
An Investigation of *Phenomenological Hermeneutics* as a Methodology in Literary Studies in Comparison with the Social Sciences: Exploring Core Concepts

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Abstract:

This methods paper looks at the methodology of *phenomenology* and *hermeneutics* as relevant to literary studies compared with the practice of *phenomenological hermeneutics* in the social sciences. Literature is the record of human experience in imaginative texts, and *literary studies* use textual analysis to elicit meanings from the text. The text, however, requires an aesthetic 'close reading' and a historical and social context to make it contemporary. As older strategies of interpreting literary texts, such as formalism and critical theory, have faded, the need for interpreting literature while retaining its imaginative essence remains. *Phenomenology*, a philosophy and a methodology for analyzing human experience, has emerged as an essential epistemological framework in the human/social sciences to uncover the *meaning* of social actions, using *hermeneutics* as one of its tools. This paper affirms that *phenomenological hermeneutics* can be used as a similar interpretative method in literary studies since both are disciplines related to human beings. The *gap* discovered through the conceptual review shows that 'phenomenological hermeneutics' has not been satisfactorily applied in literary studies, except as in the various schools of "reader response criticism," which do not exhaust the possibilities of the phenomenological method. Included here is a brief proposition on integrating literary hermeneutics with phenomenological methodology and using this framework for texts' "lifeworld" analysis, especially poetry.

Keywords: literary analysis, social sciences, "lifeworld," "lived experience," phenomenological hermeneutics.

Introduction

This theoretical paper examines the philosophical undertones of *phenomenological hermeneutics*, a research methodology prevalent in the social sciences in *literary studies*. There are many intersections between the human/social sciences and literary studies, the most prominent being the *subject* of study: human *beings* and the *world* they inhabit. Literary research is closer to the human (social) sciences in terms of subjects, perspectives, aims, and methodologies than the natural sciences. However, there are some differences.

Phenomenology, a standard qualitative methodology in the social sciences, studies the "lived experience" (*erlebnis*- Wilhelm Dilthey's German word for any specific experience which has its unity and pattern of meaning) of *subjects* who inhabit the "lifeworld" (*Lebenswelt*- coined by Edmund Husserl to indicate the pre-reflective, 'pre-given' world of 'immediate experience'); *subjects*, are "'persons' or beings that have 'consciousness' and that act purposefully in and on the world ..." (Manen, *Researching Lived Experience* 177, 182, 4; emphasis added). These actions generate *meanings*, which may be interpreted through their *expressions* via different media – spoken, written, or performed. By contrast, the natural or empirical sciences study the *objects* of the natural world, their properties, and how these "'objects of nature,' 'things,' 'natural events'" behave (Manen 3). Phenomenological methods in the social sciences employ descriptive and interpretative analyses of modes of expression, including the linguistic, done frequently through semiotics or other sign systems, attempting to understand the meaningfulness of expressions.

Literary studies, which is the study and analysis of literature, studies the human world indirectly, literature being an *imaginative record* of the "lived experience" in the "lifeworld" of human beings inhabiting a social and cultural milieu. Literature is primarily seen as

representational of the real world. Research here consists of deriving meanings through textual analysis through different interdisciplinary or 'theory' lenses, comparative studies, cultural and political ideologies, and various other interpretative strategies, which bring out the wealth of meanings embedded within these texts. The table below demonstrates the intersections and differences between the three major academic disciplines:

Parameters	Literary Studies	Social Sciences	Natural/Pure Sciences
	SIMILARITIES		
Subject	Human world as depicted in imaginative literary texts and natural world in relationship	Human actions, social interactions	Natural world / physical universe
Basis of Knowledge generation	Interpretation of texts through different lenses - literary theories, comparative studies interdisciplinary studies	Interpretation of meanings of human experiences expressed through various channels- texts, interviews, etc. and other cultural expressions	Determining causality of phenomena through Cause-Effect paradigms
Intent	INTERPRETATION	UNDERSTANDING	EXPLANATION
	DIFFERENCES		
Key area (subject) of study; object of enquiry	Human experience as represented through texts, mostly written, sometimes oral	Actions and expressions of human beings through various signs	Manifestations of natural phenomena

