

Vladimir V. Repkin and Fernando González Rey: convergences and divergences regarding the subject of study and subject who learns concepts¹

Vladimir V. Repkin e Fernando González Rey:
aproximações e distanciamentos a respeito das concepções de sujeito
do estudo e de sujeito que aprende

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the “subject of study” and the “subject who learns” concepts, developed within Historical-Cultural Psychology by Ukrainian Vladimir V. Repkin and Cuban Fernando González Rey, respectively. The analysis focuses on the converging and diverging points between these two concepts. The “subject of study” is situated within the Kharkiv variant of the Theory of Developmental Collective Learning, which focuses on psychic development, as well as on new formations that emerge through development and which are constituent of the study activity. In contrast, the “subject who learns” emerges within the Theory of Subjectivity, which examines subjectivity from its own ontological perspective. This frame of reference focuses on the moment in which the learner becomes capable of generating new creative options during the learning process. This paper seeks to demonstrate that, despite their differences, both conceptions of the subject are complimentary and contribute to the formulation of a new concept: the subject who learns through studying.

Keywords: Learning. Collective Developmental Learning Theory. Theory of Subjectivity. Vladimir V. Repkin. Fernando González Rey. Study Subject. Subject who Learns.

RESUMO

O presente artigo aborda as concepções de “sujeito do estudo” e “sujeito que aprende”, elaboradas no âmbito da Psicologia Histórico-Cultural pelo ucraniano Vladimir V. Repkin e pelo cubano Fernando González Rey, respectivamente. O foco da análise está nas aproximações e distanciamentos entre essas concepções. O conceito de “sujeito do estudo” insere-se no contexto da variante kharkiviana da Teoria da Aprendizagem Coletiva Desenvolvimental. Ele se concentra no desenvolvimento psíquico e, ao mesmo tempo, representa a visão de uma neoformação que se desenvolve e que, por sua vez, é formadora da atividade de estudo. Já o conceito de “sujeito que aprende” emerge no interior da Teoria da Subjetividade, cujo objeto de estudo é a subjetividade a partir de uma perspectiva ontológica própria. Essa concepção expressa o momento em que o aprendiz é capaz de gerar novas opções criativas no processo de aprendizagem. O texto busca demonstrar que ambas as concepções, apesar de suas diferenças, podem se complementar, possibilitando a formulação de uma nova noção: o sujeito que aprende estudando.

Palavras-chave: Aprendizagem. Aprendizagem Coletiva Desenvolvimental. Subjetividade. Vladimir V. Repkin. Fernando González Rey. Sujeito do estudo. Sujeito que aprende.

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1 Introdução

The books “Развивающее обучение: теория и практика [Collective Developmental Learning: theory and practice], by Vladimir V. Repkin (1927-2022) and “Epistemología cualitativa y subjetividad” [Qualitative epistemology and subjectivity] by Fernando González Rey (1949-2019), were published simultaneously, but in different continents, in 1997. Both discussed, around the same time, the journey and fundamental premises of two of the most relevant variants of Historical-Cultural Psychology and, what is even more surprising, the two angles through which this framework conceived the human constitution, that is, from the psychic and the subjective point of view.

The first of these angles – the psychic – was hegemonic in Soviet psychology up until the second half of the 1970s and focused on the development processes of new formations that form the basis of human constitution. One of its clearest and most consistent developments was the Collective Developmental Learning Theory, which emerged in the second half of the 1950s with the specific goal of experimentally testing the formation process of the psychic functions predominant at the primary school age in the classroom. Within this context, the work of Vladimir V. Repkin is emblematic of this framework.

The second represented, in turn, a variant that emerged in the second half of the 1990s and that focused on the study of subjectivity, understood as “a specifically human phenomenon, inseparable from culture, developing within it and, in turn, representing the the development process of culture itself” (GONZÁLEZ REY; MITJÁNS MARTÍNEZ, 2017b, p. 4, our translation).

The Theory of Subjectivity, which aforementioned book by González Rey originated, engenders this new understanding of human functioning within culture, as well as the study of human psychological functioning considering new qualitative units, as a result of “the integration between symbolic-emotional units that specify human experiences [...] defined by us as subjective senses” (GONZÁLEZ REY; MITJÁNS MARTÍNEZ, 2017b, p. 4, our translation).

