeing this" or "seeing that such-and-such is the case." This distinction allows us to say, "Now I see it as a duck", when the duck-rabbit figure dawns in a determinate way. Also, we must admit that other uses do not make sense, such as "Now I see this as a knife and fork" at the sight of a knife and a fork (Wittgenstein, 2009, fr. xi, 122).

This knowing-how has to do with the agency of the person who perceives; their expressive abilities manifest in perceptive behaviours summarised in what Wittgenstein expresses as "knowing everything with the object". I am proposing that when Wittgenstein says, "I see it as I interpret it", there is a commitment to giving concepts a role, understood in terms of skills linked to a stable employment. This idea is compatible with how Wittgenstein, as Baz says, understands concepts. When I perceive the similarity between two faces, I do not need to judge that there is a similarity; it is enough to perceive or have experiences of such a similarity. However, to have these experiences, I must have sufficient skills to perceive the aspects in question. I suggest the idea that aspect perception only involves concepts in a certain sense, which is the one indicated by Wittgenstein.

Conclusion

Aspect perception is a kind of experience that enables us to see the same object and see it in different aspects or ways. We can do it because interpretation is a dynamic and adaptive ability that we activate in our perception. This characteristic of aspect perception favours, for example, that we perceive the "duck-rabbit", "now as a duck", and "now as a rabbit". It also enables us to have perceptual disagreements with another person to the extent that I can genuinely perceive, for example, the similarity between two faces. In contrast, the other person cannot legitimately integrate sensory stimulation with the same dynamic comprehension patterns and, hence, cannot see the similarity. In this framework, the perception of aspects is an ability, a natural and trained capacity, and an active and contextual action.

The primitive, that beyond which one cannot go back, is not the pre-conceptual and pre-reflexive data of the senses nor the naked reality described from an abstract judicative language that I apply to it. The given is the interweaving in which we find ourselves significantly amid what

surrounds us, busy with activities, elastically employing rules. The given is the form of life of human animals and the way they have to know or experience it because knowing and experiencing the world is the same skill.

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