Inconsistency between Solitary Ego and the Social World?

Becoming and Meaning in Alfred Schutz

Abstract

This paper aims to show the logical consistency between the subjective and the intersubjective constitution of meaning in Alfred Schutz by revealing his insight into the dynamic character of reality. In reconstructing what is implied by the proposition "the problem of meaning is a time problem," this paper reveals that the interrelationship between the past and the present, namely "becoming," is fundamental to meaning-constitution. By critically introducing the Bergsonian view of the tension between the *durée* and its symbolization, Schutz thematizes our meaningful reality in the fluidity. From this perspective, the intersubjective world is characterized as a continuous dynamic reality taken for granted by the actors. While subjectivity, as a function of articulating experiences in becoming, is a condition of the intersubjective world, the intersubjective process enables the taken-for-grantedness of subjective reality. Schutzian phenomenology may lead to a theory of the complexity and uncertainty of social reality.

1. Introduction

This paper aims to show the logical consistency between the subjective and the intersubjective constitution of meaning in Alfred Schutz. His masterpiece, *Der sinnhafte Aufbau der sozialen Welt* (*The Phenomenology of the Social World*), written in 1932, has attracted considerable attention from social theorists. However, some critics of Schutz's theory of meaning-constitution have argued that descriptions of the solitary ego and the social world in *Aufbau* are logically inconsistent.[1] By contrast, others have suggested that the

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[1] For example, Waldenfels (1980: 205-222) criticizes Schutz's stance of egocentric understanding on the grounds that it cannot constitute intersubjective understanding. Renn

intersubjective constitution of meaning is compatible with the subjective constitution.[2] It remains to be resolved whether the subjective and the intersubjective constitution are consistent.

This problem is not solely related to the exegesis of Schutz's texts. It implies more than that. When we consider it, we face the fundamental problem of meaning. Waldenfels criticizes as egocentric the Schutzian argument of subjective constitution of meaning and supports the primacy of common meaning: "If we start from the mutual comprehension [*Verständigung*], then the intended meaning is, from the outset, a shared meaning and the ego is decentralized by the other's equal participation; the construction of the social world takes a poly-centralized form" (Waldenfels 1980: 212). From another viewpoint, Habermas (1984: 58) criticizes phenomenology for excluding intersubjectivity and approaches to the "intersubjective joint experience" based on linguistic philosophy.[3] Recently, some attempts have been made to reach rapprochement between subjectivity and intersubjectivity (Renn et al. 2012).

The claim that intersubjectivity precedes subjectivity is fundamental to these critics. Yet we do not seek to contend that subjective constitution has primacy over intersubjective constitution. Rather, Schutz's importance lies in this point: the individual and the social dimensions in a person's life are equally rooted in the dimension of "life" (*Leben*). Schutz reveals that the life of a person is always concurrently individual and social. Here "social" does not mean something "shared" or "common" to two people: the social dimension points merely to a place where one faces the Other.

In this viewpoint, the analysis of what is meant by the term "meaning" is indispensable.

(2006: 5) argues that Schutz deals with two different logics of meaning-constitution—the immanent subjective constitution and the pragmatic interactive constitution—and that they are in a severe tension.

[2] According to Barber (1988: 11), "Schutz's unique deployment of phenomenological method discloses the socialized character of the structures of intentionality." From another viewpoint, Srubar (1988) considers Schutz's conception as the subjective-intersubjective reality of the life-world. These books argue for the compatibility of subjectivity and intersubjectivity in Schutz.

[3] Though Habermas bases his argument on Schutz's comment on the problem of transcendental phenomenology, his rejection of subjective meaning-constitution opposes the Schutzian perspective.

However, most papers written by Schutz do not clearly define this term. In other words, the concept of meaning "is specified in a variety of ways, sometimes somewhat implicitly" (Embree 1991: 207). One of the most typical examples is found in "Making Music Together," in which Schutz states that music is "a meaningful context which is not bound to a conceptual scheme" (1964b: 159). Indeed, the claim that meaning is not always anchored to a conceptual scheme has wider range than the "strict identity of meaning" in Habermas's linguistic model; however, the specification of meaning, as such, is ambiguous. Moreover, it is argued by Schutz that meaning is constituted through ordering within a given scheme of interpretation (cf. Schütz 1932), so his argument seems contradictory (considered later in detail). Therefore, it is necessary to tackle the mysterious concept of meaning in Schutz in order to clarify the logical consistency between the subjective and the intersubjective meaning-constitution.