Key task for systematic study	Textual analysis to derive meanings through an interpretation (auslegung) of texts	Explicating and reflecting on the intentions, meanings and self-understandings of the subjects, leading to understanding (verstehen) of the action	Observation and analysis of the frequency, duration, causal factors, etc. of studied phenomena for the sake of explanation
Methodology	Descriptive, interpretative, semiotic, linguistic / cultural analysis of texts	Descriptive, Qualitative, mixed methodology, which aims at decoding all kinds of signs , including the linguistic	Deductive, quantitative, mixed
Methods	Inductive method Analysis through lenses of 'literary theory', and interdisciplinary comparative studies; close readings, hermeneutical readings, contextual readings	Inductive method. Mixed methods Analysis of qualitative data -field and case studies, interviews, textual analysis etc.	Quantitative data, statistical analysis and generalisations, generation of hypotheses leading to general laws about phenomena

Table 1- The intersections and differences between Literary studies, Social and Natural sciences

Thus, it is in the **subject** of investigation, which van Manen, referring to Dilthey's description, restates as "the human world characterized by *Geist – mind*, thoughts, *consciousness*, values, feelings, emotions, actions, and purposes, which find their

objectification in languages, beliefs, arts, and institutions" (*Researching Lived Experience* 3) that literary studies and phenomenology find their most remarkable similarity. The other similarity concerns the literary and cultural **sources** of information regarding studying the "lifeworld," which is the oral, written, and performed 'records' – the repositories of the "lived experiences."

Paul Ricoeur comments on how when the social sciences, as in literary studies, are concerned with the *interpretation* of written texts, as in interview transcripts, testimonies, narrations of experiences through prose or poetry, etc. then they take on a hermeneutical character (Ricoeur, *Model of the Text* 91) since their "*object* displays some of the features constitutive of a text as a text . . . and their methodology develops the same kind of procedures as those of *Auslegung* or text-interpretation" (91). Literary Studies and the social sciences especially intersect when these writings take on an imaginative character, as when the writings are *poetic*.

The Background to the Problem in Literary Studies

The twenty-first century presented literary studies globally with a challenge of practice and relevance- more widely seen as a 'crisis in the humanities' itself. Thus, teachers, scholars, and students of English literature have had to turn to new methods and methodologies of teaching, moving beyond mere Formalist 'close reading' and Structural linguistic frames of the genre. Literary studies also moved beyond the readings of texts through 'theory' – techniques of Post-structuralism and Deconstruction, which focussed on critically evaluating texts to reveal ambiguities and discrepancies, and of New Historicism that focussed on context and ideology.

With the end of 'the linguistic turn' since the 1990s, literary studies witnessed the breakdown of the "post-Saussurean analogy between linguistics, literary reading, and social analysis" due to the recognition that not everything operates as language does ("Hermeneutic Constructions"). Thus, a decline in 'theory' was seen. The move to *cultural* readings of texts happened from the 1970s onwards, which included texts representing gender, race, ethnicity, and women's issues, which broadened the scope of literary interpretations. While cultural concerns still sway in many

Anglophone countries, including India, through all these changes, one requirement remains for the 'close reading' of texts.

One of the methods of close reading throughout the last century involved 'the hermeneutics of suspicion,' a phrase coined by Paul Ricoeur to describe what Rita Felski calls "a new mode of militant reading" (*The Limits of Critique* 9), where negatively critiquing texts became the dominant mode of literary studies. According to Ricoeur, Freud, Marx, and Nietzsche, who he collectively termed the 'masters of suspicion,' are "the architects of a *distinctively modern style of interpretation* that circumvents obvious or self-evident meanings in order to draw out less visible and less flattering truths" (Ricoeur, qt. in Felski "Critique and the Hermeneutics of Suspicion"; emphasis added). While Ricoeur affirmed the usefulness of 'suspicion' for "unmasking ideologies and forms of false consciousness" (Goncalo 206), Felski points out that by constantly critiquing and being 'suspicious' of a text, "literary scholars are confusing a part of thought with the whole of thought" (Felski, *The Limits of Critique* 11), and *herein lies the need to evolve a new or revised method of 'close reading*.' For, 'the hermeneutics of suspicion,' which continues or blends with the critical attitude of 'theory,' not just obscures other forms of reading, such as the descriptive, appreciative, speculative or imaginative (Helen et al. in Felski 11), it *does not show any path to a 'recovery*,' which is "the affirmation that should balance the exercise of suspicion" (Scott-Baumann, qt by Goncalo 206; emphasis added).

