

Special Issue

On the Concepts of Subject, Object, Subjectivity and Objectivity

Prof. Zhiyong Dong^{1*}

¹ Northwest University, P. R. China

* Prof. Zhiyong Dong, Northwest University, P. R. China

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Abstract

This article gives Prof. Zhiyong Dong's own definitions to the concepts of Subject, Object, Subjectivity and Objectivity.

1. Subject

The subject here refers to an individual human or a community of humans, who is doing subjective or objective disposition, when the concept of subject is antagonistic to the concept of object.

Kant called the subject as “the *primordiable being*”, “the *highest being*”, “the *being of all beings*”, and, etc. (Note 1)

The individual here refers to the human individual who undertakes the practice and thinking. The community refers to the human community which undertakes the practice and thinking and which have got some inner links between each other. The inner links can be the links of marriage, economy, politics, military, culture, and, etc. The community, or collective individuals, or group of individuals, can be an alliance of states in a war time, a nationality, a nation, a country, a state, an industry, an enterprise, an industry, a class in a school, a working team, a military group, a family, a couple of spouse, etc., so long as the activities which the community undertake have the inner links, that is, the community have got the fundamental condition.

If the activities of the members of the community have got the inner links, it can be judged by a simple process of the relevant facts. For instance, the use of the knife by a butcher in the process of cutting flesh from the dead sheep links the process of knife-making together with the process of flesh-cutting, and makes the two processes into one series of processes, and makes both the single-moment activities involved in flesh cutting by the butcher and the single-moment activities involved in knife-making by the knife-maker commingle to become multi-moment activities. The use of the knife during the process of flesh-cutting arranges the two different sorts of activities in a fixed time order, one succeeding another: i.e., the making of the knife has to take place prior to the cutting of the flesh from the dead

sheep. In addition to the spatio-temporal order, the two different sorts of activities also presuppose the existence of each other. Without the use of the knife during the process of flesh-cutting, the flesh cannot be removed from the dead sheep as easily as it can be when the knife is used. The knife plays an indispensable role in the process of flesh-cutting. Vice versa, if the butcher had not taken the use of the knife to be an indispensable part of the process of flesh-cutting, the process of the making of the knife would not have taken place correspondingly. The usage of knife makes the two kinds of activities, that is, the using of the knife and the activities of designing and manufacturing the knife, become a series of activities which have the inner link. Another example is that almost the process of production of almost all fruit is separated quite clearly from the process of the consumption of the fruit in developed countries at the present age. This process is stated clearly above. However, the style of consuming makes these process become the activities which have the inner link. It is the same in the case of house-building. It is the style of the present house-dwelling makes these process become the activities which have the inner link.

The subject have the characteristics of multi-moment, because there are many individuals and groups of human beings, they can think and do practices at the same time, their targets can be the other individual or group of human beings as a whole. However, the subject have also the characteristics of unitary, from the perspective of each individual and groups of human beings, because each individual and groups of human beings is limited or confined by certain space-time condition and there is the phenomenon of the division of practice. The unity of multielement and polibisic in humans' thinking and practice is carried on by the moment of social division in humans' thinking and practice.

2. Object

The concept of object refers to the targets which a subject, that is, an individual person or a group of human beings, would like to think or make impact onto, when the concept of object is made antagonistic to the concept of subject. The targets can be anything in the nature, including the other individual of human being and group of human individuals; and any organ or organs of the thinker himself or the thinkers themselves, and the previous results of the thinkers, which have been materialized and objectivized, that is, the spiritual outcomes of the thinkers, such as the published articles, books, and various writings, a sculpture, a musical composition, a viewpoint, a theory, a social regulations, a law, such as the rights to get married, the rights to vote and being voted, and the activities which any animal, including the humans, undertake and can be perceived directly by the other humans at any time, such as get marriages, to do labour, to do scientific research, to consume, to do various amusement and recreation, etc. The nature can be anything, including the existent forms of anything at any time, such as any animal or plant, or flora, or the houses which we dwell, or the tables which we sit at, or the bench we sit on, or the land which a farmer cultivated, or all kinds of natural resources, including the atmosphere of the earth, and the cosmic space which the humans are exploring more and more, and the various abilities and functions which any individual human may have, including the

abilities and functions to do labour and get marriages, to consume, to do various amusement and recreation, etc. The targets can be also various laws of the development of the cosmos, including the laws of the development of the human society. In short, the so-called object can be anything which can be perceived by the organs of the subjects directly, or perceived by the organs of the subjects indirectly through some instruments or tools, such as a meter, voltage indicator, resistor, etc., which the subject would like to think through and to get to know, except the thinking process which the subjects are undertaking.

3. Subjectivity

The concept of subjectivity refers to the abstraction of the process in which the subjects deal with objects.