The psychology of psychic development, developed by Lev. S. Vygotsky, Alexei N. Leontiev and Daniil B. Elkonin, did not ignore the subjective,⁴ but approached it in the traditional fragmented fashion, without a clear ontological definition. These authors understood subjectivity as part of development, which is expressed through two distinct dimensions: the cognitive or intellectual and the affective (PUENTES, 2022b; PUENTES; MITJÁNS MARTÍNEZ, 2023).

When addressing the relationship between these two dimensions — cognitive and affective —all of them did so in a similar way, that is, considering the unity between these distinct dimensions, but without realizing, firstly, that the dimensions not only are united, but also integrated as the result of a relation of reciprocity, rather than a cause and effect one; secondly, that this integration leads to the origin, from a psychological point of view, of new qualitative units; and, thirdly, that these processes occur within the framework of culture, which is a source and also as a product of subjectivity⁵ (GONZÁLEZ REY; MITJÁNS MARTÍNEZ, 2017a).

Fernando González Rey (GONZÁLEZ REY; MITJÁNS MARTÍNEZ, 2017b), unlike the aforementioned authors, considered the existence of two lines in human development: (1) the psychic and (2) the subjective. According to his point of view, the first acts as a prerequisite and condition for subjective development in early ages, but does not, however, determine it; while the second, does not refer to the development process of specific new formations (emotions, feelings, needs, desires, etc.), but rather, represents the emergence of subjective configurations capable of generating new functions and subjective processes in various areas of the individual's life.

The “subject” has occupied a relevant but also quite distinct role within these two ways of comprehending development. Furthermore, the manner in

⁴ The subjective in the work of L. S. Vygotsky, A. N. Leontiev, D. B. Elkonin and V. V. Davidov is defined in a traditional manner, unlike the specific ontological definition of subjectivity from the point of view of González Rey's theory (cf. PUENTES, 2022b; PUENTES; MITJÁNS MARTÍNEZ, 2023).

⁵ It is important to highlight that there conceptual differences between the Unity composed by cognition and affect as proposed by Lev. S. Vigotski and the symbolic-emotional unity establishes by González Rey.

which the concept is defined has changed, as definitions have undergone a long process of theoretical improvement, based on years of experimental and constructive-interpretative research⁶, respectively.

This article addresses, precisely, the divergence and convergences that exist between the concept of subject as developed by Vladimir V. Repkin and Fernando González Rey in relation to the person who studies and learns, based on the analysis of two relevant aspects: 1) the origin and development of research on the “subject”; 2) the “subject of study” and “subject who learns” concepts.

Furthermore, the text reiterates the idea that, more than convergent and divergent, these two concepts are complementary to each other and can be integrated into a new unit, giving rise to another psychological quality: the subject who learns by studying, when, from a didactic point of view, the processes of human development are adequately favored and stimulated - aspects that will be further discussed in the final considerations.

The study analyzed the authors' work, the publications generated as a result of theoretical and practical research carried out, both in the former Soviet Union and in Cuba and Brazil, based on the premises defended by these two authors (PUENTES, 2022a, b, 2023a, b; REKINA, 2010, 2023a, b; MITJÁNS MARTÍNEZ, 2022; ALMEIDA, 2022; ROSSATO, 2022), as well as the biographical data of both, informed by each one's life trajectory and the social and family environment in which their subjective development took place, as well as each one's unique scientific perspective (PUENTES; AMORIM; CARDOSO, 2021; REPKINA, 2023b; MITJÁNS MARTÍNEZ, 2022; GOULART; MITJÁNS MÁRTÍNEZ, 2023; GOULART; GONZALEZ REY, 2023).

