

## A Meditation on the Research Methodology in Psychology:

On Researching-subject and Researched-object in Psychological Researches

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Years ago, the author encountered an unexpected incident in which the psychology graduate students appealed an insurmountable difficulty in understanding a paragraph of Merleau-Ponty's "Phenomenology and the Sciences of Man" included in his widely-read book *The Primacy of Perception*. This meditation is, in its nature, 1) an attempt to explicate the meanings of the appealed difficulty, 2) a preparatory study of the paragraph as a text in preparing for teaching a graduate class again in some future and 3) a theoretical study of the paragraph for explicating the relationship between the natural sciences and the human sciences. After having analyzed the meanings of the act of "understanding" a text, and also of the claim that "I understand", the author, as a teacher and a researcher, presents his own interpretation of the paragraph as the teaching material. Psychology students who have been trained in the natural scientific orientation taken-for-grantedly believe that the "psychological law" discovered in the "scientific psychology" are applicable to all humans, including the psychologists and the psychology students themselves. However, when and if the "law" affirms the determination of the psychological processes/activities by the external conditions, then, it is suddenly noticed, the foundation of the "psychological law" becomes unstable and loses its steadfastness and also its believed eternity, because the psychological law itself has been produced evidently by the psychological processes/activities of the psychologists of historically preceding generations under the determination of the dominant external conditions at the particular period of its creation and discovery. The essential distinction is proposed, focusing on the research-object in psychology, between the psychologies that include the researching-subject "I" and the ones that exclude the researching-"I". The implications of the distinction are explicated in relation to the appealed difficulty mentioned above of the graduate students. The ramifications of the distinction are further discussed.