Phenomenological narrative analysis of dreams and the Dreamworld Principle: From Husserlian perspective

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Summary. This paper proposes a novel method for the phenomenological interpretation of dreams from a Husserlian perspective. The method, termed phenomenological narrative analysis of dreams, comprises four distinct steps. First, it involves a Jung's story-structured analysis, followed by the second step of an analysis inspired by the concept of "another world" prevalent in popular culture. These narrative analyses set the stage for the subsequent phenomenological examination. The third step entails a phenomenological analysis in the narrow sense, where dream texts are translated by tracing the "Dreamworld Principle" backwards. This principle suggests that in dream worlds, various re-presentations (anticipation, recollection, fantasy, sign and picture consciousness, etc.) are converted into presentations (actual experiences, primarily perception), drawing on Husserl's analysis of intentionality, which will be elaborated later in this paper. In the fourth step, synthesis, the translated dream texts are integrated, revealing the underlying psychological reality of the dream. Finally, the paper provides a brief glimpse into some of the relationships to other dream theories, such as psychoanalytic, evolutionary, and neurocognitive ones. This analysis is intended not only for use by clinicians, academic researchers, but also for anyone interested in dreams and writing, and as an example it is applied to the author's own dreams from a personal dream diary website.

Keywords: Phenomenological interpretation, Jung's story-structured-analysis, Dreamworld Principle, Husserl's analysis of intentionality, dream diary

1. Introduction

As a phenomenological psychologist working to advance phenomenology in psychology (Watanabe, 2022) or "doing psychology phenomenologically" (e.g., Keen, 2003, p. 5; Churchill and Fisher-Smith, 2023, p. 480), interpreting dreams is a significant challenge. The phenomenology of dreaming has evolved over nearly a century, starting with Binswanger's groundbreaking work, *Traum und Existenz [Dreams and Existence]* in 1930. Subsequent notable contributions have been made by scholars such as Sartre (1943), Boss (1953), Caillois (1956), Usler (1964), Gendlin (1986), etc. For a historical overview, works by Zippel (2016) and Chu (2022) are informative. However, these works, being overly philosophical, artistic, sophisticated, or complicated, often lacked simple and straightforward methods for dream analysis. Thus, this paper aims to develop a new method for phenomenological dream interpretation mainly from the Husserlian perspective.

Section 2 outlines this method. Section 3 applies the method to dream samples from the author's dream diary website, elucidating their meanings. Section 4 delves into the "Dreamworld Principle", the foundational theory of this method. The final section provides a brief glimpse into some of the relationships of this method to other dream theories, such as psychoanalytic, evolutionary, and neurocognitive ones.

2. Method

The development of this method adhered to certain principles. First, it was designed to be accessible not only to clinicians and academic researchers, but also to any individual who can dream and write. For practical demonstration, dreams from my personal dream diary website will be used. Second, the term "phenomenology" in this paper primarily refers to Husserlian phenomenology, and the phenomenological method largely denotes the descriptive phenomenological method developed by Giorgi (1985, 2009), which is a faithful extension of Husserl's (1977) phenomenological psychology. These specific definitions of phenomenology and the phenomenological method are intended to simplify discussions and avoid diverging into other philosophical areas.

Remark 1: These limitations of scope of phenomenology might seem to be rather narrow-minded. The main purpose of this paper is, however, to present the principle and method of analysis of dreams from the Husserlian perspective as compactly as possible. Including a broader discussion of phenomenology will have to wait for another opportunity.

However, the descriptive phenomenological method, despite its widespread application across various fields (see Langdridge, 2006), encounters challenges in dream interpretation due to the inherent conflict between description and interpretation. Therefore, third, the Dreamworld Principle (Watanabe, 2021) is introduced as a basic tool for the phenomenological interpretation of dreams. This principle

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states that in dream worlds, nearly all re-presentations (anticipation, recollection, fantasy, sign and picture consciousness, etc.) are converted into presentations (perception, actual experience), and counterfactual re-presentations become real situations. Furthermore, scenarios expressed by *as if* in reality become actual in dream worlds. This principle primarily derives from Husserl's (1966, 1980a, 1980b) analysis of intentionality and is influenced by Binswanger's (1930a, 1930b) phenomenological study of metaphor in poetry, mythology, and dreams. Consequently, it could be more precisely termed "phenomenological principle of dream worlds". However, for brevity, in this paper it will be referred to as the Dreamworld Principle. The phenomenological analysis of dreams here involves translating dream texts by retracing the Dreamworld Principle.

Fourth, before beginning the phenomenological analysis, a two-stage narrative analysis will be introduced to determine the dream text segments for phenomenological translation. The first stage is a Jung's story structure analysis of the dream, followed by an analysis inspired by "another world" concept in popular culture (as for the detailed definition of this concept, see subsection 3.1.2). This narrative analysis aids the subsequent phenomenological analysis.

Termed *phenomenological narrative analysis of dreams*, the method encompasses four steps: Jung's story structure analysis, "another world" analysis inspired by popular culture, phenomenological analysis using the Dreamworld Principle, and synthesis. The subsequent section will apply these four steps to a selection of dream samples, providing a detailed description of each step.

