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Abstract

This paper aims to assess an argument for eliminativistic naïve realism. In addition to naïve realist claim, eliminativistic naïve realism (ENR) includes an eliminativisit claim that hallucinations do not have any visual phenomenology. William Fish (2009) has argued that ENR can close the explanatory gap between subjective phenomenal qualities and neural properties, which has been illuminated by Joseph Levine (1983). However, Adam Pautz (2012) argued that ENR cannot close the gap but just move it somewhere else, i.e. between objective perceptible qualities of external objects and microphysical properties of such objects. Fish (2013) accepted this objection but claimed that the transition is desireble. The problem is that he does not sufficiently explain why it is desireble. Moreover, Pautz has suggested that representationalism can move the gap as well as ENR. If this is correct, the considertation of explanatory gap does not weigh ENR over representationalism. Given this dialectical situation, I argue the following two points: (1) for an epistemological reason, the explanatory gap should be moved to the position between objective perceptible qualities and microphysical properties; (2) naïve realism has theoretical advantages over representationalism in terms of ontological economy and metaphysical analysis of abstract entities used to explain cognitive activities such as believing.

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Naïve realism can be characterized as the conjunction of two claims, one explanatory and one metaphysical. The explanatory claim is that the phenomenology of veridical visual experience is explained by acquaintance (or perception), an irreducible mental relation between a subject and environmental objects. That is to say, a veridical experience has visual phenomenology in virtue of the subject's perceiving environmental objects, rather than his visual system representing such objects or sensing private mental entities. This explanatory claim is insufficient in that it does not say anything about the metaphysics of visual phenomenology. Given this, naïve realists should add the metaphysical claim that the visual phenomenology of veridical experience is (at least partly) constituted by perceived objects and their properties. In this paper, I assume that naive realism can sufficiently capture the phenomenology of veridical visual experiences. Eliminativistic naïve realism (ENR) is defined as the conjunction of naïve realism and the following eliminativist claim: total hallucinations do not have any visual phenomenology.[1] Total hallucination is such that the subject is not seeing any environmental object but has a visual experience.

The eliminativist claim is usually regarded as defending naive realism against the argument from hallucination.[2] This famous argument shows that if we regard phenomenal aspects of veridical perception and hallucination as metaphysically the same (common facter principle), then naive realism is untenable. Since the phenomenal aspect of hallucination cannot be constituted by environmental objects, the naive realist metaphysical claim is incompatible with the common factor principle. Given this, naive realists must hold that the phenomenal aspects of veridical perception and hallucination are explained in different manners (phenomenal disjunctivism). What account should naïve realists provide of the visual phenomenology of hallucination? As is well-known, naïve realism has difficulty explaining the phenomenology of hallucination, due to the "screening off problem" illuminated by Martin (2004, p. 46). The problem is as follows: If the visual phenomenology of a hallucinatory experience is sufficiently explained by a property P which a veridical experience also has, then it seems inevitable that the visual phenomenology of the veridical experience will be likewise explained by P. But, in this case, the acquaintance relation, which naive realists regard as explaining the visual phenomenology of veridical experience, seems to be explanatorily redundant or screened off, for all explanatory work seems to be performed by the common property P. If the acquaintance relation is explanatorily useless, then it seems that we lack a reason to hold on to naïve realism. Hence, naïve realists need to devise an account of the visual phenomenology of hallucination that avoids this problem. Here, the eliminativist claim makes a difference. On the eliminativist view, there is such

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[1] Eliminativistic naïve realism has been endorsed by William Fish (2009, 2012) and Heather Logue (2012).

[2] For the argument from hallucination, see Fish (2009, pp. 29-33).

a thing as phenomenology of hallucination. This means that eliminativists do not have to give an account of the visual phenomenology of hallucinatory experience. Therefore, there is nothing to screen off the explanatory power of the acquaintance relation.

Perhaps, the eliminativist claim can also contribute to naive realism in a more positive manner. That is, naive realism might acquire a certain explanatory power, rather than be exempted from explanatory requirements, by getting connected to the eliminativist claim. In order to provide an argument for naive realism, William Fish (2008, 2009, 2012) focuses on the explanatory gap between phenomenal qualities (phenomenology) and neural properties, which has been illuminated by Joseph Levine (1983). He argues that naive realism has an advantage over other philosophical theories of visual experience with regard to the explanatory gap. It is crusial in his argument that total hallucinations do not have phenomenology. The aim of this paper is to access and develop his argument for ENR. If the eliminativist claim contribute to the explanatory power of naive realism, then (at least) naive realists are further motivated to accept the eliminativist commitment.