The so-called process of subjective disposition in which the subjects deals with objects refers to the process in which the subjects dispose or deal with the objects from multi-perspectives, multi-aspects, multi-strata, multi-disciplines, and, etc., including the results of human subjective dispositions previously, in the mind of the subjects. Hegel calls the process of subjective disposition as the spiritual phenomena in his book *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Kant thought that the subjective disposition cannot be defined, recognized or known properly. He said “For since reason is not itself an appearance, and is not subject to any conditions of sensibility, it follows that even as regards its causality there is in it no time-sequence, and that the dynamical law of nature, which determines succession in time in accordance with rules, is not applicable to it”. (Note 1) He did not recognize the fact that the subjective disposition can be materialized or objectivized.

A subject can summarize and described the same object from different degrees of abstraction, that is, a subject can link or connect different things in the process of his thinking. For instance, I can call the cat of my family as the cat of Dong Zhiyong’s family, a male cat, a white cat, a carnivore, a mammal, a vertebrate, a chordate, a living thing, a being, etc. All these forms of address to the same cat are right, so long as we do not arrange any defining condition or context in our thinking or expressing, because each of these addresses of the cat points out an attribute of the cat, reflecting some relationship or similarity with the other things, which have been known to us, in the world.

The reason for us to summarize or describe the same being at the same time and same place in different degrees of abstraction, or different aspects is that it might be often necessary for us to observe, think, study, summarize, generalize, or describe it from different degrees of abstraction, or different aspects, according to our different needs in different contexts, or different circumstances or different environments. For instance, when we say that the above cat as a mammal, we pay attention to see if it is necessary to be nursed to live by milk when it is very young. If so, we may nurse it with milk when it needs. When we say the above cat as a living being, we pay attention or observe it from the aspect of seeing if it can undergo a process of metabolism. If so, we have to ensure that it can have enough fresh air, food, etc., so long as we want that it can live normally.

Another way for any subject to dispose the objects is that the humans can fabricate, suppose and assume the existence and attribute of anything or any object. For instance, we can fabricate, or assume, or suppose that there was a point without any area, or a line without any width, or a surface without any bulk, which actually cannot be found in the reality of the world, and carry the relative calculations in geometry, when we would like to get to know precisely the complex shape or bulk of an object in the substantial or real world.

The Chinese people made up a myth in the ancient China. It was said that a female celestial, who is called Chang Er, together with a rabbit, who is called Yu Tu, had been living on the surface of the moon together for millions of years. Billions of fabrications and fairy tales have been made up in each community or each nation since the most ancient time. They are still been made up every day today and can be found everywhere in the world.

Besides, different subjects, that is, different individuals and different communities, can make out totally contrary answers or conclusions to the same thing or to the same being in their minds, that is, in their subjective dispositions. For instance, the consumers and the seller might make totally contrary subjective dispositions to the selling price of the same commodity. The consumers might think that the selling price of the commodity was too high and the seller wanted to make too much money from the commodity. The seller might think that the selling price of the commodity was too low, because quality of the commodity was very good. Even the same seller might think that the selling price of the commodity is too low to make money today, and he might think that the price of the same commodity is too high to make money the other day, because he might think that it might make much more money by lowering the price of the commodity and increasing the sales volume of the same commodity. These instances indicate clearly that subject is really different from subjective dispositions.

The reason for Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), the modern philosopher of German, to put forward the concept of antimony is that he saw the facts that the humans often make out totally contrary answers or conclusions to the same thing or the same being in their minds, that is, in their subjective dispositions. For instance, the so-called subjective activities can be proved by the facts that humans can call the same things with different names or titles, and conversely humans can use polysemous words to express different meanings. For example, we can use plant, flora, botany, stray, greenery, etc., to call the same thing. Conversely, we can use the same word, e.g., the word a to express one, or an article, or any, or one like, etc. The title or name of almost everything is different between Chinese and English. These linguistic or language phenomena show that humans have their subjectivity in expressing almost everything or fact, because languages can reflect the course and result of humans' thinking or subjective disposition.

Another viewpoint which should be pointed out is that people often use the method of subjective negation in the processes of their thinking in order to grasp some attributes of some objects quickly and explicitly. For instance, we have to suppose that the consultation as a motionless or static being if we want to get to know the speed of a being. If we want to get to know the speed of a car on the earth, we

have to suppose that the road, on which the car is traveling, is motionless or static, negating the fact that the road is moving together with the rotation of the earth, even as fast as more than one thousand kilometers per hour in some places on the earth. When we call a cat as a living being, we actually need negating the other attributes of the cat, such as it has a spine and is a vertebrate, etc. It is also an existent form of subjective negation when we fabricate, or assume, or suppose that there was a point without any area, or a line without any width, or a surface without any bulk, of which actually cannot be found the substantial example in the reality of the world, and carry the relevant calculations in geometry, when we would like to get to know precisely the complex shape or bulk of an object in the substantial or real world.

