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L.S. Vygotsky: Reading Anew. Part 1

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The article dwells on the earlier period of Vygotsky's works before the time when the principles of the Cultural Historic Theory were formulated. His report on the 2nd Psycho-Neurologic Congress in 1924 as well as some adjacent works including "The historical sense of psychological crisis" are considered by the author as key moments. If to compare Vygotsky's approach with I.P. Pavlov's theory of conditioned reflex, V.M. Bechterev's reflexology and K.N. Kornilov's reactology,from one side, and psychology, from the other, it reveals Vygotsky's determination to restructure psychology on the objective basis. In his opinion this implies the turn of psychology to higher forms of human's behavior, actually, to human activity. In these methodological changes of Vygotsky's views one can trace certain relations of Vygotsky's early works with P.Ya. Galperin's theoretical survey on subject and method of psychology.

Keywords: objective research, reflexology, psychological experiment, interrogation and instructions, psychic phenomena, object and subject of survey.

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Л.С. Выготский: перечитывая заново. Часть 1

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Статья посвящена раннему периоду научного творчества Л.С. Выготского, предшествовавшему времени, когда были сформулированы принципы культурно-исторической теории. В качестве ключевого момента подробно рассматривается его доклад на Втором Психоневрологическом съезде в 1924 г. и ряд «примыкающих» к нему работ, включая и рукопись работы «Исторический смысл психологического кризиса». Сопоставление подхода Л.С. Выготского к учению И.П. Павлова, рефлексологии В.М. Бехтерева, реактологии Н.И. Корнилова, с одной стороны, и психологии — с другой, показывает, что Выготский исходит из необходимости коренной перестройки психологической науки на «объективных» основаниях. Это, по его мнению, предполагает ее поворот к высшим формам поведения, но, по сути, — к совместной деятельности человека. В этих методологических изменениях позиции Выготского видится связь его ранних работ с теоретическими разработками П.Я. Гальперина о предмете и методе психологии.

Ключевые слова: объективное исследование, рефлексология, психологический эксперимент, опрос и инструкция, психические явления, объект и предмет исследования.

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"The essence of the matter is not exhausted by its purpose, but by its realization, and it is not the result that is the real whole, but the result along with its formation; ... the naked result is a corpse that has left behind a tendency"

G.V.F. Hegel. Phenomenology of the spirit.
https://www.livelib.ru/quote/434926-fenomenologiya-duha-g-v-f-gegel

The dates of L.S. Vygotsky's life and work celebrated in 2024 (the 100th anniversary of the beginning of Vygotsky's work at the Moscow Institute of Experimental Psychology and the 90th anniversary of the untimely death of this outstanding scientist in 1934) are an occasion for not only expanding our vision of his contribution to Russian psychology development but also for deepening our understanding of some key problems characteristic of its current state as well as of certain trends of its development directly related to the ideas of Vygotsky, his collaborates and followers both in our country and abroad.

It's not an easy matter to select the exact date indicating the beginning of his scientific work in psychology, in this case one could take into account various moments of his biography. Thus while still a student of Moscow Imperial University who studied law he simultaneously attended a number of psychological courses in Moscow City People's University named after Shaniavsky including some lectures by P.P. Blonsky and G.G. Shpet. The diversity of L.S. Vygotsky's interests is clearly evidenced by the materials of his "Notebooks", collected and partially analyzed by E. Zavershneva and Van der Veer, published in 2017 [7].

It seems that any anniversary associated with the name of L.S. Vygotsky is a way to stop and think again about the significance of the contribution of this outstanding scientist to the development of psychology in general and that particular field of activity in psychology in which you work as a specialist.

Due to circumstances, I have been dealing with the problems of psychology and pedagogy of higher education for many years. In relation to this and being one of the closest students of P.Ya. Galperin, in my works I showed that in the higher education system we, in fact, must create conditions for the development in a child of those new formations that, in the form of certain inclinations and abilities, act as prerequisites for the successful implementation of their development strategies at the university. In particular, I spoke about this in 1996 at the Jubilee Conference dedicated to the 100th anniversary of Vygotsky's birth, where I made a report "Cultural and Historical Approach in the Formation of the Theory of Higher education" [16, pp. 338-343], in which I showed that we can understand psychological new formations developing in a child only through the prism of developed forms of activity. In this statement I relied on the well-known thought of K. Marx, the essence of which is that hints of the higher that arise at lower stages of the development of the process we are studying can be intelligently understood only when that higher itself is already known [14, vol. 46, p. 32].

The relevance of this thought of K. Marx manifested itself again after three more decades, when I reread one of the key reports of P.Ya. Galperin, which he presented on 05.12.1969 as part of the so-called "home discussion" at the apartment of A.R. Luria [6, pp. 435—447]. In this report, Galperin considered a number of L.S. Vygotsky's ideas as the basis for the development of the theory of step-by-step formation of mental actions and concepts.

It was after my rereading Galperin's report that I turned to the works of L.S. Vygotsky from the early period of his activity. First of all, I mean the report that Vygotsky delivered at the 2nd All-Russian Neuropsychiatric Congress in January 1924 which then was published as an article in 1926 in a Collection of papers [8, pp. 26—26]. The presentation was called "Methodology of Reflexological ant Psychological Research".

The bright and informative presentation was noticed by A.R. Luria, now well known as an outstanding scientist, founder of Russian neuropsychology, Vygotsky's colleague and coauthor who was present at the Conference too and as a result Vygotsky received an invitation to the Moscow Institute of Experimental Psychology due to which his presentation was then published.

I often reread the works of classical scholars, mostly in psychological area, and comparing their thoughts about the role and purpose of psychology with the flow of purely empirical studies systematically published even in respectable professional editions reflecting the state of our science I come to the conclusion that now it's not the time for complacency. In many respects psychology seems to be not in its best state in many directions rolling back to the last or sometimes to the one before the last century. "Psychoanalysis", "Gestalt therapy", "Understanding hearing" — are all of them new or being known before then forgotten for some time?

As A.N. Leontiev sadly noticed at his time just meaning the activity studies: "... the words "activity approach" and other words about activity have been coming across frustratingly often and a lot lately, and not always in a meaning that is sufficiently outlined, defined, somewhere localized in a very wide space of knowledge, a range of concepts. Therefore, they lose their certainty, which they did not lose 15 and 20 years ago, maybe, when these two or three positions were outlined; it is clear what could have been discussed, what needed to be worked

out, and now it is unclear. Now that I see the phrase "and from the point of view of the activity approach," I will tell you frankly: it bothers me" [12, p. 118].