Also, more than the literary text that is looked at with 'suspicion,' the ultimate target is consciousness with its 'illusions' and 'lies,' as Stephen Squibbs remarks: "The suspicious object for the masters is not a text, literary or otherwise, but consciousness....." Felski calls the critical attitude in literary studies an *intellectual* stance favored over the *emotive or imaginative* ones but bars the reader from being open and vulnerable to what the text offers (*Limits* 18). She calls for a "post-critical reading" where one reflects on what the text "unfurls, calls forth, makes possible" (18).

The Problem of Consciousness Across Disciplines

Apart from the 'hermeneutics of suspicion' detailed above that

seeks to underscore the deceptions of ordinary human consciousness, there is also the scientific attitude rooted in positivism, with its onus on 'objectivity' and its inherent bias towards 'subjectivity,' which again influenced the readings of literature, ironically, since literature is the expression of the subject or the *subjective*. Its very existence points towards the presence of a human consciousness or a subject (and an author) that created the work.

This lack of a nuanced approach towards the subjective in the natural sciences is a general attitude of positivism, which von Wright calls *methodological monism*, which includes a tendency towards an explanation of all phenomena in terms of *causality* and to deem other approaches to an understanding of phenomena, mainly social and literary, such as "intentions, goals, purposes" *et al.* as "unscientific" (4). These attitudes of the empirical sciences to eschew 'subjectivity' from any research led the social sciences in the late nineteenth century to look for new ways of interpreting human actions, away from natural/empirical positivism. In the search for the 'meaning' of social action, and not just 'explanation,' methodologies in the social sciences moved away from the strictly quantitative methods of empirical sciences and to develop *qualitative methods* to *interpret* social actions. Lavery affirms how qualitative methods in the social sciences focus on "discovery, description, and meaning, rather than prediction, control and measurement" (Lavery 21). Sloan and Bowe state: "Qualitative methodological approaches tend to be based on recognition of the *subjective*, experiential lifeworld of human beings and description of their experiences in depth" ("Curriculum Design" 4; emphasis added), since the world of human beings is "socially constructed, complex and ever-changing" (4), and where human beings have agency and are not static objects.

A Conceptual Review of Phenomenology:

Essential concepts in Phenomenology: Overview of Epistemological (Husserl) and Ontological (Heidegger) stances

Many terms native to phenomenology and *phenomenology* itself have been used by researchers casually and loosely, taking away from the rigor expected from researchers. Hence, this section lists and defines certain essential concepts related to phenomenology, which

could be a bedrock for phenomenological research in literary studies.

Edmund Husserl is the founder of the phenomenological tradition as it is practiced today, who founded the system of *transcendental* or descriptive phenomenology as a counter to the positivist methods employed by empirical (pure/natural) sciences in the physical domain and psychology in the mental-behavioral domain. His phenomenology gave a new *epistemological* framework to gain knowledge, recognize subjectivity, and work towards including and transcending it. He posited that the scientific 'objective' inquiry into the world of objects, separated from subjective or personal observations, overlooks the essential aspect of *experience* since ***it is through experience that objects can be known***. One could know the world only as its elements impinged on one's consciousness and not as they may independently exist. Therefore, as Polkinghorne clarifies:

The phenomenological map *refocuses inquiry*, concentrating not on descriptions of worldly objects but on *descriptions of experience*. This requires a change in the attitude or attunement of the researcher from a *natural* perspective to a *phenomenological* perspective. (41; emphasis added)