When we examine the concept of meaning in Schutz, we must take into account what he actually implies in stating "the problem of meaning is a time problem" (Schütz 1932: 9). Schutz repeatedly emphasizes the time structure of consciousness: "I may always turn in an act of reflection from the objects of my acts and thoughts to my acting and thinking. In doing so, I render my previous acts and thoughts objects of another, the reflective thought by which I grasp them" (Schutz 1962a: 169).

However, emphasizing the reflective character of meaning falls easily into the dichotomous view that the past is independent of the present and only the past is meaningful. Rather, the stream of experience never stops while the reflective function continues to work.[4] Schutz says,

> Of course, all these terms are merely metaphors, and even dangerous ones, for there is no flux which I could possibly step out of; my very looking at it is itself an event within the stream. Any attempt to translate phenomena of inner time, of *durée*, into spatial terms are, as Bergson saw so clearly, unfortunate and misleading. (Schutz 1970: 80)

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[4] According to Muzzetto (2006: 23-4), if we understand Schutz's theory ontologically, we fall into the view that his theory of experience is strictly personal and inaccessible to the Other.

Therefore, we consider the interrelationship between the past and the present. A clue to this is found in Schutz's early manuscripts, written in the 1920s, in which we find a concept of meaning whose range is wider than reflective one (Straßheim 2016). In this so-called "Bergsonian period," Schutz constructs a theory of meaning from the Bergsonian standpoint. This paper supposes that the concept of meaning in *Aufbau* is still deeply rooted in the Bergsonian view of life.[5] For example, when Schutz argues the "polar opposition" (1932: 153) between the subjective and the objective meaning, it derives implicitly from Bergsonian philosophy, which opposes the *durée* against its symbolization.

Based on an investigation into meaning, we move to examine the logical consistency between the subjective and the intersubjective constitution of meaning in *Aufbau*. This paper finally concludes that the time dimension (the interrelationship between the past and the present) is fundamental to both subjectivity and intersubjectivity.

2. Time Dimension of Meaning: Becoming in Duration and Functions of Memory

To begin, we have to show how the meaning-constitution is performed in the flow of experience. Our stream of experience is an interrelationship between the past and the present, and we determine it as "becoming" (2.1). Therefore, the becoming in our *durée* is based on the function of memory, and meaning-constitution is performed in becoming (2.2). Such a constitution has two types of memory function (2.3).

2.1 On the Concept of Becoming and Duration

It is well-known that Schutz begins the second chapter of his book with the concept of duration (*durée*). This tends to be interpreted as implying the closeness between the Bergsonian *durée* and Husserlian stream of consciousness. However, Schutz's reception of Bergsonian philosophy is connected to the core of his theory's logical structure.

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[5] The fact that Schutz received Bergsonian theory before studying phenomenology is widely known (cf. Wagner 1977; Wagner & Srubar 1984). Strictly speaking, it was not until 1929 that Schutz began to read Husserl intensively. However, there is still scope to investigate how this reception influenced Schutz's thinking after the 1930s.

The basic tenet of Bergson is the sharp distinction between the world of duration, which is the time experienced internally, and the world of symbol, which is spatialized from duration. The world of mathematical or quantitative time is the spatialized form, while the world of qualitative time is that of duration.

According to the example given by Bergson, we can experience the sound of a bell in two ways (1910: 86-7). On the one hand, "I retain each of these successive sensations in order to combine it with the others" and gather "the qualitative impression produced by the whole series" (86). When we hear the sound of a bell as a unity of flow, we are immersed in this flow. The most typical example in our everyday life is to hear a melody; we experience it as a complete harmony. On the other hand, we can explicitly "count them, and then I shall have to separate them, and this separation must take place within some homogeneous medium" (87). When we hear the sounds as separate from each other, we put ourselves outside the flow of the sound and grasp it by a symbolic representation of time, such as "how many" or "how long." In Bergson's opinion, the former is duration while the latter is spatialization of duration.

