

Embodied and Situated Cognition: from Phenomenology to Neuroscience and Artificial Intelligence

EMBODIED MIND, ACTION, AND PSYCHOSIS

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In my presentation I shall be concerned with cognitive conceptions of psychopathology (Frith, Jeannerod) and its relationship both to and with the phenomenology (Merleau-Ponty, Sass, Fusch, Stanghellini), hermeneutics (Heidegger, Wittgenstein) and pragmatism (Dewey).

Each living organism is the result of interactions with the environment. Living creatures cannot exist without the environment and both are bond together in behavior. Biological system is able to maintain its characteristic organization for a relatively long period of time. Thus, each organism is an autonomous system. The world and the organism determine each other; the boundary organism-environment must be permeable to some extent. Even language belongs to evolutionary history of human being. It constitutionally depends, like all human activities, on physiological processes in our body and sometimes large scale technological systems. But only through language human beings are in a position to explain their experience in living and assimilate them to inter-subjective social world. Complexity, different rhythms and dimensions of human life are especially visible in the light of psychopathology. Schizophrenia, depression, or psychopathy raises a question of the full and healthy existence.

The boundary between organism and environment is always vague. On the psychological level, the organism brings order into chaotic mass of sensations only by exercising its own active powers. The organism which continually finds gratification without break, frustration, or set-back moves ahead without sufficient registering of experience. This is why, in the case of some delusions, ego grows excessively. It does not meet enough obstacles (because of the deficiency in some cognitive mechanism) and does not test its powers by endless solution of painful set-backs. Different forms of interaction or engagement in the environment serve as a condition for subject's autonomy-achieving. Only by deliberate action we are able to get an informational feedback necessary for working out an effective reality models and real contact with the world.