The process of subjective disposition is also a process which the subject does not move its body transiently and separate his spiritual activities from his bodily activities temporally. This process has been called by human beings ourselves as thinking, reduction, planning, cognition, etc. For instance, I am planning how to publish this paper in a few years now. Many international conventions and treaties, which are about how to distribute and make use of Antarctic Continent, or the outer space of the earth, or the deposits of the oceans, etc., have been signed in the past decades. These are the examples for peoples to consider how their future generations should to practice in Antarctic Continent, the deep oceans, the outer space of the earth, etc., before hand, in hundreds or thousands of years.

Therefore, from one perspective, humans' subjective disposition is a progress that humans make purely fictitious or purely arbitrary disposition.

Even the formal logic, the dialectical logic and subjective dialectics themselves are existent forms of subjective disposition. In another words, the latest genus of the formal logic, the dialectical logic and subjective dialectics themselves is the subjective disposition.

The reason to make subjective disposition, that is, the human beings have to make observations and analyses on objects from multi-aspects, multi-strata, multi-disciplines, and, etc., in their minds beforehand, is that, the human beings want to get to know more about the objects, in order to make use of the objects better, that is, to make better practice of human beings themselves. For instance, before the craftsman had made the wood desk I am using, he must had observed and got to know the quality and quantity of the materials, such as if the material was wood, if the size, the hardness, the degree of the arid of it were enough to make a desk. Otherwise, he could not have made out the qualified desk I am using.

The discipline of biology have put forward the degrees or ranks of system, such as the kingdom, phylum, class, order, family, genus, species, etc. All these concepts are the result of the subjective disposition, and can only be put forward in the process of the subjective disposition of human beings.

Some ones say that the most of the humans are innate materialists in the understanding, or cogitating, or believing a concrete thing or a fact. Seeing for oneself is better than hearing from others. Most of the humans understand, or cogitate, or believe a concrete thing or a fact only after they have perceived directly the fact by their biological organs, such as eyes, ears, noses, tongs, bodies, etc.

Of course, many people are innate idealists in the issues which are very abstract. For instance, most of people would answer the question of why only some people can live for more than one hundred years, but most of the people cannot live for more than one hundred years with the answers that their genes and living standards are different when they are living, etc. However when the people ask further why some people have such good genes and the other people do not have such good genes, the answers could be that some people have the good luck and the other people do not, etc. These answers have the characteristic of the chance or contingency.

Therefore, humans are not the innate materialists, nor innate idealists, at bottom. Humans are animals which can refine their activities with more factors than the other animals. Humans are not angels innately, nor evils innately. They have got different interests and abilities, therefore they are divided into good and bad persons by different people.

The process of subjective disposition in human mind can be sensed objectively by our sensitive organs, such as eyes, ears, bodies, etc. For instance, humans can manufacture airplane, computer, etc., according to our plan and imagine, which can never or ever be evolved in nature. The processes and results of subjective disposition in humans' minds, that is, the process of the subjects disposing or dealing with the objects from multi-perspectives, multi-aspects, multi-strata, multi-disciplines, etc., can be showed or expressed by thousands of expressing systems of speaking sounds, or pronunciation, which are very complex. They can also be showed or expressed by thousands of ways or forms of written language. The readers and listeners in the same language community can sense, understand, grasp and pass on these messages and information.

The humans have to go through a new process of fabricating synthetically and form a new description or a new fabrication after the subjects have gone through the processes of the observing, describing or fabricating the objects unilaterally or lopsided, in order to get or meet some aim or targets of their own. The results of this process is the synthetic judgment on the varied contributes of the objects, that is, the process to make our knowledge and cognition absolute.

The first reason for humans to abstract subjectivity from the concept of subjective disposition is that humans have to simplify, quicken, or speed up the process of humans' thinking and expressing. We can use one word to express the similar meaning or sense, which can be also expressed with two words or more. It is a common way or method for humans to simplify, quicken, or speed up the process of human thinking and expressing. For instance, we often see that the title of the Seventy-First Army of the Chinese People's Liberation Army is abbreviated as Seventy-First Army in many documents and newspapers in Chinese today. Many people abbreviate the United States of America as USA. We often summarize all sorts of rational activities as practice and make all kinds of the rational activities of the humans as a whole as stated in above chapters. These are the examples for humans to simply their thinking's and expressions. Yuelin Jin, the contemporary logician of China, once summarized the phenomena in the book *Formal Logic*, which he is the editor-in-chief, by saying that "the definition of a noun or phrase which is stipulated is very useful...we feel often that a noun or phrase is too long, it is

not convenient to say or write in our daily life or scientific research. We can use a short noun or phrase to exchange it ... human thinking is carried out by depending on languages. The abbreviation and simplified in languages can accelerate and quicken the speed of human thinking greatly, and can raise the degree of depth of the human thinking greatly. The definition of a noun or phrase which is stipulated can compress and condense a group of complex concepts to a single concept, which can accelerate and quicken the human thinking.” (Note 3) What should be pointed out here is that it has got another important function to compress and condense a group of complex concepts into a single concept. This important function is to accelerate and quicken the speed of the human spoken and written expressions. It is a common scene that someone cannot speak out when he is in a hurry. This fact is a common proof that human thinking’ speed is much higher than the speed of the human spoken and written expression.