Our immanent states change constantly from the past to the present or from the present to the future. The concept of "becoming" (*devenir*) implies the fluidity of the experiences in our *durée*. Bergson suggests that the world in which we live is primarily dynamic and fluid. We feel in our everyday life that we live in a static world. We become aware of the flow of time only when a conspicuous change appears. However, time flows regardless of our awareness of it. Time is not an attribute of a being outside all temporal modality; the being as a whole is taken up in the movement of becoming (Jankélévitch 2015: 48-9). This is the sense in which Bergson and Schutz speak of becoming. In the second chapter of *Aufbau*, Schutz characterizes the *durée* as "continuous becoming and passing-away" ("*Werden und Entwerden*") (Schütz 1932: 43).

It is important to recognize that, regarding the continuous flow of our duration, Bergson indicates the "interpenetration" of the past and the present. The past and the present states melt into one another and form an organic whole (Bergson 1910: 100). Bergson assumes connection between the past and the present, or penetration of the past into the present.

Experience in duration is always continuous and lies in the relationship between the past and the present. Therefore, becoming means the interrelationship between the past and the present.

2.2 Memory-Endowed Duration, Symbolization, and Meaning in Becoming

Schutz inherits from Bergson the idea of becoming and the interrelationship between the past and the present. In a manuscript written around 1929, he speaks of "the great circle" between the past and the present in dealing with the time structure of relevance (Schütz 2004: 47-8). Moreover, another manuscript from his early period reflects a characteristic view, derived from Bergson, that there is an inarticulate sphere of experience beneath the limit of remembering (Schutz 1996: 78). Schutz attempts to elucidate the foundation of the meaning phenomenon with help from Bergsonian concepts.

We can concretely grasp his interpretation of the Bergsonian theory of becoming in the manuscript *Life Forms and Meaning Structure*, written in the 1920s. In this manuscript, Schutz treats the theory of becoming as "memory-endowed duration" and draws attention to the functions of memory. This development, called "the theory of the life forms," was a seminal achievement for Schutz in the 1920s. It is essential to unravel the function of memory in order to treat time as a fundamental dimension of meaning-constitution.

First, memory is a condition of the flow of duration. Schutz writes:

Our memory, even without our asking, participates in, and registers every phase of our I. Every moment of our duration is the memory image of the preceding one plus an X. This X constitutes that which is essential for this moment; in fact, it is responsible for the unending variations of duration. (Schutz 1982: 37-8)

This function of memory not only registers each experience (*Erlebnis*) but also participates in and constructs these experiences. Experiences in the "now and thus" emerge when something new (X) is added to the memory image of the previous experience. In this sense, Schutz thinks that the memory function of registering experiences conditions the flow

of duration. Moreover, memory produces, in turn, memory images in duration. Memory not only conditions the becoming of duration but also forms the image experienced in each "now and thus." The function of forming the image is recollection. When we recollect the memory image of the previous experience, we transform the passed-away experience into the memory image suitable for the present experience.

To enable this argument to be understood intuitively, Schutz shows some figures that represent the flow of duration on a time arrow (Schutz 1982: 45-7; Schütz 2006: 68-72). We summarize it as follows. While time elapses from point t to point t+Δ, the experience changes from E_1 to E_2. The experience E_2 at time t+Δ contains the memory image of experience E_1 because, by the function of preserving experiences, memory participates in the experience at the next point in time. However, the memory image of E_1 in experience E_2 is not identical to E_1 itself. The passed-away E_1 transforms into "E_1 for E_2." Schutz describes this state of affairs as "incommensurability" between E_1 and E_2. At point t+Δ, E_1 is already a memory image that can only be recollected as part of E_2.

The concept of meaning in *Life Forms* is thus defined: "Every experience is meaningful only for retrospective memory" (Schutz 1982: 48). Meaning, in this sense, is that which is passed-away and marked out. However, something different is implied when he writes of "meaning image" (*Sinn-Bild*), which is "an already passed-away quality image which is 'reproduced' at the present moment (hypostatized apperceptive image)" (Schutz 1982: 55; Schütz 2006: 84). Here, Schutz suggests that meaning is lived experience and, therefore, not independent of becoming, for the image is, in the Bergsonian sense, pre-perceptual and pre-symbolized experience (Bergson 1911). While the passed-away experience is symbolized as meaning, our stream of experience consists, in turn, of the meaning image. This sounds strange if we consider the original sense of "image"; Schutz manages to merge the sphere of the symbol and the pre-symbolic experience.