3. Deriving the meaning of dreams by applying the four steps to samples from the author's dream diary

In my previous Japanese paper (Watanabe, 2021), a dream series consisting of 4 dreams was used as a dream sample. For brevity, only two of these dreams will be examined. The sample size does not fundamentally matter in the phenomenological study, a point which will be discussed in Section 5.

3.1. Dream Case 1: "My upstairs bedroom is right next to the Toho University Campus (10 November 2019, morning)" (Watanabe, 2019b)

Dream text: My bedroom was on the second floor of an apartment overlooking the campus of Toho University from the window (this is not true). From there, I was watching people gathering for some event. It was morning. It was a bustling, noisy world.
I needed to go to the bathroom and wondered whether I should use the small shower room next to the bedroom or go downstairs.
The latter thought soon became a reality, and I was downstairs. My mother (deceased) was awake.
I then quickly went back upstairs (just by thinking it, I could have moved instantly).

Remark 2: Words in parentheses were added when the dream was written. Therefore, these words do not belong to the dream text proper.

3.1.1 Step 1: Jung's story structure analysis

The first step in this analysis is to understand the dream as a four-act play. Jung (1974) wrote:

"Coming now to the form of dreams, we find everything from lightning impression to endlessly spun our dream-narrative. Nevertheless, there are a great many 'average' dreams in which a definite structure can be perceived, not unlike that of drama. For instance, the dream begins with a STATEMENT OF PLACE, (…). Next comes a statement about the PROTAGONIST, (…). I call this phase of the dream the EXPOSITION. It indicates the scene of action, the people involved, and often the initial situation of the dreamer.

In the second phase comes the DEVELOPMENT of the plot. (…) The situation is somehow becoming complicated, and a definite tension develops because one does not know what will happen.

The third phase brings the CULMINATION or peripeteia. Here something decisive happens or something changes completely (…).

The fourth and last phase is lysis, the SOLUTION OR RESULT produced by the dream-work. (There are certain dreams in which the fourth phase is lacking). (…) The last phase shows the final situation, which is at the same time the solution 'sought' by the dreamer (…).
(…) This division into four phases can be applied without much difficulty to the majority of dreams met with in practice – an indication that dreams generally have a 'dramatic' structure. (pp. 80-81)."

Result of applying "Step 1" to Dream Case 1:
EXPOSITION: My bedroom was on the second floor of an apartment overlooking the campus of Toho University from the window (this is not true). From there, I was watching people gathering for some event. It was morning. It was a bustling, noisy world.
DEVELOPMENT: I needed to go to the bathroom and wondered whether I should use the small shower room next to the bedroom or go downstairs.
CULMINATION: The latter thought soon became a reality, and I was downstairs. My mother (deceased) was awake.
SOLUTION OR RESULT: I then quickly went back upstairs (just by thinking it, I could have moved instantly).
This analysis aligns each paragraph of the dream text with one of Jung's four phases, suggesting a successful application of the method.

Remark 3: Some reader might point out the contradictory nature between Jungian psychology and phenomenology. However, Jung's story structure analysis itself is useful not only for Jungian or some other psychoanalytic dream theories but also for many other theories containing phenomenological one. It is because that the idea of four phase story structure goes back to Aristotle's Poetics, so has become one of the common assets for almost all narrative research (see Kilroe, 2000; also Ricoeur, 1983-85).

3.1.2 Step 2: Another world analysis

The term "another world" refers to a realm distinct from our own world, where beings such as dragons, unicorns, elves, dwarves, and others may inhabit, and magic could be dominant. The theme of another world has remained popular from traditional folktales and fairy tales to contemporary

anime. Dreaming can be interpreted as a temporary *reincarnation into another world*. Another world analysis involves identifying elements in the dream that are *different* from or *impossible* in the real world.

Result of applying Step 2 to the results of Step 1:
In this dream description, are there elements that are *different* from or *impossible* in reality? If such elements are identified, they will be sequentially numbered.

In EXPOSITION: Statement No. 1, "My bedroom was on the second floor of an apartment overlooking the campus of Toho University from the window" → *different*. I have never lived near campus.

In CULMINATION: Statement No. 2, "The latter thought soon became a reality and I was downstairs" → *impossible*. Magical instantaneous movement.

Statement No. 3, "My mother was awake" → *different*. She had died a few years earlier, about the same time I retired from Toho University.

SOLUTION OR RESULT: Statement No. 4, "I then quickly went back upstairs (just by thinking it, I could have moved instantly)" → *impossible*. Magical instantaneous movement.

Therefore, four statements from No. 1 to No. 4 are identified as *different* from or *impossible* in real world.

3.1.3   Step 3: Analysis based on the Dreamworld Principle

Translating these statements through the Dreamworld Principle and synthesizing the results will reveal the dream's meaning.

What is the Dreamworld Principle? It consists of four sub-principles, detailed in Table 1, with their derivation explained in Section 4.

