

Reference intentionality is an internal relation
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In this paper, I will focus on the basic form of intentionality, *reference intentionality* (from now on, RI), the property an intentional state has of being 'directed upon' a certain object, its intentional object. I will try to prove that (as Husserl, Wittgenstein and others originally envisaged) RI is not only a state - intentional object *relation*, but it also is an *internal*, i.e., a necessary, relation between that state and that object, at least in the sense that the state could not exist if it not were so related to the object.

The strategy of the paper will be the following. First, I will claim that RI has to be conceived in internal-relational terms, no matter which position one takes on its putative right-hand members, intentional objects. Second, I will claim that this conception fits both ways in which intentional states are nowadays ordinarily conceived, i.e., the externalist and the internalist way. For on the one hand, the best form of externalism, metaphysical externalism, entails a conception of RI as an internal relation. On the other hand, if one is an internalist, she either has to directly stick again to that conception or, insofar as she ontologically is an eliminativist about RI, this ontological position leaves untouched the conception of RI as an internal relation.

I stress that this conception yields an *understanding* of RI. My analysis is indeed meant to be a *metaphysical* scrutiny of RI, that is, an investigation on the nature of such a property, provided that that there is any. As such, therefore, this scrutiny is independent of the further, *ontological*, question of whether there is such a property as RI.¹ If it turned out that there is no such a thing as RI, this scrutiny will turn out to be a mere investigation in the mere *concept* of RI. As a result, my analysis is compatible with an eliminativist stance on RI, holding that there is no such property. For such a stance precisely is an ontological, not a metaphysical, position on RI.

1. The main claims

As I hinted at before, RI is the property an intentional state has of being 'directed upon' an object, which is typically called the intentional object of the state: the state is *about* that object. This property has to be distinguished by another similar property an intentional state may possess, namely, *content intentionality* (CI). This is the property an intentional state has of having a content. This content is what makes the state *semantically valuable*, that is, it makes the state true or false – if the state is a belief or a thought – or fulfilled or unfulfilled – if the state is an expectation, a hope, a desire, an intention ...: the mental state is a state *that* something is the case.² Clearly, many intentional states having CI also have RI: for instance, Othello's thinking that Desdemona is unfaithful is a thinking about Desdemona. Yet intentional states may

Reference And Intentionality

Michael Beaney



Reference And Intentionality:

The First Person Roderick M. Chisholm, 1981 **Reference and intentionality** Olav Asheim, 1992 **The Phenomenal Basis of Intentionality** Angela Mendelovici, 2018-05-04

Intentionality is the mind's ability to be of about or directed at things or to say something. For example, a thought might say that grass is green or that Santa Claus is jolly, and a visual experience might be of a blue cup. While the existence of the phenomenon of intentionality is manifestly obvious, how exactly the mind gets to be directed at things which may not even exist is deeply mysterious and controversial. It has been long assumed that the best way to explain intentionality is in terms of tracking relations, information, functional roles, and similar notions. This book breaks from this tradition, arguing that the only empirically adequate and in principle viable theory of intentionality is one in terms of phenomenal consciousness, the felt subjective or qualitative feature of mental life. According to the theory advanced by Mendelovici, the phenomenal intentionality theory, there is a central kind of intentionality, phenomenal intentionality, that arises from phenomenal consciousness alone, and any other kind of intentionality derives from it. The phenomenal intentionality theory faces important challenges in accounting for the rich and sophisticated contents of thoughts, broad and object-involving contents, and nonconscious states. Mendelovici proposes a novel and particularly strong version of the theory that can meet these challenges. The end result is a radically internalistic picture of the mind, on which all phenomenally represented contents are literally in our heads, and any non-phenomenal contents we in some sense represent are expressly singled out by us.

Intentionality Deconstructed Amir Horowitz, 2024

Intentionality Deconstructed: An Anti-Realist Theory argues for the view that there are and can be no intentional states. We may put this view in terms of the truth of content ascriptions. Content ascriptions in themselves cannot be true or false; they lack truth conditions. For the concept of intentionality is flawed. Nonetheless, content ascriptions have truth conditions and can be true or possess a related epistemic merit relative to practices of content ascription. The suggested view does not deny the existence of those mental states standardly considered intentional, notably the so-called propositional attitudes; it affirms it. That is, the book defends the existence of those states with the properties usually attributed to them but absent intentional properties. Specifically, it is argued that the so-called propositional attitudes possess logico-syntactic properties. The postulation of such properties plays an important role in addressing the challenge of reconciling intentional anti-realism with beliefs being true or having substitute epistemic merits: the argument from the predictive and explanatory success of content ascription for intentional realism and the cognitive suicide objection to views that deny intentionality. As part of the rejection of this final objection, intentional anti-realism is presented as a radical view which replaces traditional talk of content ascriptions with talk of quoted logico-syntactic structures, but which can yet give clear sense to its dispute with its rivals as well as to its own superiority.