Based on this duality of meaning, we understand his statement that "[m]eaning is the tension between that which becomes and that which passes away" (Schutz 1982: 51). On the one hand, meaning belongs to the sphere of experience, image and, therefore, that which is becoming; on the other hand, meaning is what is symbolized from the stream of experience.

It is useful to examine Schutz's analysis of drama and opera to see the dual vision of symbolization. Through symbolization, these art forms produce the objective meaning that can be interpreted by the spectator, actor, and audience. In general, symbolization is a necessary condition of intersubjective understanding. However, rather than separating the subjective and the objective meaning, Schutz maintains the duality of meaning. In contrast to the Bergsonian desire to depart the surface of daily life and reach the deepest level of life, Schutz recognizes the proper significance of symbolization for the experience:

> The symbolization of inner duration is made solely possible by this transplantation into the world of space and time. No other art form can bring it so vividly before our consciousness as the drama — even though its means are apparently the extreme opposite of pure duration[.] (Schutz 1982: 186)

Here, we find clear opposition to the Bergsonian stance that makes light of symbolization's significance. Symbolization, as such, does not make experiences inactive, nor deprives them of vividness; rather, it enables and constitutes them. Opera, as "the integration of drama and music" (Schutz 1982: 189), is an example that illustrates the possibility of unifying the *durée* and its symbolization. From the Schutzian perspective, the social world is never a solid and invariant entity that prevents us from gaining an insight into the lived experience. Schutzian theory attempts, from the outset, to thematize the meaningful social world in the fluidity of becoming.[6]

2.3 Reflective Glancing and Interpretation

There are two kinds of memory function that contribute meaning-constitution: the act of glancing (*Blickwendung*) and the act of interpretation. The distinction between them is not clarified in *Life Forms*. After introducing the concept of sedimentation in *Aufbau*, this distinction is addressed explicitly.

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[6] Michael Barber also asserts that "it is possible to read his discussions of duration in the light of his accounts of intersubjective interpretation" (Barber 2004: 35).

The act of glancing is directed only at a passed-away experience. We can never glance at the experience in the now and thus. Schutz explains that, by a glance, the retained experiences are grasped, distinguished, and marked out from one another (Schütz 1932: 49). Following the terms used in *Life Forms*, the meaning image in the present is always given as a recollection of experience. Yet, the experience in the *durée* always becomes and changes. The ceaseless becoming of phases is called the continuous construction of experiences in phases. As stated above, it is due to the function of memory that experiences in each "now and thus" flow continuously in duration.

Therefore, thanks to the memory function, meaning-constitution by glance and the continuous construction of experiences occur in the *durée*. Our experiences in duration are always constructive and reflective. Put differently, meaning-constitution of this kind is called a polythetic act, characterized as "step-by-step occurrences in inner time" (cf. Schutz 1964b: 172). The act of glancing is performed successively in the sequential flow of experiences and, as the phases of experiences change constantly, the retained and the marked-out image is always changeable.

The relationship between the past and the present described here is identical to that in *Life Forms*. However, Schutz deals with another act of meaning-constitution and function of memory in *Aufbau*: sedimented experience and self-interpretation. This is one of the crucial moments of meaning-constitution, but is distinguished from the act of glancing. The difference lies in how memory works for the constitution of meaningful experiences. The act of glancing marks out the experience passed away and retained in memory and adds a new experience thereto, while self-interpretation grasps the present experience with reference to the memory of experiences that have passed away completely. Here, the layer of memory utilized to constitute meaning is the sedimentation of experiences or accumulated experiences (Schütz 1932: 81). For daily life, knowledge or schemes of interpretation consist of this accumulation.

The relationship between the past and the present, between memory and duration, is also mutual in the act of self-interpretation. On the one hand, self-interpretation means the ordering (*Einordnung*) of lived experience within a given context of experience (Schütz

1932: 89). This ordering is accomplished in a synthesis of recognition by relating the experiences to be ordered to the given schemata of experience and by fixing its identical cores (Schütz 1932: 89). The act of self-interpretation as synthetic recognition fixes the flow of experience. Schutz describes this conception as follows: "Interpretation is nothing but the reduction of the unknown to the known, of that which is grasped in the glance of attention to the schemes of experience" (1932: 90).

Self-interpretation means that experiences completely passed away and accumulated in memory involve the present experience in the form of knowledge or schemes. On the other hand, the selection of context involving the constitution of meaning depends on the state of experience in every now and thus. Such context lies in the deep layer that we cannot grasp with an attentional glance (Schütz 1932: 82). In brief, memory as knowledge influences meaning-constitution in the present, while the present experience decides which memory is relevant.

