

# Phenomenology and cognitive linguistics in dialogue: A review of Ortega y Gasset's theory of emotive gesture as metaphor

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## Abstract

The present study pursues three objectives. First, to expose and discuss the contributions of the philosopher José Ortega y Gasset to the phenomenological study of gestures and emotive gesture. Secondly, to critically review one of the central theses defended by Ortega, according to which “every expressive phenomenon”—including, therefore, the emotive gesture—involves “a transposition, that is to say, an essential metaphor.” This thesis invites us, in the third objective, to establish a dialogue between phenomenology and cognitive linguistics (as developed by Lakoff, Langacker and Talmy), assuming an experientialist position vis-à-vis human reason and language, in opposition to the objectivist and formalist position of Chomsky's generative linguistics. In this interdisciplinary context, we will study the phenomenon of emotive gesture, in particular the expression of the emotion of anger, as analyzed phenomenologically by Ortega y Gasset.

## 1 | INTRODUCTION

This study pursues three objectives. First, to offer a brief exposition of some of the contributions of the philosopher José Ortega y Gasset to the phenomenological study of gestures in his essay entitled “Sobre la expresión, fenómeno cósmico” (“On expression, a cosmic phenomenon”), published in 1925. Ortega outlines in this writing some fundamental ideas for the phenomenological analysis of gestures, taking the notion of “flesh” as a guiding thread, just as other important phenomenologists, such as Maurice Merleau-Ponty, who is usually taken

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as an unavoidable reference in this field, would do some decades later.<sup>1</sup> Secondly, we shall focus on the study of the “emotive gesture,” analyzed by Ortega himself in the aforementioned essay. To do so, we will propose a critical review of one of the central theses defended by Ortega, according to which “every expressive phenomenon”—including, then, emotive gesture—involves “a transposition, that is, an essential metaphor.” This thesis invites us, in the third and last objective of our article, to establish a dialogue between phenomenology and cognitive linguistics (as developed by George Lakoff, Ronald Langacker, and Leonard Talmy, assuming an experientialist position vis-à-vis human reason and language, in opposition to the objectivist and formalist position of Noam Chomsky's generative linguistics),<sup>2</sup> paying special attention to the contributions that some contemporary linguists have made to the study of the conceptualization of emotions, in which figurative thought and language play a fundamental role. We will outline some important aspects for this dialogue, prioritizing here the phenomenological approach. To this end, we will analyze the practical case of the expression of the “anger” emotion, to which Ortega himself devotes some pages in his 1925 essay. As we will show, on the one hand, Ortega's theory of metaphor anticipates some (or perhaps even most) of cognitive linguistics' theses on metaphor. On the other hand, we also argue that some of the ambiguities in Ortega's theory can be clarified if they are considered from the point of view of cognitive linguistics.

## 2 | ORTEGA Y GASSET'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF GESTURES: CONTEXT AND APPROACH TO THE TOPIC

### 2.1 | Situating Ortega y Gasset within the phenomenological tradition

It is perhaps surprising that we chose to refer to the work of Ortega y Gasset to address the topic of gestures, and, moreover, to consider him a “phenomenologist.” However, Ortega himself subscribed very early to the phenomenological movement; already in 1913, after reading Edmund Husserl's *Ideen*, which appeared that same year, he published two essays, “Sobre el concepto de sensación” [“On the concept of sensation”] and “Sensación, construcción e intuición” [“Sensation, construction and intuition”], in which, in addition to providing us with the first texts on phenomenology in Spanish (San Martín 1994), Ortega laid the paradigmatic foundations upon which he will develop all his later philosophy.<sup>3</sup> Although we cannot stop here to explain in depth Ortega's complex relationship with phenomenology, it is worthwhile to offer at least a brief contextualization.<sup>4</sup> First of all, let us recall that the first reception of phenomenology in the Hispanic world comes from Ortega and the so-called “School of Madrid,” which he led, and includes figures such as Manuel García Morente (1886–1942), Xavier Zubiri (1898–1983), José Gaos (1900–1969), María Zambrano (1904–1991), and Manuel Granell (1906–1993), among others. It was precisely Manuel García Morente and José Gaos who translated Husserl's *Logical Investigations* in 1929 for *Revista*

<sup>1</sup>This idea is indeed widespread among scholars of this subject, which is confirmed, for example, by Borges (2019, p. 19) in her “Prologue” to the recent collective book *O gesto fenomenológico. Corpo, afeto e discurso na clínica*: “It is above all French phenomenology and, most especially, Merleau-Ponty, with his early attention to the living body, that makes room for a philosophical approach to the question of gesture.”

<sup>2</sup>For an overview of Cognitive Linguistics, see the handbooks by Geeraerts and Cuyckens (2007) and Dąbrowska and Divjak (2015). On the close relationship between cognitive linguistics and phenomenology, see Geeraerts (1985) and Zlatev (2016).

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Ortega y Gasset, *Obras completas*, 10 vols. (Madrid: Fundación José Ortega y Gasset/Taurus, 2004–2010), I, pp. 624–638 and pp. 642–654, respectively. In what follows we will cite Ortega's works by this edition, indicating the volume in Roman numerals and the pages in Arabic numerals. For a detailed study of these texts and, in general, for Ortega's close connection with phenomenology, see San Martín (1994, pp. 133–160, 161–246; 2012, 2013).

<sup>4</sup>This question has been dealt with by one of the authors in other recent works published in English (see Díaz Álvarez & Expósito, 2022), so we refer to them for a more in-depth study of the subject.