Thus the specific purpose of the article is to draw the reader's attention not to the "core" works by Vygotsky in the realm of the cultural historical theory of psychological development created by him — they are well known since they constitute the corpus of fundamental basics of psychology not only in this country. In the light of the current psychological and pedagogical issues related to the radical reform of the foundations of the education system taking place in the world, which is still based on centuries-old traditions of "transferring" the experience of the past to a new generation, they also require some new reading.

But I got interested in Vygotsky's early works those that are directly related to the beginning of the Moscow period of his creative studies — they allowed him in a short time to become the founder of the so—called "non—classical" psychology [21], which opened up new horizons for many researchers — both in our country and abroad — for the development of the entire system of psychological knowledge.

Of course, Vygotsky's scientific school, which many psychologists of different generations consider themselves associated with now and before, for both historical and personal reasons, has never been a kind of monolith. As Vygotsky wrote in one of his notebooks, "... why is the question of *the unity of work* being raised. Because everyone made *their own step* on their own, starting from common initial positions. But *where* did he put his foot?" [7, p. 297]. It can be assumed that here L.S. Vygotsky is referring to the departure of A.N. Leontiev as his closest collaborator from the general line of research on the role of sign mediation in the systemic structure of consciousness.

Here is what A.N. Leontiev himself noted in 1976 in his memoirs about working with L.S. Vygotsky in the 30s: "Another alternative was to return to practical actions. Along the line of this second alternative, another kind of side, parallel, research cycle arose, which **returned the concept as a whole to the idea of generating and developing consciousness in practical actions** (highlighted by me — N.N.)" [12, p. 115].

It is my own working on the articles that became landmarks for myself that helped me to understand the fundamental differences in the scientific positions of the participants in L.S. Vygotsky's circle. The first of them was devoted to the comparison of the views of A.N. Leontiev and P.Ya. Galperin [15]; the second — to the analysis of the positions of L.S. Vygotsky and A.N. Leontiev [17]. My goal was not only to identify the ideological grounds for a certain divergence of their views that arose during their joint work, but also highlight those real possibilities for the reintegration of their positions that open up in the light of clarifying the methodological patterns of the development of modern psychological knowledge. No doubt, this work was being carried out by P.Ya. Galperin within the framework of the theory of step-by-step formation of mental actions and concepts.

In this paper while considering Vygotsky's views which are especially characteristic of the stage of his methodological positions development studied by me I'll try to demonstrate that

Vygotsky not only constantly returned to the need to solve the problem of the subject of psychological research, but even (I venture to assume) to solve the question of the very existence of the "psyche" as a certain property of objective reality that exists independently of our consciousness, but acts for us in the form of so—called "psychic phenomena" — a question that P.Ya. Galperin not only systematically addressed, but also proposed a definite solution to it, although theoretically he did not fully realize the significance of this step for the restructuring of the entire conceptual system of non-classical psychology.

1.

As it is known the Moscow period of L.S. Vygotsky's scientific activity was preceded by the Gomel period of his active labour in the field of psychology, including work on the book "Psychology of Art", the textbook "Pedagogical Psychology", as well as a number of experimental studies in the field of memory, for which he actually created the author's version of the technique of "double stimulation" and "sign mediation" (perhaps not yet realizing their methodological potential, which will come out only later).

The results of these experimental studies were announced by him in the form of three reports at the 2nd All-Russian Psychoneurological Congress, one of which he delivered on January 6, 1924. (The report was later published in the form of an article "Methodology of Reflexological and Psychological research" in the Proceedings of the Institute of Experimental Psychology in 1926 [8, pp. 26—46]) and reproduced in 1982 in the 1st volume of the Collected works of L.S. Vygotsky [4, v. 1, pp. 43—62].

As it was already mentioned the presentation delivered by Vygotsky at this congress made such a strong impression on A.R. Luria, who was present there (at that time he was an employee of the Moscow Institute of Experimental Psychology, who simultaneously served as the scientific secretary of the institute), that he reported to the director of the institute K.N. Kornilov about a young Gomel psychologist, who, in his opinion, should become an employee of the institute. So Vygotsky was invited by K.N. Kornilov to work at the institute, how-

ever, as a researcher though of only the 2nd category.

Vygotsky's ideas presented in the report were indeed consonant with reactology, the direction of research that Kornilov himself, after becoming director of the institute, "rooted" in the institute research activities after the dismissal of its former director G.I. Chelpanov on ideological grounds. No wonder that to Vygotsky, an already established psychologist with fundamental theoretical and methodological training and a broad scientific outlook in various fields of humanitarian knowledge, understanding the trends in the development of not only psychology, but also art, literature, linguistics, fluent in several European languages etc., Kornilov's "reactological" approach to the problems of psychology for some time seemed a perspective direction for the development of psychology.

Possessing the capabilities of a methodologist, theorist and experimenter, focusing on other contemporary areas of psychology development abroad (zoopsychology, psychoanalysis, behaviorism and Gestalt psychology), Vygotsky seeks to identify both the methodological and, if possible, both experimental and methodological potential of reactology in solving the main problem for him — determining the directions and methods of psychological research of consciousness. Judjing by Vygotsky's works published at this period [4, v. 1, pp. 78—98], [4, v. 1, pp. 132—148], [8, v. 1, pp. 26—46], he actively uses Kornilov's argumentation in order to reveal the content of his own approach. Obviously, during this period of creative scientific studies, reactology seemed to L.S. Vygotsky both relevant and an important stage in the development of psychology as a science — a definite, generally positive movement forward in the knowledge of the subjective world of man, overcoming the "objectivism" of I.P. Pavlov's teachings on higher nervous activity and V.M. Bekhterev's reflexology, and "subjectivism" of the traditional empirical psychology of consciousness, developed by G.I. Chelpanov.

However, at the same time L.S. Vygotsky is already actively working on the manuscript of the "Historical meaning of the psychological crisis", which, according to historians of psychology, was written by him in 1927—1928. It contains serious criticisms of a number of areas of psychology, including the reactological approach in general, and K.N. Kornilov in particular.

It is quite obvious that in this regard, Kornilov's article "Naive and dialectical materialism in relation to the science of human behavior", which opened the second collection of the Institute's works [8, pp. 7—18], published in 1926 (in which, in the section "General and theoretical articles" Vygotsky's famous article "Methodology of reflexological and psychological research", prepared by him on the base of materials of theoretical and experimental studies of the Gomel period of his scientific activity and a January speech at the psychoneurological Congress of 1924 was also presented) became very indicative for L.S. Vygotsky.

