

Contemporary Issues in Philosophy of Mind and Cognition
Prof. Ranjan K. Panda
Prof. Rajakishore Nath
Department of Humanities and Social Science
Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay

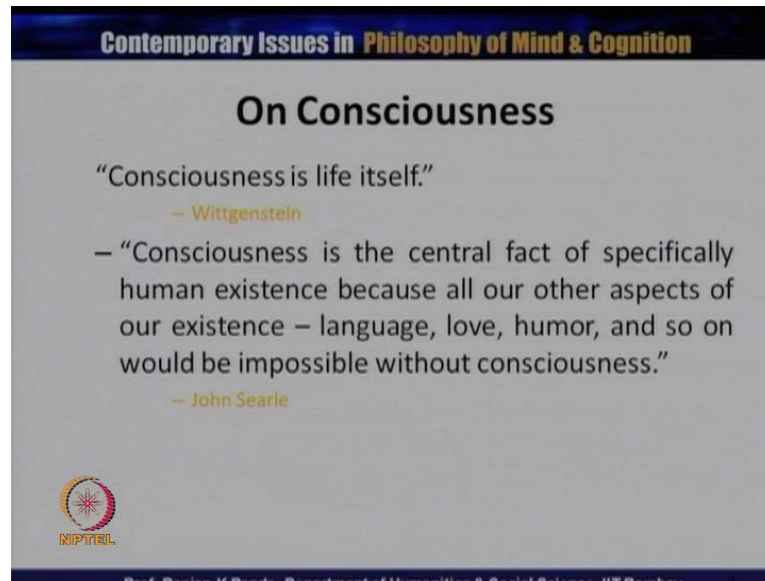
Lecture No. # 26
The Structure of Consciousness-1

Today, we will discuss about the structure of consciousness. This idea of structure of consciousness is discussed by Searle in his book the rediscovery of the mind, published in 1992 by MIT press. Searle talks about consciousness as something being caused by the brain processors and we have already discussed about it. According to Searle consciousness is caused by brain processes and realized in brain processes referring to this Searles thesis. That consciousness is something biological and it is produced by the neuro physiological function of the brain processes.

Now, so far as this hypotheses is concerned Searle tries to give a scientific account of consciousness and naturalistic account of consciousness. We have already discussed about this hypothesis, we have also discussed about the nature of intentionality as such. Today, we are going to discuss the structure of consciousness or the structure of intentional state. What is, and what are the properties that constitute the intentional state? According to Searle intentional state is constituted of various properties such as intentionality, subjectivity, aspectuality, unity all these are properties or features of consciousness.

Whenever we talk about consciousness, we talk about a composite feature of our experience. So, in this context what Searle is going to discuss about consciousness that is what we try to look at. And since Searle has been talking about this that he belongs to the wittgenstein tradition, the tradition which was built by Fergie and Witteinstein.

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Then we will look at Wittgenstein of the famous statements that consciousness is life itself, that is **Wittgenstein** where Wittgenstein tries to associate consciousness with life, **life** this is such a vast concept. Look at how Searle defines the notion of consciousness. According to Searle **he** writes a code consciousness is the central fact of specifically human existence, because all our other aspects of our existence such as language, love, humor and so on would be impossible without consciousness.

So, consciousness has been associated with life and life is manifested in various forms. The **very** fact that human beings use language, the **very** fact that the human beings fall in love with others, human beings have various aspartic form of life and human beings are using language in such a complex way is **a** something very significant. And it is through language or what I will call with the help of the principle of the expressibility human beings express themselves. So, that is something very significant about Searle, **Searle** does not suggest that his naturalistic hypotheses is an eliminative one.

So, Searle's naturalism is rooted in biology and biology for Searle is a science that talks about human life or life perceive. So, in this context it is very important to talk about consciousness and relate consciousness with life. So, when we relate consciousness with life we try to show how significant this concept is, how complex this concept is. In this context we need to look at Searle's notion of consciousness.

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The slide features a dark blue header with the text "Contemporary Issues in Philosophy of Mind & Cognition" in white and yellow. Below the header, the title "On Consciousness" is centered in a large, bold, black font. Two quotes are listed: the first is "Consciousness is life itself." attributed to Wittgenstein, and the second is "Consciousness is the central fact of specifically human existence because all our other aspects of our existence – language, love, humor, and so on would be impossible without consciousness." attributed to John Searle. At the bottom left, there is a circular logo with a red and white starburst pattern and the text "NIPTEL" below it. The slide has a light gray background.

