

Information Competency and Creative Initiative of Personality and Their Manifestation in Activity

Natalia P. Tabachuk¹, Irina A. Ledovskikh², Nadezhda A. Shulika³, Irina V. Karpova⁴,
Victor A. Kazinets⁵, Anatolii E. Polichka⁶

Abstract

The relevance of the research is due to the global trends of development of the information society that are associated with the rapid advancement of civilization (IT penetration, increased computer availability, variability) and innovation processes in the sphere of education (competency-based approach, humanization and humanitarization). These development trends of the information society influence both the development of personality as a subject of activity and of its relevant features, such as information competency and creative initiative. With regard to this, the paper is aimed at revealing the essential meanings of the phenomena "information competency" and "creative initiative of personality" via the dialectics of their development, self-development and mutual influence. The leading method for studying this problem is modeling that allows considering in an integrated manner the existing and the other as factors detailing the mutual influence of the information competency and creative initiative of personality within the structure of its individuality, as well as detailing the dialectics of development of the information competency and creative initiative of personality through the manifestation of subjective reality in the structure of individuality. In the paper, the essence of the human information competency and its role in the development of the information society is identified and approaches to understanding the personality's creative initiative and its manifestations in the activity. The paper also details the mechanisms of transformation and integration of the processes of development of information competency and creative activity of personality as of a subject of activity. The authors refer to them the following: competence, reflexivity, "inner dialectics", subjectness, "intersubjectivity", ability of dialogue, and manifestation of individuality. The materials of the paper are of practical value for master degree students, postgraduate students, teachers of higher educational institutions and other educational establishments pursuing the research in this sphere who set themselves the objectives of building the forecast models of dynamics of the development of the personality's information competency and creative initiative.

Keywords: *information competency, creative initiative of personality, dialectics, individuality, self-development.*

Introduction

Currently, one's individual life path as self-establishment evokes in one the manifestation and reinforcement of relevant personality features. These features are the personality's information

¹ Assoc. Prof., Candidate of Pedagogy, Pacific National University, tabachuk@yandex.ru

² Assoc. Prof., Candidate of Physics and Mathematics, Pacific National University, ledovskikh_irina@mail.ru

³ Assoc. Prof., Candidate of Pedagogy, Far Eastern State Transport University, Pacific National University, shulika2006@yandex.ru

⁴ Assoc. Prof., Candidate of Pedagogy, Pacific National University, karpova_imfit@mail.ru

⁵ Assoc. Prof., Candidate of Physics and Mathematics, Pacific National University, matan@khsu.ru

⁶ Prof., Doctor of Pedagogy, Pacific National University, aepol@mail.ru

competency and creative initiative that influence one's mapping out the path of both one's movement through the life and the development. The interest in the development of human information competency and a personality demonstrating the creative initiative is associated with the following global trends:

- rapid development of the civilization (IT penetration, increased computer availability, variability, innovation processes in the sphere of education (competency-based approach), humanization, humanitarization);
- multiplicity of choice;
- an increasing complexity of life;
- the focus on developing a subject of the activity who is busy with exploring the social change situations within the contemporary information society and not on preparing an "opportunist";
- targeting a personality with its individual features, ensuring the opportunities for self-unfolding;
- significance of the products of creativity both for an individual and for the expectations and norms of the society.

Within these trends, the phenomena of "information competency" and "creative initiative of personality" can be rethought; the existing and the other can be determined as factors detailing the mutual influence of the personality's information competency and creative initiative in the framework of its individuality; and the dialectics of the development of the personality's information competency and creative initiative can be worded through the manifestation of the subjective reality.

Literature Review

In detailing the essence of human information competency, several facets are singled out: understanding the phenomenon of the "human information competency", the process of the development of human information competency and its particularities, and self-development of one's information competency level within the structure of individuality.