Judging by the title of his article, K.N. Kornilov claimed in it the role of a methodologist and the theorist of a new direction in the development of psychology as a science of reactions. This article defends the point of view (in fact, deeply eclectic), which consists in the fact that the psyche, of course, is different from matter, although it is its special property. Here is one of the main theses of this article: "Dialectical materialism believes that being is not reflected in consciousness in the same way as things in a mirror, that these reflections have a subjective character determined by the structure of the perceiving apparatus; that a thing is not at all a collection of "red", "sounding", "smooth", "fragrant", etc., as existing independently of consciousness, but that this "red", "sounding", etc. exists only_subjectively,_only_in_consciousness, (emphasized by me — *N.N.*) as the perception of objects, whereas objectively_outside_consciousness_there_are only_fluctuations_outside_consciousness_ethereal,_air waves,_etc. (emphasized by me — *N.N.*), as objects of perception, which, of course, are not identical to our perceptions of subjects" [8, p. 9].

The subject of a separate article could be an analysis of the text of this article by K.N. Kornilov, revealing the position of K.N. Kornilov, which actually coincides in its main theses with the position of S.L. Rubinstein, who already in his version of the activity approach also spoke about the unity, but not the identity of the mental and physiological.

Here we can only note that it was this thesis, but already in the formulations of S.L. Rubinstein, that was subjected to serious methodological criticism in the 50s. As P.Ya. Galperin noted at the "home discussion" in December 1969 [6, pp. 435—447], "there is a position in Marxism: consciousness is a product of the brain and a reflection of the outside world. And Rubinstein shouted the loudest about it, and they almost tore his head off about it, because they told him about double determination" [6, p. 444]. In the same report, P.Ya. Galperin recalled this position of K.N. Kornilov in the 30s: "It was only once in the simplicity of his soul that K.N.. Kornilov said that mental activity is a reflection of brain activity. He was well corrected then, because I see things through concepts, but things, objects of the outside world" [ibid.].

Therefore, it is not surprising that, based on his, to put it mildly, "peculiar dialectical" point of view, supported by references to arbitrarily selected quotations from the texts of materialist philosophers of different eras and views, including Lucretius, Holbach, De La Metri, L. Feuerbach, F. Engels, G.V. Plekhanov and even N.I. Bukharin, who was considered at that unforgettable time the leading theorist of the party, K.N. Kornilov

wrote: "Plekhanov expresses it this way: "Every given psychological state is only one side of a process, the other side of which is a physiological phenomenon," or, as Bukharin puts it even more clearly, "the psyche is an introspective expression of physiological processes" [8, p. 12]. Next, K.N. Kornilov continues: "That the subjective state, as an "introspective expression of physiological processes" according to Bukharin's characterization, really exists (emphasized by me — N.N.), no one seems to deny this: neither representatives of dialectical materialism, as we saw above, nor representatives of reflexology. And since this is so, it is clear that these subjective states should be the object of science and study. ... but as long as the existing subjective states remain only subjective, i.e. they are the property of the subject, and are not revealed in any way in movement, music, word, etc.., science cannot deal with them. Only when they are revealed and objectified outwardly, they become the property of science" [ibid., p. 17].

And L.S. Vygotsky shares a similar argument in those years, as evidenced by the materials of his article "Psyche, consciousness, the unconscious" [4, v. 1, pp. 132—148], in which he notes: "The psyche should not be considered as special processes that additionally exist on top of and in addition to brain processes, somewhere above or between them and as a subjective expression of the same processes, as a special side, a special qualitative characteristic of the higher functions of the brain" [ibid., p. 137]. It should be noted that in fact L.S. Vygotsky adheres to this position of K.N. Kornilov in the works of his Moscow period. However, it is important for us to understand how L.S. Vygotsky's thought developed in the future. This article was first published in one of the collections of the Institute's works in 1930, but it was written much earlier, since already in the "Historical sense of the psychological crisis" this position of K.N. Kornilov was considered critically, probably L.S. Vygotsky became aware of its methodological deficiency.

It should be noted that, unfortunately, despite the primitiveness of K.N. Kornilov's argument about the relationship between the "mental" and the "physiological", which became obvious to L.S. Vygotsky, now it still haunts psychology in our country. So many psychologists, not excluding S.L. Rubinstein, A.N. Leontiev, and even P.Ya. Galperin, paid tribute to the famous position formulated by V.I. Lenin that the "psyche" is a function of the brain" [9, v. 18, pp. 84—92]. The ideological grounds for the commitment of Russian psychologists to this thesis are clear, but S.L. Rubinstein enthusiastically defended it in his works and directly pointed out that "... mental activity as a reflex activity of the brain is the mental activity of a person carried out by the brain (highlighted by me — *N.N.*)" [18, p. 7]. "There is no need to separate and contrast one thing with another — the relationship of the mental to the brain and its relationship to the outside world. This cannot be done primarily because mental activity is the activity of the brain interacting (!!! — N.N.) with the outside world, responding to its effects (highlighted by me — N.N.)." [ibid., p. 5]. And P.Ya. Galperin, of course, understood the "internal" inconsistency of this position, but it was only in his famous "Introduction to Psychology" [5] that he tried to overcome this "postulate" rooted in our philosophical and psychological literature. For us, who know about the path that L.S. Vygotsky took in less than 10 years of his work at the Institute of Experimental Psychology, it is obvious that he would not have become Vygotsky if he had not clearly seen all the main methodological flaws of reactology at the very beginning of his collaboration with K.N. Korrnilov.