So, consciousness is a concept as Paul Johnston would try to define would referring to Wittgenstein in his book, *The Reinking, the Inner*. Johnston writes that to understand the concept of consciousness we do not need to define or to describe it, but to recognize what is involved in saying that someone is conscious. What is important is not a description, but understanding of the significance of the concept. So, we need to really talk about what is the significance of this concept, how it is explaining the various forms of life that human beings share when he or she encounter with the other living beings in the world or other creatures in the world or other immaterial bodies in the world, so that is something very important. So, consciousness is to be talked and it is to be talked reserving its relationship with the other.

We need to describe and recognize the meaningful aspect of conscious life. So, then we will be probably able to describe what is consciousness, consciousness as concept and how it is been understood in our everyday life situations.

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The slide is titled "Searle on Kant" and is part of a presentation on "Contemporary Issues in Philosophy of Mind & Cognition". It lists the following points:

- Consciousness related to space and time
- A) experience of objects are temporally extended
- B) stream of consciousness
 - Phenomenological time does not exactly match with real time.

The slide also features the NIPTEL logo in the bottom left corner.

So, Searle tries to define consciousness in this way, look at it what Searle talks about when he says that consciousness is related to space and time or consciousness is related to the reality, because referring to Kant he brings this chapter on structure of consciousness. Referring to Kant he says that experience of objects is temporally extended. So, when we talk about experience, when we talk about the representations of the world, they are represented in our thoughts or in our mental states and for Searle mental states are intentional states, they are also known as representational states.

Now, these representational states have a structure in the sense that they involve the semantic content, so when I express a particular representational state, I express with content, this expression shows how my mental states are directed towards the world. So, when I think about my mental states or when anyone thinks for that matter, mental states are nothing but thoughts. So, when we were thinking we are trying to relate our self with thoughts and thoughts are not material objects, thoughts do not exist in the world, thoughts are certainly mental, their mental phenomena. And if we talk about mental phenomena then we refer to the interiority of our experience, it is not something available there and it is something available here with me, may be in Searle's language Searle will talk about that something there in our head.

And that is the inner, not necessarily, now this idea of inner is not something observable according to Searle, meaning there by we do not really observe what is my feeling, what

kind of happiness I have, so that is very subjective one. So, subjectivity is a feature associated with consciousness or how do I look at a particular object in the world.

So, seeing something (()) something, now this kind of ideas one can find in Wittgenstein and Kant. So, Kant when he talks about concepts or thoughts Kant very much associates time with thought, because it is not available in space, but we can always talk about thoughts or change of thoughts or change of mental states with reference to time. So, the mental states are extended in time, their part of the inner world not in Cartesian sense of course, but as I said that there is something which is existing in our head and that is what is mental.

So, this very notion of the mental will be discussed once we talk about the the dozen of features that Searle explains as the property that composes the mental, will talk about that, but what is important here again in Kant or again with the Cartesians that they believe in stream of consciousness. So, there is a continuity in consciousness, consciousness is not a distinct phenomena, consciousness shows that it is always in a processes, so in that sense the consciousness is flowing when I say that we are all thinking being. Thinking refers to a process, a mental processes and that is tells us how we talk about stream of consciousness.

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The slide is titled "Contemporary Issues in Philosophy of Mind & Cognition" and "Searle on Kant". It contains the following text:

- Consciousness related to space and time
- A) experience of objects are temporally extended
- B) stream of consciousness
 - Phenomenological time does not exactly match with real time.

The NIPTEL logo is visible in the bottom left corner.

So, this phenomenological notion of consciousness that which is related with a time but called phenomenological time does not exactly match with the real time. So, I can think

of future, I can think of my past, I can live with my past, I can go back to what I did yesterday or day before yesterday or two years back or three years back, things like that. I can always live in the present, I can always live in the past and I can also imagine my future.

So, every conscious being has this potentiality to talk about future, to think about future. And in that context Searle is referring to this idea of the phenomenological time, which does not really resemble the real notion of time which we have, that I got up at six o'clock, had my breakfast, came for this lecture, etcetera, etcetera, etcetera. So, all these are happening in a real time frame work, which we all have in our everyday life, but what is phenomenological notion of time is the concept of time, which is given to my consciousness. So, in my consciousness I go back to my past, I can live in by past in the sense that I experience my past, so in my consciousness I can always imagine of a better future.