The '**natural**' attitude here refers to the everyday, commonplace, 'taken-for-granted' attitude towards objects, which is un-examined and naïve; in contrast, is the "phenomenological perspective," which "depends on a wider horizon of consciousness that usually remains unexamined" (Applebaum). Phenomenological inquiry focuses on objects of perception, as they appear to human consciousness, and is not concerned with the existence of these objects, as such, in the world or elsewhere. The concern is with *how objects appear to consciousness* and are cognitively perceived, and *not whether the object has an existence independent of the experience*. This gives phenomenology a broad applicatory scope since anything that is 'given' to consciousness or experienced by consciousness, whether internal (immanent) or external (transcendent) to itself, can form the subject matter of phenomenological inquiry; this includes mental states like dreams, visions, hallucinations, etc. which are often dismissed as 'subjective' by other methodologies. Next, Husserl affirmed how human consciousness had an '**intentional**' quality,

always pointing towards something, and hence, it could not be separated from the world of which it is a part. Consciousness, as he famously said, is always "*consciousness-of*" (Husserl, qtd. in Hahn 19; emphasis added); "consciousness directs itself towards objects and takes up those objects as its theme" (19). Any experience, as per phenomenology, consists of the "reception of worldly objects by the processes of consciousness to constitute what presents itself in awareness" (Polkinghorne 42). By emphasizing the "person-world relationship in the constituting of experience" (42), phenomenology thus forms a bridge between idealist and realist stances of reality – reality, as experienced, is neither in mind nor 'out there,' but is apprehended by the indubitable connection between mind and world.

Here, Husserl introduced the concepts of *noema* and *noesis* to explain the intentional-experiential dimension of consciousness. *Noema* and *noemata* refer to how the "intentional object" appears to the observer; the 'intentional object' (object of attention), as perceived in a particular manner, which is different from the actual object. *Noesis* is the consciousness-correlate/*noetic* act that intends the object at any particular time (Gallagher, *Phenomenology* 59, 74).

Another critical aspect of Husserlian phenomenology is the method of 'bracketing' or *phenomenological reduction* (**epoché**) to arrive at an *eidetic* essence of anything, wherein the essential nature of the phenomenal object is arrived at through the "lived experience" of it. *Erlebnis*, or the "lived experience" highlighted by **Wilhelm Dilthey**, when given the dimension of Husserl's *intentionality*, indicates anything that is given to consciousness (objects, events, or any phenomena) in the sense of having "lived through it" (Manen, "Phenomenology in its Original Sense" 811), and has a sense of "immediacy." The meaning of *experience* itself needs to be clarified here to arrive at the phenomenological sense of it. Here, the "lived experience" does not refer to "natural, inevitable, causal and correlational processes," which is the "past-oriented, cause-and-effect image of experience that David Hume offered to empirical-analytic science" (Manen, "Ways of Knowing" 216); instead, *experience* is the one associated with Rousseau, who introduced a new way of writing by turning to the rich and intimate world of "inner experience," by

which the *intentional meaning* of the experience is grasped (217). This term, "lived experience," is used rather loosely to mean having any experience. However, phenomenologically, it refers to Husserl's term *zu den Sachen* – "a turning back to what matters in lived or primal experience" (Manen, "Original Sense" 811) and answering, "the basic phenomenological question, 'What is it like?'" (Dan et al. in Manen, 811). Phenomenology aims to recover this meaning embedded within the "lived experience" of any human agent but forgotten or taken for granted in the 'natural attitude.'