Two Epistemological Gaps

The explanatory gap problem, to which Fish (2008; 2009) claims that naïve realism can provide a solution, is as follows: On a standard qualia theorist view, the phenomenology of a visual experience is an intrinsic property of the subject, which is realized by neural processes in the subject's brain. An intrinsic property of a subject cannot be an environmental object or its property. Thus, on the qualia theorist view, the phenomenology of a visual experience is regarded as metaphysically different from environmental objects and their properties. Suppose that you are seeing a red apple. In this case, you are likely to have a visual experience with a reddish-apple-phenomenology. The qualia theorist maintains that the reddish-apple-phenomenology is realized by the neural processes in your brain. The question to be asked here is, why does the physical or functional processing realize the reddish-apple-phenomenology, rather than a bluish-apple-phenomenology or a reddish-banana-phenomenology? We seemingly cannot make it intelligible by appealing to any neural properties why you are undergoing the reddish-apple phenomenology, rather than other types of phenomenology. This indicates that there is an explanatory gap between the phenomenology of an experience and neural processes responsible for the experience. How can we close this gap?

Fish first (2008; 2009) argued that naïve realism can close the explanatory gap but, due to Adam Pautz's very plausible objection (Pautz 2012), he later withdrew it. Instead, he (2012) claimed that naïve realism can move the gap to a more appropriate position than original one, which is between microphysical properties (e.g. particular reflectance and arrays of particles) and objective perceptible properties (e.g. redness and apple-shape). How does naïve realism move the gap? According to him, 'it is the nature of this environment [the

subject is acquainted with]–not the nature of the [brain] processing–that accounts for what it is like to [have a visual experience]' (Fish, 2013, p.2). That is to say, it is not neural properties but environmental objects and their perceptible properties that we should appeal to in order to answer the question why you are undergoing the reddish-apple-phenomenology rather than other types of phenomenology. If it is inappropriate to explain in terms of neural properties why you are undergoing the reddish-apple phenomenology rather than other types of phenomenology, then there is no gap that *we should close by adding some explanatory story*. On his proposal, therefore, the original explanatory gap problem is not solved but dissolved. Such a problem does not exist from the beginning. However, this does not mean that there is no explanatory gap. There remains a different explanatory problem. It is undeniable that environmental objects have both microphysical properties and perceptible properties. Moreover, it seems plausible that an object has a perceptible property in virtue of having certain microphysical properties. Given these, suppose that you are undergoing the reddish-apple-phenomenology. It is not explanatorily enough to say that this is because you are seeing a physical concrete object, and its redness and its apple-shape constitute the phenomenology. We should further explain why and how the particular perceptible properties (redness and apple-shape), rather than other perceptible properties (say, greenness and banana-shape), are realized by the microphysical properties of the object. This problem seems no less difficult than the original one.

In spite of this, Fish claims the gap should be located between the microphysical properties and objective perceptible properties (I call this "objective gap"), rather than between neural properties and intrinsic properties of the subject (I call this "subjective gap"). In what sense is the objective gap better than the subjective one? Is this intuitively obvious? At the very least, it seems unclear to me why it is desirable.

How does Fish answer to this question? One strategy is to emphasize that the objective gap is "original". As Shoemaker (2003) has explicated, the explanatory gap was located at the objective position before dualism of mind and matter flourishing, but it has been moved to the subjective position by dualists. In light of this, it may be claimed that the objective position is the very good-old one and that the gap should be moved by non-dualists to the original position. It is likely that Fish follows this line, because he writes

> The reason we find a subjective explanatory gap in the first place is because it was hoped that the objective explanatory gap could be dealt with by kicking it upstairs into the mind. That might work for a dualist, but for a materialist the problem simply resurfaces in a new, subjective, form. So in relocating it to the world, I am simply putting it back in its original place (Fish 2012, p. 2).

However, it is unclear why the gap should be located at the original position for non-dualists. The fact that an item was originally located at a

position does not by itself mean that the item should be there. Fish adds this claim: "if […] the character of a particular episode of acquaintance arises from environment the creature is acquainted with, then we would have made great strides in understanding consciousness, even if there did remain an unsolved problem in metaphysics" (2012, p.2). It is hard to understand why this claim is dialectically effective. Qualia theorists face the explanatory gap problem of how they can explain in terms of neural properties why a subject is undergoing a particular phenomenology. Likewise, naïve realists face the explanatory gap problem of how they can explain why a subject is undergoing a particular phenomenology, in terms of a certain relation between the subject and the environmental object which is microphysical in nature. The latter problem involves an external relation to environmental objects; the former problem does not. However, the difference seems unimportant for our concern. Both problems are associated with the nature of phenomenal consciousness. With this respect, there seems no reason for favoring one over the other.