These aspects are discussed by many scholars who adopted various approaches to this problem range: anthropological (Tabachuk, 2009), phenomenological (Tabachuk, 2015), activity-based (Golubin, 2006, Golovko, 2007, Kosorukova, 2015, Koleva, 2013, Arabadzhi, 2012), systemic (Kosorukova, 2015, Kolyeva, 2013, Arabadzhi, 2012), competency-based

approach (Burmakina et al., 2006, Vitt, 2005, Vorovshchikov, 2006, Tabachuk, 2009, Polichka & Isakova, 2012, Golubin, 2006, Golovko, 2007, Kosorukova, 2015, Koleva, 2013, Arabadzhi, 2012, McClelland, 1973, Boyatzis & Sala, 2004, Boyatzis, 2008, White, 1959).

The problem of the personality's creative initiative manifesting itself in the activity is not new and quite a few scholars (Ponomarev, 1976, Druzhinin, 1999, Brushlinskiy, 1991, Zhuravlev, 2014, Dorfman & Baleva, 2014) associate the following questions with it:

- Why do some people demonstrate the adaptive initiative while other people demonstrate the creative one?
- How can the creative initiative be developed and turned into creative achievements?
- What are the conditions for self-development of the personality's creative initiative?

In self-development of the information competency and creative initiative of personality, the integration processes can be manifested that trigger the mechanisms of comprehending oneself as a subject of one's own efforts and self-transformation. Considering the dialectics as the development of the personality's information competency and creative initiative in the activity renders important a class of human personal growth tasks. It also evokes understanding the fact that these phenomena being inherent in personality get established in a uniform way and it launches their self-development.

As no final answer to this and some other questions has been found, the research of this direction is relevant.

Methodological Framework

The subject of the research are the personality's information competency and creative initiative and their manifestation in activity.

The objective of the research consists in detailing the essential meanings of the "information competency" and "creative initiative of personality" phenomena through the dialectics of their development, self-development and mutual influence.

According to the subject and the objective of the research, the following tasks had to be solved:

1. Identifying the essence of human information competency and its role in the development of the information society.
2. Analyzing the approaches to the understanding of the creative initiative of personality and its manifestation in activity.

3. Detailing the transformation and integration mechanisms for the development processes of the personality's information competency and creative initiative as the subject of activity.

4. Finding out the existing and the other as factors that reflect the mutual influence of the personality's information competency and creative initiative in the structure of its individuality.

5. Detailing the dialectics of development of the personality's information competency and creative initiative through the manifestation of subjective reality in the structure of individuality.

In order to attain the objectives of the research and solve the tasks set, a set of mutually complementary research methods were used: the analysis of philosophic, psychological and pedagogical literature, extrapolation and modeling. The methods employed were appropriate to the set tasks, which has enabled the authors to record some results while analyzing the research subject.

Results and Discussion

The Essence of Human Information Competency and Its Role in the Development of the Information Society

In the contemporary understanding, the phenomenon of human information competency exists as the objective and subjective reality. On the one hand, these are the enhancing factors of being of the information society that are envisaged from the outside; on the other hand, information competency exists in the subject's ideas about information technologies, information resources and the information society.

For instance, in their studies some scholars treat the notion of information competency as a complicated individual psychological formation based on integration of theoretical knowledge, practical abilities in the area of innovation technologies and a certain set of personal features. Meanwhile, others believe it to be the new literacy which contains the abilities to speedily and independently process the information, to make completely new decisions in unexpected situations using the technological means (Pechenyuk, 2008). This idea is supported in several works devoted to the study of various types of literacy (Chigisheva et al., 2017, Harshman, 2017). In the previous studies conducted by the authors, the phenomenon of human information competency is viewed as a key metasubject competency consisting of the cognitive, motivational, and activity-based components that are provided with details by man via "understanding", generating his own meanings, and enriching the subject experience.

The essential characteristics of human information competency are the cognitive, motivational and activity-based components. The cognitive component (purposes) includes the diversity of

knowledge in students about their own capacities of understanding the meaning and essence of information, of information processes, fundamentals of computer science, the place and part of information technologies in the academic and professional activity. The motivational component (meanings) characterizes the students' attitude to development of the information competency, their having a need of its self-development, as well as their motivation for a high-quality efficient work with information. The activity-based component (actions) of the information competency in students of a humanitarian higher educational institution allows viewing the students' subject experience being involved into the educational process – that in working with information, its various sources and in mastering the information technologies (Tabachuk, 2009).