*de Occidente* (the publishing house founded by Ortega in 1923)—the very first translation of this work into another language. Likewise, Husserl himself gives an account of Ortega's profound relationship with phenomenology in a letter to Roman Ingarden dated November 1934, in which he relates the visit of the Spanish philosopher that same year:

This week we have had a very interesting philosophical visit; Ortega y Gasset, with whom we are very impressed. He is profoundly versed in my writings. Every day he has had long and earnest conversations with Fink and me, and his questions penetrate to the most difficult depths. He is in fact not only, as a publicist, the educator of the new Spain, but also, as a teacher, the leader of a phenomenological school. He is now going to translate the *Meditations*, and later the other works (the Spanish edition of the *Logical Investigations* is in everyone's hands there). A wonderful man withal.<sup>5</sup>

Regarding Ortega's adoption of Husserl's phenomenological method, it is worth noting, as we have already mentioned, that the notions of evidence and intuition are the fundamental assumptions used to elaborate his own philosophy. Thus, in an important text of 1918 entitled "Discourse for the Royal Academy of Moral and Political Sciences" (unpublished until 2007, when it appeared in the new edition of his complete works), Ortega maintains the following:

Regarding the different ways of referring the consciousness to an object, we would have left for the end the most decisive one: intuition, in which, unlike all other acts, we are given the very object of which we speak, which we mention, represent, remember, judge, theorize and dispute. In intuitive acts the consciousness brings its object into immediate presence. In them there is no intermediary or representer of things, but it itself, so to speak, in person makes its representation. (VII, pp. 714–715)

In this same text Ortega affirms that "from the classic studies on this question published by Husserl in his *Logische Untersuchungen* (1901) it can be said that the whole current reform of philosophy has started" (VII, p. 716, n. 2). This same idea is what he applies to ethics already in his first book, *Meditations on Quixote* (1914), where he claims that "only a spirit seems moral to us which before each new action tries to renew the immediate contact with the ethical value in person" (I, p. 751).

We refer here to these ideas to show how phenomenology, in Ortega's view, involves a change of philosophical paradigm, not only in the theoretical-methodological perspective, but also, and above all, in the practical dimension. That is why we have argued in other works that Ortega's ethics is based on a phenomenological axiology analogous to the Husserlian and Schelerian axiology (cf. Expósito, 2021). The phenomenological bases of Ortega's philosophy are also shown in his conception of the human being, that is to say in his philosophical anthropology, on which we will now comment in order to understand in depth his theory of expressivity, gesture, and metaphor.

Beyond the possible and important influences of Husserl, Scheler, and other phenomenologists in Ortega's thought, what we are interested in emphasizing here is that the Spanish philosopher is elaborating his own philosophy from the phenomenological method, putting it into practice in an original way, and applying it to the different dimensions of reality analyzed in his writings. Proof of this appears in his essay "Sobre la expresión, fenómeno cósmico," published in 1925, which we will deal with in this article, and which focuses mainly on his

<sup>5</sup>This letter is found in volume III of Husserl's *Briefwechsel* (1994, p. 298), and the quoted fragment was translated into English by Rodríguez Rial in a pioneering study entitled, precisely, "Ortega—Phenomenologist" (1990, pp. 127–128, n. 1).

phenomenology of gestures. But before going into it, it is convenient to contextualize it and recall some philosophical and anthropological theses that support the ideas defended in it. This essay should be read together with another text published that same year, “Vitalidad, alma, espíritu” [“Vitality, soul, spirit”], in which Ortega synthesizes his philosophical anthropology, distinguishing three fundamental and irreducible dimensions of human life:

In effect: between vitality, which is, in a certain way, subconscious, dark and latent, which extends to the background of our person like a landscape to the background of the picture, and the spirit, which lives its instantaneous acts of thinking and willing, there is an intermediate realm that is clearer than vitality, less illuminated than the spirit, and which has a strange atmospheric character. It is the region of feelings and emotions, of desires, of impulses and appetites: what we shall call, strictly speaking, soul. (II, p. 576)

We are therefore not dealing with the classical definitions of “soul” and “spirit”; rather, Ortega uses them to refer respectively to the *emotional* and *intellectual* dimensions of human life, distinguishing them, in turn, from “vitality,” understood as *instinct* and *subconsciousness*. Thus, in Ortega's view, these three notions, “do no more than denominate patent differences that we find in our intimate events: they are descriptive concepts, not metaphysical hypotheses” (II, pp. 578–579). This *descriptive* procedure is precisely that of phenomenology, whose point of departure is the first-person experience and its corresponding description of the phenomenon under analysis, strictly adhering to the mode of occurrence of the phenomenon itself. Expressed in technical terms, it is a matter of making *epoché* or a “bracketing” (*Einklammerung*) of all previous prejudices or theories in order to reduce us—or to lead us back to (*zurückführen*)—the lived experience (*Erlebnis*), thus executing a change of attitude, from the natural or ordinary one in which we live daily, to the philosophical or phenomenological one. This change also implies a questioning of the “naturalistic” or “scientific” attitude, typical of the natural sciences, in which the human being, both in his *emotional* and *intellectual* dimensions, is reduced to one more thing-like and corporeal entity of nature, that is, to the laws and explanations of physical causality.<sup>6</sup> Faced with such a reductionist conception of the human being, Ortega begins his work “On expression, a cosmic phenomenon” with the following questions:

When we see the body of a man, do we see a body or do we see a man? Because man is not only a body, but, behind a body, a soul, spirit, conscience, psyche, self, person, whatever you prefer to call all that portion of man that is not spatial, that is idea, feeling, volition, memory, image, sensation, instinct. In other words: is the human body, by its appearance, a body in the same sense that a mineral is? It is not now a question of whether or not chemistry can reduce a human organism and

<sup>6</sup>Such is, in synthesis, the sense and purpose of the Husserlian phenomenological method of “epoché” and “reduction”—which has been criticized and, at the same time, partially and biasedly interpreted by a good part of contemporary philosophy—and so Husserl himself reiterates it in a multitude of texts. See, for example, Chapter One of the Third Section of *Ideas II*, entitled “Opposition between the naturalistic and the personalistic world” (Husserl, 1991, pp. 173–210). This is, moreover, a subject that has been widely studied by specialists, from Husserl's first disciples (Fink, 1934; Landgrebe, 1963) to the later and more recent works of Aguirre (1970), San Martín (1986, 2015), Zahavi (1996, 2021), and Schnell (2010), to cite only some of the best known. San Martín (1986, p. 121, 1994, p. 243) has emphasized the importance of this notion in Husserl's phenomenology, as can be seen, for example, in the second volume of the lectures *Erste Philosophie* of 1923/1924 on the theory of phenomenological reduction, where Husserl states that his conception of *epoché* and reduction was limited and incomplete until he did not achieve the way to an “intersubjective” reduction, which he considers “of crucial importance to make possible a complete transcendental phenomenology and—to a greater degree—a transcendental philosophy” (cf. Husserl, 1959, p. 174, n. 2). On Ortega's application of the phenomenological method and its relation to phenomenology, see, in addition to the aforementioned studies by San Martín and Rodríguez Rial, the recent volumes edited and coordinated by Morujão et al. (2021), and Expósito and Domingo Moratalla (2022).

a mineral to the same elements, but whether the aspect of the one can be reduced to the same components as the aspect of the other. (II, p. 680)