Now, having a big bungalow, having a big car and so on and so forth, so this idea of living in time is something very important when we talk about Kant, because Kant talks about the change of mental states of thoughts with reference to time. For in the change of any physical object can be explained with reference to both space and time. So for terminology is concern, so when time is concerned, it is only to reference to thoughts Kant is talking about or Kant can we can always talk about the concept of change in thoughts. So, this probably Searle is not interested here to bring here, so what is Searle interested in, Searle is interested in the notion of consciousness and how it is being composed by various other features.

Now, once that is told to us we will try to see whether this notion of consciousness that Searle is advocating is an honor goes to the cartesian notion of consciousness or not, that will one can very well reflect and try to bring some kind of a just a position with reference to Decart or and with the reference to Denett or the other functionalist. Because functionalist notion of the mental or consciousness is not a compositional notion of consciousness, consciousness is not a compositional fact of different features and which are intrinsically associated with each other. Functionalist would deny this fact that consciousness is something irreducible; it is irreducible to the brain functions.

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Contemporary Issues in Philosophy of Mind & Cognition


About *the other mind*

- The category of the *other people*

Capacity for assigning a special status to other loci of consciousness

Is biologically based and

Is a Background presupposition of all forms of collective intentionality.

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Prof. Devendra K. Pandey, Department of Humanities & Social Sciences, IIT Bombay

Now, Searle also talks about the notion of other mind, it is not that I am thinking and I only think and others are not, but consciousness is something very social. I find that kind of naturalism Searle is bringing, consciousness is not something Cartesian, not something which is available to me alone, that is something very much Searle will not advocate that.

That consciousness is something very personal and it is not accessible to the other or this quit and quit personal will not constitute something called a collective. So, consciousness is **is** something very different because consciousness is associated with intentionality and it is the feature of **of** the intentionality that it would always associate itself with the other. It is a binding feature in the sense that it binds the other with itself; it binds the world with itself, **with** the world with itself.

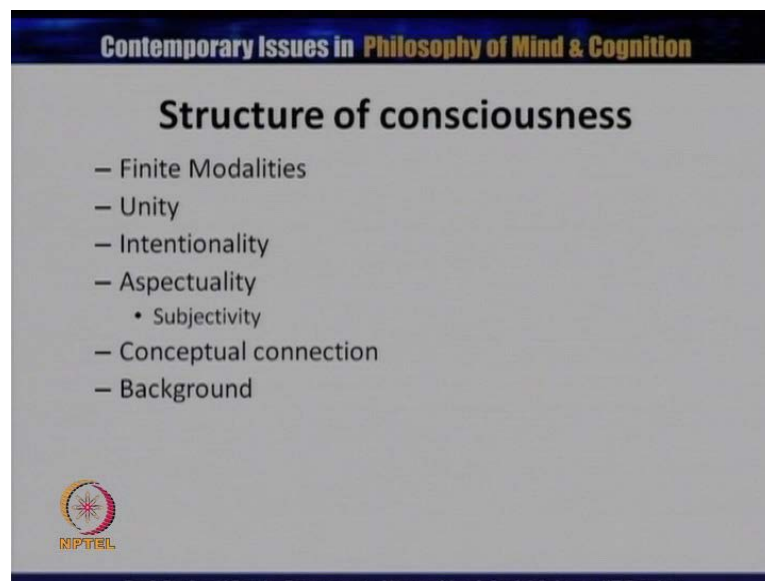
So, this binding principle or the unifying principle that Searle is talking about is something very significant, which would suggest that it is not me who is thinking, but it is the other which would which constitutes might be. It is the other which suggests that I am a person, I am a person identified with relation to something else and I am a person with reference to the other. When others leave they give this identity to me that I am so and so with reference to a particular community or with reference to them.

I am a father, because I have a family; in my family my children have given me this identity that I am a father of so and so. Now, this very notion of personal identity or me

as a social being is grounded in social intentionality according to Searle. So, this idea of a social intentionality or collective intentionality that Searle is speaking in his later works is something very significant. So, we just see what he talks about the other mind, the category of the other people, so other people are also important and the capacity for assigning a special status to other locus of consciousness.

So, they have this capacity, in the sense that they give me a kind of a social status, so in their intentionality my consciousness is located in a specific temporal world, in a socio biologically world. So, that is how I am associated with other and others are associated with me. So, consciousness has a biological background and it has also a social background, in a social background I am identified as a person. Now, let us go back to the basic idea that how consciousness is composed in Searle's theoretical frame work of biological naturalism.