Let us sequentially translate the statements (Nos. 1–4) based on these sub-principles, where translation means *tracing the Dreamworld Principle backwards*.

Sub-principle IV appears relevant to statement Nos. 1 and 3. Statement No. 1 might translate to: "Even in retirement, I feel a strong emotional connection to my academic life at Toho University, *as if* my bedroom was overlooking the campus." Statement No. 3 could translate to: "I feel close to my late mother *as if* she were still alive."

Sub-principle I seems applicable to statement Nos. 2 and 4. Statement No. 2 could be translated as: "I wanted to go downstairs and imagined that I actually did so"; Statement No. 4 might be translated as: "I wanted to return upstairs and imagined that I actually did so."

3.1.4   Step 4: Synthesis

This step, Synthesis, is divided into two sub-stages:
Synthesis 1: Translation of the entire *dream text* by integrating the results from Step 3. The resulting *reality text* aims to articulate the *psychological reality*, which is sometimes subconscious.
Synthesis 2: The meaning of the dream.

Synthesis 1: Translation of the entire dream text
"Even in retirement, I feel a strong emotional connection to my academic life at Toho University, *as if* my bedroom was overlooking the campus. I needed to go to the bathroom and wondered whether I should use the small shower room next to the bedroom or go downstairs. I wanted to go downstairs and imagined actually doing so. I feel close to my late mother (who lived downstairs) *as if* she were still alive. I wanted to return upstairs and imagined that I actually did so."

Synthesis 2: Meaning of the dream
In analyzing the translated text, we can differentiate between sentences that convey central meaning and those that provide background context. The central theme is captured in two sentences, both containing the phrase "as if." The other sentences collectively establish a psychological background, setting the stage for the emergence of the central meaning.

The dream's meaning can be extracted as follows:

"Since retiring, I have been spending most of my time at home, but I still feel close to the academic life of bygone days at Toho University as if my bedroom was overlooking the campus. And I feel close to my late mother (who lived downstairs) as if she were still alive."

The analysis is thus complete.

As previously mentioned, the meaning of dreams represents a psychological, sometimes subconscious, reality. Dream analysis entails *translating dream texts into psy-*

Table 1. Four sub-principles of the Dreamworld Principle.

Each sub-principle and its main sources	Explanation of each sub-principle
Sub-principle I Husserl (1966, 1980a). Also see Bernet (2004); de Warren (2010)	In the real world, *re-presenting consciousness* (recollection, anticipation, fantasy, etc.) exhibits a dual structure: the image of the object being represented and a tacit awareness that *it is just a representation*. In the dream world, this implicit awareness disappears, converting the dual structure into a singular one. Thus, when thinking about the past, future, or fictional beings, we are left only with the images of these objects, *akin to actual perception and experience*.
Sub-principle II Husserl (1980a)	The counterfactual imaginary thinking becomes actualized in dreams. For example, I might think "If *I had studied* in America, I *would* speak English more fluently. In my dreams, *I have graduated* from an American university and *am speaking* fluent English with Americans.
Sub-principle III Husserl (1980a)	Enjoyment of novels and movies in the real world also encompasses a dual consciousness structure. While engrossed in Harry Potter in reality, I maintain the implicit knowledge that it is fictional. In dreams, the consciousness structure is singular; I lose self-awareness and find myself *actually attending Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry as Harry Potter*.
Sub-principle IV Husserl (1980b); Binswanger (1930a)	In reality, experiences often feel as *if they* are happening, whereas in dreams, they occur *as actual events*. For instance, in the real world, we might feel as *if* falling off a cliff in despair or soaring in joy. In dreams, these sensations become *literal experiences* of falling off a cliff or soaring through the air.

chological reality texts by tracing the Dreamworld Principle backwards.

3.2. Dream Case 2: "Majestic reddish landscape (29 November 2019, afternoon)" (Watanabe, 2019c)l

Dream text: I feel like Mr. S (my old friend) came out and said something to me, but I am not sure. Anyway, we were riding our bicycles through the natural landscape.
I was passing through the mountainside, intending to head toward town. I chose a certain road, but halfway through it split into two (I think I was already alone at that time). When I took the left road, it seemed that I had taken a wrong turn, and the road was going uphill little by little along a large valley.
This would take me in the opposite direction from the town.
A magnificent reddish-brown landscape of a large valley spread out before me.
Dr. Y calls me on my cell phone. He said that he had contacted C-city and asked me if I would talk to them (I think Dr. Y, the person on the other end of the line, actually came out at this point), and he meant that C-city would give me a helping hand when I was lost. This may be possible because Dr. Y has political power.
I woke up at this point.