The process of the development of human information competency is inseparable from the integral process of personality development and it occurs as a staged introduction of an individual into the world of information relationships and information culture. As pointed out by Shulika (2016), the process of the development of information culture is not distilled to acquiring knowledge and abilities in computer science, information technologies and other courses only, but it also consists in the process of the required information qualities being formed in a subject and it depends on the subject's extent of realizing their own information needs.

The authors view the development of human information competency in two aspects: within the internal patterned construction (the personality's absorbing the values existing in the culture, the methods of working with information in the process of interaction with the man's subjective reality) and within the transition to self-improvement of the information competency, i.e. at the point when one has achieved a certain personal level and demonstrates a capacity for developing oneself and for improving one's information competency (Tabachuk, 2009). Both aspects of the development of human information competency are united by the man getting new opportunities, features and abilities (Cener et al., 2015).

For this research, it is crucial that at each point of being one discovers new qualities and abilities in oneself, in the object around one while relying on one's subject experience. The transition of potential human abilities and qualities into actual being is relevant at various stages of human development.

The contemporary world contains quite a large variety of information streams, which enhances the requirements for the development level of such human abilities as information competency and creative initiative of personality. These capacities not only enable one to

contribute to the development of culture and of the society as a whole, but they can also act as an important resource for life activity.

Approaches to Understanding of the Personality's Creative Initiative and Its Manifestations in Activity

At different times, the question about the essence of creativity and manifestations of the personality's creative initiative has won the limelight of the philosophers' and psychologists' attention. The diversity of approaches to understanding the essence of the personality's creative initiative can be expressed through an entire set of ideas and theories. In particular, A.L. Zhuravlev (2014) while describing the main aspects of scientific works of Brushlinskiy emphasizes the role of human personal features that determine one's establishment as that of a subject. He also pointed out that an important place among them belongs to independence, productivity, availability of certain meanings of life and values, creativity, and initiative.

The philosopher Smirnov understands initiative as a philosophic category to be a universal property, an attribute of matter that is expressed in its ability of self-movement, ability to change other objects and develop certain internal conditions (Smirnov, 1985). He singles out two meanings of the term "initiative": a side, a constituent of any process of interaction or action; and a process. Initiative acts both in the shape of internal processes and in the shape of external manifestations.

Kholodnaya (2015) argues that the notion of subject stresses the individual and unique nature of prerequisites and manifestations of the intellectual initiative.

Following Sedova (1999), the authors will mean by the creative initiative a unit of functioning of a creative personality; a feature of a life activity subject that enables the subject to adapt under new social and cultural conditions in the most successful manner and that promotes the subject's reasonable self-identification based on analyzing actual opportunities and individual manifestations.

In studies of Razumnikova and Yashanina (2015), it is noted that the wide scope of knowledge, speed of mental processes and an ability of focused control and maintaining attention are all components of intellect and are incorporated in the functional system of creativity. The authors of this work believe exactly these features to be ones to influence manifestation of the personality's creative initiative in activity.

The notion "creative mental field" introduced by Dorfman (2014) is associated with the creative initiative of personality. Dorfman's (2016) empirical notion of the creative mental field as the common root of divergence and variability is applicable to the subject of activity. The scholar singles out some indices of divergent thinking, such as fluency, flexibility, and originality, and mentions that they lead to discovering the general capacities of the creative mental field. These indices characterize not only the creative personality but also one who shows oneself as a subject of activity and as capable to find one's way in the information society. The mental constituent of the intellect and creativity is also being studied by Kholodnaya (2015).

While suggesting a new approach in studying the nature of the intellect within the framework of analyzing the particularities of organization of a personality's individual mental (intellectual) experience, Kholodnaya (2015) focuses her attention on the fact that the word "creative" is used to call a person who alongside with the ability to make discoveries in this or that subject area has a unique manner of expression at the level of the product created and a unique creative pattern at the level of modes of activity. She singles out such aspects of abilities as verbal understanding, verbal intellect index (with which the authors associate the process of development of the activity subject's information competency), and verbal fluency as creativity index, as that of creative initiative. These aspects of abilities complement each other. Speaking about the process of development of the information competency and of the personality's creative initiative, verbal understanding makes up the basis for "individual mental (intellectual) experience" of interaction within the information society.