2 Convergences and divergences regarding the “subject” concept

Vladimir V. Repkin has a succinct theoretical body of work; however, he compensates for this disadvantage with a vast production in the field of Russian language learning methodology. Access to his main ideas in the West is still very

⁶ The constructive-interpretative methodology conceives research as theoretical creation and production (GONZÁLEZ REY; MITJÁNS MARTÍNEZ, 2017a).

recent⁷. In Brazil, specifically, his work began to circulate just a decade ago, in 2014, and only after 2018 did it receive a boost due to Gepedi's⁸ work. Fernando González Rey, on the other hand, is the author of a vast body of work published in Spanish, Portuguese, French and English. In Cuba, his country of origin, his work became widely known as of the beginning of the 1980s.⁹

Both psychologists share something in common: an interest in the study of human motivation, personality and the subject, although they approached these interests through different paths and conceptions within the broader framework of Historical-Cultural Psychology. These similarities and differences will now be addressed.

2.1 The origin and development of research on the “subject”

The “subject” was an object of study throughout the scientific investigations of these two authors; their approach, however, became more intense and systematic, from the 1990s onwards. The concept as formulated by both represented, as previously stated, a theoretical effort to conceptualize the concept of “subject” within psychological science, and more specifically, within Historical-Cultural Psychology, which had given little relevance to the topic and approached it in a manner diametrically opposed to the way in which Vladimir V. Repkin and Fernando González Rey went on to do.

Vladimir V. Repkin was not only one of the first to consider the subject of study an object of research, but also to take on the endeavor of developing the concept as a fundamental goal. The theoretical model developed by him over the last twenty years (REPkin; REPkinA, 1997, 2019) makes this choice explicitly clear. For Repkin, the development of theoretical thinking was not, and could not

⁷ It was only at the beginning of the 21st century that it became more expressive with the publication of two articles in English: “Developmental Teaching and Learning Activity” (Russian original: Razvivaiushchee obuchenie i uchebnaia deiatel'nost') and “From the History of Research into the Problems of Developmental Teaching in Kharkov” (REPkin, 2003a, p. 10-33; REPkin, 2003b, p. 77-96).

⁸ Study and Research Group on Developmental Didactics and Teacher Professionalization (Gepedi).

⁹ However, his work was censored after the second half of the 1990s, due to his migration to Brazil. Today, his work, although still under the effect of censorship, is more accessible.

be, the goal and direct result of collective learning¹⁰, as was defended by Davidov (1986). On the contrary, he focused on how children develop through being the subject of study, that is, they develop through the activity of thinking in order to solve his problems. In fact, the inspiration comes from Lev S. Vygotsky, for whom “collective learning [...] is the form through which the development of the subject takes place” (cf. REPKIN, 1999, p. 12).

Vladimir V. Repkin's research on the subject of study can be divided into two periods: (1) studies that lead up to the concept of subject of study (1975-1990); (2) the subject of study activity (1990-2021). The article entitled “Понятие учебной деятельности” [The concept of study activity] (REPKIN, [1976]2021) is the first in which the author bases himself on the premise “that the person is not only an object, but also the **subject of learning and education**” (REPKIN, [1976]2021, p. 311, our emphasis). However, the subject as a new formation would not be approached from a conceptual point of view during this period.

The lectures given by Vladimir V. Repkin between 1990 and 1992 mark the origin of this new focus in his theoretical line of work. Since then, the subject of study has not only been repeatedly researched, but has also gradually been considered the main objective of Collective Developmental Learning within the Kharkiv Group in Ukraine. The main theses on the topic can be found throughout various lecture materials and articles, most of which have remained unpublished to this day (cf. REPKIN, 1992; 1997a, b, c, 1999; REPKINA, 1993; REPKIN; REPKINA, 2012 [2018] 2023a, 2019, 2023b).

In turn, the beginning of Fernando González Rey's studies on the subject can be traced back to the second half of the 1990s. As with Vladimir V. Repkin, the process of developing the concept can be divided into two periods: (1) studies that lead up to the concept of subject (1975-1996); (2) the

¹⁰ According to Davidov (1996, p. 252, our translation and emphasis), “**collective learning** refers to the interaction between students and the teacher, the relationship between individual learning and the teacher’s professional effort. If the latter is interpreted through the concept of ‘activity’, then collective learning can be characterized as the relationship between study activity and pedagogical activity”.

subject (1997-2019). It is during the second period that the concept of subject who learns emerges. According to Almeida (2022, p. 105), in the first period “...the concept of subject is not yet elaborated as a theoretical category.” However, in the second, the author advances in the development of the subject concept, which goes on to be considered one of the central categories of his Theory of Subjectivity, alongside those of subjectivity — individual and social —, subjective sense and subjective configuration. Just as was the case in Vladimir v. Repkin’s work, Fernando González Rey’s category of subject was neither static nor immutable.