"It should be noted," L.S. Vygotsky writes in the "Historical sense of the psychological crisis, "that the heterogeneity of the material, fragmentary nature, change of meaning of the phrase out of context, the polemical nature of most statements, **true precisely in the denial of false thought**, but empty and general in the sense of a positive definition of the task, in no way allow us to expect anything from this work — or more than a more or less random pile of quotations and their Talmudic interpretation. But quotations arranged in the best order will never give a system." [4, v. 1, p. 397]. And L.S. Vygotsky continues his thought: "The new theory, following Plekhanov, accepts the doctrine of psychophysical parallelism and **the complete irreducibility of the mental to the physical, seeing in this crude, vulgar materialism.** But how is one science possible about two fundamentally, qualitatively heterogeneous and irreducible categories of being? How is their fusion possible in an integral act of reaction?" [ibid., p. 398]. Next, L.S. Vygotsky tries to formulate possible answers to the questions posed by K.N. Kornilov: "... we," writes L.S. Vygotsky, — have two answers. Kornilov sees a functional relationship between them, but this immediately destroys any integrity: two different values can stand in a functional relationship. **It is impossible to study psychology in terms of reaction, because inside the reaction there are two irreducible, functionally dependent elements**. The psychophysical problem is not solved by this, but it is transferred inside each element and therefore makes it impossible to study at any step how it connected the whole psychology. There the relation of the entire field of the psyche to the entire field of physiology was unclear, here the same insolubility is entangled in each individual reaction. What methodologically does this solution to the problem offer? Instead of solving it problematically (hypothetically) at the beginning of the study, solve it experimentally, empirically in each individual case. But it's impossible. And how is one science possible with two fundamentally different methods of cognition, not methods of research — K.N. Kornilov sees introspection not as a technical de-

vice, but as the only adequate way of cognition of the mental. It is clear that methodologically, the integrity of the reaction remains "pia desiderata" (good intentions — *N.N.*), but in fact such a concept leads to two sciences, with two methods studying two different sides of being" [ibid., pp. 398—399].

Involuntarily we who know about the emergence in the 30s of the ideas of the activity approach by A.N. Leontiev, who to a certain extent relied on his early reactological works conducted jointly with A.R. Luria viewing them as a definite alternative to the position of L.S. Vygotsky, the possible source of the appearance of this assessment by L.S. Vygotsky of K.N. Kornilov's approach becomes clear.

For L.S. Vygotsky himself a conflict arises here: Kornilov brands in agnosticism I.P. Pavlov, who wrote about the significance of subjective experiences and the impossibility of exploring them with "objective" research methods developed by himself. However, Vygotsky in his articles, referring to the same words of I.P. Pavlov, as an important characteristic of the role of experiences argues that we must find a method to explore these subjective states without losing their content.

So this was the subject of that very January 1924 report at the congress and the 1926 article written on its basis [8, pp. 26—46]. L.S. Vygotsky sees a way to improve the reflexological methodology, but suggests including the survey as a rigidly constructed methodology aimed at objective research. At the same time, Vygotsky does not question the point of view expressed by I.P. Pavlov, while psychological research is stigmatized for being fixed on the introspective description of subjective states, without offering a methodology for identifying their objective content. Therefore, he concludes his article with an analysis of the survey methods from the point of view not only of what was positive in reflexology, but also of what was accumulated in subjective empirical psychology. He shows that the survey must very accurately follow the appropriate instructions and the specifics of each specific situation, that it is necessary to compare different "indications" of the subjects in terms of identifying contradictions, etc. — and this, in his opinion, allows for an objective study of the content of the "mental" side of the physiological process.

Knowing about the path that Vygotsky went through, we understand how and why it is the analysis of speech activity that becomes for him the source of his scientific inspiration. Moreover, it is important to note that this understanding of the functions of speech and speech communication as the leading means of regulating the activity of the subject occurred even before the formulation of the "basic law" of cultural and historical psychology — the transition of the interpsychic plan of behavior into the intrapsychic plan of consciousness, in which he found the answer to the question of the psychological mechanisms of the emergence of higher forms of behavior.

Indeed, in his further scientific research, Vygotsky compared his ideas about speech as a way of revealing the content of introspection results with the characteristics of communication given by P. Janet, who proceeded from completely different grounds [3, p. 1021], [4, v. 5, p. 197]. Indeed, for the French sociological school, of which Janet was a representative, it was obvious that speech in the context of communication is aimed primarily at the assimilation of social representations, when individual representations are considered only as forms of "being" of collective representations.

2.

The main methodological issue that is significant for any science is the question of the subject of research. In relation to psychology, it can also be defined as a question about the subject of a psychologist's activity. This activity can be theoretical or practice-oriented — the researcher always proceeds from understanding of what he considers as a subject of psychology. The idea of the subject of psychology as a science if accepted by members of the scientific community is the basis for identifying the subject of activity within the framework of a specific study.

But the answer to this main question presupposes, firstly, the distinction between the subject and the object of research. Traditionally, it is believed that different sciences can distinguish different sides (aspects) in the same object, making them the subjects of their research. From this point of view, different views on the same object create different "subjects of research". However, from a methodological point of view, this point of view is erroneous. Let's try to figure this out.

The existence of a person in the objective world presupposes his activity aimed at cognition and change of this world. But at the same time, we must not forget that any person, including a researcher, from a psychological point of view always deals with the "subjective" content revealed in his image of objective reality, which is, to be precise, mediated by his activity with one or another fragment of objective reality, with which the subject of this activities objectively deals [17]. As a result of this tool-equipped activity of the subject, aimed at some specific fragment of objective reality as an object of his activity, objectively bearing "in itself" certain properties necessary for the subject, there is a transformation of that "subject", which from a psychological point of view, i.e., from the point of view of the subject, acted as an empirical object of activity (a «thing"). Thus, this process of identifying the subject of activity as an objective process from a methodological point of view acts as a process of

"**subjectifying"** the objective world of a specific fragment of objective reality, but in general (already from a psychological point of view) appears to him in the form of "**re-subjectifying**" (reinterpreting") the empirical object of activity.

In a small experiment that I systematically conducted in different classrooms during the lecture, the audience was shown a photo showing some kind of device hidden by a cloth. The participants in the experiment had to answer the question: "What is it?" As a possible answer, they were simultaneously offered the following options: a walkie-talkie, a camera, a desk clock, a tablet, a tape recorder, etc. The listeners expressed various hypotheses. Then the previously hidden object was opened and the listeners saw a smartphone in front of them, acting for them as a familiar object, which, however, due to the "versatility" of this device, it can be considered using all the "subjects" indicated in the answer options. I.e. as a kind of "something", a smartphone, considered no longer as a subject, providing telephone communication, but as an object with a whole range of properties that allow it to be used as a walkie-talkie, a camera, a watch, a radio receiver, a tablet, etc. But if we continue this series of possible uses of this object, then it can be considered both as a commodity, and ... a source of radiation, and even a means of self-affirmation.

Moreover, as a kind of something", this object has properties that allow it to be used as a measure of length or weight, a projectile, etc. though of course, such use of a smartphone" is not obvious. But let's ask ourselves: does our "smartphone" remain a smartphone when used in this way? Or we begin to guess that in reality we are only looking at an object with a number of properties that, thanks to our methods of activity, act as one or another "subject", i.e. an object that we can use in one way or another. And being a smartphone for him means having only those characteristics that allow him to act in this capacity.