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Now, Searle talks about a dozen of features, they are finite modalities, unity, intentionality, aspectuality or subjectivity, I mean for him subjectivity will be part of this notion called aspectuality. And then Searle also talks about a conceptual connection, connection between what is conscious and what is unconscious. Then Searle also talks about (()) psychology, whenever we perceive something we perceive at the background of certain things. So, human being perceptions are always in the mood of a figure and a figure is host against a particular background, that is what is he means by the (())


psychology. It has to bring the psychology in to **now** this idea that consciousness always or experiences are always against a particular kind of a background.

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Conti...

- Familiarity
- Overflow
- Center and Periphery (field of consciousness)
- Boundary Condition
- Mood
- Pleasure and unpleasure

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Now, the other features are the familiarity conditions, overflow, center and periphery distinction, boundary conditions, mood pleasure and unpleasure. So, these are the dozen of features that Searle talks about in order to discuss the structure of consciousness. You can say that the manifestation of consciousness as a biological phenomenon, you will have all this features.


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Finite Modalities

– “Human consciousness is manifested in strictly limited number of modalities. In addition to the five senses of sight, touch, smell, taste, and hearing and the sixth senses of ‘balance’, there are bodily sensations and the stream of thought.”

- Searle (1992:128)

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Prof. Binay K. Sanyal, Department of Humanities & Social Science, IIT Bombay

Now, let us begin with this first notion called finite modalities. Now, what does Searle mean by finite modalities? Searle writes that human consciousness is manifested in strictly limited number of modalities. In addition to five senses of sight, touch, smell, taste and hearing, the sixth sense of balance there are bodily sensation and the stream of thought. Finite modalities are the modalities which talks about or which shows that how do we have sense experiences.

Now, our sense experiences are finite, when I see all of you are looking at me I have the experience of students looking at me. Now, this very experiences confined to a particular classroom, a particular classroom experience, you can call it perception, you can also being the other sense experiences that I am hearing your questions, I am looking at your faces all this. So, all this are part of my experience and this experiences are finite, Searle does not believe in infinite experiences.

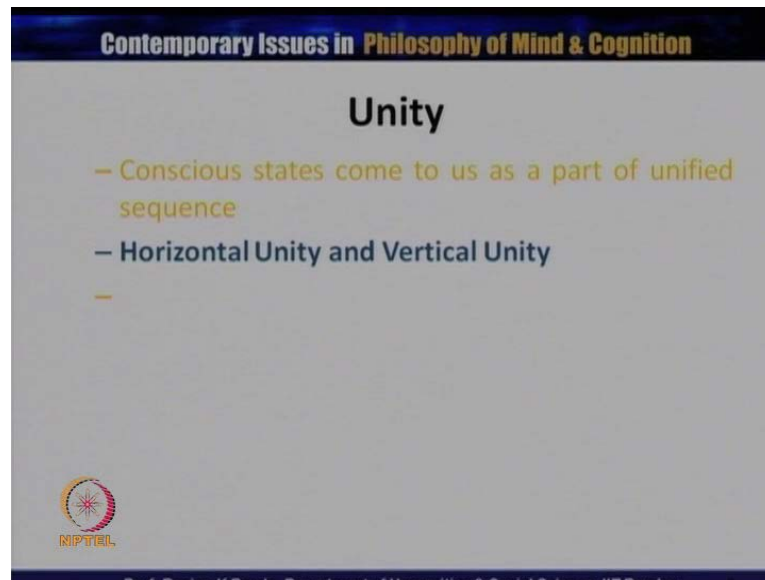
Say for example, this experience of infinity in the sense that I am experiencing Brahman, say for an example brahman as you all know in Indian context is identified with universal consciousness. So, these kind of conscious experiences are not discussed in the frame work of the modalities that Searle talks about. Whenever Searle talks about consciousness it is about our limited notion of consciousness, that whenever I am doing something, I am conscious of that. So, the very fact **that** I am lecturing to all of you is giving me this impression that I am conscious of this very fact that I am lecturing.

So, this Searle will call a kind of an expression of the finite consciousness. So, human consciousness are expressed in a finite mode, not in a infinite mode, the way it has been discussed by the spiritual seekers that consciousness is infinite and it is universal and it is a universal mode of representation. So, that kind of ideas Searle will not entertain in the frame work of biological naturalism. So, **the (())** will try to look at how do we have sense experiences, they also talks about the sixth sense, the sense of balancing, ok.