In the period marked by the origin, development and consolidation of the Theory of Subjectivity, which lasted from 1997 to 2019, throughout González Rey’s work (1997, 2003, 2004, 2006, 2017), the development of the conceptualization of the subject is referenced. In these works, the subject is more central than in Vladimir V. Repkin’s work, and is not restricted, as in the latter, to the aspects involved in school learning. As one of the central categories of his theory, the subject was initially used to refer to the individual or social group that, in its active, conscious, intentional and emotional condition, is capable of acting in the different contexts of life, in accordance with the subjective configurations previously constituted and the subjective configuration generated through action, which is informed by the of the action itself, as much as by the context in which the action takes place (GONZÁLEZ REY, 2003).

This is a category whose creation lies in the need to explain how actions, whether that of groups or individuals, do not depend solely and directly on what was previously constituted, but also on what is subjectively produced in the context of these actions. In alignment with this definition of the subject, the author developed the concept of the "subject who learns" (GONZÁLEZ REY, 2006). The constitution of the subjective dimension of learning involved in the singular action of the subject who learns is brought to the foreground. Furthermore, what is relevant for this article is that learning is comprehended as a process that mobilizes development when it occurs in certain circumstances. It

is also important to emphasize that the "subject who learns" concept will go on to appear again in subsequent publications¹¹.

2.2 The “subject of study” and the “subject who learns” concepts.

In his conceptualization, Vladimir V. Repkin does not allot a different role to the “subject of study” than the one given by Fernando González Rey to the “subject who learns” (cf. PUENTES, 2019a). What essentially differentiates both concepts, according to our understanding, is the way each author understands the origin and development of the subject, that is, its constitution, as well as the moment and concrete conditions of its emergence.

Vladimir V. Repkin considered the “subject of study” as the main new formation of the initial years of elementary school. For him, it is formed through the study activity, alongside the development of three other new formations: meaningful reflection, analysis and planning. His concept underwent a long process of experimental development, which involved at least two very notable stages within the second previously mentioned period: (1) the “subject of desire and of the study activity” (1990-1996) and (2) the “subject of goals and study activity” (1997-2021).

The main theses on the “subject of desire and of the study activity” are contained in the materials prepared by Vladimir V. Repkin for the lectures he gave in 1992. In the first definition, two essential aspects stand out: on the one hand, “the need for self-transformation” that the student experiences during the study activity and, on the other, the ability “to satisfy it through collective learning”. Thus, while it preserves Elkonin’s (1967[2021]) central thesis on the self-transformable subject, the predominant view established by Davidov (1972) – that the subject merely incorporates the actions that guarantee the solution of the study task; that is, that the subject simply

¹¹ It is present, for example, in “A configuração subjetiva dos processos psíquicos: avançando na compreensão da aprendizagem como produção subjetiva” [The subjective configuration of psychic processes: advancing the understanding of learning as subjective production] (GONZÁLEZ REY, 2012) and the book “Psicologia, educação e aprendizagem escolar” [Psychology, education and school learning] (MITJÁNS MARTÍNEZ; GONZÁLEZ REY, 2017). In the latter, the author uses the term “subject who learns”, introduced in 2006, and also “subject of the learning process” and “learning subject”.

expresses their capacity for self-transformation - is challenged. Defending quite the opposite, Repkin (1992 apud REPKINA, 1993, p. 6, translation and emphasis added) stated:

But who, after all, is the subject of the study activity? This type of **subject** implies having the **need for self-transformation** and **being able** to satisfy it through collective learning, that is, **to want, to like and to being able to learn**.

With this definition, the “subject of study” incorporated, along with the ability to change, the need and desire to do so. Around the same period, when addressing this issue once again, Vladimir V. Repkin emphasized the role of desire. In fact, he even wondered whether the process of forming this quality should not be an essential goal of collective learning aimed at psychic development and, therefore, an important aspect of the content of collective developmental learning (REPKIN, 1999).