Let's fix this "verbal" turnover: we "see" the world by certain modes of action with certain objects appearing in front of us in the field of our possible actions. Let me remind you, by the way, that in one of the tasks of the popular Torrence test, testees are asked to describe the possible use of abstract drawings as fragments to create specific images based on it, and the number of suggested options indicates the degree of creativity of the testees.

Consequently, any object that appears to us as a specific "subject", i.e., the way we already know how to work with this object, is potentially "multi-subjective", i.e. it can act as different "**subjects"** listed above. In other words, any object that falls into the orbit of our activity is revealed as a certain "subject" only in our specific activity with it: everything is determined by what activity takes place, how it is related to the corresponding need that brought this "subject" to life.

In this sense, we emphasize — only in this sense — it can be argued that objective reality is " subjectless". Its "subjectification" is the process and results of our practical activity, the activity of the subject who creates the "subjective" world. It would seem to be a completely understandable idea, but how many copies have been broken and continue to be broken in the process of various methodological discussions, the essence of which is ignoring the creative basis of the joint activity of its practical participants.

It is necessary to constantly take into account the methodological "reefs" of distinguishing between "subject" and "object". Such a distinction is unusual for ordinary consciousness. So, using the term "object", a person can mean an observable object or a subject (a "thing") (in the everyday sense in which it is understood in everyday life) — which implies a certain way of working with an object as with a fragment of objective reality, which, thereby, "constitutes" this object already as a certain an empirical object.

For science, any object is a universe of possible "subjects", which at the beginning act as possible subjects of research, revealing one or another essence of the object under study, which for all "non—participants" in scientific activity acts as an **empirical object**, i.e. a completely understandable "subject".

British scientist A. Fleming, who discovered a common mold in a Petri dish, which killed the bacteria he needed for experiments, became a Nobel Laureate thanks to the discovery of penicillin, which became a means that saved millions of lives dying from bacterial infection. As L.S. Vygotsky wrote., "every thing can be considered as a microcosm, as a universal measure in which the whole big world is reflected. On this basis, they (methodologists — N.N.) say that to study to the end, to exhaust one thing, one object, one phenomenon, means to know the whole world in all its connections" [4, v. 1, p. 403].

Therefore, any empirical object must be considered as a fragment of objective reality, as a kind of "something" containing a universe of entities hidden from us, one of which may interest the researcher from the perspective of the science that he represents. Unfortunately, in the traditional scientific consciousness, it is the idea of a different relationship between subject and object that is much more widespread and thus appeared in Marxist philosophy (V.I. Lenin) and has been entrenched in Russian science for a long time. According to this view, different sciences can distinguish different sides (aspects, functions) in the same empirical object, (i.e. in the subject"), making them the subjects of their research. As an illustration of this view, the example with a glass, proposed at the time by V.I. Lenin, was often used. Reasoning, the authors who used this example showed that a glass can act as a vase for flowers, and a pencil stand, and a paper holder, and a projectile, etc. This position

was formulated most clearly in the 60s by P.Ya. Galperin [5], and after him the same idea was reproduced by other authors [10], [20] and others.

However, based on the above example with a "smartphone", it is necessary to make a certain and very significant adjustment to this position: it is not the "glass" that has certain sides, but the object hidden behind it that acts as a "smartphone" for us, but considered as a fragment of objective reality may have certain properties that, when used by one or another can act in different ways as different "subjects", so to speak, take on different "guises". Therefore, what is empirically perceived in everyday terms as different functions ("aspects", "sides") of the subject (thing) used in the household activity, which thereby became a "new" instrument of our activity, from a methodological point of view means that in reality any "subject" is always a socially developed (during the development of activity) form of the use of objectively existing fragments of objective reality, that exist regardless of our consciousness. They define human activity by their properties, which he obey and which he masters as a side of interaction.

Being a subject of activity and at the same time an objectively existing fragment of objective reality, constantly located — regardless of its consciousness — in various forms of interaction with the conditions of his objective being, a person has the ability to actively use these independently existing properties of objective reality as means and tools of his activity, turning them from objects of consumption into "subjects" of his needs, which they act as such only thanks to certain ways of activity that "subbjectify" his needs [1], [10], [11]. As noted by K. Marx, "The subject as being for a person, as the subjective being of a person, is at the same time the present being of a person for another person, his human relationship to another person, the social relationship of a person to a person" [14, v. 2, p. 47].

Therefore, objectively there is a psychological difference between the representation of the identified subject in the form of an "subject" (thing) in a joint practice-oriented activity and its "scientific" representation: the properties of objective reality revealed in the process of instrumental actions are always revealed from the point of view of those tasks of joint activity for which objective-like "accurate" understanding of the "known" properties of the studied "object" characteristic of specialized scientific activity appears is just one of the possible tasks.

The subject — in his "practical" consciousness — always expresses the "objective" reality revealed to him "biased", in a certain way, about things, providing not only and not so much a certain understanding of these things as a certain attitude towards them.

A common understanding of the activity nature of the differentiation of an object as a fragment of objective reality and an "subject" as a method of action in objective reality, the practical use of any object in a system of joint, always practice-oriented human activity, may be represented from this point of view as the most important psychological characteristic of the essential forces of man himself, which was revealed by K. Marx. "The history of industry and the established objective existence of industry, — K. Marx noted, even at an early stage of the formation of his concept of man as a social individual, "is an open book of human essential forces, sensually presented to us by human psychology, which has so far been considered not in its connection with the essence of man... Such psychology, for which this book, that is, just the most sensually tactile, most accessible part of history, is closed, cannot become a truly meaningful and real science" (K. Marx's italics — *N.N.*) [13, pp. 594—595].

I would like to note that all the leading Russian psychologists, including L.S. Vygotsky, S.L. Rubinstein, and A.N. Leontiev, not to mention their students and followers, systematically reproduced this idea of K. Marx, the content of which is of key importance for psychology based on the methodology of the activity approach. At the same time, many of them systematically confused the concepts of an object (as a fragment of objective reality) and a "subject" (as a way of human activity mastering this objective reality that exists independently of his consciousness). The volume of this article does not allow us to present in detail the variants of such a mixture, therefore I will limit myself to just one, but very illustrative example from the work of P.Ya. Galperin "Problems of activity in Soviet psychology" [6, pp. 281—300]. I quote: "In fact, taken according to its objective content, it (the subjective content — *N.N.*) really does not belong to psychology: the external "subject" content of activity is the material impact on a material object and its successive transformations — what kind of psychology is this? Of course, in itself it is something "subjective", not "mental", it is not psychology!" [ibid., p. 291].