The second reason for humans to abstract the subjectivity from the concept of subjective disposition is that we can further quantify easily the degree of an abstraction, or one-sidedness, distortion, repudiation, etc. For instance, we say that there is phenomenon that someone has got the facts that he is too one-sided, or too distort, or too repudiate, etc., when he disposes something in his mind or practice. That is to say, actually he does not dispose something properly or suitably, in the process of practice or thinking in his mind in absolute term, when he deals with the matter in that circumstances.

One of the main reasons for humans to abstract the process of subjective disposition as the subjectivity, and further quantify the degrees of abstraction, one-sidedness, distortion, repudiation, etc., is that quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis are two different thinking process, or two different thinking moments. We need different nouns or phrases to express them, because human thinking often depends on the languages and they are two different thinking process, or two different thinking moments. One of the reason for us to abstract the process of subjective disposition as the subjectivity is that it can help us to quantify the processes of the subjective dispositions and pass on the judgments on the level of each subjective disposition.

In short, humans need different nouns to express subject and subjectivity in many cases, in order to think clearly, or to do subjective disposition clearly in our minds, because our thinking often depends on the languages.

What should be pointed out here is that Kant’s concepts of “*unity of appearance*” and “*pure intuition*”, (Note 4) in his book *Critique Of Pure Reason*, actually refer to the ability of the subjective disposition in humans’ minds. The reason for Kant to speak out that human can legislate for nature is that the humans could not organize any effective cooperation and coordination, if any matter in nature did not go through the process of subjective disposition and its expression. (Note 5) Hegel once said the similar words as “As a matter of fact, thinking is always the negation of what we have immediately before us. With as much truth however we may be said to owe eating to means of nourishment, so long as we can have no eating without them. If we take this view, eating is certainly represented as ungrateful: it

devours that to which it owes itself. Thinking, upon this view of its action, is equally ungrateful.” (Note 6)

However, most of the readers of *Critique Of Pure Reason* by Kant and both *Phenomenology of Spirit* and *The Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Science* by Hegel can be unable to make head or tail, nor distinguish the difference between the two concepts, after they have read the above three books, since Kant never explained the concepts of “unity of appearances” or “pure intuition” to the degree as to pointing out their genus and differentia, nor Hegel ever explained the concept of *spiritual phenomena* to the degree.

Therefore, we may explain clearly, or discriminate, here, the connection and difference between subjective disposition and spiritual phenomena. The two concepts have got the same meaning in the general process of thinking and expression in the contemporary Chinese language. Engels once stated very clearly that the spiritual phenomena is one of the existent forms of the function of the human protein. The human protein is one of the forms of the material, or matter, or substance. Therefore, the spiritual phenomena is one of the existent forms of the material phenomena. In the contemporary Chinese language, the antonym of the subjective disposition is objective phenomenon, or objectivity. The antonym of the spiritual phenomena is material, or substance, or matter, or material phenomenon. So the concept of the spiritual phenomena is higher in the degree of abstraction than that of the concept of the subjective disposition. And the concept of subjective disposition is one of the existent forms of the spiritual phenomena. Therefore we will try to use the word of subjectivity, or subjective disposition, but not the spiritual phenomena, since the best way of the definition is by displaying its nearest genus and differentia. (Note 7) And what is more, it is much easier to get the benefit of the matching with the word of subject in the Chinese language, which pay great attention to the matching of the words.

4. Objectivity

The concept of objectivity refers to the sum total of the existence of all the relevant facts and materials which a subject has got when he is deposing a object, when the concept of objectivity is opposing, or antagonistic to the concepts of subject, object and subjectivity, that is, when the subject connects the concept of objectivity with the concepts of subject, object and subjectivity. What the relevant facts and materials refer to the facts and materials which no matter the will or subjectivity of the thinking subjects recognize or acknowledge their existence or not. They include not only the historical facts, such as the sun, etc., which humans can directly feel or perceive through their organs of sense, but also the laws of the development of the matters, which exist in the cosmos, such as the law of gravitation, the law of the development of the human society, e.g., the development of productivity determines the development of relations of production, etc. The relevant facts and materials here also refer to various results of human subjective disposition, which have been materialized or objectified, that is, which have been expressed by oral languages, written languages or body languages, such as a musical composition, or a novel, or an idea for design, or a system of theory, or a viewpoint, or a book of

philosophy, or a work of social science, or a legal provision, e.g., the right to get married, the rights to vote and being voted, etc.