Martin Heidegger, associated with *hermeneutic phenomenology*, was formerly a student of Husserl and an influential philosopher in his own right; his influence is seen on Sartre, Habermas, Derrida, Foucault, Gadamer, Ricoeur, Levinas, Rorty and Vattimo (Farin 107). He brought in the existential and *ontological* dimensions of phenomenological inquiry. With his concept of '**dasein**' – humans as existentially *being-in-the-world*, he also opposed the Cartesian dualism of subject and object since there is a "prior belonging together" of the two in the world, and hence, human experience cannot be separated or viewed apart from the space of the world, where objects also exist. Expanding on the theme of intentionality of consciousness, Heidegger stated, "the idea of intentionality implied a fully ontological immersion in the world" (McCaffrey 216), and this further implied two crucial conclusions. The first is that one's existence as a human consists of "the performance of intentional acts, and (the human) is therefore essentially not an object." Second, an 'immersion' in the world implies a commitment to *understanding* this world (216) rather than causal explanations, which brings in *hermeneutics*, the art and science of *understanding* and *interpreting* experience. Heidegger fine-tuned the concept of *experience*, constructing every intentional act of experience as an **event** – *ereignis*, instantaneous and imbued with meaning, that which is experienced as a human being-in-the-world (**dasein**), "beyond mere subjectivism and scientific theoretical objectivism" (Vallega 141).

Unpacking the etymological description of phenomenology, Heidegger posited that in the Greek word 'phenomenology,' "*logos*

means 'to let something be seen,' and *phenomenon* means 'that which shows itself in itself' (Manen, *Phenomenology of Practice* 27). Etymologically, *phenomenon* originates "from the Greek word 'phaenesthai,' meaning 'to show itself,' a phenomenon might be considered anything that presents itself" (McConnell-Henry 8). Manen explains this further: what phenomenology aims to "let show itself" is something that is *concealed* or hidden, something that lies *hidden* but that belongs to what shows itself so essentially as to constitute its 'meaning and ground' (Heidegger, qt. by Manen, *Phenomenology of Practice* 28). Hence, phenomenology is an inquiry into the **essences** of phenomena, which lie hidden within and are to be uncovered by the processes or methods of this inquiry, *hermeneutics* being one of them. Heidegger combined the phenomenology of Husserl with the insights gleaned from the hermeneutics of Dilthey and brought in the methodology of *phenomenological hermeneutics* to interpret experience, including that expressed in texts.

An essential facet of Heidegger's phenomenology about literary studies is his privileging of **language** over observation in the phenomenological process: "Phenomenology. . . must find the words for what it sees." (Farin 110) and his idea that "language and poets are the original interpreters" (107). Heidegger stated that poetry is "the voice of truth, the saying of the unconcealedness of what is" in his essay, "The Origin of the Work of Art" (Heidegger qt. in "Introduction", *Poetry, Language Thought*, Hofstadter x)

To sum up the above ideas, Manen says how, "Anything that presents itself to consciousness is potential of interest to phenomenology, whether the object is real or imagined, empirically measurable, or subjectively felt (Manen, "Meaning Attribution" 2). Here, 'essence' of phenomena refers to "the universal commonality in the experience" (Holiday), which are very often expressed as emotions, feelings, behaviors and in literature portrayed through poetry, fiction, drama, and narrative. To elicit the *essence* of any experience as portrayed, phenomenology studies the "lived experience" (*erlebnis*) within the "lifeworld"/Lebenswelt, "pre-reflectively" as it impinges on human consciousness, without taxonomizing, classifying, explaining, conceptualizing, abstracting, or

even attributing meaning to it. (Manen, 2017).

The affinity between literary studies and phenomenology, apart from the linguistic aspect of interpretation, stems from the nature of the phenomenological inquiry of **revealing what is concealed**. Hence, it points towards a **recovery of the essential meaning of experiences** lost under the facades of ordinary living in a technological world. It also points to the very nature of language itself – it reveals and conceals simultaneously. For this, the tool used by both disciplines is **hermeneutics- the art and science of interpretation**.