Nevertheless, I think there are two arguments to show that from an epistemological perspective the subjective gap is more harmful than the objective one. The first argument is as follows: it seems plausible that we know about the environmental world via phenomenal experiences. Suppose that, as qualia theorists should do, the phenomenology of a visual experience is regarded as metaphysically different from environmental objects and their properties. This supposition is entailed by any theory facing the subjective gap. On this supposition, as Mark Johnston (2006) argues, it becomes mystery how we can get to know the environmental world *via the phenomenology*. On the other hand, if we think that the phenomenology of a visual experience is partly constituted by environmental objects and their properties, it is intuitively intelligible how we can get such knowledge. In this sense, it seems that the subjective gap is epistemologically worse than the objective gap.

The second argument is that the subjective gap leads to a skeptical scenario about the knowledge of the phenomenology other people undergoes. In the case of the subjective gap, the phenomenology of a visual experience is private in the sense that a particular token of an intrinsic property is manifested only to the experiencing subject. In this case, we cannot know, via direct observation, about the phenomenology others are undergoing. Thus, an epistemological problem arises: how can we know what phenomenology others are undergoing? The problem partially stems from the subjective gap. Suppose that the gap can be plausibly extended from the explanatory level to the metaphysical level. This opens up the metaphysical possibility that the same brain activity realizes different intrinsic properties. Given the possibility, the fact that our brain activities are significantly similar does not entail the sharing of phenomenology. Hence, even in the same environment, I might undergo quite different phenomenology from that of my internally identical twin. This seems to destruct the commonsense idea that the phenomenology which I am undergoing in a perceptual situation is reliable evidence regarding what phenomenology others undergo in the same situation. Arguably, this leads to the skepticism that we cannot know about the phenomenology of others. On

the other hand, in the case of the objective gap, the phenomenology of a visual experience is objectively observable in the sense that I can directly observe a particular token of a perceptible property which constitutes the phenomenology of the visual experience of others. When you and I are seeing the same red apple, we are observing the same token of a perceptible property, the particular redness, which constitutes both of your phenomenology and mine. Therefore, it seems that we are able to know, via direct observation, what phenomenology others are undergoing. Even if the gap can be extended to the metaphysical level, any epistemological problem does not arise because perceptible properties themselves can be publicly observable. The metaphysical possibility that the same microphysical properties realizes different perceptible properties does not lead to the skepticism that we cannot know, via direct observation, what perceptible properties others are undergoing. Consequently, the explanatory gap should be located at the objective position because of the epistemological advantages.

Elinativistic Naïve realism or Representationalism

Can naïve realism alone locate the explanatory gap at the objective position? The main rival of naïve realism is representationalism, which is characterized as a conjunction of the following explanatory and metaphysical claims: (1) a visual experience has phenomenology in virtue of the subject's visual system representing environmental objects and their properties; (2) the phenomenology of a visual experience is identical to a certain representational content of the experience (I call the content RCE). I assume that representationalism can sufficiently capture the phenomenology of veridical visual experience as well as naïve realism. As Pautz (2012) has pointed out, some kinds of representationalism accepts the idea that 'the sensible qualities are in the mind-independent world' (p.4). That is, representationalists can hold that RCE responsible for visual phenomenology contains perceptible properties as its components. Given this, representationalists can identify the phenomenology of a veridical visual experience with perceptible properties. Thus, naïve realism and representationalism do not differ in how to locate the explanatory gap. However, this does not mean that we cannot provide any argument favorable for naïve realism by considering the explanatory gap. In this section, I will construct an argument to the effect that ENR has a theoretical advantage over representationalism.

Representationalists need to accommodate RCE to provide an account of visual phenomenology. What is RCE? First, it should be noted that RCE is an abstract entity, which cannot be identical to a concrete spatiotemporal component of the environmental world. This is derived from the plausible presupposition that any type of representational content as such cannot be a concrete spatiotemporal item. It seems to me that the presupposition is undeniable. However, even if this is rejected by some sound counterargument, it may be accepted by representationalists that a RCE cannot be identical to an

environmental object instantiating perceptible properties. Representationalists usually accept the principle that the phenomenology of hallucination is metaphysically the same as that of veridical perception. Since there is no suitable environmental object in cases of hallucination, RCE cannot be identified with such an object-properties couple. Hence, RCE must be such that it is not identical to environmental objects instantiating perceptible properties but somehow involves perceptible properties. The question to be asked here is, what kind of abstract entity is RCE? Among current analytic philosophers, it is widely accepted that RCE is (1) an abstract entity which has accuracy conditions and (2) is attributed to visual experiences on the basis of a certain criteria (Siegel, 2011). This characterization is minimal. So, how should we further characterize RCE? There are two options: (1) to characterize RCE as a distinctive type of content, which is essentially different from other types of content attributed to cognitive activities or states such as thinking, judging or beliefs; (2) to characterize RCE as the same type of content as that attributed to cognitive activities or states. My argument is that either option leads to, in different manners, the same conclusion that naïve realism has a theoretical advantage over representationalism.