3.2.1 Step 1: Jung's story structure analysis

Result of applying Step 1 to Dream Case 2:
  EXPOSITION: I feel like Mr. S (my old friend) came out and said something to me, but I am not sure. Anyway, we were riding our bicycles through the natural landscape.
  DEVELOPMENT: I was passing through the mountainside, intending to head toward town. I chose a certain road, but halfway through it split into two (I think I was already alone at that time).
  CULMINATION: When I took the left road, it seemed that I had taken a wrong turn, and the road was going uphill little by little along a large valley. This would take us in the opposite direction from the town. A magnificent reddish-brown landscape of a large valley spread out before me.
  SOLUTION OR RESULT: Dr. Y calls me on my cell phone. He said that he had contacted C-city and asked me if I would talk to them (I think Dr. Y, the person on the other end of the line, actually came out at this point), and he meant that C-city would give me a helping hand when I was lost. This may be possible because Dr. Y has political power.

3.2.2 Step 2: "Another world" analysis

In this dream, are there elements different from, or impossible in, the real world? Identifiable elements of this nature will be sequentially numbered.
  In EXPOSITION: → The entire situation is *different*, as Mr. S is recovering from an illness in his hometown, far away, and our interaction is limited to occasional letters. This entire EXPOSITION will be assigned to Statement No. 1.
  In DEVELOPMENT and CULMINATION: → The entire scenario is *different*, as I have never encountered such a landscape. However, being lost in unfamiliar landscapes is a recurring theme in my past dreams. This entire situation will be assigned to Statement No. 2.

SOLUTION OR RESULT: The content in parentheses, "Dr. Y, the person on the other end of the line, actually came out at this point" → *impossible*. He made a magical appearance. This will be assigned to Statement No. 3.
SOLUTION OR RESULT for the whole situation: → *different*. I have never encountered such a situation, but it seems plausible. This will be assigned to Statement No. 4.

3.2.3 Step 3: Analysis based on the Dreamworld Principle

Translating these statements by tracing the Dreamworld Principle (Table. 1) backwards and integrating the results will reveal the meaning of the dream.
  Sub-principle IV applies to Statement Nos. 1 and 2. Statement No. 1 might translate to: "Although we are now just pen pals, I feel close to Mr. S, as if we could still go cycling together."
  Statement No. 2 could be translated as: "I feel out of this world, as if lost in an unfamiliar landscape."
  Sub-principle I seems applicable to Statement No. 3 and may be translated as: "I imagined that Dr. Y, the person on the other end of the line, actually came out at this point."
  Sub-principle II fits Statement No. 4 and may be translated as: "Even if I find myself in a difficult situation akin to being lost in an unfamiliar landscape, Dr. Y's political power might be able to assist me."

3.2.4 Step 4: Synthesis

Synthesis 1: Translation of the entire dream text
"Although we are now just pen pals, I feel close to Mr. S, as if we could still go cycling together. I feel out of this world, as if lost in an unfamiliar landscape. I imagined that Dr. Y, the person on the other end of the line, actually appeared in front of me. Even if I find myself in such a difficult situation akin to being lost in an unfamiliar landscape, Dr. Y's political power might be able to assist me."

Synthesis 2: Meaning of the dream
Reflecting on the result of Synthesis 1, I propose the following interpretation of the dream: "I feel out of this world, as if lost in an unfamiliar landscape, missing the presence of my friend Mr. S. Concurrently, there's an inclination to rely on someone knowledgeable like Mr. Y, who possesses political power and understands the world well."

4.   Theoretical considerations: How did we derive the Dreamworld Principle?

4.1. Referring to Husserl's classification of intentionality (Table 2)

Readers may notice certain parallels between the four subprinciples in Table 1 and aspects of intentionality in Table 2. However, these correlations are not strict, as the principles were derived largely from my own dream observations, rather than directly from Husserl's classification of intentionality. A brief overview of these correspondences is given here.
  Sub-principle I, which provides an overview of the Dreamworld Principle, may correspond to the general relationship between *Re-presentation* (*Vergegenwärtigung*) and *Presentation* (*Gegenwärtigung*), suggesting that re-presentations in reality transform into *presentations* in dreams.

Sub-principle II–IV specifically relate to types of "Quasi-positional re-presentation" in Table 2, although not precisely. Sub-principle II might correspond to *Fantasy*, involving counterfactual imagination, a complex situation not fully described in Husserl's texts. It encompasses elements of *Fantasy, Anticipation, Recollection*, and sometimes *Appresentation* (*Experience of others*). Despite its complexity from a Husserlian perspective, this form of imagination is significant in dreams and sometimes appears to be somehow related to Freud's wish fulfillment or Levonsuo's (2000) thread simulation.

Sub-principle III is related to *Sign and picture consciousness*, while sub-principle IV corresponds to *Perceptive fantasy* (imagination as an *as if* perception).

Remark 4: The classification of intentionalities in Table 2 is provisional (Husserl's works do not contain such a table!). For instance, under "Perceptive fantasy" (Husserl, 1980b), phenomena such as "theatrical performance" and "metaphors in poetic expression" are grouped by their as if perceptual quality. However, due to the lack of comprehensive descriptions of metaphor in Husserl's texts, I referred to Binswanger's (1930a, b) works on metaphors in poetry, mythos, and dreams. The appropriateness of this integration may need further examination. Additionally, there is a subtle but practical distinction between "picture consciousness" and "perceptive fantasy." For example, when viewing the Mona Lisa, we perceive the portrait as a copy of the woman, Mona Lisa. In contrast, observing Hamlet in a play, we experience it as if directly encountering Hamlet himself through the actors portraying him (see Husserl, 1980b, pp. 514-515). While this distinction may be somewhat contentious (see Ijuin, 2010), it appears to be practically beneficial for the phenomenological interpretation of dreams.

