

## SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

### *Theory and Philosophy of Psychology*

#### **T.N. Ushakova. Semantics of Speech: Name, Word, Utterance**

The term, semantics, stands here for the psychological processes of understanding, or «making sense of», different aspects of the world, including language. The author traces key moments of semantic development in a child: from the first appearance in a baby to the emergence of naming, or the phenomenon of giving names to objects. The author considers both psychological and psychophysiological content of word semantics and suggests an original view of how thoughts are articulated through words.

### *Theoretical and Empirical Research*

#### **O.A. Konopkin. Conscious Self-Control: the Structure/Function and Content Aspects**

The author analyses two main aspects of regulatory processes that determine their perfection, the stage of development and characteristics of performance. The former, «structural-and-functional aspect», relates to the inner mechanisms of conscious voluntary self-control. The latter, to deal with so-called psychological content, relates to psychological means with which the individual realises the functional structure of control. The second aspect has advantages: it enlarges and deepens the image of control processes, both cognitive and pragmatic; it shows the role of emotions, motivations and personality; it demonstrates the functional unity of the mind in the conscious self-control processes. The live process of psychological control exists as a basic unity

of both structure (form) and content, each of which alone is insufficient.

#### ***Special Theme of the Issue. In Search of Philosophical Reference Points***

#### **V.M. Allakhverdov. Splendour and Misery of Empirical Psychology: Towards a Methodological Manifesto of Petersburgian Psychologists**

The author argues against two statements typical of contemporary psychology: first, that the scientist's activity is always subjective and that science therefore cannot pursue truth; second, that empirical data are objective and do not depend on the person. Although science is a subjective activity, its ambition is to describe reality adequately. Experience tells us that science has both subjective and objective elements. Yet we cannot allow contradictions in science; «anything does not go». If two conceptions are based on two mutually contradictory presuppositions, they cannot be equally true. Sometimes behaviourism, psychoanalysis and cognitivism are described as various descriptions of the same phenomena. The author disagrees with it and argues that only one approach can be correct. The more we can see what is subjective in the text, the better we understand and assess it. Psychologists should report about their preliminary expectations and how much the results of their research match the latter. The author believes that any data claim is an interpretation and as such should be double-checked.

#### **A.I. Vatulin. A Turning Movement**

The author considers «methodological anarchism», or theoretical pluralism,

a hot topic of today's discussions in Russian psychology. What are we to do if different conceptions exclude or ignore each other? The author believes that polyphony is not acceptable: otherwise, psychology becomes a manipulative device in pursuit of political or commercial aims. To be a science, psychology requires a certain methodological apparatus shared by the entire psychological community. As a remedy, the author presents some recent approaches, including V.P. Bransky's theory. The article may be of interest for psychology teachers and everyone concerned with what the author calls chaos in contemporary psychology.

**M.V. Ivanov. An Ode to the Demythologised Experiment**

By clarifying methodological principles, Allakhverdov's article helps find a way out of the crisis in psychology. The author argues that establishing rules for making explicit objective and subjective elements in scientific research is the most important.

**A.S. Karmin. Methodological Reflection Without an Exclamation Mark**

The author discusses the paper by Allakhverdov, «Reflection on the science of psychology with an exclamation mark». He argues against what he calls a «post-modernist» rejection of rationality, objectivity, and truth in scientific knowledge. Psychologists should move away from theoretical pluralism towards constructing a methodological foundation for their science.

**A.D. Nasledov. Splendour and Misery of Theoretical Psychology: Empirical Validity of Scientific Facts**

The author denies that either a search for empirical proof of theoretical state-

ments or relations between fact and theory are main problems of contemporary psychology. He believes that our main concern should be with the criteria of validity of empirical facts. Psychological fact is a product of empirical and statistical generalisations, the validity of which should be considered at the first place. The author believes that Russian psychology is not sufficiently sensitive to incorrect generalisations. As a result, empirical facts are not taken for an argument, and any theoretical discussion becomes meaningless.

**V.F. Petrenko. What Is Truth? Our Response to the Lord Chamberlain**

The author discusses psychology's methodology and subject matter. Regarding the category of truth in psychology, he argues in support of constructivism.

**A.N. Poddiakov and J. Valsiner. How to Get out of the Misery without Loosing Splendour**

Commenting on Allakhverdov's article, the authors introduce the term, «methodological cycle», which unites theoretical and empirical, deductive and inductive knowledge. Making a distinction between empirical and pseudo-empirical science, the authors discuss possibility of comprehensive non-contradictory empirical descriptions and theoretical interpretations, uses of qualitative and quantitative methods in psychological research, and reflection of these problems in teaching.

**E.A. Sergienko. A Science Needs Methodological Laws**

The author sympathetically comments on the paper by Allakhverdov. She argues against the principle of «methodological liberalism» claiming that metho-

dology is a core element of science indispensable for its theory and practice.

**T.V. Chernigovskaia. An Inevitable Present**

The article is an attempt to find one's bearings in an empirical science under a crisis. The author argues for an approach that unites the natural sciences and the humanities. The same questions that puzzle the cognitive science, neurophysiology, linguistics, anthropology and even quantum physics (the latter includes the observer as a relevant and non-reducible participant) challenge psychology. It has to be multidisciplinary, and that brings the problems of combining different kinds of knowledge. In our species, which is called *Homo Loquens*, language is the best way to counteract the chaos brought by the senses. The author believes that objectivity is the matter of description.

**Y.M. Shilkov. Towards a Methodology of Psychological Knowledge**

The author applies contemporary philosophy of science to psychological knowledge. Differentiating between classical and contemporary science, he discusses three questions: 1) what are the conditions of establishing a psychological fact? 2) What is the nature of objectivity and conditions of possibility of psychological research? 3) What is truth in psychological knowledge? The author pays special attention to the nature of psychological experiment.

**A.V. Yurevich. Militant Romanticism**

Responding to Allakhverdov's article in this volume, the author calls him a «romantic psychologist». «Romantic psychologists» [the term was introduced by A.R. Luria] are deeply concerned with the «eternal» philosophical or methodo-

logical issues. Yet the author finds discrepancies in the article in question: contradictory claims, imperatives that are too hard, and confusion between postmodernism, phenomenology, irrationality and anti-scientism.

**V.M. Allakhverdov. A Sad Optimistic View on Psychological Science: What My Colleagues Think of Psychological Knowledge**

The article sums up the discussion. The author emphasises that even those participants, who are willing to sign the manifesto in question, allow more or less explicit empiricist claims. Psychologists face a choice: either to be a happy epistemological pessimist satisfied with the status quo (that is, accepting that psychology is an odd science lacking unity) or to remain optimistic hoping for the better (and accepting that psychology is in yet another crisis). Preferring the former position - epistemological optimism - the author invites his colleagues to continue with the manifesto.

*Work in Progress*

**S.S. Belova. Logic and Intuitive Basis of the First Impression of the Child's Intelligence**

The article describes results of an experimental research. In this research, experimental subjects were shown a short video of a child and asked to give their opinion of the child's intelligence. The experimenter wanted to know how precise such an evaluation can be, which basis it is given on, which behavioural features are used, and how the verbal description of the child's behaviour influences the outcome of evaluation. The intelligence was measured with J. Raven's Standard Progressive Test.