

# Distinctions between phenomenal relations

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Let's now turn to the last item we need our functionalist theory to explain: the distinctions between phenomenal relations.

We can focus this problem by thinking about a pair of subjects who differ only with respect to the focus of their attention, e.g. as follows:

A senses that  $p \ \& \ q \ \& \ r \ \& \dots$  and attends to  $p$

B senses that  $p \ \& \ q \ \& \ r \ \& \dots$  and attends to  $q$

Obviously neither of the strategies just discussed — appeals to nonconceptual content or poisedness — will work here, since typically the contents of attentional states are poised to directly affect belief and desire, and it seems plausible they will be nonconceptual by Tye's criterion iff the contents of perceptual states are.

What it seems we need is an account of the difference between attentional and perceptual representation — of what is special about attentional representation. One naturally looks here for some functional difference — some connection which attending to  $x$  has to other mental states which merely perceptually representing  $x$  does not. But if we think about the sorts of attentional shifts discussed above, it is not easy — for me at least — to see what this functional difference could consist in. No matter which point of intersection my attention is focused on, I'm able to demonstratively refer to both, immediately form beliefs about both, etc.

What is the functional difference between the two visual experiences described above, which differ only via a shift of attention?