In contemporary Chinese language, subjectivity sometime refers to the process of the objective disposition in some context, that is, the human practice, or the activities of human limbs or body under the guidance of human subjectivity. The reason for the human practice to be called the process of the objective disposition in some context is that the human practice has got the characteristics of the activities of human limbs or human body, which can be sensed directly by humans' sense organs.

The difference between objectivity and object is also demonstrated by the facts that the object can be the sum total of the objects which are disposed by the subjects, and also can be any single object which is disposed by the subjects. Objectivity refers only to the sum total of the facts and existences which are relevant with the object or any human, or objects or humans, which is disposed by the subjects. These facts and existences may be known by the subject or subjects, but also may not be known by the subject or subjects. These facts and existences can be the one-sided or unilateral attribute of the object itself, that is, some of the characteristics of the object, but not all of the characteristics of the objects. These facts can also be one or some the connections, which are exist inevitable objectively between objects or their objective environment. For instance, the first things we have to deal with are the seeds and plant, when we want to increase the output of one hectare of wheat. We have to get to know the quality of the seed and if the plant is growing well, etc. However, we have also to get to know many other factors, which relevant directly or indirectly to the growth of the plant, such as the climate, the hydrology, the quality of the land, the quantity of the organic fertilizer, or the plant diseases, or the insect pests, of the piece of land, etc. These factors compose or constitute the objective factors or environment for the raising of the output of the wheat of the piece of land, respectively to the seed of the plant.

What is more, the factors which relate with the raise of the output of the wheat would be more and more. Humans have to get to know more and more in order to raise the output of the wheat of the piece of land continuously. For instance, we often have to irrigate the land in time in drought seasons with the electric water pump in order to guarantee the need of the water for the growth of the plant. The electric power supply, which the production of the water pump and the draw of the water to the wheat field need, relates many fields of productions, such as the production of the steel, etc. These factors become the factors or environment, which relate the raise of the output of the wheat, no matter the will of few people acknowledge or recognize it or not, or no matter they know it or not. Even the all the branches of space science become the relative factors, which relate the raise of the output of the wheat, if the humans need doing the experiment of space breeding.

When humans deal with the factors, which relate directly or indirectly the raise of the output of the wheat, humans have to divide each factor from other factors, make them one by one become the object or immediate object of human research or observation. For instance, the plant diseases and insect pests of the field, which relate directly the plant growth, will become the immediate objects of the subjective disposition of the relevant experiments and scientists if they work in the fields of the plant diseases and

insect pests of the field. This change is determined by the ability of human subjective cognition, because each human can only select one object to study or observe in each process of thinking or subjective disposition.

In short, objectivity is the concept which relates more factors than the concept of object and subject. This is another example that the change of quantity brings the change of quality.

5. Objectification of Subjective Disposition

The process of objectification of subjective disposition refers to the process that humans change what they think to what they can sense directly by their own sense organs and by the sense organs of other humans.

The above sections have stated that the reason for human beings to make subjective disposition is that the human beings want to get to know more about the objects, in order to make use of the objects better or more efficient, that is, to make their practice better or more efficient, further to make their living conditions better. The historical facts have shown that humans have always carried out their practice collectively through the forms of co-operation and division of labour since the emerge of the human beings, because the capacity of each individual human being to produce and supply living materials and living circumstances is quite finite and weak, in relation to the natural environment in which each individual human being has to survive.

Human beings have to carry out idea intercourse or mind exchange in order to make co-operation and division of labour better and more efficient. However, the thinking process and thinking results can only be known directly by the thinker himself individually. No other person, or other species of animal, or any machine, or any instrument can get to know explicitly or accurately it directly, as stated above.

Language is one of the main tool or main way for people to carry out mind intercourse or idea exchange, as language is one of the main forms for people to materialize their thinking process and thinking results explicitly or accurately. Making use of languages is one of the natural abilities with social characteristics, which human beings have got through millions of years of evolution. The thinking process and thinking results of an individual can only be perceived directly by the other people through the thinker's language, including oral languages, written languages, body languages, and the pictures painted by the thinker, and some manufactured matters by the other people, etc. The other individuals can sense and understand through their subjective disposition if they make agreement before hand or accept them through common practice. That is, our thinking and cognition on subjective disposition can be expressed out mainly by our oral language and written language and body language, and then to be perceived directly by the other individuals through their sensory organs, such as ears, eyes, etc., and further to be understood and grasped by them. Only through this process, can the relevant individuals be able to organize the efficient co-operation and division of collective activities. For instance, the English spoken people can make sure and grasp the content and definition of the concept of subjective disposition, which uses the English as one of their material carrier, and on the

foundation of it further to develop the relevant systems of philosophical theories and hypotheses, and further more for the English spoken people to carry out the collective practice at a higher degree or a higher level.