When describing the resource-based approach to individual intellectual activity, Kholodnaya (2015) stresses that evolution of individuality is largely based on the development of cognitive abilities that play a key part in the establishment of the subject's mental world.

Proceeding from these theoretical provisions (Dorfman, 2014; Kholodnaya, 2015; Yigit & Tarman, 2016), it can be argued that the development of the personality's information competency and creative initiative within the framework of individuality influences the establishment of the "creative mental field", "individual mental experience", and the "subject's mental world" in general.

For this research, the mental constituent is an integrating factor of mutual influence as for the personality's information competency and creative initiative in the structure of individuality and it is associated with self-development of personality.

Self-development of the personality's creative initiative is related to the experience of reflection. Kulikova (2005) notes that the personality's experience of reflection is a constituent of its subject experience that is accumulated during the repeated operations of correlating the knowledge about oneself and one's opportunities, expected self-transformations and possible changes both in the reality around one and in oneself to the requirements of activity. As for self-development of the personality's information competency and creative initiative, the reflexive experience acts toward it as the subjective reality.

According to Shadrikov and Kurghinyan (2015), while performing reflexion toward a certain activity, a subject shows an ability to consciously reproduce the experience gained, to master it and to turn it into a generalized action method for certain situations. In the subject's act of reflection, the subject's abilities are manifested – such as information competency and creative initiative.

Many scholars consider the reflexive constituent as a process of self-regulation of life activity to be the basic element of the subject's self-development (Popov et al., 2016).

According to Brushlinskiy (1996), for man as a subject, conscience matters especially much because it is during reflection that man forms and develops his objectives (that can only be conscious), i.e. the objectives of activity, communication, contemplation and other kinds of initiative. "Man objectively acts (and therefore is studied) within the system of infinitely versatile and controversial qualities; the most important of them is being a subject, i.e. the creator of one's history, the architect of one's life path: initiating and performing the originally practical activity, communication, behavior, cognition, contemplation and other kinds of specifically human initiative – creative, moral, and free" (Brushlinskiy, 1996, p. 76).

Zinchenko (1994) statement about "mastering the new actions and activity is enrichment of the subject, development of not only the operation and technical, cognitive abilities but also of personality, its essential forces" (Zinchenko, 1994, p. 17) is especially significant for this research. The author points out that "man is the subject of activity if it is not only man who masters the activity but also it is the activity that masters him" (Zinchenko, 1994, p. 18). Action is an essential condition for formation of meanings and their deepening", it is associated with "rendering the meanings significant" and "rendering the purposes meaningful"; "the beginning of reflection is encompassed in action".

The manifestation of personality's creative initiative in activity generates the transition from "forms creation to meanings creation", develops its subject experience of cognition, self-education, and ensures the acquisition of culture and values of mankind.

Kulikova (2015) argues that value attitude of man in his integral system of attitudes plays the part of a determining factor for his life activity and comprises the following meanings:

- perception of this or that phenomenon of reality from the standpoint of a system of personality values, that is, revealing and acknowledging the extent of its moral and spiritual significance for both man and the society;
- inclusion of this phenomenon as a value into the personality's system of values and turning it into an internal value reference point;
- elaboration of a behavior strategy in which the focus on the development and reinforcement of a new value (of self-development) will emerge as one of the personality's value reference points;
- development of the man's value autonomy.

Within this context, it can be noted that the development of human value autonomy determining the core of one's motivational choice, focus, place of spiritual and moral reference points in one's life influences the development of the information competency and manifestation of the personality's creative initiative. The value attitude of a personality toward self-development of its information competency and creative initiative is associated with comprehending the significance of this process for one's own efficient performance in the information society.

Following Ozhiganova (2015), the authors believe that the internal motivation leads to manifestation of creative initiative in the activity, which is due to spontaneity (internal causes), aspiration for self-expression, self-cognition and the propensity to profoundly study the world (discover the new), to the emotional factor as a trigger mechanism for the creative process, by the inherent value of a creative act that is associated with positively colored emotional conditions, unselfishness. The factors of manifestation of the highest creative abilities and of the creative initiative described by Ozhiganova (2015) confirm that their becoming relevant is associated with activation of resource conditions of man. The manifestation of the highest creative abilities is related to the mental resource of the development, the latter leading to self-

cognition, self-expression, self-actualization and self-development of personality (Ozhiganova, 2015).