According to the first option, RCE is essentially different from other types of content. One may think that while RCEs are non-conceptual, contents of other cognitive activities or states must be conceptual (Evans 1982; Tye 2009). Others may think that while RCEs are phenomenal contents, contents of other cognitive activities or states cannot be so (Kriegel 2002). On this option, in addition to some types of contents attributed to cognitive activities and states, a different type of content is introduced to explain the metaphysical nature of visual phenomenology. It is of course not reprehensible to introduce an abstract entity in order to explain a phenomenon. My point is rather that we should be economical with respect to ontological commitment. We should not introduce abstract entities if an explanatory task at hand is achieved by reference to entities in hand. Naïve realists do not require any abstract entities for explaining the metaphysical nature of visual phenomenology of veridical experiences. All they need to invoke to delineate the phenomenology is environmental objects instantiating perceptible properties. Such an entity must be accommodated in representationalism as well. Perhaps, representationalists can establish a reductive theory of RCE. [1] In this case, representationalism might not involve any problematic abstract entities. However, there is a fairly general agreement that no satisfactory reductive theory has been established.[2] Unless such a theory is actually constructed, we can permissibly exclude it from our consideration. Thus, if representationalists take the first option, it follows that naïve realism is more ontologically economical than representationalism.

According to the second option, RCE is essentially the same as other types of content. One may think that RCEs and contents of beliefs are both

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[1]Dretske (1995; 2003) and Tye (2000; 2009) are the examples of such a reductive theory.
[2]For objections to such reductive theories, see Pautz (2010).

conceptual (McDowell 1994). Representationalsts who takes this option may claim that since naïve realism must also accommodate contents of cognitive activities and states, it does not have any advantage in ontological commitment over representationalism. Certainly, naïve realists should accommodate such abstract entities. However, this does not mean that there is no difference between naïve realism and representationalism with respect to how to metaphysically analyze the abstract entities. For naïve realists, abstract entities are used only to characterize cognitive activities/states without presentational phenomenology. On the other hand, representationalists must use abstract entities to characterize not just such cognitive activities/states but also visual experiences with presentational phenomenology. This difference suggests that naïve realism is open to more various metaphysical analyses of such abstract entities as compared to representationalism. One of the metaphysical analyses appeals to the concept of possible world. Suppose that one believes that there is a red apple in front of him/her. On this analysis, the content is analyzed as a set of possible worlds in which there is a red apple in front of him/her. Assume that accuracy or truth conditions of some cognitive activities/states are satisfactorily captured by this possible-world analysis. Given this assumption, this analysis is available to naïve realists. However, representationalists seemingly cannot adopt it. It is unclear how a relation to a set of possible worlds can explain the presentational phenomenology of a veridical visual experience. It seems extremely implausible that when one has a visual experience with the RCE that there is an apple in front of him/her, all possible worlds in which there is an apple in front of him/her are simultaneously presented to him/her. From the phenomenological perspective, it seems that *a* world (whether this is the actual world or a non-actual world) alone can be presented to us at a time. If this consideration is correct, then the possible-world analysis cannot be applied to RCE, which is supposed to be identical to the phenomenology of visual experiences. Therefore, while naïve realists can include the possible-world analysis in the candidate list of metaphysical analyses of contents of cognitive activities/states, representationalists cannot do so. Moreover, some of other analyses might also be unavailable for representationalists. Excluding the philosophy of perceptual phenomenology, the concept of representational content is normally used to capture what information a mental process/state delivers, rather than what phenomenology a mental state has. Given this, we can plausibly guess that some existing metaphysical analyses of representational content do not fit to RCE. From these considerations, it can be reasonably concluded that representationalists have to impose more constraints on metaphysical analyses of the contents of cognitive activities/states than naïve realists. It might be possible to devise a metaphysical analysis of abstract entities at issue which meets the all explanatory requirements, but the burden of proof lies with representationalits. To my knowledge, there has not been such an analysis. Thus, if representationalists take the second option, it follows that naïve realism is more tolerant than representationalism with respect to the metaphysical nature of such contents. This is also a theoretical advantage of naïve realism.

Consequently, whichever option representationalists take, naïve realism has a theoretical advantage over representationalism.

Note that the eliminativist claim (total hallucinations do not have any visual phenomenology.) is crucial for this argument. If naïve realists dismiss it, then they need to accommodate certain entities (say, qualia, sense-date or a certain type of representational content) in order to explain the metaphysical nature of the phenomenology of hallucinations. The accommodation of such entities obviously deprives naïve realism of the theoretical advantage mentioned above. ENR alone can take advantage of my arguments.

Conclusion

From the above discussion, we can reasonably conclude that ENR can best deal with the explanatory gap problem. This constitutes a motivation for naïve realism. Therefore, naïve realists should adopt the eliminativst claim not just for the negative reason to block the argument from hallucination but also for the positive reason to motivate naïve realism.

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