The reason for this confusion of the concepts of "objective" and "subjective" is that both of these concepts — the concept of "objective" and the concept of "subjective" — are interpreted so broadly that the concept of "objective reality" i.e. that which exists independently of our consciousness seems to include everything that exists besides a specific fragment of objective reality we have mastered which de facto has become an "subjective" element of our subjective world.

And therefore it is natural that from a similar point of view, the analogous subjective world of another subject suddenly becomes an "objective world", and only because it exists outside and in addition to "our" consciousness, which, in fact, generates all the methodological collisions of idealism, and, above all, subjective idealism, for which only the world exists his conscious-

ness. These collisions were some time ago analyzed in great detail by E.V. Ilyenkov in his numerous works on the problems of the "ideal". The antidote to this identification of the "objective" and the "subjective" for me was K. Marx's 1st Thesis on Feuerbach, in which the principle of their distinction is formulated very precisely: "The main drawback of all previous materialism — including Feuerbach's — is that the object, reality, sensuality is taken only in the form of an object, or in the form of contemplation, not as a human sensory activity, practice, not subjectively. ...Feuerbach wants to deal with sensory objects that are really different from mental objects, but he does not take human activity itself as an subjective_activity (emphasized by the author — *N.N.*)" [14, v. 3, p. 2].

Therefore, any "object" — as an element or component of our field of action [5], which opens up in the image of the world [11] — is always one or another way of working with an object that satisfies one or another specific need with its properties, a way that once allowed — by transforming certain fragments of objective reality — to form new "subjects" for us, thereby revealing previously hidden properties of objective reality, which have become subjects of research, the results of which will open up new possibilities for further transformation of objective reality into new "objects" of our needs. "The eye became a human eye just as its object became a public, human object created by man for man....Therefore, feelings have become theorists directly in their practice. They relate to a thing for the sake of a thing, but this thing itself is an objective human relationship to itself and to a person, and vice versa" [13, p. 592].

Objective reality is always given to a person in a certain "subjective" form — in the form of certain "things" that serve to satisfy certain needs: "This is a chair — they sit on it, and this is a table — they eat at it," — the heroine of "Cat House" tells her guests, thereby emphasizing the activity essence of any "subject." An object as a fragment of the objective world, as a kind of universe of various properties, due to various **"subject**-oriented" and **subject**-specialized ways of our activity with certain fragments of objective reality, always acts as a specific "subject" designed to satisfy a specific "subjectified" need.

However, behind its appearance in the world of human activity there is always a specific way of activity that has been developed and, one might say, "codified" in the system of activity according to the characteristics of its use. The bearers of this method are the older generation, which, in a system of joint activities with the younger generation, "transmits" it, i.e. creates the necessary conditions, including means of activity, so that this method, as a social relay race, becomes the property of every new candidate for people.

This often creates the illusion that this method belongs to the object itself, acting as a means and/or instrument of activity. This kind of illusion was shared by my teacher P.Ya. Galperin who repeatedly claimed that it was the tool that is the carrier of the way it was used, and A.N. Leontiev, who thought similarly. From a theoretical point of view, this position was overcome only in the early 70s by D.B. Elkonin, another member of the Kharkov group of collaboratesand followers of L.S. Vygotsky. This is evidenced by the entry he made in his diary, which, unfortunately, is missing from his main publications of that time: "Even the theory of the gradual formation of mental actions is not devoid of elements of naturalism. I am right that the human way of using it is not written on the subject. It is known only to society, i.e. to man as the bearer of the method" [21, p. 502].

It is the ways of activity of a social individual with one or another fragment of objective reality included in the area of joint objective activity that transform these fragments as components of the already "subjective" reality of our activity.

In the field of research, in the field of technology, the way of activity appears as a method. Thus, through various methods of activity (methods and techniques, whether it is the exploration of the microcosm through a hadron collider, or cooking borscht according to a new recipe recommended in a TV program about delicious and healthy food), which a person creates/finds /masters/implements, he thereby constitutes his "subjective" world. A creative person is someone who knows how to "reinterpret" the world of "subjective" reality around him, using other previously unknown methods of activity to create new "objects" as elements of the cultural field of mankind, or applying the old method to previously unknown objects of his activity. Therefore, it is necessary to distinguish between **the subject of research**, which must be identified in the course of research, and the **"subject" as that empirical object** (or phenomenon) with which we deal in our practical activities. Their "mixing" is fraught with failures in the study, which "negate" all our efforts, not to mention the funds spent in vain on its implementation. As noted by F. Engels, "This is an old story. First they create abstractions, distracting them from sensual things, and then they want to know these abstractions sensually, they want to see time and smell space. The empiricist is so drawn into his habitual empirical cognition that he imagines himself still in the field of sensory cognition even when he operates with abstractions" [14, v. 20, p. 550].

In the first case, we are talking about the psychological result of the expedient instrumental influence of the subject on a certain fragment of objective reality (object), due to which this psychological result acts as another "subject-specialized" abstraction of the real

way of acting with the object of this activity. This abstraction summarizes the psychological consequences of the subject's interaction with the objective world, and in our "everyday" consciousness this abstraction is "substantivized" in the form of an empirical object (a thing). At one time, K. Marx, as part of the development of economic theory, which L.S. Vygotsky systematically referred to in his works [4, v. 1, pp. 291—436], [7], used the term "objective mental form". Through this term, K. Marx fixed the "sensually supersensible" or social nature of the results of any form of joint activity carried out in the system of social production. [14, v. 23, p. 86]. Unfortunately, this term is not rooted in our psychological literature, although it plays an important role in the works of E.V. Ilyenkov on the problems of the ideal and in the analysis of consciousness in the works of M.K. Mamardashvili, as it most accurately captures the psychological content of the concept of "subject", which I, already as a term, put in quotation marks in order to "turn off" the reader's everyday interpretation of it, which arises when using this term in everyday life and often uncritically used in scientific texts.

The actual subject of research is always only hypothetically assumed, but hidden from the researcher properties or characteristics of objective reality, a fragment of which should actually be considered as an object of research activity. Therefore, as L.S. Vygotsky emphasized more than once, referring to Goethe, when organizing psychological research, it is important to be able to "make the problem a postulate" [4], [7]. The assumption postulated in this way begins to serve as the most important criterion for the selection of research methods corresponding to its theoretically predicted essence, through which the objective reality under study is practically transformed.