This is, as we will later see, the approach that Ortega puts forward to analyze the phenomenon of gesture, overcoming all dualism—and this phenomenological thesis is fundamental—since, beyond any previous categorical distinction, the starting point of his analysis is the *intrinsic unity* between “body” and “soul,” as both concepts have been defined, so that, Ortega clarifies, “this unity—which is indifferent and prior to spiritualist and materialist theories—does not consist in our seeing simply together, and as one beside the other, the body and the soul, but rather that both are articulated forming a peculiar structure” (II, p. 682). This *peculiar structure* is precisely what Ortega, as a phenomenologist, tries to reveal, a task for which he turns to the notion of *flesh*, since flesh “is expression, it is the patent symbol of a latent reality. Flesh is hieroglyphic. It is expression as cosmic phenomenon” (p. 683). This conception of corporeality in Ortega’s philosophy is fundamental to understand the embodied condition of the human mind, which will be one of the keys to understand the origin of metaphors in cognitive linguistics. Ortega, faithful to his literary and metaphorical style, provocative at times to attract the reader’s attention, uses the term “cosmic” (even in the title of the essay) to defend the thesis that the gestural phenomenon “has an objective foundation and constitutes a cosmic phenomenon like any other” (p. 687), in the sense that the essential laws and structures of this phenomenon can be discovered and described (scientifically-phenomenologically). This is, indeed, the central thesis defended in the essay that we will comment on below, that is, the philosophical and anthropological importance of gestures and, specifically, of the *emotive gesture*.

## 2.2 | Body, flesh, and emotive gesture in “On expression, a cosmic phenomenon”

As we have pointed out in the previous section, Ortega begins his phenomenological analysis of gestures by distinguishing two basic and irreducible notions of *body*: on the one hand, body “in the same sense in which a mineral is” (p. 680), that is, as pure materiality and exteriority, and on the other hand, body as “flesh,” as “exteriorization of something essentially internal” (p. 680). This difference, Ortega maintains, is revealed to us when we consider them “as phenomena, as aspects” (p. 680), so that, we insist, it is not a question here of a spiritualist or materialist dualism, but, on the contrary, of taking as the first, evident and radical datum the phenomenon of “the appearance of the Other,” or alterity—as Emmanuel Lévinas (1961) will later insist—that is, as the manifestation of something latent, but recognizing that, ultimately, “life is constitutively and irremediably a hidden, unspatial reality, an arcane, a secret” (Ortega, II, p. 681). Thus, relying on this second distinction between *the patent* and *the latent*, between *exteriority* and *intimacy*, Ortega introduces one of the basic theses of the essay, namely “for there to be expression there must be two things: one, patent, which we see; another, latent, which we do not see immediately, but which appears to us in it” (p. 681). This is, indeed, the approach that allows Ortega to maintain that “the emotional gesture is the most obvious fact in the orb of expressive phenomena” (p. 688), distinguishing, in turn, between the emotions expressed and the gestures that express them:

Emotive gestures constitute a repertoire of attitudes and movements, which is repeated with great monotony. If we pay attention only to their generic *facies*—crying, laughter, fury, etc.—we notice the disproportion between the incalculable variety of the emotions expressed and the types of gestures that express them. In fact, the fury of one man is always different from that of another, and it is incomprehensible that when expressed it is not so in its individuality. It is so, indeed. No two faces laugh the same. On the generic architecture of laughter, which is a pure

scheme, each organism puts a peculiar modulation. And this is no longer an expression of laughter—the generic scheme expresses it sufficiently—but the character of the laughter, or, let us say without further ado, his intimate being. These small variations of the emotional gesture then take on a value. (p. 689)

We have quoted this passage at length in order to contextualize and show more clearly four important theses of Ortega that will allow us to connect his phenomenological analysis of gestures with the contemporary contributions of cognitive linguistics, stressing the importance of these “variations of the emotional gesture.” The first thesis is expressly formulated in the aforementioned essay “Vitality, soul, spirit”: “only the soul expresses itself” (II, p. 589, n. 1). This statement is supported, in turn, by three theses that we will discuss below, especially the last two, from the perspective of cognitive linguistics. The first is of an anthropological nature, and maintains that “it is not our actions that declare our most authentic being, but precisely our gestures and physiognomy,” which, Ortega continues, “leads us to a capital psychological distinction between the spirit—a non-individual faculty—and the soul, which is our person, insofar as different from the others,” hence it is the soul “that desires, loves, hates, rejoices and compounds, dreams and imagines,” and, in short, the only one that *expresses itself*. This thesis is based on the distinctions set out above, first, between exteriority and intimacy, and second, between the latent and the patent. Accordingly, Ortega argues that all expression implies an intimacy that is expressed, so there can only be proper “expression” where there is an intimacy or, in other words, an intimate self or subjectivity. This last idea leads us directly to the second thesis, which is of a linguistic nature but based on his philosophical anthropology, that is, Ortega’s distinction between “expression” and “signification”<sup>7</sup>:

At first it may surprise the reader that expression is denied to the spirit, when language, which is an operation of the intellect, therefore, of the spirit, is usually considered as the expressive function par excellence. But, in my opinion, it is a strict error to consider language as an essentially expressive act. Precisely what leads us to judge it to be the prototype of all expression—its intellectuality—is what makes it not to be so. Indeed, the characteristic of the word as opposed to the expressive gesture is its signification. But what is signified in the signification or meaning of the word is always an object: “table,” “tree,” “I,” “two and two are four.” On the other hand, what is expressed in the expression is always the subjective: “my pain,” “my joy,” “my vanity,” “my well-being,” etc. Hence the perfection of the word as signification consists in the idea signified being as impersonal as possible, that one and the same word signifies in all men the same notion. (II, p. 589, n. 1)

It is the notion of “expression” that sustains the central thesis of the essay, according to which, as we have seen, the *flesh*, by means of the emotive gesture, *expresses a latent interiority*. Now, since this interiority can never be made completely and immediately patent, but is expressed through gestures, Ortega maintains—and this would be the last central thesis underpinning his approach—that “every expressive phenomenon,” including, therefore, the “emotive gesture,” involves “a transposition, that is to say, an essential metaphor” (p. 682). As we will try to show, this dialogue between phenomenology and cognitive linguistics, to which Ortega’s own text invites us, will provide important keys to understand some current issues, both in the field of linguistics and phenomenological philosophy.