Suppose I am a very angry at you, angry at your questions, now this expression of anger are not suppose to be expressed when somebody asked a particular question, I must be reasonably accepting a question when it is thrown to me with a balanced mind. So, this idea of a balancing talks about a rational mind **mind** which has rational capacities. So, whenever I talk about actions or the manifestation of actions or the performance of a voluntary action that represents a balanced mind.

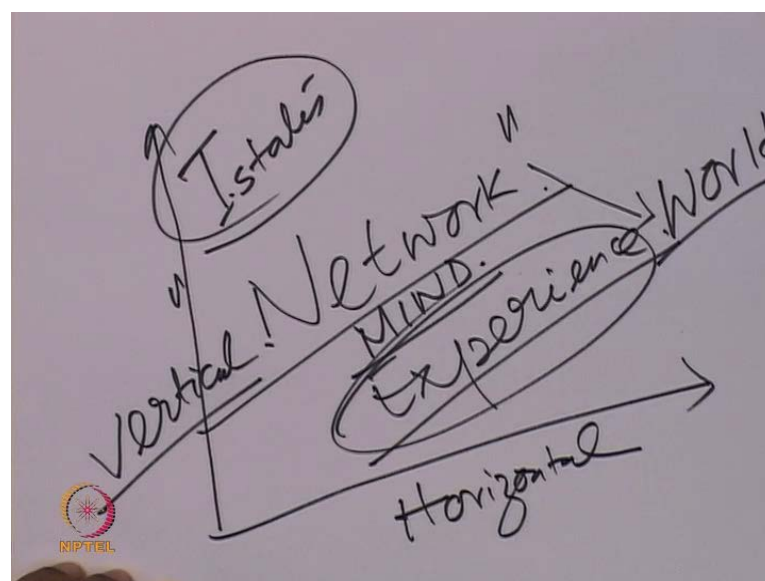
Now, this balance mind or the expression of the balance mind is certainly in expression of the finite mode of consciousness. So, that is how Searle will talk about different modalities, finite modalities in which we experience things in the world or we experience the reality, etcetera, let us go to the other concept that is the notion of unit.

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Now, unity is constituted as one of the features of consciousness, that consciousness or the conscious mental states are unified.

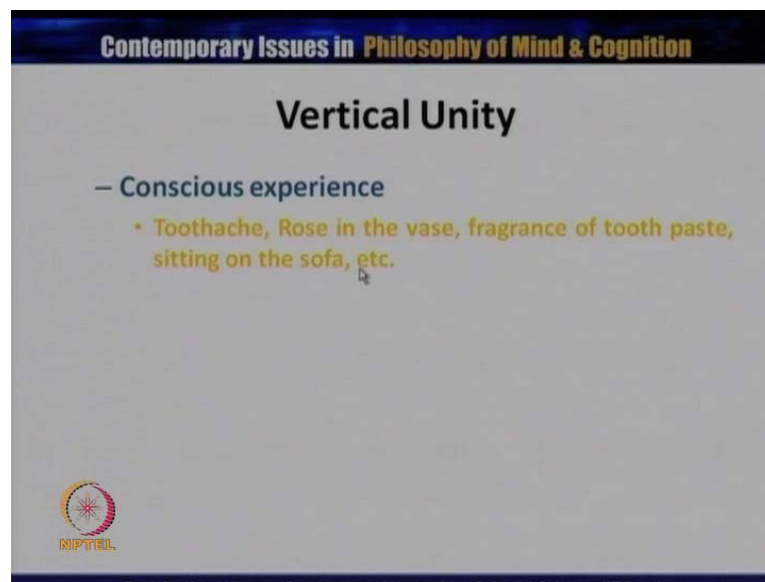
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I have already talked about in my previous classes that all intentional states constitutes a network, there is a network of intentional states. There is a network of intentional states, this network are connected and when we talk about experience, is a part of this network, because they network represents mind, the network as a whole represents the mind.

So, if that is the mind, then it is interacting with the world, then the experiential features or an experiential connective shows that there are two modes in which we try to connect, we try to unify these experiences or you try to unify this thoughts or intentional states or representational states. According to Searle there are two notions of unity, one is the horizontal notion of unity and another is the vertical notion of unity.