Following Kulikova (2005), the authors will mean by self-development of personality a natural process – a mechanism of man's own participation in his establishment that is in congruity with nature and man. This is the process that unfolds, enhances, gains new meanings for man while being enriched by the appropriate skills of working on oneself and being reinforced by a belief in the result of one's efforts. Popov, Ustin and Ibraghimova (2006) determine self-development as self-creation, self-transformation, self-construction that is performed during the man's interaction as a subject with himself, a conscious aspiration for and a process of changing oneself, including the appearance, inner world (the mental), social and production relationships. According to the authors, in this context self-development acts as the main pivot of personality – one on which the distinct nature of the personality's information competency and self-assertion of the personality's creative initiative in activity center.

Considering the studies by Vygotskiy (2003), it should be pointed out that when wording the general genetic law of cultural development he noted "in the personality's cultural development, each function appears on stage twice, in two aspects: first, socially, and next – psychologically; first it appears between people, as an inter-mental category, and then – within the personality, as an intra-mental category" (Vygotskiy, 2003, p. 44). Extending the statement, it can be argued that the personality's information competency and creative initiative as products of objective reality that exist and are discussed in the society are transformed into the subjective reality as one that creates the man's inner world.

The Mechanisms of Transformation and Integration of the Processes of Development of the Information Competency and the Creative Initiative of Personality as the Subject of Activity

In the previous studies conducted by the authors, the mechanisms of transformation and integration of processes of the development of the personality's information competency and creative initiative were identified. They are as follows:

1. Competence being "an ability to make efficient and at the extreme innovation decisions concerning a certain subject area based on the subject knowledge organized in a special way" (Kholodnaya, 2015, p. 26). With regard to this, following the ideas of Kholodnaya (2015), it can

be stated that "the originality of an individual mental experience" is the manifestation of the competency-based and creative constituents of the subject of activity as principles being integrated. She emphasizes that "creativity is an effect of competence". The creative process is due to the presence of "knowledge transformers", which is achieved in reflection.

2. Reflexivity being an ability to learn the creative principle in oneself while interacting with the information reality. According to Shadrikov and Kurghinyan (2015), reflexivity is a feature of personality determining reflection as a process. Meanwhile, reflection while being the manifestation of reflexivity in activity has an individual measure of expression against the individual structural components of the activity.

3. "Inner dialectics" (Hegel, 1992) being the internal beginning of self-movement, a prerequisite for activation of personal self-development of the information competency and the creative initiative.

4. Subjectness. While studying the problem of proportion of the notions of subject and personality, Serghienko (2013) singles out the functions of subjectness that are inherent in both subject and personality. He refers to them the cognitive, regulative and communicative functions mentioning that for subject these functions open up through understanding, control of behavior and subjectness / objectness of interaction while for personality they are disclosed via meanings formation, value reference points, experiencing, and selectivity of interaction. He emphasizes that only provided that there are meanings the understanding is possible; that it is only while experiencing that the opportunity of meanings generation and behavior change, its control emerge; and it is only a certain focus of personality that leads to selectivity of the communicative interactions.

5. Intersubjectivity being the significance of subject experience of learning the information reality of one person for another. Abulkhanova-Slavskaya (1991) maintains that the "basis of initiative formation in professional achievements is the comparison of oneself to others" (Abulkhanova-Slavskaya, 1991, p. 61).

6. An ability of dialogue, of building the "dialogical relationships" (M.M. Bakhtin) being the generation of a variety of meanings evoking the concealed new formations and translating the social purposes into personal meanings. According to Buber (1995), "man who is studying the world is man with man" (Buber, 1996, p. 87). This leads the authors on to comprehending that it is only while interacting with another subject, the information society that the understanding "of

human information competency" can become more profound with personality as well as the creative initiative can be manifested.

