Psychological measurements of personality are often described as objective tests, projective tests and psycho-semantic tests.

Objective tests have a restricted response format, such as allowing for true or false answers or rating using an ordinal scale. Prominent examples of objective personality tests include the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory-III, Child Behavior Checklist, and the Beck Depression Inventory.

Projective tests allow for a freer type of response. An example of this would be the Rorschach test, in which a person states what each of ten ink blots might be.

As improved sampling and statistical methods developed, much controversy regarding the utility and validity of projective testing has occurred. The use of clinical judgement rather than norms and statistics to evaluate people’s characteristics has convinced many that projective tests are deficient and unreliable (results are too dissimilar each time a test is given to the same person).

Psycho-diagnostic methods described above have a number of serious deficiencies. For example, the direct methods of psycho-diagnostics based on the self-report reveal only consciously realised and not actually operating motives. Even adequately realised motives can be distorted during testing because of their various social desirabilities and therefore socially undesirable motives are masked and socially desirable motives are demonstrated. Other groups of tests – projective, do not allow evaluation of precise quantitative changes during the course of treatment. The quality of the conclusion under the projective test highly depends on the level of preparation and professionalism of the psychologist who is carrying out the test.

These traditional investigational methods of observing the human psyche, including the active methods of presentation of various test problems, the analysis of the dynamics of learning, and questioner data collection are insufficient because between the researcher and the psyche of the subject being tested is the conscious mind, which mediates all actions and processing of information and modifies all reactions.

Psycho-Semantic Tests

Psycho-semantic methods are free of the above described defects. The psycho-semantic approach allows the researcher to gain access to knowledge of how people think which is not always available to the people themselves. In psycho-semantics, the task for the individual is to provide some classification about a topic. The response could be a judgment of similarity, an indication of the extent to which she or he agrees or disagrees with a statement, or some other association. There are many different types of responses that are possible with this technique. On the basis of numerous responses to a range of stimuli, a matrix of data is obtained from each subject. The matrix can then be used with any analytic technique that is based on matrix algebra. These include a variety of well-known multidimensional procedures such as factor analysis, cluster analysis, latent variable modeling, and many others. As a result, the researcher can find "bundles" of interconnected meaning that form the coordinate axes of semantic space. The number of independent factors that emerge from an analysis defines the number of dimensions that are used.
to locate meanings in semantic space. According to these geometric models of the mind, the greater the number of independent factors that emerge from an analysis, the greater the cognitive complexity of the individual, group or social consciousness. Psycho-semantics, in a very simplistic way, is a link between words and feelings.

The psycho-semantic approach uses a hypothesis that human psyche and a person’s previous experiences are organized by semantic principle and the humans are the product of information of their surrounding environment. Any traits, influences, abilities, etc. are described and experienced through words, pictures, sounds etc. Information is categorized and prioritized by emotions throughout one’s life. The major content of the human’s informational being is not accessible to his/her conscious mind it belongs to the subconscious mind. Defining the requirements and developing the stimuli for the practical part of this article requires us to address the analysis of the psychological structure of a word-stimulus in forms that comprise an element of psycho-semantic spheres and its logical or semantic structure as organization that represents meaning.

Is it possible to have a detailed and scientifically proven approach to the psychological research of psycho-semantic spheres that will show which real connections were stimulated by a word and, if possible, to analyze the degree of probability of occurrence of these connections and degrees of affinity in which the separate components of this semantic system exists? In addition, are there any methods of objectively studying these semantic fields and their various incoming components?

Attempts to solve these problems have been repeatedly undertaken in psychology by Deese, Dixon, Kelly, Noble, Osgood, Shevrin, Kostandov, Luriya, Smirnov, Beznosjuk, and Zhuravlyov. There have been some experimental attempts to define subjective semantic fields and connections (inside of them) using methods of associative experiment by Deese and a conditional reflex by Luria and Vinogradova. Initial premises were developed to study psyche processes that presumed to obtain the information of its semantic elements without traditional division into motivational, will, and cognitive spheres. The foundation of such an approach was originated by Vygotsky.

The overwhelming majority of the methods of studying the psyche have not represented physical measurements. They neither maintained metrological requirements nor applied them consistently in experiments.

We require psychological methods which allow us to use not only theoretical but also practical applications to learn mental functions without the influence of the conscious mind of the participant being tested. The work of Shevrin, Shevrin, Bond, Brakel, Hertel and Williams, Kostandov and Dixon include methods of subconscious presentation of the testing information. On the basis of these works, the conceptual models were constructed that are competing with traditional psychoanalytic postulates in their efficiency of the practical applications by Beznosjuk and Smirnov and Smirnov, Beznosjuk & Zhuravlyov.

Applied on a subconscious level, psycho-semantic methods provide diagnostically significant structurally quantitative information for the organization of individual systems of values and attitudes. In subconsciously applied psycho-semantic procedures, the statistics are collected not within the limits of groups of examinees but within the limits of repeating probes during testing procedures in a single examinee.
The subconsciously applied psycho-semantic method appears indirectly, presented to the examinee in the form of a “verbal game,” appealing, seemingly, only to linguistic competence. These methods actually open the subjective content of language symbols that is embodied in the structural formation work of real motives and goals of the subject.

The content-analysis of scientific literature allows us to isolate the most important aspects for actual application testing. In this regard, we intend to identify a group of elements within the psycho-semantic sphere relating to destructive motives of specifically defined groups.