<sup>7</sup>As Ortega reminds us, this distinction refers to Husserl’s phenomenology: “We will say, then, that the word expresses (manifests, communicates) the act of meaningful intention; it signifies the content of an intuition and names the object. See Husserl’s *Logische Untersuchungen*” (VII, p. 717, n. 2).

## 2.3 | The expressive phenomenon, an “essential metaphor”? A critical review of Ortega's thesis

We will focus on two central ideas in Ortega's approach to the study of gestures, namely the distinction between “expression” and “signification,” and his conception of metaphor. For the latter, we will refer to his “Ensayo de estética a manera de prólogo” [“Essay on aesthetics as a prologue”] (1914), since it is there that he expounds in greater detail his theory on metaphor, which is fundamental, of course, for understanding his later writings on aesthetics and artistic criticism—remember his well-known essay on *La deshumanización del arte* [“The dehumanization of art”] (1925)—but also for understanding his thesis on the phenomenon of gestures.<sup>8</sup> It is worth remembering that, in Ortega's view, metaphors are not reduced to the literary and pictorial field. Rather, as he argues in his aforementioned 1914 “Essay,” “the term ‘metaphor’ means both a procedure and a result, a form of mental activity and the object achieved through it” (I, p. 673), with this “mental activity” also being fundamental, for example, in science, as emerges from his essay “The two Great Metaphors” (1924) where he affirms that “metaphor is an indispensable mental instrument, it is a form of scientific thought” (II, p. 505).

Ortega's phenomenological distinction between “expression” and “signification” is equivalent to the linguistic distinction established by Ferdinand de Saussure more than a century ago in his posthumous work *Cours de Linguistique Générale* ([1916] 1974) and commonly accepted by modern linguistics between the two components of the linguistic sign, namely “signifier,” or form, and “signified,” or meaning. It is also equivalent to the semiotic distinction developed by Roland Barthes in *Elements de sémiologie* (1965) between “expression” (linguistic, gestural, or other) and “content.”<sup>9</sup> But Ortega does not simply distinguish between the two dimensions of a word or a gesture, he also develops a characterization of the relation between these two dimensions that proves to be well aligned with three fundamental principles of cognitive linguistics, as opposed to the formalist perspective of Chomsky's generative linguistics. One of these principles is the assertion that any linguistic unit is a *symbolic unit*, that is, the conventionalized pairing between a semantic structure and a phonological structure, hence the inseparability between form and meaning or between grammar and semantics. Ortega points this out when he affirms that “for there to be expression there must be two things: one, patent, which we see; the other, latent, which we do not see immediately, but which appears to us in the former. Both form a peculiar unity, they live in essential association and as betrothed, so that where the one is present, the other appears” (II, p. 681), and also when he explains that the expression “is a patent symbol of a latent reality” which is signification (p. 683). The second principle of cognitive linguistics proclaims the primacy of meaning and, consequently, the primacy of semantics, because the basic function of language involves meaning. Ortega endorses this primacy of meaning when he states that “what is understood about the word is not its sound, which is only heard; what is understood is the meaning or significance that it expresses, that it represents” (p. 681), and “always, in expression, the expressive thing spontaneously sacrifices itself to the expressed thing” (p. 681). The third principle of cognitive linguistics, more epistemological and philosophical in scope, establishes the *embodied*,

<sup>8</sup>For a recent discussion around the phenomenological bases of the aforementioned “Ensayo de estética a manera de prólogo,” as well as of his aesthetics in general, the debate between Expósito and San Martín (2020), on the one hand, and Harman (2020), on the other, may be of interest, since in that dialogue some of the central phenomenological concepts of Ortega's philosophy are discussed in greater detail.

<sup>9</sup>Ortega's notions of “expression” and “signification” are not identical to the linguistic notions of signifier; expression or form; and signified, content, or meaning, respectively. However, Ortega's distinction between the two dimensions of a word, a gesture, or any other semiotic unit foreshadows what cognitive linguistics will come to understand about the nature and relationship between the two parts of a semiotic unit. In Ortega's view, every “expression” implies a signification, and every “signification” refers to an intersubjective experience. These ideas, as we will see later, are part of the basic concepts of cognitive linguistics.

*experiential nature of meaning* and language, in the sense that meaning and language reflect the needs, interests, and experiences of individuals and cultures. The *experientialist* position of cognitive linguistics emphasizes the view that human reason is determined by our organic embodiment and by our individual and collective experiences. It is in this sense that Ortega speaks of the body-flesh as the exteriorization of intimacy, with the soul being the only one that expresses itself, as we saw in the previous section.

While Ortega's distinction between expression and signification is pertinent and in perfect harmony with cognitive linguistics, his statement that "every expressive phenomenon implies, therefore, a transposition; that is to say, an essential metaphor" (p. 682) needs some conceptual clarification. Ortega claims that all human intimacy that is given by an expression "has no space," so that it necessarily has "to ride matter, to transpose itself or translate itself into figures in space" in order "to manifest itself" (p. 682). It is precisely this idea of *transposition* that underlies Ortega's statement that every expression involves an essential metaphor. What Ortega wants to highlight is the nonmaterial nature of meaning as *conceptualization* associated with linguistic or nonlinguistic expression such as gesture, meaning thus being a dynamic process (hence the more appropriate term "signification"), embodied in any mental experience—which is in perfect harmony with cognitive linguistics.<sup>10</sup> At the same time, Ortega emphasizes the basic semiotic function of any linguistic or nonlinguistic expression, namely *symbolization* of meanings or conceptualizations. Ortega uses here the concept of metaphor in its etymological sense of "transposition," but what he means by this "essential metaphor" is in fact that any expression (word, gesture, etc.) implies the symbolization of a conceptualization or mental experience. Leaving aside this terminological inadequacy of Ortega on metaphor, what truly matters here is to emphasize Ortega's recognition and phenomenological explanation of the cognitive and communicative importance of figurative thought, language, and gesture in general, and of metaphor in particular as a fundamental process of figurative meaning.