7. Manifestation of individuality being a distinct, original mode of existence of a certain personality as a subject of independent activity. Yakovleva (1997) argues that "human individuality is inimitable and unique, hence it is the fulfillment of individuality that actually is a creative act" (Yakovleva, 1997, p. 65). Individuality manifests itself in the interests, judgments, views. The notion of personality is associated with that of individuality, characterizing one in the unity of one's natural and social qualities. Social relationships being interpreted through the internal particularities are manifested in each certain case differently; each personality is unique and in this sense – individual (the subjective reflection of the objective world). Man acts as individuality when man is taken in his original being.

It should be pointed out that the transition from the outside inwards (that of the objective world to the subjective reality) transforms the very process, changes its structure and functions, and influences the process of self-development of the personality's information competency and creative initiative.

Dialectics of Development of the Personality's Information Competency and Creative Initiative as Seen Through the Manifestation of Subjective Reality in Individuality

Two diagrams given below in Fig. 1 and Fig. 2 are drawn up by the authors. The diagrams determine the existing and the other as factors detailing the mutual influence of the personality's information competency and creative initiative within the structure of its individuality; and the dialectics of the development of the personality's information competency and creative initiative through the manifestation of subjective reality in the structure of individuality, respectively.

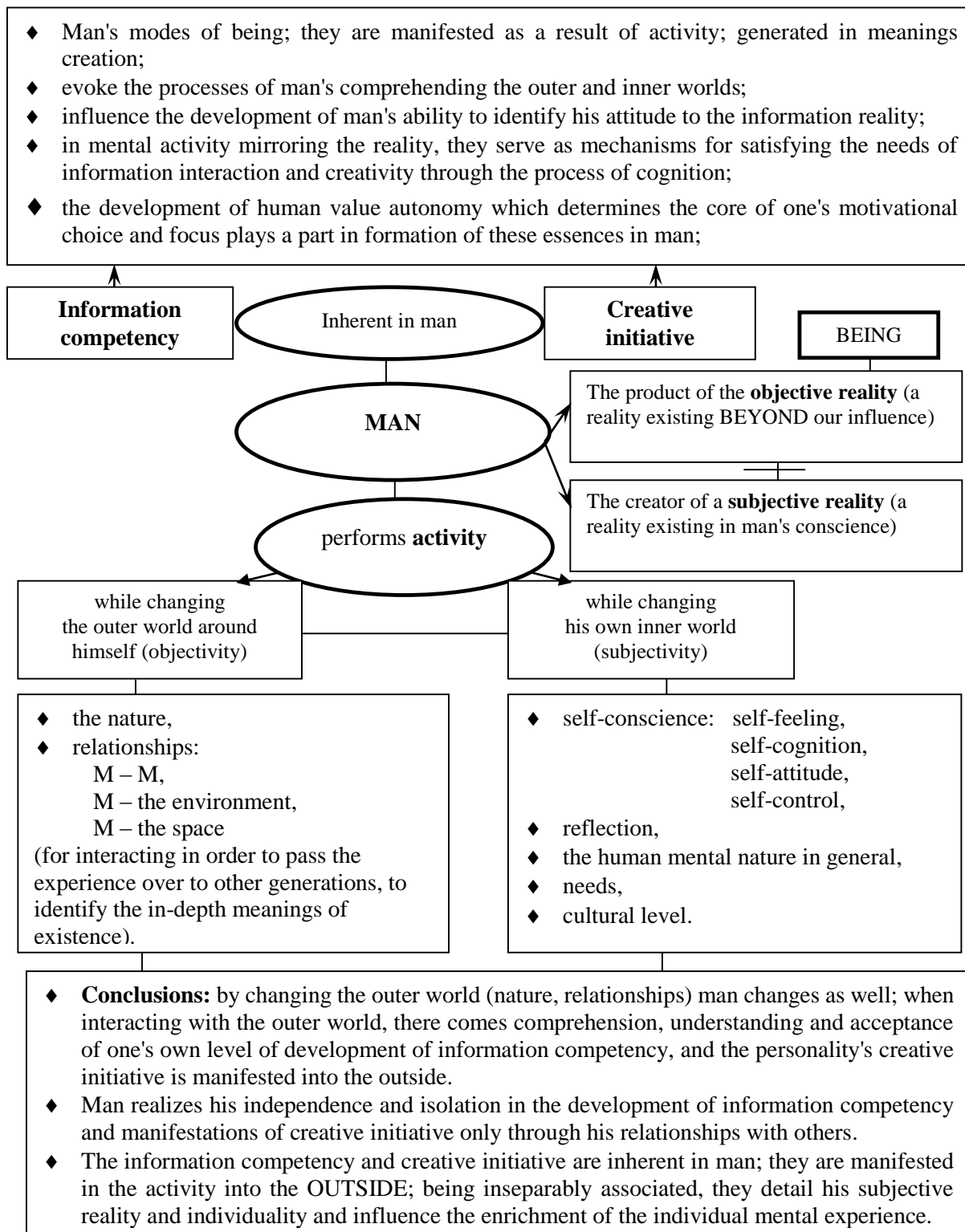


Figure 1. The existing and the other as factors detailing the mutual influence of the personality's information competency and creative initiative in the structure of its individuality