The second reason for human beings to have to express their subjective processes with languages, especially with written languages and pictures, is that the capacity of the memories of each individual or community which exists in real history is quite limited. For instance, I cannot memorize all of the concrete words, which have been written by myself in the former parts of this book. In the circumstances that I cannot complete the whole thinking of all the ideas, which have to be expressed by this book, I have to write down the ideas which have been thought out by me to get to know them precisely in my former and later writings, in order to express out all of my ideas completely, integrally, without any internal contradiction or repetition in logic. Feisheng Ye, the contemporary linguist of China, and his colleagues, in their book *Outline of Linguistics*, says about this state of affairs that “In fact, the sentence could not be too long, when somebody speaks. The speaker or listener could not remember the content of what the speaker said if the sentence is too long.” (Note 8) These words state clearly that the ability of the memory of each human is quite limited. We can think and do logic reduction in rather high degree only when we make the process of our thinking into languages.

It is the same to any human community, because each community is composed or formed by certain individual persons, and the number of the individual persons of a community is always limited. Therefore, the memory of each community in real history is limited, because the number of its members is always limited, and consequently the ability to remember directly by the brains or minds of all members of it is always limited.

Besides, each community has to pass on the useful knowledge, which the members of the community have gained, such as the skills in production, good ideas, good thinking methods, the rules of linguistic expression, etc., to the younger generations, in order to make the community to be able to exist and develop continually. Therefore, each community has to materialize the results of the thinking of their members, through the objective forms of using relevant words, pictures, oral languages, written languages etc., to pass on the useful ideas to the younger generations.

People, vice versa, often study the processes, results and levels of people’s thinking through studying the phenomena of languages for the reason that languages are one of the main forms of materialization of the processes, and the results of human thinking, that is, the human subjective dispositions, because languages are one of the main forms of the materialization and objectification of the subjective disposition. For instance, Yang Shi, the contemporary Chinese scholar, tells some characteristics of primitive thinking of the human beings in his book *the Childhood of Philosophy*. He reports in the book that he got to know, through reading some foreign philosophical books, that the people, who were called Ewes, in a primitive tribe in Africa, always expressed the different forms of walking with dozens of different words, e.g., walking firmly, walking with one limp, walking with the head tilted to one side, walking tranquilly, walking leisurely and carefree, walking with throwing out one’s belly, pace to and

fro, walking hardly because of his fatness, walking with the four limbs shaking strenuously, etc. However, there is no the word of walk in their language, because they had not abstracted or summarized such a more abstract concept. The relevant philosophers concluded that the degree of abstract thinking of the Ewes is lower than the contemporary advanced communities. (Note 9)

Today people often judge a reduction of a person as a good reduction or a bad reduction through analyzing his linguistic expressions. (Note 10) For instance, Yuelin Jin gave example in the book *Formal Logic*, of which he is the chief-editor, that “if $2 + 2 = 4$, then the snow is white” is a hypothetical proposition with sufficient and necessary conditions. The hypothetical propositions are clearly true if we only consider the relation between the first component or antecedent and the second component or antecedent is true or not. However, people would think that this hypothetical proposition is bad or not true. The reason is that each hypothetical proposition should have got many connections in meaning. The example above does not reflect the rich connections in meaning, when we analyse the above example.’ (Note 11) Therefore, it is a bad thinking or proof.

Many the other scholars also often study formal logic, through the analyses of the language expressions, to see if a reduction or a proposition is good or not. (Note 12)

Besides, the most abstract and the most complex forms of the practice themselves, which humans have done, are the language expression. The language expression includes the written languages, the oral languages and the body languages.

The difference between the body language and the other practice of humans is that the body languages are done for the other people to look at. For instance, to make secrete overtures between the young male and young female, etc. The other forms of the humans’ practice are not done to be seen by other human individuals. For instance, a person cook a meal, which is not done to show to the other persons. It is all right so long the person is satisfied with his meal.

The reason for me to say that the languages are the most abstract and the most complex forms of the practice, which humans have done, is that the regulations of the languages for each human to obey are much more than the regulations made for the other activities. For instance, when a person speaks, he is regulated by many regulations of the relative grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and pragmatics, etc., much more than he does other activities, such as to transport some things to another place, and so on so forth. Correspondingly, what the staff, who work in the fields of scientific research, literature and artistic creation, education and social government, etc., may come across the most are the objects which are the results of linguistic activities, in today’s situation of the information explosion, everyday. Most of the various concepts, propositions, definitions, systems of theories, regulations for activities, outline for activities, political regulations, the reports of governments, etc., are expressed by written languages and pictures at present.