The "reverse" course of thought, when the "postulate becomes a problem", allows us to critically analyze the prevailing ideas about the essence of the subject under study, which — due to the results of previously implemented practical interaction with objective reality and the experience of theoretical and experimental research — appear to us as empirical objects or "subjects", i.e. "objective thought forms" — those social filters through which the objective world appears to us, shamefully referred to in some studies as "psychological reality".

In order to make sure of this, it is enough to look at the table of contents of any psychology textbook. Dozens of "mental" processes (various types of perception and memory, thinking and imagination, etc., etc.) located next to each other or "separated" from each other by hundreds of pages, "coexist" in them, acting as active agents of their own "mental" actions, hundreds of "mental properties" and "mental states" that actively influence behavior, etc.

I recently found a certain theoretical confirmation of the basis of my critical attitude to such a nomenclature in the book "Being and Consciousness" by S.L. Rubinstein. On page 279 of this book, you can find a note that S.L. Rubinstein made at the time: "In general, it must be said that the functional structure of psychology artificially breaks up and spreads phenomena under different headings (perception, memory, etc.) that are essentially completely homogeneous, expressing the same psychological patterns. A radical restructuring is also needed in this regard (emphasized by S.L. Rubinstein — *N.N.*). In the future, the main part of psychology will have to be built as a system of patterns common to phenomena related to different functions, to different processes" [18, p. 279].

Therefore, it is necessary to constantly take into account that in any such "subject" — as a result of our interaction with objective reality arising in the course of human activity, **something** always emerges, i.e. something that is yet to be revealed, and only in the possibility, during the development of joint activities. And only in the case when objective reality responds to us with "reciprocity" we manage to "identify" the properties we study and "include" them in the system of concepts about these properties. Therefore, L.S. Vygotsky's 's constant interest to the problem of the genesis of concepts and the correlation of "everyday" and "scientific" concepts is natural [4, v. 2, pp. 118-294].

Thus in the context of activities aimed at an empirically existing object, its "phantom" properties and characteristics, which are "products" of our activity, which we "attribute" to objective reality, can be considered as a subject of description, but not as a subject of research. That is why the methodological distinction between the subject — as properties of objective reality and the "subject" — as our established ideas about reality, is central to the organization of any research, including psychological.

3.

Further steps on the way of presenting the abovementioned problem of the relationship between the **"object"** and the **subject** of research is directly related to the analysis of the relationship between such categories as **phenomenon** and **essence**. Let us emphasize once again our position: the relationship between phenomenon and essence has an activity nature: a new "subject" as a public summary of our joint activities — appears as a natural result of purposeful human activity with an object that acts as an "understandable" phenomenon in front of us/ However, its essence is still hidden, and it has yet to be learned, made public asset for our practical activity and our consciousness as a psychological form of this activity. This is exactly what L.S. Vygotsky "anticipated" in

the early period of his work. Later he tried to express this "premonition" in his concept of the semantic structure of consciousness, which is the essence of cultural-historical theory as a "non-classical" psychology.

The characteristic of any phenomena is what every science began with, including psychology, which, like any science, begins with a description of the content that appears in the phenomenon, thereby replenishing the phenomenology of psychology. Every phenomenon, as our "subjective image of objective reality", is only a phenomenological manifestation in its psychological essence of what is hidden behind this phenomenon, i.e. those properties of objective reality that "appeared" to us in a certain, specially or accidentally arisen problematic situation that requires its solution. We are just "changing the angle of view" — and we have a different phenomenon in front of us.

Kindness and sensitivity or pretense and hypocrisy? Is it true that the same essence stands behind these phenomena and/or does everything depend on our view of the object of our activity, which always acts as one or another "subject"? As L.S. Vygotsky noted, quoting G. Munsterberg, "no abnormal experience can in itself serve as proof that a psychological, not a physiological explanation is required. This is a philosophical question that must be solved theoretically before we can begin to explain special facts" [4, v. 1, p. 132].

The specificity of the presentation of the objective content revealed in the course of activity, which appears to us in the form of the "subject" of our joint, always practically oriented activity — in comparison with its "scientific" representation — lies in the fact that through communication, the identified properties of objective reality are always revealed from the point of view of those tasks of joint activity for which objectivists are "accurate" understanding of the "known" properties of the studied "object" acts only as one of the possible and by no means always significant tasks. The subject — in his "practical" consciousness — always expresses the "objective" reality revealed to him "biased", in a certain way, about things, providing not only and not so much a certain understanding of these things as a certain attitude towards them. Thus, we are talking about the desire to "catch" the essence behind the phenomena.

All serious philosophers, starting with Plato, tried to reveal the complexity of this relationship, emphasizing its dialectic: "the essence manifests itself, the phenomenon is essential" — a textbook phrase written by V.I. Lenin reading Hegel's "Lectures on the History of Philosophy" at the time [9, v. 29, p. 227]. But each phenomenon acts as a potential representative of the objective world as a whole, in the course of always "partial" research of which many different "subjects" appear. As L.S. Vygotsky noted, "Every concrete phenomenon is completely inexhaustible and infinite in its individual characteristics; one should always look for something in a phenomenon that makes it a scientific fact. This is exactly what distinguishes the observation of a solar eclipse by an astronomer from the observation of the same phenomenon by the simply curious person. The first identifies in the phenomenon what makes it an astronomical fact; the second observes random signs that fall into the field of his attention" [4, v. 1, p. 298]. This thought of L.S. Vygotsky is a development of the methodological position belonging to K. Marx, who noted that "... if the form of manifestation and the essence of things directly coincided, then any science would be superfluous" [14, v. 25, part 2, p. 384].

Let's imagine that a specific person is selected as an empirical object (object of observation). There are many definitions of what a "person" is, each of which captures certain empirically revealed properties of that fragment of objective reality that appeared to us as a person — it can be viewed from different positions in a particular situation: "man", "adult", "buyer", "pedestrian", "athlete", etc. All these listed manifestations are different "objective" versions of an empirical object, the essence of which is being a person. One could recall K. Marx's textbook words from the famous Theses on Feuerbach: "The essence of man is not an abstract inherent in a separate individual. In its reality, it is the totality of all social relations" [14, v. 3, p. 4].

Therefore, it is no coincidence that in one of his most important works written during this period of scientific activity — "The Historical Meaning of the Psychological Crisis", L.S. Vygotsky noted: "In this sense, we can say that every person is to one degree or another a measure of the society or, rather, the class to which he belongs, because it reflects the whole set of social relations" [4, v. 1, p. 403].