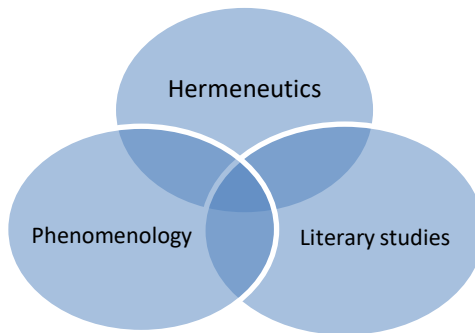


Fig. 1- The inter-connection between Phenomenology, Literary Studies and Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics: Etymology and an Overview

While hermeneutics is a sought-after tool in qualitative methods of phenomenological analysis, it is less popular than a method of analysis in literary studies. However, hermeneutics has existed since classical Greek times, when the word was first coined. Its etymological origin is from the Greek word *hermeneia*, which was translated into Latin as *hermeneutics*, the word used "not only to designate the activity of interpretation, but also the activities of declaration, explanation, translation, communication, and even artistic elocution" (Keane and Lawn 1). However, it is as *interpretation*, or as the activity of interpretation, that *hermeneutics* is currently understood. *Hermeneia*, the etymological root of *hermeneutics*, comes

from the word *Hermes*, which referred to the playful, mischievous messenger of the Greek gods who brought messages to the human world, mediating between two worlds, just as **language mediates between experience and thought**. Moules writes, "Hermes has the character of complication, multiplicity, lies, jokes, irreverence, indirection, and disdain for rules; . . . he is the master of creativity and invention. He can see things anew . . ." (2).

Hermeneutics – Definitions and historical development relevant to Phenomenology Hermeneutics has two aspects: **exegesis**, which is the actual interpretation of texts and its underlying **philosophy**, as in "the theory or philosophy of the interpretation of meaning" (Bleicher, 1980). Exegesis and interpretation were first seen in Protestant Biblical scholarship (*hermeneutica sacra*), legal texts (*hermeneutica juris*), and classical texts (*hermeneutica profana*). Biblical exegesis developed from medieval rhetoric and was concerned with the understanding of ambiguous passages through studying their context, which gave rise to the practice of the '**hermeneutic circle,**' in which "the parts of a text should be comprehended out of the whole in which they stand, such as the whole of a book and its intent, of a literary genre, and of the work and life of an author" (Grondin 402).

The next phase began in the late modern period when Romantic German philosopher and Protestant theologian *Freidrich Schleiermacher* proposed "a more philosophical and universal understanding of hermeneutics . . ." (Grondin 403) and posited that there needs to be an art of **interpretation that would be binding on all disciplines**. This marked the separation of research and philosophic inquiry in the humanities, away from the methods of the natural sciences. This development is essential since science upheld the *objectivity* of the researcher- "the scientific method supports individuals to free themselves from bias, and to attain distance from those contextual features that are unique to their life history. . . and at times, eliminate(s) the natural, unpredictable experiences that are the hallmark of each human life" (Holroyd, "Clarifying Understanding" 1). This not just negates the "lived-experience"; it also leads to a specific manipulation of outcomes, which is not desirable in the realm

of the human/social sciences or literary studies that deal with immersive human experience, and in the research of which, both the researcher and the subjects are intimately involved in **dialogic understanding**. The influence of Schleiermacher is seen in the concepts of *creativity in interpretation*, the *role of language* (both linguistic and psychological aspects), and the '*hermeneutic circle*' (Moules 5). The 'hermeneutic circle' was further developed ontologically by Heidegger and linguistically by Gadamer in the twentieth century.

William Dilthey, after Schleiermacher, is credited with emphasizing the role of **understanding over explanation** in human science research. "We explain nature, but human life, we must understand (Dilthey, qtd. by Manen, *Researching Lived Experience* 4)". The natural sciences classify, predict, and explain objects of the phenomenal world. In contrast, the "human sciences aim at explicating the meaning of human phenomena (such as in literary or historical studies of texts) and at *understanding* the lived structures of meanings (such as in phenomenological studies of the lifeworld). Dilthey also heralded the move of hermeneutics from mere "epistemological understanding toward ontological understanding in the human and cultural sciences (Holroyd 2)". This was taken up further by Martin Heidegger and Hans-Georg Gadamer, who explored phenomenology from an existential perspective and the unique role of *language* in revealing the world through experience. Holroyd (2) talks of the three factors in this approach:

1. presupposing a **strangeness** and inaccessibility of texts (and non-texts) from the interpreter due to distances brought in by time, cultural differences, etc
2. The **possibility of interpretation** is due to both interpreter and subject sharing an assumed link of commonality using *dasein* – being in the world as humans.
3. The pivotal role of **language in shaping experience**, and thus language, interpretation, and understanding "as inseparable structural aspects of human-being-in the world" (Laverly, qt. by Holroyd 2).