Regarding emotional gestures in general and the gesture of anger in particular, Ortega speaks of the "analogy or metaphor between spatial and psychic" (p. 687), the spatial being the physical bodily gestures of anger or other emotion, and the psychic being the emotion or feeling. What defines metaphor is in fact the perception of a mentally constructed similarity between distinct domains of experience, such as the domain of feelings and the domain of physical space. The tendency of the so-called *conceptual metaphor* (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) is to establish an analogy between a more abstract domain and a more concrete domain, in the sense that the former is conceptualized in terms of the latter. Ortega's description of the intrinsic metaphor of any emotional gesture, therefore, needs clarification. Ortega takes metaphor as an *antonomasia* of figurative meaning, following the traditional rhetorical position of considering metaphor as the queen of figures of speech, and consequently confuses two processes that may accompany or even imply each other but are cognitively distinct, namely, metaphor and metonymy. Ortega states that "emotions can find in spatial movements their correspondences, their metaphors" (p. 688) and gives the example of joy that "produces a dilatation of our intimate person" (p. 688) as well as the joyful gesture that "distends the cheeks, raises the eyebrows, opens wide the eyes and mouth, spreads the arms apart from the trunk" (p. 688). Of sadness, he adds that it "contracts the soul, concentrates

<sup>10</sup>See Langacker (2008) in the preliminaries to his introduction to cognitive grammar: "In cognitive semantics, meaning is identified with the conceptualization associated with linguistic expressions. This may seem obvious, but in fact it runs counter to standard doctrine. The conceptual view of meaning is generally rejected as insular—implying isolation from the world as well as from other minds—or else as nonempirical and nonscientific. These objections are unfounded" (p. 4), and "meaning is not identified with concepts, but with conceptualization, a term chosen precisely to emphasize its dynamic nature. Conceptualization is broadly defined to encompass any facet of mental experience" (p. 30). Langacker explains that *conceptualization* encompasses any facet or type of mental experience, whether established or new, abstract or sensorimotor and emotive, including appreciation of physical, linguistic, social, and cultural context. In other words, meaning is the product of the mental activity (cognitive process, neurological activity) of physically embodied and socioculturally situated human minds.

it and gathers it on the image of the painful event, making us hermetic to the outside world” (p. 688) and parallels this to the gesture that “puckers the whole face towards a center, pulls all the muscles together and closes the pores” (p. 688). He even speaks about the gesture of anger in which a person “grits his teeth, frowns, clenches his fist and slams it on the table” (p. 687). What he is describing, though, is not the metaphorical process but the metonymic process, equally intrinsic to the emotive gesture.

Ortega's characterization of metaphor in section V of his “Ensayo de estética a manera de prólogo,” while retaining these same terminological improprieties, contains three ideas that find an echo in modern Conceptual Metaphor Theory, widely and productively developed within the framework of cognitive linguistics since the seminal study *Metaphors We Live By*, published in 1980 by linguist George Lakoff and philosopher Mark Johnson. Ortega begins by characterizing metaphor as a process involving not a real but a conceptual relationship of similarity, thus constructing a new object in opposition to the real object. Illustrating this process of conceptual similarity by means of the “cypress-flame” metaphor, Ortega warns that “the similarities on which the metaphors are based are always inessential from the real point of view. In our example the identity of the linear scheme between a cypress and a flame is so extrinsic, insignificant for each of the many elements that we do not hesitate to consider it as a pretext” (I, p. 674). In fact, what defines metaphor is a relationship of conceptual or conceptualized similarity between distinct entities or domains, such as, taking Ortega's example, the cypress (tree) and the flame (fire). Consequently, metaphor (and the same goes for metonymy and other figurative meaning processes) is primarily and essentially a conceptual process and only secondarily linguistic or semiotic, and a normal and recurrent cognitive process rather than a poetic ornament or figure of speech. In other words, metaphor is not just a stylistically attractive way of expressing ideas by means of language or other communication mode, but a *way of thinking* about things.

Ortega's second important idea is that metaphor cognitively involves “two operations”: the rupture of the real and the literal sense (“the annihilation of things into what they are as actual images”) and the creation of a new world that takes the real world as a “mental mold.” Thus, “the cypress-flame is not a real cypress, but it is a new object that it retains from the physical tree as the mental mold—a mold into which a new substance completely foreign to the cypress, the spectral matter of a dead flame, comes to be injected. And, vice versa, the flame abandons its strict real limits—which make of it a flame and nothing but a flame—to fluidize in a pure ideal mold, in a kind of imaginative tendency” (p. 675). Translating Ortega's idea into Conceptual Metaphor Theory terms, a metaphor consists of a *mapping*, through a series of ontological and epistemic correspondences, of the structure of one domain (source domain) onto another (target domain), the latter to be understood in terms of the former. More specifically, a metaphor constitutes a conventionalized conceptual schema or pattern in the form X IS Y,<sup>11</sup> such as A CYPRESS IS A FLAME OR ANGER IS FIRE, and involves a systematic set of correspondences between the respective source (Y) and target (X) conceptual domains, which can be either associations between elements of the two domains, or inferences. The metaphorical mapping is systematic, partial, unidirectional (from flame to cypress—and not also in the reverse direction, contrary to what Ortega seems to suggest—or from fire to anger) and usually becomes automatic and unconscious. By means of conceptual metaphor, we tend to conceptualize more abstract, intangible domains in terms of more concrete, immediate, experiential domains. Differently, metonymy constitutes a conventionalized conceptual schema or pattern in the form X IS FOR Y, as for example PHYSIOLOGICAL EFFECT OF EMOTION FOR EMOTION (gritting the teeth, frowning, closing the fist, pounding the table, etc. out of anger), the source X and the target Y are two subdomains of the same conceptual domain, associated by a spatial or categorical contiguity relationship. The metonymic mapping leads to a

<sup>11</sup>In Cognitive Linguistics, conceptual metaphors and conceptual metonymies are represented in small caps.

mental activation of a less salient subdomain, target Y (which becomes the *active zone*), by reference to a more salient subdomain, source X (which serves as a *reference point*).

Ortega's third key idea is that metaphor "consists in the transposition of a thing from its real place to its sentimental place" (p. 676), that is, from the real world to the *sentimental* world, since the sentiment points to our interiority or intimacy, as opposed to the real objects of the external world. Hence Ortega defines sentiment "as an executive state of mind, as a performance of my self" (p. 676). In this precise sense, he states that the metaphor of the flame cypress consists in "executive living the cypress-call being" (p. 676). Ortega points here to the true motivation of metaphor: metaphor is grounded in human experience—which is one of the pillars of Conceptual Metaphor Theory. Ortega speaks of the *sentimental place* as the place of metaphor, but in accordance with cognitive linguistics it is possible to extend the meaning of this expression to encompass the place of *mental experience* of any nature, not only "intellectual" experience but also sensory experience, motor experience, and emotional experience. Metaphor is thus both a process and a product of human experience. However, it must be added that the origin and motivation of metaphor are not only to be found in the individual experience, in the sensory-motor, emotional, and bodily experience of the self, but also in intersubjective, and thus social, cultural, and historical experience, as has been proven by recent developments in Conceptual Metaphor Theory (e.g., Steen, 2011), which advocate an approach to metaphor that is not only psychological but also social and cultural, thereby demonstrating that supposedly universal metaphors turn out to be culturally specific.