However, a few years later, Repkin (1997a) significantly changed the “subject of study” concept to the point that it became characterized by the child’s ability to establish (determine, formulate) new study tasks and find ways to solve them. Over the next three decades, Repkin (1997a; REPKIN; NEKRASOVA, 2018; REPKIN; REPKINA, 2023a, b) maintained this concept without significant modifications, revisiting it repeatedly and from different perspectives in several publications. In this second approach to the “subject of study” concept, one observes the replacement of the attributes needs and desires with the ability to autonomously establish the objectives of one’s actions, formulate and redefine study tasks, and plan the next stages of the activity.

The goal [of Developmental Collective Learning] began to be understood no longer as the development of the student’s activity, but as the **development of the student as a subject of the study activity**, that is, **an individual capable of establishing new study tasks and finding ways to solve them** (REPKIN; REPKINA, 1997, s/d, translation and emphasis ours).

Future research should further develop the category of “goal-setting” from Vladimir V. Repkin’s perspective. Still, one thing is certain: needs, motives, and desires were removed from the concept’s definition, but remained present at the core of his “subject of study” concept.

During the second stage, the subject concept retains some of the content present in the first stage. The change is in emphasis: instead of focusing on the formation of desire – such as the motives for studying as one of the goals of developmental learning –, the emphasis now falls upon the formation of the ability to set goals or study tasks, which is comprehended as a specific new formation. In Vladimir V. Repkin's understanding of personality, the student's system of motives is a structural element, that is, it is an essential aspect of the subject of collective learning's self-transformative nature.

The two stages that comprise the development process of the “subject of study” concept were associated with a gradual and continuous elucidation of the definition. Vladimir V. Repkin shifted from personality to the subject of study, from the subject of desires and capabilities to the subject of goals and capabilities, culminating in a clearer understanding of the psychological structure explored. Thus, instead of omitting or replacing needs and desires, Repkin incorporated them into the concept of “goal-setting” as part of the components that compose this psychological structure.

It is important to note that the previously mentioned elements (needs, desires, goal-setting) are a part of the psychological aspect of the subject of the study activity proposed by Repkin. According to him, the psychological aspect includes needs (desires, motives), appropriate capabilities, consciousness, the ability to determine the goals for the upcoming activity, reason, will and freedom (REPkin, 1997a).

The subject concept also underwent a complex process of theoretical development and refinement, going on to become one of the Theory of Subjectivity's central categories. In the book “Subjetividade: teoria, epistemologia e método” [Subjectivity: theory, epistemology and method] (2017), Fernando González Rey introduced the definition of “agent” so as to differentiate it from “subject”. However, unlike Vladimir V. Repkin's “subject of study” concept, which went through two distinct phases, Fernando González Rey's “subject who learns” concept has not undergone significant changes since its origin in 2006. On the

contrary, it has undergone gradual refinement and progressive concretization, leading to greater conceptual accuracy regarding its content.

The “subject who learns” concept, in contrast with “study subject” concept, which emerged to refer to the child who acts within a specific type of activity, was conceived to highlight how subjectivity participates in learning as a system. In this sense, González Rey (2012, p. 35, emphasis added) stated:

The notion of **the subject who learns** aims to shine light onto all the subjective processes that constitute the different subjective configurations that are organized in the complex context of school life and that can be associated with very different events and relationships within the school, such as the position of the young person within the broader group of other young people, their relationship with the teacher, what the different subjects represent to them, etc.

The “subject who learns” derives from the broader “subject” concept. It seeks to address a specific manifestation of the child involved in a given process, as is the case with school learning. By conceptualizing it as the person who acts in a certain way, considering their constitutive complexity, Fernando González Rey adopts a similar stance as most historical-cultural psychologists, such as D. B. Elkonin and V. V. Davidov. In doing so, he distances himself significantly from Vladimir V. Repkin, for whom one of the most important properties of a person who acts as a subject is his ability, in addition to actively involving himself in the task of study, to set it as a personal goal.