4.2. "Context of discovery" of the Dreamworld Principle

The distinction between the context of *discovery* and the context of *justification*, though controversial in the philosophy of science (see Kuhn, 1970; Schickore & Steinle, 2006), is useful for elucidating the formulation of the Dreamworld Principle. In this section, the focus will be on how the principle was *discovered*, with its *justification* addressed in the subsequent subsection (4.3). The discovery process is best illustrated through several *episodes*, which I have previously discussed only in Japanese (Watanabe, 2010, 2016).

1. There is no future tense in dreams
In 2004, I traveled to Canada as a visiting professor at a university near Toronto. This was my inaugural overseas research experience. While at a hotel in Toronto, I contemplated the upcoming meeting with my new research colleagues the next day. That night, I had the following dream:

Dream text: I went to the university and met the professor who invited me. Although I had corresponded with him, this was my first time meeting him. Then he introduced me to other research colleagues. Afterwards, we went together to a large auditorium where he said there were many students interested in our research project. I don't remember what happened after that. (Watanabe, 2010, p.203)

Initially, I considered this dream to possibly exemplify the "threat simulation theory of dreaming" (Revonsuo, 2000), as I felt somewhat anxious about the upcoming meeting. However, recalling Husserl's (1960) methodological principle of *epoché*, which signifies stopping judgments or bracketing in phenomenological research, I approached the dream as a pure phenomenon. This process involves adopting an unbiased stance, setting aside explanations or interpretations (see Giorgi, 2009; Langdridge, 2006). In this case, two "pure phenomena" were present: the dream text described above and the reality text outlining my pre-sleep thoughts: "At the hotel in Toronto, I was thinking about the impending meeting with new colleagues and feeling a bit nervous about it." This *reality text* provides a contrast to the *dream text*.

The next phenomenological step I undertook, later formalized and named as "phenomenological elucidation" in my recent research (Watanabe, 2022, p. 971f; also see subsection 4.3.), involved *comparing two phenomena*, or in effect,

Table 2. Classification of intentionalities based on Husserl's (1960, 1966, 1980a, 1980b) texts, with a few additions of Binswanger's (1930a, 1930b) text. Revised and enlarged from Table 2 in Watanabe (2022, p. 975).

Kinds of intentionality	Modalities of consciousness	Brief comments
Presentation (*Gegenwärtigung*).	Perception.	Intuitive and actual experience in which objects appear directly, that is, in "flesh and bone" (see Husserl, 1980).
Re-presentation (*Vergegenwärtigung*). "To represent means to make present something absent" (Feyles, 2012, p, 728)	Consciousness other than "perception" and "experience of others".	Imagining objects that are not actually here with the awareness that they are absent or irreal.
Positional re-presentation. Imagining something with belief in its reality at any point in time.	Anticipation (or expectation).	E.g., imagining the scene of the tomorrow's meeting.
	Recollection.	E.g., imagining a scene from yesterday's meeting.
Quasi-positional re-presentation. Imagining something without belief in its reality (For the difference between "positional representation" and "quasi-positional representation", see Casey (1978) and Feyles (2012)).	Fantasy.	E.g., imagining fictional creatures or scenes such as centaurs or fairy dance parties.
	Sign and picture consciousness (*Bildbewusstsein*).	Imagination as mediated by signs, letters, or pictures. E.g., imagining a woman called Mona Lisa in a portrait, regardless of whether she truly existed.
	Perceptive fantasy (*Perzeptive Phantasie*)	Imagination as an "as if" perception. E.g., viewing Hamlet as if he were the real Prince of Denmark. E.g., "sinking into despair" as a metaphor in poetic expression.
Appresentation (*Appräsentation*)	Experience of others.	Experiencing others as other subjectivities.

two texts. For this comparison, I initially transformed these texts from past to present tense. This *technique*, aimed at facilitating the reliving of experiences, was subsequently formalized in my research as: "Narratives in the past tense are converted to the present tense" (*ibid*., Table 1 of p.973). Through this process, I realized that *while reality texts often explicitly or implicitly include future tenses, dream texts do not*. This observation was the first step in developing the Dreamworld Principle.

2. There is no past tense in dreams
The next step focused on whether dreams similarly lack past tense. For this, I used a collection of dreams from my colleagues, students, and myself dating back to the 1970s as a database (Watanabe, 2010). I encountered a dream report that perfectly illustrated this point. The report is too lengthy to quote here, so I will summarize the key aspects (*ibid*., p. 204ff).