Based on the above analysis, we make explicit what the concept of "meaning" means in Schutz. Our meaningful experience is not reduced to either the past or the present. Meaning is not a static construct but always lived through.[7] When Schutz uses the concept of "subjective meaning," the "subjective" dimension is important not because it refers back to the transcendental ego as the ultimate origin but because it treats meaning as a lived-through, both dynamic and articulated moment of our life. In this sense, meaning is the articulation of our experience by the function of subjectivity. Meaning defined as articulation is a wider concept (Straßheim 2016). In this viewpoint, meaning is not a kind of static, reified thing. If we handle it outside the stream of life, it would not be Schutz's concept, regardless of whether it is constituted individually or in interaction with the Other.

It is true that we, in fact, find a narrow definition of meaning in some of Schutz's writings. Despite his own warning about the spatial metaphor of time, Schutz occasionally falls into substantiation of meaning. If we use a narrow definition, however, we lose sight of the dimension of becoming and fall into the dichotomy of subjective meaning and

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[7] Sometimes he quotes Husserl's *Ideen* Vol.1, stating, "all real unities are unities of meaning" (cf. Schutz 1962b: 230). We should be cautious not to understand this passage in a static way.

intersubjective meaning.

3. Becoming and Meaning-Constitution in the Social World

To show the logical consistency between the solitary ego and the social world, we need to progress to examining how the idea of becoming is incorporated into the explanation of the social world. Though Schutz often discusses the basic structure of the social world in post-1940s papers written in English, he speaks increasingly of tense rather than time itself. The fundamental assumption of becoming and fluidity of reality is thus blurred.[8]

One typical example is found in part of his argument on taken-for-grantedness in our everyday life. He often describes our reality as "taken for granted until further notice." However, this faces the difficulty of describing our experience as if it had a binary mode of "taken for granted" and "problematic." This view would ignore the flexibility of our everyday experience and fall into the scenario of tunnel vision (Straßheim 2016). To make clear the theory of becoming and meaning, we must pay attention to the analysis of the social world in *Aufbau*. Schutz deals with the reality constitution of an actor in the social world, adopting the same viewpoint as the theory in his later works, but puts more emphasis on the dynamic and fluid character of our lived experience and reality.

The clue to the compatibility of subjective and intersubjective meaning-constitution in *Aufbau* is again the act of "glancing," which is distinguished from the concept of "interpretation." To glance at the Other's stream of experience is to grasp their experience simultaneously and in a vivid present.

3.1 Simultaneity and Becoming in the Social World

Glancing at the Other's flow of experience is a condition of genuine understanding, but not identical to it. When Schutz uses the expression of glancing at the Other's *durée* or flow

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[8] We need further research to determine whether he continues to explore the dynamics of reality in his later period. Nevertheless, we can confirm that Schutz's theory of meaning after the 1940s still deals with a variety of phenomena not usually treated as meaningful, such as music (Schutz 1964b). This suggests that his theory of the life-world lies against the background of the fluidity of reality. It is worth scrutinizing the concepts of relevance, typification, and horizon (cf. Schutz 1970) from this viewpoint.

of consciousness, it has the same characteristics as glancing in solitary ego as the act of grasping the becoming of duration. However, unlike the act of glancing at the ego's duration, we should note that it is not the act of reflecting and constructing the flow of experience. The Other's duration is "inaccessible" for the ego (Schütz 1932: 109), which can only gaze at the state of changing of the Other's experiences, for the content of those experiences can at best be interpretable by the ego's knowledge. "The Thou is that consciousness whose execution of acts at the every now and thus I can see occurring simultaneously" (Schütz 1932: 113).[9]

Simultaneity is characterized as the "coexistence" of duration (Schütz 1932: 112). This term, it should be noted, does not imply physical coexistence. For Schutz, it is instead the basic and necessary assumption that the Other's stream of consciousness has a structure analogous to that of the ego (Schütz 1932: 112–3). In addition, Schutz argues not only that each of us subjectively experiences our own *durée* as an absolute reality but also that the *durée* of the Other is given to us as absolute reality (Schütz 1932: 113). The coexistence of duration in the ongoing stream is the assumption that the Other's *durée* is as certain as the ego's.[10]