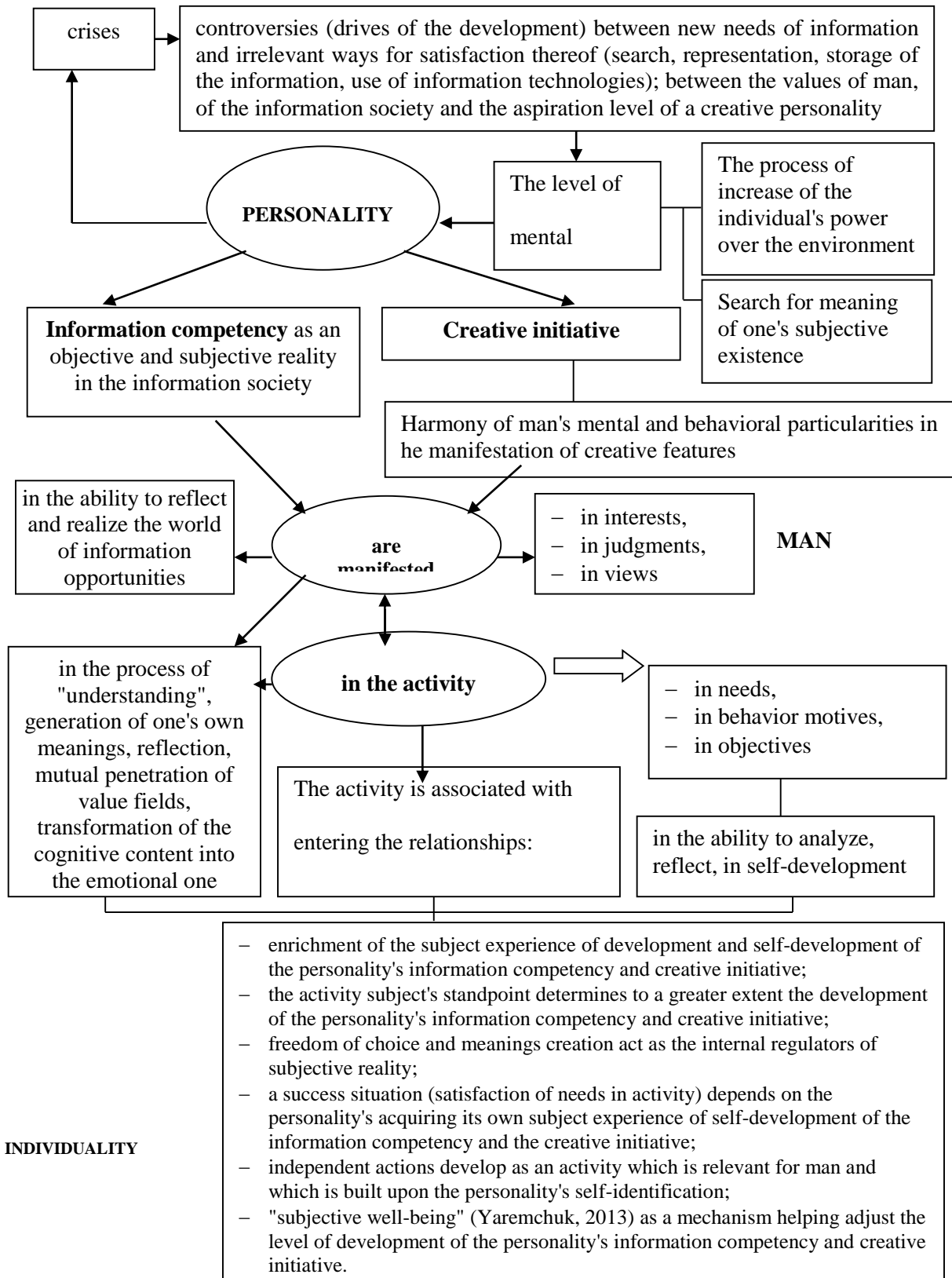


Figure 2. The dialectics of the development of the personality's information competency and creative initiative via the manifestation of subjective reality in the structure of individuality

Conclusion

For wording the conclusions on the theoretical research conducted, the theoretical provisions suggested by Abulkhanova (2014) will be taken into consideration. In detailing the principle of subject methodologically, Abulkhanova (2014) pays attention to the ontological approach to the activity subject and singles out such categories as life path, life capacities, life strategy. Life path is a way for the personality's self-fulfillment and objectification, reproduction of itself in forms of life, its continual mode of self-realization and self-fulfillment. Life capacities of personality characterize its new quality acquired by it during its life that is involved into social reality. Life strategy is the personality's way of life that fulfills in it what is important for it – its human essence. With regard to this, in the development of the information competency and the creative initiative, the personality is reproduced in the forms of life, self-fulfilling. The personality's life path is associated with the manifestation of life capacities which are the information competency and the creative initiative. Acting as a subject of activity, man elaborates his strategy of developing the information competency, the creative initiative and "the mode of life of his individuality".

The essential meanings of the "information competency" and "creative initiative of personality" phenomena are associated by the authors with the mental constituent as a field, resource and individual experience of life activity of the subject. Similarly, they relate it to meanings creation that develops the personality's subject experience of cognition and self-education and ensures acquisition of culture and values of mankind. The said meanings are also associated with a reflexive constituent that enriches the subject experience of development and self-development of the personality's information competency and creative initiative; and with the subjective well-being as an integral evaluation of the personality's life being up to its main meanings-related reference points.