And to each community, all the good ideas, which the community has gained and are good for the existence and development of the community, have to be passed on to the following generations, through some forms of materialization and objectification, such as using the written languages, or the

oral languages, or the objects in kind, or the pictures, or the model of the objects in kind, or the sand tables, or keeping records by tying knots, etc.

Humans have to follow and comply with the regulations, which their ancestors have made, when they made the regulations of the materialization and objectification of their thinking. For instance, the contemporary people in the northern part of China have to express their views in the dialect and grammar which is popular in the northern part of China. They could not say in other ways. Otherwise, the other people would think that they were talking nonsense. When they express their views in written language, they also have to follow and comply with the regulations, such as the character patterns, the morphology, the terms and the grammars, which their ancestors have made when their ancestors made the regulations of the materialization and objectification of their thinking. Otherwise, the other people would think that they did not make any sense, consequently the other people or their offspring could not know their ideas or viewpoints. That is to say, the process of the materialization and objectification of the humans subjective disposition is limited or refined by the objectively historical factors. These objectively historical factors are the results made by their ancestors through their objective dispositions, but they have become something objective to each member of the language community, if the pronunciation, character pattern and grammar, have been accepted and acknowledged generally, that is, to have got the consensus of the language community. As a concrete member of the language community, it is a matter which he has no power or ability to change with his subjective will, no matter he likes or not, no matter he acknowledges it or not, because it is a matter which has been determined by the generations of his ancestors, only if the person is the represents of language community, who have been empowered by the community as whole, to have the right to change the character patterns, the morphology, the terms and the grammars, such as Li Si (?-208 B.C.) 李斯, the first prime minister of the Qin Dynasty in Chinese history, or Wu Zhetian (624-705), the only empress in Chinese history, or Mao Zedong (1893-1976), the first Chairman of the Central Government of the People's Republic of China, or the head of the Reform Committee of Chinese Language and Characters of China, the chief-in-editor of a publishing house, some famous writers, some famous literary and art workers, the discoverers of some new matters or new product, like Madam Currie (1867-1934), etc. Besides, these changed character patters, the morphology, the terms and the grammars, have to be accepted and acknowledged generally by the language community as a whole. Otherwise, these changes can not be understood, accepted or acknowledged by the following generations of the community. This is the fundamental reason why Kant would say that the concepts of space and time, etc., which actually were named by the humans freely and casually at will, have got the nature of *a priori*, etc., to each person who lives in the actual history. Yuelin Jin think that it is wrong for "logical positivists to deem that the law of logic was arranged by humans, just like the regulations for people to play chess or cards." (Note 13) The reason for Yuelin Jin to have got the above viewpoint may be that the logical positivists did not point out that the ways of the language expression, which reflect the laws of humans' logic thinkings, are limited and refined by the ways of the language expression, that is, by the grammars and

the meanings of words, which are made by the ancestors of the community. They can not be changed by any single person himself, as a offspring of the community, at will or as his pleases. Or only the community as a whole through its representatives can change the grammars and the meaning of a word, which have been determined or regulated by their ancestors, to a certain degree. This is a objective and historic fact. The reason for us to put forward the concepts of the materialization and objectification of the humans' subjective dispositions is that there is the historical fact that there is the connection and difference between a community as a whole and its single member. At bottom, the meaning of each word, the grammar, the pronunciation and the intonation of a language community are the results of the suit or its liking of a language community as a whole. It can not be changed by any single person himself, as the offspring of the community, at will or as his pleases. Ludwig Josef Johann Wittgenstein (1889-1951), the famous philosopher of language, once proofed that there is not the possibility of private language, and expounded the social nature of languages. (Note 14) Therefore, we can reduce or say that the process of the expression of language is the process of the result of the materialization and objectification of the human spirit or human subjective dispositions.

The concept that humans have souls, or the souls will be always immortal, comes from, fundamentally speaking, the fact that the sages and wise men of a community can pass on their concepts and ideas, which are good, at least from the aspect of their living time, to their following generations and beneficial to their following generations, through the ways of the materialization and objectification of the human spirit or subjective disposition.

There are many kinds of languages which are used at present, because the tortuousness and complication of the development of the human history, that is, each language community has its relative independence in its development, for they have to face different environment of its social development. It said that there are thousands of languages which are in usage at present, according to same linguistic monographs, (Note 15) such as Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish, German, Portuguese, Arabic, Japanese, etc. The number and forms of the dead languages, which were once used by some people, are very big and many many, from the historical fact that the different written languages, which were used by many states, were united by force into one form of written language by the order of Emperor Qin Shihuang (259 B.C.-210 B.C.), the first emperor in Chinese history, and the historical facts that some languages, which were once used by some people, are no longer used by any person, in their daily life, such as the languages used by ancient Babylon and ancient Tocharian, and, etc.