We define this essence based on our everyday consciousness. It is on such "substantive" differences that differences of professional views and positions are based. A doctor sees a person from the point of view of his anatomical and physiological structure and psychophysiological state; for a biochemist, a person is a conglomerate of organic processes; for a psychologist, a person is a subject with certain abilities realizing himself in a system of certain social relations. Unfortunately, the fundamental definition of man, presented by L.S. Vygotsky after K. Marx, does not serve as a guide for us in organizing our empirical, in fact, human research: it is enough to critically analyze those questionnaires that psychologists have been using for centuries, studying "abilities", "character", "personality as a whole", its "motivation", etc., — all of them are concepts that act as so—called "umbrella" terms that hide the absence of proper conceptual content. Obviously, this list can be continued. Probably, for aliens from other planets this object is not "set" initially as a "person", and they can "subjectify" it in their own way.

At the same time, each person is one in many manifestations: This is due to the multidimensional nature of the world, which sometimes interferes with everyday life. Science proceeds from the fact that each object is a specific manifestation is an abstraction that takes into account only certain characteristics of a given person.

So, we observe objects, but due to our activity they appear to us as "subjects". And the task of the researcher is to overcome the corresponding ideas and deal with their hidden essence, which appears in these phenomena, in order for a new understanding of the phenomenon of interest to arise, so that this phenomenon in our new understanding may become different.

This is exactly what P.Ya. Galperin formulated, also following K. Marx: "... Science studies, in fact, not phenomena, but what lies behind them and produces them, what constitutes the "essence" of these phenomena — their mechanisms" [5, p. 46].

There is another psychological dimension in the analysis of the problem of phenomenon and essence — the ratio of "appearance" and "reality". It's about how a person perceives objective reality while interacting with it. A large range of examples are provided by the so-called visual illusions. It's for example, the Ponzo illusion with the image of railway tracks, as if going into perspective. It is natural for the viewer that the size of the transverse "sleepers" decreases as they are removed, although theoretically we understand that their size is the same.

If the logic of perspective is violated in the image, then we see that the "farthest" element of the image is evaluated as larger. The effect of such illusions is such that a person does not rely on the results of the so-called "objective" measurement carried out using appropriate means, which, in fact, is also "subjective", since this measurement is carried out by the subject, but on what he "as if" sees, making false conclusions based on his previous experience of evaluating the spatial elements of the "visual" field — within the framework of an accepted lifestyle and cultural context.

It is no coincidence that the remarkable psychophysiologist and ophthalmologist of the 19th century, G. Helmholtz, said that the "mechanism" for the occurrence of such distortions of the visual field is not the peculiarities of our perception, but the so-called "unconscious conclusions".

Thus, the problem of visibility and reality is that different people's ideas about the same thing may not coincide. The objective world exists independently of our awareness of it, but, thanks to our awareness of it, it acts for us as our subjective world. Therefore, it is necessary to remember that our subjective representations are only a picture of our understanding of this objective world achieved today, an understanding not free from errors and illusions of our "perception" of objective reality.

The most striking example of such an illusion is the daily observed by man as a "natural" phenomenon: sunrise and sunset. Here, it would seem, the essence of the process is known to us (the Earth rotates around its axis, and not the Sun rotates around the Earth), but this knowledge does not change our perception of this "astronomical" phenomenon, since psychologically we are dealing with "visibility", not reality. We still "see" that the Sun is "moving" and not the Earth is "spinning". Moreover, as a mass VTSIOM survey of a large audience showed, more than 30% of respondents believe that this is really the case and they seem to believe in it [19].

We interpret the visible world all the time — through a system of stereotypes that have developed in our activities, various attitudes, value systems, etc. — of everything that becomes a subject for psychological research. Here is an example of a similar problem that was solved during an experiment conducted under my supervision [22]. In a chaotic set of spots **(Fig. 1)**, the

Fig. 1

testees were supposed to "see" the cow, but for the vast majority this turns out to be an impossible task. The very process of the experiment consists in presenting images of real cows. After each presentation of another realistic image, the subjects were presented with the first image again. And for a number of subjects, this was enough for them to begin to "see" the image of the cow's head in the first image. Note that this always happened in the form of an "insight" — as an unexpected "appearance" of this head for the subjects themselves. Gradually, after presenting the next realistic images of different cows, the number of subjects who suddenly "saw" the cow in the first image increased.

But for some subjects, such an "appearance" of a cow occurred only as a result of the visual materialization of the contour of the head of this animal in the first figure **(Fig. 2)** — its appearance for some time against the background of spots, which also remained stable after this "materialization" disappeared.

The verification of the experimental results, delayed for several months, showed the stability of the phenomenon that had arisen. In fact, the subjects had a restructuring of the "visible" world: an active process of "discretion" by the subjects of a given image was formed.

This experiment shows that our "visible world" is the result of the formation of certain ideas about the world that arise through our activities in objective reality. We must always take into account that we see the objective world through its image — as a "phenomenon of an object to a subject" — the image of the world [11]. Appearance (as an "objective mental form") and reality never coincide and, by definition, cannot coincide. This statement contains the essence of the methodological position on the difference between absolute and relative truth, which is the "core" of the theory of knowledge, as the basis of which scientific psychology should be considered, since it reveals the psychological patterns of formation and development of joint human activity. In general, the process of **resubjectifation** (reinterpretation), which occurs in such cases, always acts as a creative process of transforming fragments of the mosaic, through which we "see" objective reality, acting for us in the image of the field of our possible action [2], [5].

All of us, always dealing with objective reality, fix the results of our activities in this reality only in the form of its phenomena — conditions and the results of our subject-oriented actions. By revealing the essence hidden in phenomena, we create conditions for the development of our activities in objective reality. The universality of objective reality is hidden behind each fragment of the mosaic of the visible world. In the case we are considering, any something is not just a phenomenon, but also a hidden "essence" behind it, which can become both an image and a representation of the subject about reality. Consequently, we come to the conclusion again that each object of our activity is a "universe" with diverse properties — hence the variety of possible phenomena of the same essence. A paradoxical problem arises in relation to scientific research: how can we investigate "something", the essence of which has yet to be revealed in the course of its research, but it is given to us only in the form of a "subject", the result of our activity with an object that represents this "elusive something", and not the subject of research? It is possible to answer this not at all rhetorical question only by taking a certain methodological position.

Fig. 2

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