Information competency is a key metasubject competency consisting of the cognitive, motivational, and activity-based components that are provided with details by man via "understanding", generating his own meanings, and enriching the subject experience.

Following Sedova, by creative initiative, the authors mean a unit of functioning of a creative personality, a feature of a life activity subject enabling the subject to adapt under new social and cultural conditions in the most successful manner and promoting the subject's reasonable self-identification based on analyzing actual opportunities and individual manifestations.

The personality's information competency and creative initiative are mutually developing structures of personality, and they can transform and improve themselves in the process of their development. Information competency and creative initiative of personality act as cumulative structures of personality that are grown up by it independently (Tabachuk, 2015).

The mechanisms for transforming and integrating the processes of development of the personality's information competency and creative initiative are competence, reflexivity, "inner dialectics", subjectness, "intersubjectivity", ability of dialogue and manifestation of individuality.

Finally, some words should be said about the directions of further research which the authors believe to be promising. They are ones relying on the theory of the creative mental field (Dorfman, 2016), resource-based approach to the intellect and creativity (Kholodnaya, 2015), the methodological principle of subject (Abulkhanova, 2014), the study of subjective well-being as a component of values- and meanings-related sphere of the personality (Yaremchuk, 2013; Tarman, 2017). Among them, there can be named the comprehending of the role of virtual collective subject in the creative educational process, and the creative mental field in the structure of individuality, the latter manifesting itself in the development of the personality's information competency. There are also creative initiatives of the subject of information society to be explored within the ontological approach, "creativity as an effect of competence" – within the resource-based approach, the information competency of personality to be studied as a subject of activity, and subjective well-being – as a condition for self-development of human information competency. Studies in the said directions have to be continued.

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