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The vertical notion of unity as Searle says, **say** for example, I have a toothache and I also experience the vase, I also experience the fragrance, **the fragrance** of tooth paste. I am also experience **this** fact that I am sitting on a sofa and brushing my teeth, very typical I am suffering from toothache, I am experiencing the vase which is kept near the table and **the** I also smell the fragrance of my tooth paste.


These are all coming to me kind of a unified notion of experience and Searle will call that **now this kind of** vertical unity, there is also some kind of unity, which he says it is a kind of a horizontal unity. Now, what is this idea of horizontal unity? Now, horizontal unity talks about the unity between thought and actions, what I am thinking and what I am doing, that is connected with a reference to content.

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Horizontal Unity

- Experience of thought and action
- Saying – meaning – acting
- Binding problem in neuroscience
- Kant on Transcendental Unity of Apperception

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As I said there is a semantic content involved, so whenever a thought is expressed, it is expressed with the content and that content is identical with the action which is performed, the act which is I am performing, they are not to separate things. So, Kant's notion of the transcendental unity of an apperception of something very close to Searle's notion of a horizontal unity, when Kant says that space and time are to Apairi say phenomena or concepts, they are not certainly categories, they are (()) concepts.

And when I have a particular experience of something, I not only apply the categories, but also look at this experience as a part of the space and time and that gives Ansenders some kind of judgment. So, a judgment is produced with the application of space and time as an Aprairi concepts. So, space and time are the form of experience according to Kant, they are the form of experience, so similarly, in Searle, we need to talk about consciousness as a kind of a binding principles, as a kind of a unifying principles.

Now, this binding principle **is also analyzed** is also analyzed from the point of view of neuron science, the neuron science talks about now the binding problem, how one neuron is connected with the other and so on and so forth. This connection is a causal connection, if x is a neuron and x is connected to c fiber, which is another neuron, so whenever I have this experience of pain, the c fiber is stimulated and therefore, it is stimulating the x or it is connected with the x, which is another neuron.

Now, this kind of causal connectivity or neural connectivity also talks about the unity, the unity in the brain processes or what we called the binding processes. The (()) model will talk about it in a different way and I am sure in your future classes professor Nath will be talking about the connectionist model of mind. And the other representationalist like Foder would also talk about how the representationalists in an artificial system are connected with each other.


This overall gives an idea that each mental state is causally connected with the other, but in Searle, the notion of unity that is talking about is not causally connected. Whether Searle will talk about intentionality, Searle says mental states are in principle to intentional.

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Intentionality

- “For large number of cases, the consciousness is indeed a consciousness of something, and the ‘of’ in ‘consciousness of’ is ‘of’ of intentionality.”
– Searle (1992: 130-131)
- Psychological Mode
- Direction of Fit

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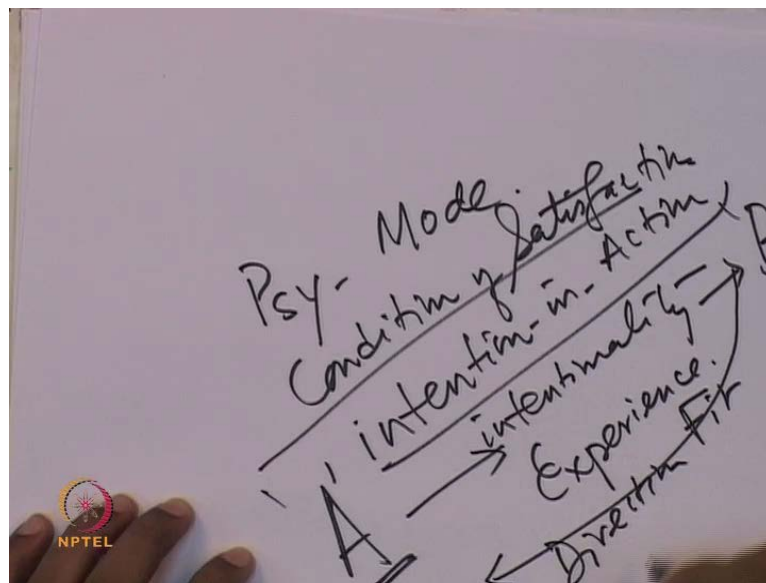
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Now, when they are intentional, they might be having some kind of an intentional relationship and that he defines with respect to mental (()). I have discussed about it in the previous class, that when I act, I act with an intention, so the manifestation of an my intention shows that I am intentionally engaged with the other or with the world and this intentional engagement is not purely causal. At the same time I am also causally related with nature, because I am a physical being, a biological being and Searle gives this example that the gravitational force is operating. Whenever I am acting, say for an example when I write here, it is also this fact that there is a gravitational force which is

operating. So, I am causally somehow connected with nature at the same time I am able to perform intentional action.