González Rey (2006) defines the “subject who learns” by deriving from and interpreting the subject concept present in his publications over a period of ten years, that is, between 1997 and 2017. In “Epistemología cualitativa y subjetividad” [Qualitative epistemology and subjectivity] (1997), the active and intentional character of the subject as an individual is already evident (ALMEIDA, 2022; ROSSATO, 2022). Additionally, a new aspect is incorporated when he refers to the role of emotions in the intentionality of the acting subject. In “Sujeito e subjetividade: uma aproximação histórico-cultural” [Subject and subjectivity: a cultural-historical approach] (2003), he

defines the person as a subject of emotion, going “beyond the previous propositions that defined the person as a conscious, intentional and interactive individual” (ALMEIDA, 2022, p. 106). In “O social na psicologia e a psicologia social: a emergência do sujeito” [The social in psychology and social psychology: the emergence of the subject] (2004), according to Almeida (2022), González Rey provides greater conceptual precision to the subject category, emphasizing its generative character, as it encompasses the generation of alternative paths of subjectivation. In “Subjetividade: teoria, epistemologia e método” [Subjectivity: theory, epistemology and method] (2017), the author proposes, in collaboration with Albertina Mitjáns Martínez, the most complete and complex version of the conceptualization of the subject, defined as

one who creates his own subjectivation path, who transcends the normative social space within which his experiences take place, exercising creative options in the course of them, which may or may not be expressed through action (GONZÁLEZ REY; MITJÁNS MARTÍNEZ, 2017a, p. 73).

The precision conferred, in this last publication, to the “subject” concept implied a conceptualization of the “agent” concept, which refers to “the individual or social group situated in the unfolding of events in the current field of their experiences; a person or group that makes daily decisions, thinks, likes or dislikes what happens to them, which, in fact, grants them active participation in the course of events” (GONZÁLEZ REY; MITJÁNS MARTÍNEZ, 2017a, p. 73). Thus, the “agent” category, formulated in 2017, is more fitting with the ways in which “subject” was used in previous works.

In “O sujeito que aprende: desafios do desenvolvimento do tema da aprendizagem na psicologia e na prática pedagógica” [The learning subject: challenges in developing the theme of learning in psychology and pedagogical practice], there is no specific moment in which González Rey (2006) explicitly conceptualizes the “subject who learns”. When referring to this specific work, Almeida (2022) points out that the author discusses attributes of the concept

throughout the concept. Consequentially, it is possible to extract a definition from the text. In our understanding, Fernando González Rey considers the “subject who learns” as the child or student who, during their learning process, becomes capable of producing new subjective senses that favor the learning process itself. In this regard, he wrote:

To reclaim the **subject who learns** implies integrating subjectivity as an important aspect of this process, since the subject learns as a system and not solely through intellect. **The subjective sense**, in the way we’ve defined this category, **is a symbolic-emotional system in constant development**, in which each of these aspects is evoked reciprocally, without one being the cause of the other, provoking constant and unpredictable developments that lead to new subjective sense configurations (GONZÁLEZ REY, 2006, p. 33-34, our emphasis).

The author then goes on to state that not every student becomes the subject of their own learning, but rather those who are capable of developing a different script in relation to what they learn and of take a critical and reflective stance in relation to learning. On this matter, he wrote: “This stance is only possible to the extent that they are able to **generate subjective senses** in relation to what they learn” (GONZÁLEZ REY, 2006, p. 40). Here, once again, the idea of the emergence of the subject being linked to the ability to generate subjective senses in relation to what they learn is made clear.

We can infer that the “subject who learns” is the student who produces ideas that questions that which is taught, who invents, who imagines, who reflects, who understands, who reasons and becomes actively involved in learning and formulates hypotheses, that is, the student “who learns as a system, not just through intellect” (GONZÁLEZ REY, 2006, p. 33). However, it is important to underscore, in light of Fernando González Rey’s most recent conceptualization of the subject (GONZÁLEZ REY; MITJÁNS MARTÍNEZ, 2017a, p. 73), that what characterizes the “subject who learns” is not only the production of subjective senses, or the development of differentiated scripts in relation to what is learned, or a critical and reflective stance in relation to what is learned, nor even the dialectical

integration of these three aspects. These aspects are present, but their interrelation does not yet fully characterize the subject. The student, as an agent, also produces subjective senses throughout the learning process based on the way they experience this process. In addition, the student follows unique paths in their learning process and even assumes reflective and active stances throughout this process. In this sense, at least two other qualities are paramount in the updated definition of the “subject who learns”: first, the ability to transcend the normative space of the learning process; second, the ability to exercise creative options in this process (aspects that are present in the subject concept developed in 2017).