### 3 | THE EMOTIVE GESTURE IN THE EXPRESSION OF ANGER: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL AND COGNITIVE LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION BASED ON ORTEGA Y GASSET

We will now focus on the study of the emotive gesture, paying special attention to the expression of anger. We will highlight the phenomenological and cognitive linguistic notions of corporeality and experience, and of "embodied experience," as has been proposed in the previous sections. Some contemporary linguists have been working along the same lines, such as Zlatev (2016) and Geeraerts (2021). For this interdisciplinary dialogue, we must first clarify the role of some basic phenomenological notions, such as corporeality, expression, and "embodied" experience, as well as their intrinsic and necessary connection with figurative language—not only metaphorical—since only then will we be able to understand precisely what is meant and implied by the thesis according to which the body, brought back to its "carnal" dimension, is revealed to us as "a very fertile expressive field," as some phenomenologists such as Ortega maintain. Thus, taking a step further in this direction, trying to apply this approach to a concrete case, we will dwell in what follows on the emotive gesture that expresses anger.

Returning to Ortega's essay "On expression, a cosmic phenomenon," let us recall that it is composed of two large sections. The first, which we have already commented on, is entitled "Variations on the flesh," and the second, "Inutilitarianism." It is in the latter that Ortega offers us his analysis of the "anger gesture," confronting the explanations and descriptions of this phenomenon offered by "utilitarian biology" (II, p. 684). The latter would be paradigmatically represented, in the philosopher's opinion, by the theories of Darwin and Spencer, against which Ortega maintains that "the two canonical theories that have tried to explain the emotional gesture, reducing it to the usual physiological mechanism—Spencer and Darwin—have not succeeded" (p. 686). Against them, then, relying on the work of the German neurologist and psychiatrist Oskar Kohnstamm—*Finalistic Activity and Expressive Activity* (1913)—Ortega supports the thesis that emotional gestures reveal "an extra-utilitarian function of life," so that "expressivity would be, then, a primary function of life, irreducible to all others" (II, p. 686).

Thus, as opposed to reflex movements, which would be “useful” for life, and voluntary movements, not necessarily governed by the principle of “usefulness,” emotive gestures would constitute a third type of movements that would be characterized, precisely, by being involuntary and useless. To clarify his objection, Ortega distinguishes between an “immediate utility” and an “indirect utility,” arguing that “in the expressive movements of emotion we cannot discover any immediate utility,” but that, at the most, we could speak of “the indirect utility that can report to the moved person the notification of his intimate state to others,” and, certainly, Ortega concludes, “it is possible that this exists, although sometimes it would be more useful to be able to hide our intimacy” (pp. 685–686). Without dwelling here on this first objection, we are interested above all in the second objection raised by Ortega, since in it he explicitly shifts his analysis of the emotive gesture from “pure physiology” to “psychological explanation.” To further support this approach he will bring into play some phenomenological theses and distinctions that we will comment on below:

Darwin himself understands that this utilitarian principle is not enough to clarify the abundant vocabulary of emotive gestures, and he is forced, with the exemplary honesty of his thought, to add another principle of a very different nature: the principle of contrast. When he notices that the muscular play of laughter is of opposite mechanics to that of crying, it occurs to him to suppose that a whole class of gestures has been formed simply as a contraposition to others, where an opposite sentiment is expressed. But with this principle we leave not only utilitarian but pure physiology. It is, in effect, a psychological explanation. (p. 686)

Ortega draws attention, first of all, to the “abundant vocabulary of emotive gestures,” a *linguistic* phenomenon that, as we saw, finds its basis in *experience*, in the “small variations of the emotional gesture,” which, far from being insignificant phenomena, “acquire an eminent value in the scale of expressive phenomena” (p. 689), as Ortega pointed out, and as contemporary studies in the field of cognitive linguistics have shown (e.g. Foolen, 2012; Kövecses, 2000; Soares da Silva, 2021). Second, following the phenomenological principle of “contemplating” phenomena “without doing violence to them, letting them themselves highlight their peculiarity” (Ortega, II, p. 685), Ortega opposes the scientific and physicalist reductionism that imposes the principle of “physical relation” as the explanation of every phenomenon, whether spatial or psychological, which in turn implies, in his own terms, an “ideological imperialism” (p. 685). Ortega’s argument to confront this approach is that “the contraposition of two somatic attitudes has nothing directly to do with the opposite sense of two feelings. This ultimate opposition is only spiritual, and to it is made to correspond a spatial contraposition” (p. 686). Faced with the assumption of a single type of explanation—the “physical relation”—to understand all types of phenomena, Ortega explicitly mentions the operativity of a peculiar “symbolic relation” proper to emotive gestures:

In crying, the eyebrows are depressed and drawn together; in laughter they are raised and separated. What is the relationship between this and the purely “ideal,” intentional polarity between sadness and joy? Evidently, a relationship that is not physical, a symbolic relationship. The organism symbolizes corporeally the psychological polarity or opposition between two emotions. (pp. 686–687)

Thus, referring to the work of Theodor Piderit—*Mimicry and Physiognomics* (1886)—Ortega cites this author as the promoter of the symbolic theory of emotional gestures, inviting us to “rehearse meditation” on the “gesture of the furious.” To this end, Ortega proposes, first of all, to distinguish “the angry emotion from its representation in the theater of the body and then see how one fits into the other” (II, p. 687). He then goes on to define the wrathful feeling as follows: first, “to feel anger is to need the harm of another to compensate for our intimate imbalance”; secondly,

“it is the reaction to a material or moral harm we have received”; and, thirdly, “the angry feeling is an intentional attack that in our inner self we execute against someone determined” (p. 687). It is precisely this last definition, which characterizes anger as an *intentional attack*, that will serve Ortega as the guiding thread of his phenomenological analysis and that will allow him to discover “the decisive aspect” of the phenomenon, which lies, in his opinion, in the following:

