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From psychological- disciplinary knowledge to a transdisciplinary one

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Abstract

The article highlights the relation of congruence and complementarity between disciplinary knowledge and the transdisciplinary one. Without being a new discipline, transdisciplinary emerges from disciplinary research, which in turn is clarified by the transdisciplinary knowledge. First mention of transdisciplinary concept was made in 1970 at the international workshop "L'interdisciplinarité - Problemes d'enseignement et de recherche dans les universités" organized by OCDE in Nisa; the concept was mentioned during the talks among Jean Piaget, Erich Jantsch and André Lichnerowicz. Psychology, as a form of disciplinary knowledge, could benefit from the revitalization and enrichment of its field by approaching a transdisciplinary perspective. This would help achieve a subjective objectivity and an objective subjectivity, by constantly questioning and always check understanding.

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1. Disciplinary knowledge and transdisciplinarity knowledge

Jean Piaget, a Swiss psychologist, philosopher, biologist and logician formulates a first sense of transdisciplinarity, as a superior stage of the interdisciplinary relationships, a stage to imply a total knowledge system without borders established among disciplines (Piaget, 1972). The author had the merit of surprising the necessity of a new form of knowledge. Later on this term was developed and it was given the sense it has today.

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The philosopher and physicist, Basarab Nicolescu defines the transdisciplinarity as something that exists at the same time among disciplines, inside the disciplines and beyond any discipline (Nicolescu 1999). The aim of the transdisciplinarity is the understanding of the present world from the perspective of the knowledge unity.

The words "three" and "trans" best expresses the term transdisciplinarity: „three" means the transgression of „two" and transdisciplinarity means the transgression of duality which opposes the binary couples such as subject – object, simplicity – complexity, etc.

Disciplinary knowledge refers to the most one and the same level of reality, while transdisciplinarity knowledge deals with the dynamic provoked by the simultaneous action of more than one levels of reality. The discovery of more than one levels of reality necessarily gets through disciplinary knowledge. So, transdisciplinarity, without being a new discipline emerges from disciplinary research which in its turn is clarified by the transdisciplinarity knowledge. In this respect, the disciplinary and transdisciplinarity research are not antagonistic, but complementary. Basarab Nicolescu makes a comparison between the two forms of knowledge (Nicolescu, 2002):

Table 1. Disciplinary knowledge and transdisciplinarity knowledge

Disciplinary knowledge	Transdisciplinarity knowledge
In vitro	In vivo
External world (object)	Correspondence between external world (object) and internal world (subject)
Knowledge	Understanding
Analytical intelligence	New type of intelligence - balance between mental, feelings and body
Oriented towards power and possession	Oriented towards bewilderment and sharing
Binary logic	The logic of the included third
Values exclusion	Values inclusion

Profound knowledge is a new type of knowledge - transdisciplinarity knowledge, which corresponds to an in vivo knowledge. This new type of knowledge is defined by the correspondence between the external world of the object and the internal world of the subject.

Disciplinary knowledge and transdisciplinarity knowledge are therefore complementary and not antagonistic, both methodologies being founded on scientific spirit. Transdisciplinarity methodology enriches other disciplines, bringing new and necessary clarifications which cannot be generated by a disciplinary methodology; transdisciplinarity methodology does not replace the methodology of each discipline. In the presence of many levels of reality, the space among the disciplines and beyond them is full. The discontinuous structure of reality levels determines the discontinuous structure of the transdisciplinarity space which explains why the transdisciplinarity research is basically distinct from the disciplinary research, but at the same time complementary.

2. Psychological and transdisciplinary knowledge

For example the psychological knowledge just as the disciplinary knowledge is an in vitro knowledge; at least this is the aim of psychology, in its ambition of standing out as a science. Due to the psychology's desire to impose itself as a science, there resulted a bigger and bigger fragmentation and hybridization of the object study by deepening and development of a field as targeted as possible. This explains the multiple new disciplines, from the disciplines studying man as a bio-socio-spiritual being to the disciplines that deal with the main types of activities performed by man, up to the disciplines preoccupied by the physical and psychological integrity insurance.

Psychology's object of study is appropriately represented by the psychic life (clinical psychology, psychosomatic, psychotherapy, neuropsychology, etc.) by activity or behaviour (education psychology,

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