With no intention of proposing a new definition, we could argue, based on the integration of the definitions present in 2006 and 2017, that the “subject who learns” is the student who, when learning, creates new subjectivation paths through the production of subjective senses that lead to the transcendence of the normative learning space and the exercise of creative options and, in doing so, enhances, from a qualitative point of view, the learning process itself. The four elements: new subjectivation paths as a result of the subjective senses produced, the transcendence of the normative learning space, the exercise of creative options and the enhancement of one’s own capacity to learn, is what characterizes the “subject who learns”.

It is important to emphasize that, in “Psicologia, educação e aprendizagem escolar” [Psychology, education and school learning] (MITJÁNS MARTÍNEZ; GONZÁLEZ REY, 2017a, p. 68), yet another characteristic of the “subject who learns” is featured: their emotional implication in the learning process. What differentiates this concept, in comparison to Vladimir V. Repkin's “subject of study” concept - whose focus is on the analysis of the functioning of intellectual operations -, is the understanding that learning is a subjective configuration, in which “the processes traditionally defined as psychic are constituted as subjective processes” (GONZÁLEZ REY; MITJÁNS MARTÍNEZ, 2017a), in which imagination, emotions and intellectual operations are integrated into a new functional unit.

3. Conclusions

We acknowledge that the exploration of the topic of the subject in this article was particularly complex and challenging for multiple reasons. It is important to emphasize, however, that there were no significant precedents in Brazilian psychology and didactics on this specific issue. In this sense, we underscore the need for a systematic approach of this theme within the scope of research groups dedicated to the study of collective learning and human development.

Vladimir V. Repkin and Fernando González Rey represent two distinct lines in Cultural-Historical Psychology, each developing fundamental aspects of Vygotsky's work. Repkin devoted himself to the in-depth and original study of two Vygotskian psychological systems - consciousness and development - while González Rey concentrated on the third system that Vygotsky only went as far as outlining: subjectivity.

Both theorists made paradigmatic contributions in their respective fields: Repkin revolutionized the Theory of Developmental Collective Learning, developing a unique theoretical model within the Kharkiv Group that was widely adopted in the former Soviet Union. At the same time, González Rey achieved the remarkable feat of laying the foundations and developing a Theory of Subjectivity from a Historical-Cultural perspective in the relatively short period of two decades.

Vladimir V. Repkin made significant progress in defining the "subject of study", analyzing its psychological content, structure, stages of development and fundamental characteristics, in addition to developing research methodologies and diagnostic instruments with a predominant focus on the cognitive dimension and the development of motivation (especially cognitive interests), but without systematically addressing emotions or the interrelationship between the intellectual and subjective dimensions of psychic development. In contrast, Fernando González Rey investigated the broader subject concept - from which the "subject who learns" derives - offering a detailed characterization of this concept from a subjective

perspective that places emotions as a central and permanent element in its definition, thus contributing to the development of the Theory of Subjectivity from a historical-cultural perspective.

Both authors were pioneers in the field of psychology, as they introduced the idea of a subject who is generative in nature - Vladimir V. Repkin through the "subject of the study activity" concept and Fernando González Rey through the broader "subject" concept, understood as a producer of subjective senses, which emphasized its active, intentional and transgressive character, thus overcoming deterministic conceptions and approaches that omitted the generative aspect of the subject condition in human action. The concepts of "subject of study" (Repkin) and "subject who learns" (González Rey) quickly consolidated themselves as fundamental references: the first for the research of psychic development within the framework of the Elkonin-Davidov-Repkin psychological-didactic system, and the second for the analysis of subjective processes in educational contexts. As both theorists argued, it was impossible to adequately study psychic or subjective development without considering the active condition of the subject present in the transformative action it is capable of.