The dreamer, a young man, was involved in a motorcycle accident 1.5 years prior. Since then, he has repeatedly experienced almost identical dreams. In these dreams, he is riding his newly improved motorcycle home at a slightly faster pace than usual. As he rounds a corner, he notices a light truck approaching, about 50 meters away. He brakes hard, but the truck continues to close in. The rear wheel of the bike starts to slip, and he hears a "squeak" sound. The truck gets within 5 meters, then 4, 3, and 2 meters, and then suddenly he is back at the point where he is 50 meters from the truck, reliving the same scenario. He tries multiple times to avoid the collision, but after about the fifth replay, the dream ends with a loud bang, a shock, and an impact with the truck.

This dream is characteristic of typical PTSD dreams. However, what struck me was the present tense reproduction of a *past* experience. In the real world, the dreamer might recall or reminisce about the accident, but in the dream world, the accident is experienced and perceived only as a present event. Thus, through the same procedure as just above described for the case of future tense, I realized that while *reality texts often explicitly or implicitly include past tenses, dream texts do not* (As for the justification of this statement, see subsection 4.3.; Watanabe, 2022, p. 971f). This observation was the second step in the development of the Dreamworld Principle.

3. There is no counterfactual conditional sentence in dreams
Following the recounting of his dream, the young man made a significant observation. Having experienced the same dream repeatedly over the past year-and-a-half, he felt as though he was unsuccessfully attempting to change the final scene. His self-analysis suggested an underlying question: "Could the accident have been avoided somehow?" This unresolved question hindered his acceptance of the final scene (the collision), likely explaining the repetitive nature of the dream, i.e., the pursuit of a different outcome (avoidance). However, after witnessing the same result despite numerous attempts, he might have begun to accept the inevitability of the accident. The recent decrease in such dreams could indicate his recovery from the aftermath of the car accident.

Comparing this real-world reflection with the dream content, I recognized another crucial difference between the real and dream worlds. In reality, the dreamer thinks *in a counterfactual conditional way*: "The accident could have been avoided if I had braked earlier or driven slower," etc. In contrast, the dream world unfolds entirely in the present tense. *There is no counterfactual conditional sentence in dreams*. This insight was the third step in my journey toward the Dreamworld Principle.
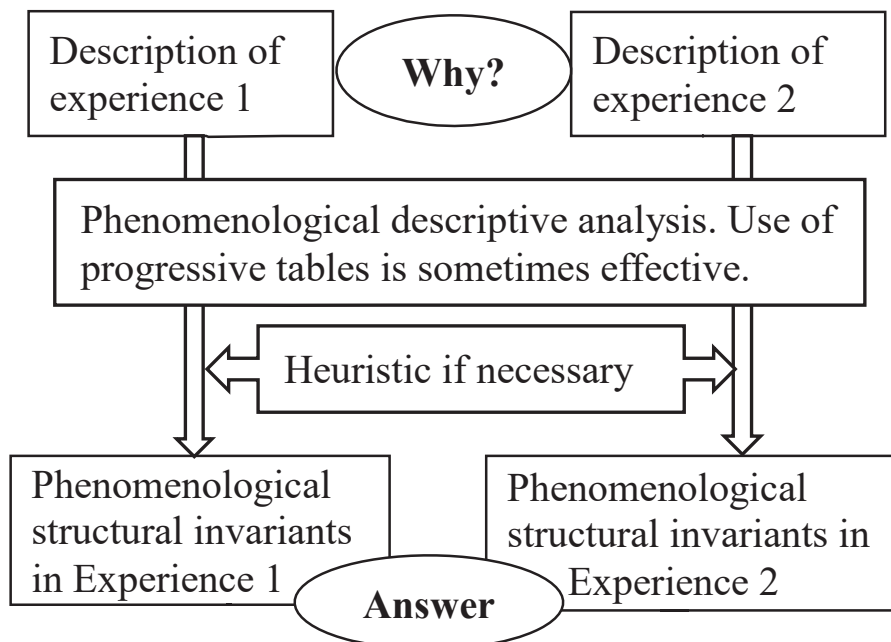

Figure 1. General outline of the process of phenomenological elucidation.
Note. Quoted from the Figure 2 of Watanabe (2022) with a part of its caption: "If necessary, some heuristic such as the seven fractions of the lifeworld or Husserl's classification of intentionalities is used to aid in identifying structural invariants in experiences. [Created by MSWord 2016]" (p. 97).

4. In dreams, engagement with books or movies requires becoming a character, often the protagonist

My next step focused on what happens when reading a book or watching a movie in a dream. Since childhood, after reading a captivating novel before bed, I sometimes dreamt of being the protagonist of the novel and living in its world. Can one continue reading a book in a dream? Some researchers, such as Revonsuo (2000), might argue against such a possibility due to the perceived irrationality or archaic characteristics of dreaming. However, I discovered several dream reports where I was not just reading books but also writing academic papers. The report I am about to summarize is quite lengthy, so I will only include key parts (Watanabe, 2010, p. 210ff).