So, it is this intentionality according to Searle is an essential feature of consciousness. Look at what Searle says. For large number of cases the consciousness is indeed a consciousness of something and the of, put in quote, in consciousness of, is of, of intentionality. Now, this of talks about two things, one is the expression of the psychological mode and another is the direction of fit.

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Now, the expression of the psychological mode will talk about the condition of condition of satisfaction and I have discussed about it in the last class. That whenever we talk about the performance of an intentional action, we also aspects certain things, so when the expectation is fulfilled, then satisfaction is generated. So, the fulfillment condition and the prior intention in which reaction is performed are two different things things which are intentionally connected with the network. So, therefore, to talk about that they are intentionally connected, Searle brings this idea of intention in action, I think I am also discussed about it in the last class.

That is Searle talks about intention in action, which is this; it shows the intentionality operating in experience that exhibit the intentionality operating experience. So, suppose this is an agent A performing an action B, when he performs, he experiences it. So, for

an example I am writing, I am experiencing this fact that I am writing, that is what we calls intention in action, what I intended to write and I wrote are two intentional state.

If I could succeed in writing something, if I could succeed in telling something to you, then it gives me some kind of a pleasure, some kind of satisfaction, so there is a generation of satisfaction is something which says that intentionality coming from the world and that is what direction of fit searle talks is about. So, there is a kind of a direction of fit, the direction fit will talk about the connection between mind to the world or the agent who is a conscious being interacting with the world and the world also responding to this interaction.


So, for example, if I request you to bring a glass of water and hearing my request you brought the glass of water, then I am satisfied, because whatever I was expecting you did that. So, when you brought the glass of water for me then it shows that intentionality is from the world to the agent or the world to the mind. So, intentionality thus talks about some kind of self referentiality, which is involved in the expression of my prior intension, because when I said bring me a glass of water, I also expected, I also desired that you would listen to me, you listen to my request and offer me a glass of water. So, the very fact that you brought a glass of water was a part of my desire, which is part of my prior intention. So, in that sense the intentionality always having this feature called direction of fit, not only the psychological mode, but also the direction of fit.

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Contemporary Issues in Philosophy of Mind & Cognition

Perspectival and Aspectual

– “My conscious experiences, unlike the objects of the experiences, are always perspectival. They are always from a point of view. Perspective and points of view are most obvious for vision, but of course they are features of our sensory experiences as well.” (Searle 1992: 131)

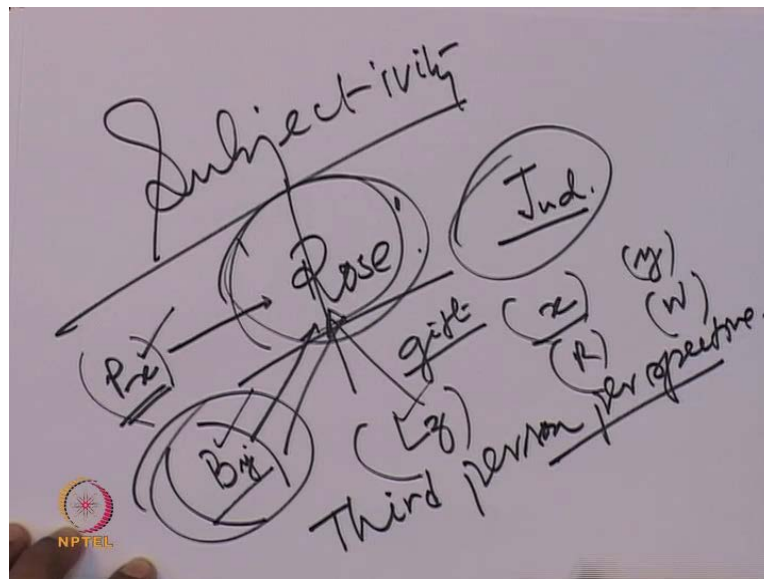

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Searle also talks about two other features, which are logically associated, one is aspectuality or prospectivity, consciousness according to Searle is prospective. Now, what is prospectivity or when you say that consciousness is prospectival, what does Searle mean by that?