Vladimir V. Repkin and Fernando González Rey developed distinct but complementary conceptions of the subject of learning: while Repkin approached it from the perspective of psychic development through collective study activity, González Rey focused on its subjective dimension. Despite these differences in focus, both conceptions share fundamental attributes - the generative, active, conscious, intentional, creative, reflective and especially transgressive character. This transgression is present in both the "subject of study", who must "show determination when making decisions contrary to generally accepted norms and rules" (REPkin; REPkina, 2019, p. 71), and in the "subject who learns", characterized by their ability to "transcend the normative social space within which their experiences take place" (GONZÁLEZ REY; MITJÁNS MARTÍNEZ, 2017a, p. 73). Hence demonstrating how the creative rupture with established norms constitutes an essential

element in both theories, even if analyzed from different angles - the cognitive-operational in Repkin and the symbolic-affective in González Rey.

It is paramount to recognize that the theories of Developmental Collective Learning and Subjectivity, far from being exclusive, actually complement each other dialectically: while the first focuses on the systematic organization of collective learning processes centering the psychic development of children in educational situations, the second is dedicated to the analysis of the complex processes of human functioning in cultural settings, in which the inseparable unity between the symbolic and the emotional is at its very core - learning being one of these processes. This complementarity shines light on how the cognitive-operational dimensions (privileged by Repkin) and subjective-affective dimensions (explored by González Rey) represent equally vital, yet distinct, facets of human development.

The "subject of study" and "subject who learns" concepts represent, respectively, the different theoretical emphases that consider the participant in the educational process: while the first privileges the cognitive-intellectual aspects of collective learning, the second focuses on the subjective and social dimensions inherent to the act of learning. This apparent dichotomy, however, is overcome by the complementary nature of the approaches, as highlighted by González Rey (2006, p. 37): "the subjective sense is not opposed to the operational aspect of learning, but rather contemplates a quality of learning that had not been considered as intrinsic to learning", thus revealing how these perspectives, rather than being exclusive, offer enriching and mutually complementary perspectives on the educational phenomenon.

In contemporary times, it is imperative to reconsider learning with a focus on the integral development of the human being, capable of articulating - not by mere juxtaposition, but by dialectical synthesis - the psychic and subjective dimensions of development. The investigation of this new conception of learning will enable the theoretical conceptualization of the "subject who learns by studying", understood as one who, by producing subjective senses, (1) constitutes themselves as a person, (2) reconfigures their study activity, (3) transcends

normative social frameworks and (4) generates creative learning alternatives. This subject synthesizes all of these aspects and possesses the following crucial attributes: procedural character, creativity, reflective awareness, emotional dimension, subversive potential, dialogical-relational nature, subjective singularity, comprehensive activity, fictional and inventive capacity, in addition to the competence to self-determine objectives and tasks - qualities that, integrated, radically redefine the traditional parameters of education.

Vladimir V. Repkin y Fernando González Rey:
aproximaciones y distancias en torno a los conceptos de sujeto de
estudio y sujeto que aprende

Resumen

Este artículo aborda los conceptos de “sujeto de estudio” y “sujeto que aprende”, desarrollados en el marco de la Psicología Histórico-Cultural por el ucraniano Vladimir V. Repkin y el cubano Fernando González Rey, respectivamente. El análisis se centra en las aproximaciones y diferencias entre ambas concepciones. El “sujeto de estudio” se inscribe en la variante jarkoviana de la teoría del aprendizaje colectivo desarrollador. Su enfoque está en el desarrollo psíquico y, al mismo tiempo, representa la visión de una nueva formación que no solo se desarrolla, sino que también configura la actividad de estudio. Por su parte, el “sujeto que aprende” emerge dentro de la Teoría de la Subjetividad, cuyo objeto de estudio es la subjetividad desde su propia perspectiva ontológica. Esta concepción representa el momento en que el aprendiz es capaz de generar nuevas opciones creativas en el proceso de aprendizaje. El texto busca demostrar que, pese a sus diferencias, ambas concepciones del sujeto pueden complementarse y dar lugar a una nueva noción: el sujeto que aprende estudiando.

Palabras clave: Aprendizaje. Teoría del aprendizaje colectivo desarrollador. Teoría de la subjetividad. Vladimir V. Repkin. Fernando González Rey. Sujeto de estudio. Sujeto que aprende.

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