The object against whom anger goes is one; the object on which the gesticulation discharges is another. An action is preformed in the anger: to hurt, hit or kill the object A. The gesture performs the action of anger, but substituting object B for object A. What is the meaning of this substitution? Here is the decisive aspect of the phenomenon. The gesture of anger chooses object B by the chance that it is the closest. The same thing would give it object C or D or E. It follows that while the emotion is directed at a determined, concrete and unique object, its gesture performs the angry act on any object. The role of the latter is reduced to representing the absent character, and it has in common with it only the abstract attribute of resistance. We will say, then, that the action of the wrathful person has a generic object—the resistant—and the emotion, a singular object, which belongs to that genus. Now, to symbolize is to substitute one object for another. (p. 687)

This description of the phenomenon reveals once again the importance of this “symbolizing” for the explanation and understanding of the emotive gesture, *symbolizing* which Ortega includes, as we saw, under the expression of “essential metaphor.” Concluding his analysis, Ortega thus defines anger as “a symbolic action of the intentional action that constitutes the wrathful feeling,” which shows that, “since between one and the other there must be no more community than some abstract coincidence, it is understood that emotions can find in spatial movements their correspondences, their metaphors” (pp. 687–688). It is therefore important to make it clear that, alongside “physical” laws and relations, there exists another type of “symbolic” relation, which implies recognizing that “this abstract correspondence, this analogy or metaphor between the spatial and the psychic is the cosmic fact of expression subjected to objective laws of evidence, a relative of that which governs astronomical truths” (p. 688). This is, likewise, the mechanism that explains the “perfect incongruity” described above in cases where “the object against which the anger goes is one; the object on which the gesticulation discharges is another,” since their “nexus” is nothing physical, but *symbolic*. This is, in short, one of the central theses that sustains Ortega's whole approach:

The radical brotherhood between soul and space, between the pure “inside” and the pure “outside,” is one of the great mysteries of the Universe that must most attract the meditation of new men. The error that has closed the way to its study was to look for a “physical” relationship between the two, not realizing that this implied partiality for one of the two elements. There was talk of “mutual influence” between soul and body, of psychophysical action, of parallelism between soul and body. This was to see the question from only one side and to condemn oneself to the dilemma between spiritualism and materialism. Now we see that beyond these ways of relating soul and world there is between them a non-physical nexus, an unreal influence: symbolic functionality. The world as an expression of the soul. (p. 688)

So much, then, for the phenomenological description offered by Ortega of the gesture of anger, opening the doors, as we have seen, to the contributions that cognitive linguistics currently offer for the study of this *symbolic functionality*, paradigmatically collected and expressed in figurative language, to which we must necessarily refer for an adequate conceptualization of emotions.

Emotion interacts with cognition, culture, language, and other forms of communication such as gestures. The close relationship between emotion and cognition constitutes evidence

for the epistemological principle of embodied *mind/cognition*, underpinning current cognitive sciences such as cognitive neuroscience (e.g., Damásio, 2000), cognitive psychology (e.g., Varela et al., 1991), contemporary phenomenology and philosophy of mind (e.g., Gallagher, 2005, 2012, 2017) and cognitive linguistics (e.g., Gibbs, 2006; Lakoff & Johnson, 1999).

Emotions can be conceptualized in a literal sense, but what is found across languages is that they are conceptualized more often and with greater cognitive and communicative efficiency in a figurative sense, especially through metonymy and metaphor. This is not only valid for the linguistic expression of emotions, but also for any other gestural or nonlinguistic expression of emotions. In other words, emotive words, gestures, images, etc. are frequently used in a figurative sense. In the figurative conceptualization of emotions, metonymy and metaphor function simultaneously. There is, on the one hand, a general metonymic principle of the EFFECT-FOR-CAUSE type, whereby anger, sadness, fear, joy, love, and other emotions or feelings are referred to by their corresponding physiological effects and gestures, such as an increase/decrease in body temperature, redness in the face and neck area, blood leaving the face, crying and tears, dryness of the mouth, increased pulse, erect/lying posture, chest out, jumping up and down, hugging, general physical agitation, etc. On the other hand, these physiological and gestural metonymies trigger different metaphors, such as ANGER IS HEAT/FIRE, ANGER IS AN ENEMY/A DANGEROUS ANIMAL, FEAR IS A TORMENTOR/A TRICKSTER, JOY IS LIGHT, SADNESS IS DARKNESS, LOVE IS A NUTRIENT/APPETIZING FOOD, LOVE IS FIRE, among many others.<sup>12</sup>

Anger is an emblematic case of the symmetrical interplay of metonymies and metaphors.<sup>13</sup> The balance between metaphor and metonymy results from the link between the metonymy based on body heat and heat metaphors. The physiological metonymy INCREASE IN BODY TEMPERATURE STANDS FOR ANGER triggers the basic metaphor ANGER IS HEAT. We easily imagine heat in the forms of a fire and a hot fluid, and so this basic metaphor develops two metaphorical applications, namely ANGER IS FIRE and ANGER IS THE HEAT OF A FLUID IN A CONTAINER. The heat metaphor combines with other physiological and gestural metonymies, such as INCREASE IN BODY TEMPERATURE, REDNESS IN FACE AND NECK AREA, CRYING AND TEARS, INCREASED PULSE RATE AND BLOOD FLOW, GENERAL PHYSICAL AGITATION STAND FOR ANGER. At the same time, the heat metaphor, specifically the metaphor ANGER IS A PRESSURIZED FLUID IN THE BODY CONTAINER generates various submetaphors. Specifically, when the intensity of anger increases, the fluid heats up and can even boil, rising until there is no more room and it begins to exert pressure against the walls of the body container. The experiencer can resist the pressure by exerting a counterpressure or by containing the anger and keeping it inside. Otherwise, he/she can lose control over the emotion, failing to stop the anger fluid from boiling over or exploding.

Still under the same cultural metonymic model of the physiological and gestural effects of anger, a series of other metaphors join the heat metaphor. Anger can be conceptualized as an ILLNESS to which one is not immune, and as a psychological disorder that leads to irrational and violent behavior, especially as INSANITY, often expressed as loss of mind or blindness, or also in the form of attacks, typically of rage. Irrationality and violence are also elaborated by the metaphorical conceptualization of anger as an AGGRESSIVE ANIMAL inside the experiencer, evoking the instinctual part of our nature that is neither dominated nor domesticated and overrides the purely rational and moral one. The idea of control, and of the danger that the lack of control evokes, is further elaborated by a very recurrent metaphor in which anger is personified as an OPPONENT IN A STRUGGLE that must be fought or controlled. A special case is

<sup>12</sup>On the cognitive and communicational power of metaphor and metonymy in conceptualizing emotions, see the seminal studies by Kövecses (1986, 1990) and Lakoff and Kövecses (1987) and the more recent study by Kövecses (2000). On metaphor and gesture, see Cienki and Müller (2008) and Cienki (2017). Gesture is one of the domains of nonverbal communication that has provided evidence for the claim that metaphors are part of thought, not just verbal language, and that cognition has an embodied basis.