Non-Propositional Intentionality Alex Grzankowski, Michelle Montague, 2018-07-19

The mind is directed upon the world. There are worldly things that we have beliefs about and things in the world we desire to have happen. We find some

things fearsome and others likable The puzzle of intentionality how it is that our minds make contact with the world is one of the oldest and most vexed issues facing philosophers Many contemporary philosophers and cognitive scientists have been attracted to the idea that our minds represent the world This book explores an important assumption about representation namely that when we represent things in the world we represent them as having properties and in this way our representations have propositional structure The contributors examine what the commitment to propositionalism amounts to illuminate why one might find the thesis attractive or unattractive and consider ways in which one might depart from propositionalism The hope is that this will lead towards a more complete understanding of how the mind and world are connected

Intentionality as Constitution Alberto Voltolini, 2024-06-28 This book develops a novel theory of intentionality It argues that intentionality is an internal essential relation of constitution between an intentional state and an object or between such a state and a possible state of affairs as subsisting The author's main claim is that intentionality is a fundamentally modal property hence a non scientifically natural property in that it does not supervene either locally or globally on its nonmodal physical basis This is the property primarily for an intentional mental state to be constituted by the entities it is about In the case of intentionality of reference such constituents are objects in the sense of individuals in the case of intentionality of content such constituents are possible states of affairs as subsisting Constitution is meant in a mereologically literal sense those constituents are essential parts of the relevant states As a result the theory claims not only that intentionality is relational but also that it is an internal essential relation holding between an intentional state and its object or proposition like content Intentionality as Constitution will be of interest to scholars and advanced students working in philosophy of mind philosophy of language metaphysics and cognitive science

The Logic of Intentional Objects Jacek Pasniczek, 2013-03-14 Intentionality is one of the most frequently discussed topics in contemporary phenomenology and analytic philosophy This book investigates intentionality from the point of view of intentional objects According to the classical approach to this concept whatever can be consciously experienced is regarded as an intentional object Thus not only ordinary existing individuals but also various kinds of non existents and non individuals are considered as intentional including such bizarre entities as quantifier objects some dog every dog Alexius Meinong an Austrian philosopher is particularly well known as the inventor of an abundant ontology of objects among which even incomplete and impossible ones like the round square find their place Drawing inspirations from Meinong's ideas the author develops a simple logic of intentional objects M logic M logic closely resembles classical first order logic and as opposed to the formally complicated contemporary theories of non existent objects it is much more friendly in apprehending and applications However despite this resemblance the ontological content of M logic far exceeds that of classical logic In this book formal investigations are intertwined with philosophical analyses On the one hand M logic is used as a tool for investigating formal features of intentional objects On the other hand the study of intentionality phenomena suggests further ways of extending and

modifying M logic Audience The book is addressed to logicians cognitive scientists philosophers of language and metaphysics with either a phenomenological or an analytic background Approaches to Intentionality William E. Lyons, 1995 Professor Lyons in this book both explores others approaches to intentionality and expounds his own Part I gives a critical account of the five most comprehensive and prominent contemporary approaches to intentionality These approaches can be summarised as the instrumentalist approach derived from Carnap and Quine and culminating in the work of Daniel Dennett the linguistic approach derived from the work of Chomsky and exhibited most fully in the work of Jerry Fodor the biological approach developed by Ruth Garrett Millikan Colin McGinn and others the information processing approach which has been given a definitive form in the work of Fred Dretske and the functional role approach of Brian Loar In Part II Professor Lyons sets out a multi level developmental approach to intentionality Drawing upon work in neurophysiology and psychology the author argues that intentionality is to be found in different forms at the levels of brain functioning prelinguistic consciousness language and at the holistic level of whole person performance which is demarcated by our ordinary everyday talk about beliefs desires hopes intentions and the other propositional attitudes Written in a direct clear and lively style the extended survey of contemporary debate in Part I will be invaluable to the student of philosophy of mind or cognitive science as well as to the scholars and graduate students who will find an original new theory to contend with in Part II The MIT Encyclopedia of the Cognitive Sciences (MITECS) Robert A. Wilson, Frank C. Keil, 2001-09-04 Since the 1970s the cognitive sciences have offered multidisciplinary ways of understanding the mind and cognition The MIT Encyclopedia of the Cognitive Sciences MITECS is a landmark comprehensive reference work that represents the methodological and theoretical diversity of this changing field At the core of the encyclopedia are 471 concise entries from Acquisition and Adaptationism to Wundt and X bar Theory Each article written by a leading researcher in the field provides an accessible introduction to an important concept in the cognitive sciences as well as references or further readings Six extended essays which collectively serve as a roadmap to the articles provide overviews of each of six major areas of cognitive science Philosophy Psychology Neurosciences Computational Intelligence Linguistics and Language and Culture Cognition and Evolution For both students and researchers MITECS will be an indispensable guide to the current state of the cognitive sciences The Oxford Handbook of The History of Analytic Philosophy Michael Beaney, 2013-06-20 During the course of the twentieth century analytic philosophy developed into the dominant philosophical tradition in the English speaking world In the last two decades it has become increasingly influential in the rest of the world from continental Europe to Latin America and Asia At the same time there has been deepening interest in the origins and history of analytic philosophy as analytic philosophers examine the foundations of their tradition and question many of the assumptions of their predecessors This has led to greater historical self consciousness among analytic philosophers and more scholarly work on the historical contexts in which analytic philosophy developed This historical turn in analytic philosophy has been gathering pace since the 1990s and the present

volume is the most comprehensive collection of essays to date on the history of analytic philosophy. It contains state-of-the-art contributions from many of the leading scholars in the field, all of the contributions specially commissioned. The introductory essays discuss the nature and historiography of analytic philosophy, accompanied by a detailed chronology and bibliography. Part One elucidates the origins of analytic philosophy with special emphasis on the work of Frege, Russell, Moore, and Wittgenstein. Part Two explains the development of analytic philosophy from Oxford realism and logical positivism to the most recent work in analytic philosophy and includes essays on ethics, aesthetics, and political philosophy, as well as on the areas usually seen as central to analytic philosophy, such as philosophy of language and mind. Part Three explores certain key themes in the history of analytic philosophy.

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