

Perezhivanie in the [Dictionary Of Psychology](#),

by I. A. Meshcheryakov

Perezhivanie is one of the most complex psychological constructs, and as a result, a number different interpretations are compatible. Most understandings of *perezhivanie* emphasize its emotional coloredness, direct representation in the consciousness of subject and its link with events in the subject's personal life. Dilthey gave *Perezhivanie* such a great significance, that he replaced the traditional triad "contemplation – thinking – action" with "*Perezhivanie* – expression – understanding" making *Perezhivanie* the basis of understanding psychology and pedagogy. G. I. Chelpanov took *Perezhivanie* as a very capacious category, covering knowledge, feeling and will. This understanding is close to the English term *experience*, which designates simultaneously переживание and опыт. However, in Russian, the word is more expressive of the emotional-personal content, which presents the synthesis of knowledge-relation. In the same sense S. L. Rubenstein claims: "*Perezhivaniya* become for the person that which proves to be personally significant for them." According to A. N. Leontyev, emotional *perezhivaniya* are manifested as internal signals, by means of which are realized the personal sense of an event. F. E. Vasilyuk understands *perezhivaniya* as the special form of activity, which appears in situations of the impossibility of the subject achieving the leading motives and plans of his life, the wreck of ideals and values, the result of which is the transformation of mental reality, accentuating value "to survive," i. e. to transfer usually painful events, to overcome a heavy feeling or state, to endure, to maintain.

Perezhivanie is one of the key concepts in the theory of L. S. Vygotsky, closely related to other concepts: the social situation of development, the zone of the proximal development, development crises, psychological age. Vygotsky emphasized complex and integral nature *Perezhivanie*, making this concept the connecting link between the internal privacy of the mind and the reality that surrounds it: "A *Perezhivanie* is a unit where, on the one hand, in an indivisible state, the environment is represented, i.e. that which is being experienced – a *perezhivanie* is always related to something which is found outside the person – and on the other hand, what is represented is how I, myself, am experiencing this, i.e., all the personal characteristics and all the environmental characteristics are represented in a *perezhivanie*; everything selected from the environment and all the factors which are related to our personality and are selected from the personality, all the features of its character, its constitutional elements, which are related to the event in question. So, in a *perezhivanie* we are always dealing with an indivisible unity of personal characteristics and situational characteristics, which are represented in the *perezhivanie*" (Vygotsky *Problem of the Environment*).

Perezhivanie was given special attention by Vygotsky in studying the nature and the process of aesthetic creation, intelligible in light of his constant interest in psychology of skill; however, he did not see a fundamental difference between aesthetical and unaesthetic *perezhivanie*, but, on the contrary, emphasized their united nature. Vygotsky identified the problem of development of *perezhivanie* in ontogenesis, which is reflected in the comparison of children's and teenage *perezhivanie* and understanding the essence of ages through the *perezhivanie* which are characteristic for them.

According to the theory of Vygotsky, *perezhivanie* can be approached as any other mental function, which in ontogenesis is developed from the involuntary and direct forms to the highest forms, which have the status of actions or activities. This approach offers possibilities for distinguishing the different genetic forms *perezhivanie*, and also for the search for the cultural-historical means of mastery of *perezhivaniya*.

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(Translated from the Russian by Andy Blunden)