<sup>13</sup>On the importance of metaphor and metonymy in the conceptualization of anger, see the seminal studies by Kövecses (1986, 1990) and Lakoff and Kövecses (1987) and the more recent studies by Soriano (2013) and Soares da Silva (2021, 2022).

elaborated by another quite frequent metaphor highlighting the high-power emotion in which anger is conceptualized as a WEAPON that the experiencer uses efficiently against a target.<sup>14</sup>

## 4 | CONCLUSIONS

In this article, we have tried to show that Ortega y Gasset's contributions to the study of gestures and, more specifically, of the emotive gesture, are fully valid and current, both from a philosophical and linguistic point of view. Four specific conclusions can be drawn from this interdisciplinary study.

Firstly, Ortega's approach introduces some phenomenological notions that will later prove fundamental for this subject, such as “flesh,” “expression,” or “bodily intimacy,” as well as the importance of figurative language, mainly metonymy and metaphor, understood by Ortega as a “transposition of the real place to the sentimental place,” for the expression and conceptualization of emotions. Ortega shows in his study of gestures as expressive phenomena that gestuality, far from being a mere biological and physiological fact, emerges as a fundamental feature of human life, understood as “intimacy” that needs to be manifested and “externalized,” hence, as he states in his 1925 essay, the study of gestuality places us before “a serious anthropological problem” (II, p. 690). He maintains this same thesis until the end of his life, as can be seen, for example, in the preliminary note he wrote in 1950 to the Spanish translation of Karl Bühler's *Theory of Expression* (cf. VI, pp. 598–600). Ortega's approach thus allows us to understand and thematize gestuality as a radical philosophical problem, since it leads us back to the very roots and conditions of possibility of human life. This, in turn, goes beyond the field of philosophical investigation and extends to other disciplines, including linguistics, so that Ortega's phenomenological contributions also prove relevant to contemporary cognitive linguistics.

Secondly, this interdisciplinary approach made possible and supported by the aforementioned concepts enabled us to provide a more complete and grounded account of the phenomenon of the emotive gesture, as we have seen by analyzing the specific case of anger. The complex and intrinsic relationship between the experience of emotions and their expression and conceptualization, prompts us to establish an interdisciplinary dialogue of mutual enrichment between phenomenology and cognitive linguistics. These two disciplines are therefore not mutually exclusive, but rather complementary. Each of them deals with a different and complementary dimension of the same phenomenon, as we have seen with the example of the emotive gesture, whose first condition of possibility is the very existence of a living body, of the “flesh” as an expression of a bodily intimacy. More specifically, Ortega shows that any expression, and therefore also the gestural expression of anger or any other emotion, implies a meaning, and this meaning conveys an intersubjective experience. In the same vein, cognitive linguistics claims that any linguistic or gestural unit is a conventionalized pairing of meaning and form (there are therefore no empty forms of meaning) and that meaning is an embodied, experiential, and intersubjective phenomenon. In this way, cognitive linguistics can find in Ortega, and in phenomenology at large, philosophical and phenomenological foundations for the experientialist principle of language and meaning.

<sup>14</sup>The alleged universality of the emotion of anger and its regular and productive metaphorical and metonymic conceptualization, especially the heat metaphor, support the universalist and psychophysiological perspective of emotion concepts. However, some studies have shown that the emotion of anger and its metaphorical conceptualization are also profoundly associated with culture and that anger can be experienced in different ways across societies and historical periods. For example, Geeraerts and Grondelaers (1995) revealed the strong influence of the medieval folk theory of the four humors and the four temperaments (yellow bile-choleric, black bile-melancholic, phlegm-phlegmatic, and blood-sanguine), which dominated medical thinking in Western Europe for several centuries, on the conceptualization of anger and other emotions. Soares da Silva (2021, 2022) provides a detailed corpus-based cognitive linguistic analysis of the cultural variation in the conceptual structuring and metaphorical representation of anger in the two main varieties of Portuguese, namely European and Brazilian Portuguese.

Cognitive linguistics, in turn, offers to phenomenology linguistic evidence for the phenomenological method of intersubjective reduction.

Thirdly, both Ortega and cognitive linguistics highlight the crucial role of figurative thought, language, and gesture in the conceptualization of emotions. Ortega speaks of an “essential metaphor” in the expression of anger or any other emotive gestures. Cognitive linguistics describes in detail and accurately the metonymic and metaphorical mechanisms involved in the linguistic and gestural expression of any emotion. There is, on the one hand, a general metonymic principle of the effect-for-cause type, whereby anger and other emotions are referred to by their corresponding physiological effects. On the other hand, these physiological metonymies may trigger different metaphors, so that anger could be conceptualized in terms of heat/fire, enemy, dangerous animal, illness, opponent in a struggle, etc. As was shown above, emotional concepts, as well as many other concepts, are thus shaped by metaphor and metonymy.

Finally, this phenomenological investigation is a *transcendental* one, not because it deals with idealizations or pure subjectivities, but precisely because it takes the analyzed phenomenon—whatever it may be—back to its original conditions of possibility, that is, of manifestation. For this reason, transcendental phenomenology, in executing *epoché* or bracketing any previous theory, thesis, or notion (that is, any prejudice), is oriented by the phenomenon itself, leading us back to its original mode of appearance, hence the importance of the phenomenological method for grounding the study of linguistic phenomena in first-person experience, which is nevertheless shared and intersubjectively corroborated. For this reason, we believe that the dialogue between phenomenology and cognitive linguistics cannot do without the notion of “transcendental phenomenological reduction,” ultimately understood, as Husserl himself put it, as “intersubjective reduction,” since it is this crucial and radical step that would allow us to ground this interdisciplinary dialogue, by adopting the phenomenological method. It is therefore a highly topical field of research, whose theoretical, philosophical, and linguistic bases will have to be elaborated and discussed by specialists in both fields in future studies.

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