While interpreting experience, Heidegger emphasized the 'fore-structures of understanding' that we are born with because of our being in the world. Awareness of these *fore-structures* of understanding (McCaffrey 217), which can come forth as bias, prejudices, and fore-conception, and incorporating them into interpretations of experience makes the research more complex, meaningful, and comprehensive.

Hans-Georg Gadamer and **Paul Ricoeur** are two other hermeneutic philosophers in the phenomenological tradition whose expositions on language and poetry are particularly useful for a phenomenological reading of literary texts. Both these writers stressed how language and the human world "are inextricably bound together in a *hermeneutic circle* because our 'being-in-the-world is primordially linguistic" (Gadamer, quoted in Green 2). Ricoeur calls the "hermeneutic circle" as a "reciprocity between text-interpretation and self-interpretation" (Ricoeur, "Metaphor" 95). He also points to the specific problems in interpreting the *written* text since "with written texts, the discourse must speak for itself" (95). Also, just as experience is seen as an event, language (discourse) is an *event* (97). It has two references- an extra-linguistic reality of the world ("lifeworld") and the speaker herself: "Language has both a *reality*-reference and a *self*-reference," and interpretation is guided by the connection between the two ("Metaphor" 98).

The 'Gap' found in Review of Literature of Literary Methods of Interpretation

Phenomenological readings of literary texts developed into Reader-response theories and Reception theory. Perhaps due to the influence of "the intentional fallacy" of Wimsatt and Beardsley, literary interpreters avoided interpreting texts from the *authorial* context. However, as Haney remarks in "William Wordsworth and the Hermeneutics of Incarnation," while the reception of meaning in texts is essential, equally essential but neglected is *the 'production of meaning'* (236; emphasis added).

Theoretical Framework: A Working Model for Literary Studies

Four stakeholders could be considered for a phenomenological-hermeneutic study of the "lifeworld" in literary texts: subject, author, reader, and text

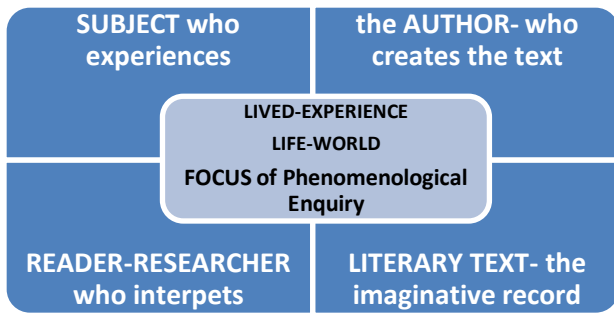


Fig. 2- The four essential stakeholders for hermeneutic phenomenological inquiry in Literary Studies

Also, the following parameters are seen as significant in the intersection of social sciences research: language, methodology, methods of analysis, and outcome.

Parameters in Hermeneutics	In Phenomenology	In Literary Studies
Language	Meaningful component of experience	Words are embodiments- not merely denotative. Language embodies experience
Methodology	Qualitative approaches of data-collection, analysis, etc.	Hermeneutics and Philosophy Lenses: Literary Criticism and Theories, Interdisciplinary Comparative Studies
Method	Meaning to Text: (Manen, “Meaning-Attribution” 2)	Text to Experience Tracing experience through interpretation of texts
Outcome	Understanding of Experience	Understanding of Experience

Table 2: Parameters for a Phenomenological Hermeneutic Approach

Conclusion and Further Scope of the Model:

The model proposed here can be applied to the "lifeworld" of a text/poem to interpret the *experience* of the writer/poet embedded within it. This analysis method can be applied in two specific contexts: the actual **classroom** with graduate or post-graduate students studying poetry and any **project**/dissertation/thesis involving in-depth research into poetry.

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