The most powerful and ablest form of language is the written language, including formula and chart, among all the forms of language, which is the form for people to materialize and objectify the process and results of their thinking, up to now. It is because the limbs of humans are quite limited, and the abilities of the changes of the limbs, including the sigh language used by the deaf-mute, which can be sensed by other people, are quite also limited. The human language of the limbs is the weakest in expressing people's meaning. The oral language is more powerful than the language of the limbs.

However, the elements of the oral language which can be sounded and sensed are less than the written languages. For instance, the phonemes of the current Chinese are not more than 270, which including 56 initial consonant and simple vowel, the four tones of modern standard Chinese pronunciation and the level tone. The phonemes of contemporary English, that is, the vowels and consonants which can be expressed by the International Phonetic Symbols, has got only 48. These phonemes can compose and construct millions, even unlimited morphemes, that is, the syllables or words. However, it always appears the phenomena that phoneme is the same, but the words are different; that phoneme is the same, but the meanings is different; the word is the same, but the meaning is different; and the meaning and the word is the same, but the phoneme is different in the same language community in oral languages. The multitone word, a word which have many pronunciation, and the dialects, are the typical examples of these phenomena. It can be only expressed clearly, exactly and briefly by the written languages. Therefore, hitherto the written language has got the strongest expressing ability among all forms of language.

At present, there is a trend that phenomenon of reading the mobile digital information and pictures is developing very fast, it seems that the reading of the mobile digital and pictures information begins to prevail the reading of the physical pictures and written materials, because the rapid development of the mobile digital information and pictures, such as the development of television, computer and screen of handset, etc. However, reading the mobile digital information and pictures is only a new ways for people to read and speak at bottom. It cannot eliminate or remove the phenomena of written language, limb language or oral language. It is because that the main contents themselves of the mobile digital information and pictures are oral language, limb language and written language. To say nothing that the makers of the mobile digital information and pictures basically make their working plans and schedules by written language and oral language. This is a unchangeable historic fact. It just like the relation between thinking and languages. Language is only one way of the expressing form of humans' thinking. Humans can still go on thinking without language, just as the deaf persons can also think. Languages would not had appeared if the humans' thinkings had not appeared. Therefore, the humans' thinkings is the most fundamental event, then the language as the second event, and the third is the mobile digital information and pictures.

By the way, it is better to tell the fundamental difference between the human languages and the function of the cry of the other animals, like that of birds and mammals, such as cats or dogs. The fundamental difference between the humans' languages and the function of the cry of the other animals is that the human languages can express much more meanings. That the humans' languages have developed to the stage of written languages is the glaring example of the situation. Therefore, human languages have got more regulations, or more complex regulations than the cry of the other animals. Therefore, humans' languages may express the meaning of the cry of other animals. But the cry of other animals cannot express clearly the meaning of human languages.

Notes

Note 1. *Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. by Norman Kemp Smith, London: MacMillan And Co., 1929, p. 492, A 578-579, B 606-607.

Note 2. *ibid.*, p. 476, A 553, B 381.

Note 3. Yuelin Jin (chief-in-editor), *Formal Logic*, Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2006, pp. 50-53.

Note 4. Immanuel Kant's Critique Of Pure Reason, trans. by Norman Kemp Smith, London: MacMillan and Co., Limited, 1929, pp. 148, A127, B95.

Note 5. *ibid.*, p. 148, A126-127, p.658, A840, B868.

Note 6. G. W. F. Hegel, *The Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Science*, trans. by William Wallace, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975, p. 17, §12.

Note 7. See also Martin Heidegger, *Being And Time* trans. by John Macquarrie & Edward Robinson, Oxford: Blackwell Publishings Ltd, 1962, p. 23.

Note 8. Feisheng Ye *et al.*, and revised by Hongjun Wang *et al.*, *Outline of Linguistics*, the forth edition, Peking: Peking University Press, 2010, p. 20. [in Chines]

Note 9. Compare Shi Yang, *The Childhood of Philosophy*, Peking: China Social Sciences Press, 2011, p. 12. [in Chinese]

Note 10. See also Patrick J. Hurley, *A Concise Introduction to Logic*, 10th edition, Singapore: Cengage Learning, p. 44.

Note 11. Compare Yuelin Jin (chief edited), *Formal Logic*, second edition, 2006, Beijing: People's Public, the 39th print, 2009, p. 112 [in Chinese].

Note 12. *ibid.*, p, 112, p. 119.

Note 13. *ibid.*, p. 6.

Note 14. More detailed can be consulted in Shengqin Chai, *Occident Language Philosophy*, Xian, the Shaanxi People's Publish House, 2000, pp. 153-163. [in Chinese]

Note 15. Feisheng Ye *et al.*, and revised by Hongjun Wang *et al.*, *Outline of Linguistics*, the forth edition, Peking: Peking University Press, 2010, p. 18, p. 114.