Now, according to Searle my conscious experiences unlike the objects of experiences are always prospectival, they are always from a point of view, now this is very significant. They are always from a point of view, if I say that my students are most intelligents students of say 2010, now this I say it because I want to make a point to other that this student of my class HS420 are the most intelligent student of IIT b from the batch 2010.

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Now, if I say that I make a point that is my point of view, so whenever a subject is responds to the other or interact with the other in the form of passing a judgment or making an accession then the **the** subject or the person represents his or her point of view. So, it is subjects' point of view or **the** it is the first person's point of view, this is the case. It is from my point of view I say that students of HS420 are the intelligent or the most intelligent students of the batch 2010, now that is what is very significant, because that gives a prospective.

A prospective who tells me that I compare these students with my previous batch student, I compare this with other batch of students who are associated with me. So, this kind of comparison analysis gives births to my prospective that this batch is a very good

batch. Now, the perspective and points of view are most obvious for vision but of course they are features of our sensory experiences as well. So, whenever we are talk about experiences, very fact that it is very clear according to Searle in the case of perception.

So, when I have a visual experience of a particular object or a thing, then the (()) is very clear, I look at it from my point of view. Let us given a example of a rose is a flower and x is a poet, the poet looking at this beautiful rose, the poet suggest that the rose is beautiful.


Look at a botanist, now when a botanist tries to look at the same rose, he looks at it from from the prospective of biology, from a scientific prospective, let us take the life condition of the rose. And ordinary human being who is also a lover, he is trying to look at rose from a different point of view with a sense of gift; probably he would offer it to his lover. So, all these x, y, z, poet, botanist and lover are looking at the same phenomenon, the same object from three different prospective, so in that sense consciousness is prospective.

Because whenever we talk about a visual experience, we try to show that there is a prospectivity associated with this experience. So, according to Searle it is very much clear in the case of visual experiences that consciousness is prospectivel, but it could be associated with some other experiences, when as I said, when somebody is giving a kind of a judgment, I judge that x is right and y is wrong, so right and wrong is judged from a particular prospective. Or when I appreciate say for example music, a piece of music, my appreciation is always from a point of view, so what Searle calls it a first person point of view.

Contemporary Issues in **Philosophy of Mind & Cognition**

Aspectuality

- “All intentionality is aspectual. Seeing as object from a point of view, is seeing it under certain aspects and not others.”
- **Subjectivity**
- What it feels like to me or ...to bat ?



Prof. Ranjan K. Panda, Department of Humanities & Social Science, IIT Bombay

Now, aspectuality is also associated with consciousness and it suggests that all intentionality or all intentional experiences are aspectual. Say for example, when I say seeing as object from a point of view is seeing it under certain aspects and not others. So, when I look at a rose, I look at it from a particular point of view, I also look at it an aspect of it, I do not see the entire, probably the entire is imagined and in my imagination I try to comprehend it.

Similarly, a lover in his imagination try to comprehend this fact that **this** he would offer to his beloved, but what is given to his experience is the only an aspect of it. So, what is given, whenever we talk about the experience what is given is only an aspect of it. So, the **the** content of experience is constitute from this feature of this aspectuality, **so** and therefore, prospectival and aspectual are associated with the subject, they are part of the subject, they are part of the subjectivity of the agents consciousness or the persons consciousness.

Because, what it feels like me or what Thomas Nigel would say, what is it like to be a bad know in his famous paper published in 1974 in philosophical review, Nigel suggest that the first person prospective or the first person presentation of the reality cannot be ruled out.

So, whatever may be the objective analysis, the analysis which is claimed by scientist, so for example, a kind of analysis in the case of botanist will be offering in the case of the life span of the rose. So, the scientific explanation would always gives us a kind of a

third person prospective, so the prospectuality which is associated with the scientific explanation of an experience is **is** from a third persons point of view, that which can be demonstrated, that which can be objectified, that which can be disclosed to others as they are **a** something always with a case, in the case, in a scientific **the** explanation.

But, when we talk about philosophical explanation, experience, we look at it from a first person point of view. So, consciousness in this a regard will have several other features, which we would be discussing in our next class. So, today, we could only finish some of the important features of consciousness that compose the network or the mind or that structures the intentional conscious states or experiences. They are the notion of modality; it is a finite modality, intentionality, unity and subjectivity which are manifested in this feature called prospectual and aspectual. So, with this I conclude my lecture today and we will being with the other features in the next class; thank you.