It should be noted that the duration of the ego flows while he or she is glancing at the Other's *durée*. Therefore, Schutz describes the simultaneity of duration by using the term "grow older together" (*Zusammenaltern*) (Schütz 1932: 113; cf. Schutz 1964b). The expression "grow older" (*altern*) derives from Bergson's *vieillir* (Ishihara 2009: 12), which describes, in *Time and Free Will,* the constant progress of our world. It implies the preservation of experiences in the flow of consciousness. Schutz writes in *Life Forms and Meaning Structure*:

> We had defined inner duration as continuous manifoldness, stating thereby that, in every phase of this flow, an as yet not existing X must be added to that which is given. Since

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[9] Schutz quotes Bergson, stating, "I call simultaneous two streams which from the standpoint of my consciousness are indifferently one or two" (Schütz 1932: 112), but this explanation is too ambiguous to reconstruct his argument logically.

[10] Some previous works identify difficulties in explaining simultaneity by illustrating the synchronization of inner and outer time (Zaner 2002; Renn 2006). However, in *Aufbau,* Schutz does not theorize simultaneity in this line.

anything which passed away has been integrated into our memory, this new X can only consist of an additional experience. Our duration flows unequivocally and continuously. While we add memory, we are getting older. (Schutz 1982: 44)

Growing older means ceaseless increasing of memory and constant elapsing of duration. The entire process of the simultaneity of the *durée*, growing older together, means the becoming of experiences and the memory function in the *durée*.

Of course, the act of glancing at the Other's stream of experience and the simultaneity is just a pure we-relationship that does not include understanding of the Other's concrete state of mind. Yet we should not evaluate it as "empty" theorizing (cf. Waldenfels 1980: 210) but, rather, take it as a form of experience in the social world (Muzzetto 2006: 21-2). As we argue later, it is becoming that enables us to constitute the taken-for-grantedness of the intersubjective world.

3.2 Intersubjective World as Dynamic Experience

If the becoming of the social world is presupposed, the meaning-constitution of the intersubjective world and mutual understanding are given as dynamic. Schutz never views the intersubjective world as static. Such a rigid relationship with the Other is revealed in a typified and anonymous way of understanding: my absent friend, a postal employee, the German Reichstag, etc. All these are "examples of the increasing anonymity in the contemporary world and the gradual transition from relatively close experience (*Erlebnisnähe*) to absolutely estranged experience (*Erlebnisfremdheit*)" (Schütz 1932: 202). In this paper, we put aside these anonymous understandings and engage in the intersubjective understanding in simultaneity.

The ego not only notices the becoming of the Other's experience but also interprets the content of the experience with reference to one's own memory. The interpretation is based on general or specific knowledge of the Other, such as an interpretive scheme, habits, language, and motive (Schütz 1932: 188). Of course, the majority of this kind of knowledge derives from the passed-away experiences, which include experiences in past simultaneity. As Schutz

explains in his later work, the bulk of our knowledge comes from our contemporaries or predecessors, and is handed down to us (Schutz 1964a: 131).

If one grasps the Other under one's knowledge without any reference to the Other's stream of experience (i.e., outside the simultaneity of duration), then that is mere self-interpretation in contrast to genuine understanding. To comprehend the latter, it is useful to examine the example of a person speaking German (Schütz 1932: 111-2). When we say that we understand that person, it usually denotes five different levels: (1) looking at the person's external bodily movement, (2) perceiving the sounds, (3) noticing the specific pattern of the sounds, (4) grasping the words as the sign, and (5) regarding the meaning of the words as indicating the speaker's subjective experiences. Among these, only the last conveys genuine understanding, since it refers to the Other's stream of experience.

Genuine understanding is an interpretive process, performed ceaselessly in simultaneity of duration. The experiences of understanding are deposited in the memory, which is thereby changed. If understanding with the given knowledge or interpretive scheme is unsuccessful, then we have to reconsider it to solve the problematic situation. Hence the ego's knowledge of the Other increases from moment to moment and undergoes continuous revision (Schütz 1932: 188). In this sense, Schutz treats interpretation in the social world as a dynamic process performed in the interrelationship between the past and the present.[11]

The problem of intersubjectivity should be reconsidered in this direction. Schutz argues that the intersubjective world is not a static being but a dynamic world, constantly becoming and passing away in the coexistence of the ego and the Other, with their memory and duration. The constitution of "our world" is a constant process. The most suitable condition for this process is a face-to-face relationship: "It is only from the face-to-face relationship, from the common lived experience of the world in the we, that the intersubjective world can be constituted" (Schütz 1932: 190).