Dream text: In my dream, I was writing an academic paper. The theme was the antagonism between Freud and Jung over the interpretation of Beethoven's Fifth symphony. (…) Once they had an opportunity to discuss it face to face. However, the second time they approached each other at a street corner, Jung noticed Freud from a distance, but thought he was too lazy to talk with Freud and hid in a hedge around the corner. (…) In this scene I think I became Jung. I hid myself deeper and deeper in what was now a bush and no longer a hedge. Freud looked suspiciously behind the bushes, thinking it was probably Jung, but seemingly he didn't find him…

Regarding dreams involving movie-watching or story-listening, I have encountered cases where I started as an observer but soon found myself as a main character in the narrative (Watanabe, 2010, p. 221f; 2016, p. 148). Thus, *in dreams, one cannot continue engaging with a book or movie without becoming part of their world, often as the protagonist*. This realization marked the fourth step toward formulating the Dreamworld Principle.

5. Transformation of "as if" situations in the real world into actual situations in the dream world

The previous four steps relate closely to the first three sub-principles (I-III) in Table 1. The addition of a fourth sub-principle, which includes *as if* situations, completes the series. I did not directly reference this sub-principle in my earlier Japanese works (2010, 2016). This fourth sub-principle emerged recently, inspired by Lakoff's theory of conceptual (or primary) metaphor and its application in dream interpretation (Lakoff, 1993, 1997; Bolognesi & Bichisecchi, 2014). For instance, I have dreams where I walk 0.5–1 meter above ground level, concealing this ability from others in the dream world (Watanabe, 2016, p.52ff). Drawing on Lakoff's concepts, these dreams suggest that, in reality, I live as if I am walking on air, metaphorically speaking, and keep this perception hidden. Initially, integrating Lakoff's cognitive linguistic theory with phenomenological theory seemed challenging. However, insights from Binswanger's work on metaphors in poetry, mythology, and dreams (1930a, b), and Husserl's descriptions of perceptual fantasy (1980b), have provided a connection. Thus, *the feeling of as if in reality is expressed as actual situations in dreams*, marking the final step toward formulating the Dreamworld Principle.

4.3. Justification of the principles of dream worlds

In conventional psychology, justification typically follows a hypothetico-deductive process involving hypothesis formulation and empirical testing through quantitative or qualitative methods. This approach differs from the phenomenological psychology process. There are various sub-methods within the descriptive phenomenology method (see Langdridge, 2016). In my recent paper, I presented a method called the phenomenological elucidation procedure (Watanabe, 2022), as illustrated in Figure 1.

Phenomenological elucidation, a concept derived from Husserl's texts (1964, 1970), enables us not only to describe our experiences but also to explore the why behind these experiences. For a detailed explanation, see Watanabe (2022). Here, I provide an overview with reference to Figure 1.

When confronted with two experiences, we might pose the question "why?" For example, comparing childhood memories with current daily experiences, one might ask: "Why am I less happy now than in my childhood?" In the context of the dream experience at a Toronto hotel, when considering the dream and the plans for the next morning, the question arose: "Why does a future plan manifest as reality in my dreams beforehand?" This inquiry initiates the process of phenomenological elucidation.

In Figure 1, the "phenomenological descriptive analysis," inspired by Giorgi (2008), leads to the identification of "phenomenological structural invariants" in Experience 1 (the dream) and Experience 2 (a pre-sleep plan). Utilizing Husserl's classification of intentionalities (Table 2) as a *heuristic*, in Experience 1, the phenomenological structural invariant is defined as *presentation* (*perception*, *actual experience*), while in Experience 2, it is *re-presentation* (*anticipation*). By comparing these invariants, we answer the earlier why question: *"Because the re-presentation in the real experience is structurally transformed into the presentation in the dream experience. With respect to intentional consciousness, the double structure of the real world is transformed into the single structure of the dream experience"* (Watanabe, 2022, p 974). This phenomenological elucidation procedure serves as the justification for not only Sub-principle but the entire Dreamworld Principle.

Methodological Comment: Some readers may argue that the so-called Dreamworld Principle does not quite qualify as a principle. For instance, Sub-principle I states, "In the real world, *re-presenting consciousness* has a double structure: the image of the object to be represented and a tacit consciousness that *I am only representing it*. In the dream world, this implicit awareness disappears and the double structure becomes a single structure" (Table 1). However, this does not apply to lucid dreams, where the whole story is perceived with some awareness of its unreality (see LaBerge & Rheingold, 1991). Thus, the dual structure of representing consciousness in the real world may persist even in dreams.

In addressing this objection, it is important to emphasize that the process of phenomenological elucidation does not seek to establish a *general law*. This process often starts with a single, meaningful example. From this, we might arrive at the initial *phenomenological structural invariants*, which are *the essential experiential structures for the experience in question*. As we encounter similar examples, we can recognize similarities and differences from the previous ones. The initial insight, therefore, may undergo *generalization* or *differentiation*. Consequently, we arrive at the Dreamworlds Principle, comprising four sub-principles with unique yet related phenomenological structures. When en-

countering a lucid dream, it should be distinctly differentiated from other normal dreams, as some researchers, such as Thompson (2015), argue that waking consciousness, normal dreaming, and lucid dreaming are three distinct states of consciousness. Recognizing lucid dreaming as a unique state prompts the search for phenomenological structural invariants different from those in ordinary dreams. In short, the initial insight is neither verified nor falsified, as in natural science, but rather *refined and elaborated through generalization and differentiation*. As Watanabe (2022) asserts, "[t] his process methodologically differentiates phenomenological studies from natural scientific studies in human science in general" (p. 974).

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Domhoff (2019) identifies five major contemporary theories of dreams and dreaming: Freudian, activation-synthesis, memory-consolidation, threat-simulation, and neurocognitive theory. Does our phenomenological narrative analysis of dreams have any theoretical relationships to any of these theories? For instance, the statement "There is no future tense in dreams" from Sub-principle I of the Dreamworld Principle might be interpreted using Freud's psychoanalytic theory or explained through Revonsuo's threat simulation theory based on evolutionary biology. In cases where a desired future is realized in a dream, Freud's wish-fulfillment concept may apply. Conversely, an anxiety-inducing future materializing in a dream seems to align well with the threat simulation theory. If you emphasize the incompatibility between these theories, you will have to choose one of the alternatives each time. However, the relationship between these theories and phenomenological theory is that while Freudian and threat simulation theories focus on the dreamer's *motives*, phenomenological theory offers a *structural framework* of consciousness where these motives manifest. This structural framework, though crucial, might not be sufficient alone for interpreting dream meanings. In this way, there may be some cases where psychoanalytic or evolutionary theory complements phenomenological theory in dream analysis.

Additionally, as Watanabe (2022) points out, neurocognitive theory, represented by Domhoff (2001, 2019), shares a different type of complementarity with phenomenological theory. Fox et al. (2013) proposed that: "We argue that dreaming can be understood as an 'intensified' version of waking MW [mind wandering]" (p. 1), and "mentation during REM sleep is in many ways a longer, immersive, more intensive version of spontaneous thoughts and daydreams" (p. 11). From a phenomenological perspective, "this 'intensification' or 'immersive' state in dreaming is understood in more detail, and more clearly, when based on the structural transformation from 're-presentation' to 'presentation' – in other words, referring to Table 2 [cited as Table 2 in this paper], from 'anticipation', 'recall', 'fantasy' or 'sign and picture consciousness' to 'perception'" (Watanabe, 2022, p. 978).

As stated at the beginning of Section 2, the phenomenological narrative analysis was proposed not only for clinicians and academic researchers, but also for anyone who dreams and writes. I encourage all readers to try this analysis. If you remember any dreams in the morning, write them down. Uploading these dream texts to a personal website with remarks about the real situation may enhance the credibility of your dream records in the research community.

Once you have about 10 nights' worth of dreams recorded, start the phenomenological narrative analysis with cases that appear easier to analyze.

It is important to note that the recommendation of analyzing 10 nights of dreams is not particularly significant. Hall & Van de Castle (1966) suggested analyzing at least 10 dreams for their content analysis approach. They likely adopted this number based on the hypothetico-deductive procedures commonly used in scientific research, where hypotheses are formulated and then empirically verified or falsified. For instance, in *Dream Case 1* of this paper, the interpretation that "I feel close to my late mother (who lived downstairs) as if she were still alive" may seem to be a hypothesis. If a series of 10 dreams began with this dream, and in some of them my late mother appeared alive, this hypothesis might be considered "verified." Conversely, if she were referred to as deceased in another dream, the hypothesis could be "falsified."

However, as discussed in Section 4, this procedural step does not align with phenomenological psychology. Suppose in one dream, my mother appears alive and the interpretation suggests a feeling that she is still alive, while in another, she is mentioned as deceased, interpreted as acceptance of her death. The different meanings of each dream could be viewed as facets of my psychological reality from different perspectives (the nature of psychological reality itself is beyond the scope of this paper). This is why you can start phenomenological narrative analysis of dreams with cases that are easier to analyze.

I encourage readers to engage in phenomenological narrative analysis of dreams, and to offer critiques and refinements of this method, which is still in its early stages.

Remark 5: This paper has something in common with my previous papers (Watanabe, 2019a, 2022), such as Table 2 and Figure 1. However, in these papers, I was unable to present a method for analyzing the individual meanings of dreams, mainly due to the lack of the dreamworld principle. This principle appeared for the first time in my Japanese article (Watanabe, 2021), which was actually written after Watanabe (2022). However, the phenomenological basis of this principle was not perfect because I had not yet found Husserl's (1980b) descriptions of perceptual fantasy (As for the discussion about the "Perceptual fantasy", see "remark 4" at the end of subsection 4.1). Therefore, this paper is effectively the first systematization of the dreamworld principle based on Husserlian phenomenology. In addition, under "Context of discovery of the Dreamworld Principle" in section 4.2, I newly described in detail how the Dreamworld Principle was derived. These, I believe, are the main contributions of this paper to the dream research.

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