We should keep in mind that Schutz attempts to avoid hypostatizing sharedness or commonness of the world between the ego and the Other. It is usual to define the

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[11] Wagner (1973) notes the ability of phenomenological sociology to elucidate the fluidity and dynamics of social reality.

intersubjective world as common objects "that have the same meaning for a given set of people and are seen in the same manner by them" (Blumer 1969: 11). However, this definition should never be converted into the idea of a shared and identical medium for both the ego and the Other. From the Schutzian perspective, the intersubjective world is, rather, one of the realities taken for granted by the actors. Since it concerns the constitution process of taken-for-grantedness, the strict identity of a medium between the ego and the Other is not significant. The actors can regard some things as different even if a third-party observer considers them identical, and vice versa. Moreover, it is always possible that the reality taken for granted proves to be false; it is open to fluidity. Thus, the intersubjective world remains valid as long as the ego considers itself justified in equating one's own interpretation with the Other's (Schütz 1932: 190).

4. Concluding Remarks

We revealed in this paper that the interrelationship between the past and the present, namely "becoming," is fundamental, and our meaningful reality is based on the articulation of the stream of experience. Subjectivity is a function that articulates lived experiences and, therefore, enables the meaningful reality. Above all, this paper focuses on the function of memory. Subjectivity, thus defined, is not only compatible with intersubjectivity but also a condition of possibility of the intersubjective world. Meaningful articulation of our experiences is essential for the intersubjective world; there is no room for intersubjectivity in the totally inarticulate sphere, which Bergson calls "pure duration."

However, subjectivity is never self-contained: it is anything but the ultimate origin of the world. Rather, it constantly changes in correlating with the world. Our experience in the stream of becoming is always open to the intersubjective world. The act of interpretation performed by each person is verified or proved false in every phase of interaction. The reality taken for granted is constituted in and through this process. In this sense, intersubjectivity is a condition of subjectivity.[12]

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[12] Although language is crucial for this process, it emerges in the pre-predicative level.

In conclusion, the subjective and intersubjective meaning-constitution in Schutz are viewpoints elucidating meaningful articulation of our experience in becoming. We can never reach this viewpoint unless we transcend the world already constituted, that is, the world of daily life. The fluidity of the everyday world is a hidden dimension for its inhabitants. The person living naively and straightforwardly feels as if the world is stable. However, Schutzian phenomenology has the potential to overcome the naivety of daily life, not by reducing the world to the transcendental ego but, rather, in the manner of mundane constitutive analysis. In this way, Schutz reveals the meaningful reality that arises from the tension between fluidity and stability.

Since becoming and fluidity of experiences are fundamental to his view of life, this may lead to theorization of the life-world thematizing complexity and uncertainty of the social reality from the Schutzian perspective. When we become aware of or refer to a change in our social reality, we find that the reality has emerged in the flow of time. Thus, we tend to identify time with change. However, needless to say, the temporal dimension of reality does not emerge suddenly. Rather, temporality is always fundamental to reality. For an individual, meaningful reality is constituted with reference to the sequence of lived experiences, the biographical situation, and the historical context that transcends the individual. Besides, such meaning constitution is never fully completed but always in process.

It is true that the precarious character of social reality is enunciated by some treatises of phenomenologically oriented sociology (Wagner 1973: 63-66; Berger and Luckmann 1967: 103). This viewpoint enables us to consider our everyday life as becoming, and, therefore, to pose a question about the static appearance of reality in the continuous dynamic process. Nevertheless, the potentiality of this standpoint is yet to be completely developed. In general, three ways of interpreting Schutzian texts are widely accepted: "proto-sociology" (Luckmann 1983), "pragmatic theory of the life-world" (Srubar 1988), and "phenomenological sociology" (Psathas 1973).[13] However, this paper suggests we should explore the Schutzian theory of time and meaning, including his "Bergsonian period." It is the dual vision of meaning that

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[13] Regarding the reception of Schutz in Germany and the US, see also Eberle (2012).

can overcome the controversy deadlock over subjectivity and intersubjectivity in Schutzian phenomenology.

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