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FACTORS AND FORMS OF APHASIA

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CONTEMPORARY neurophysiology and micro-anatomy of the brain have substantially advanced our conceptions of the functional organization of this complex organ, and progress in our knowledge of the structure of language and the evolution of speech processes has made the contemporary study of speech much richer than it was a few decades ago.

As a result of the work of I. P. Pavlov and his school there exist excellent grounds for considering the cerebral cortex as the central section of the extero-, proprio-, and interoceptive analysers, which connect the organism with the outer and inner world and permit regulation of its activity. According to this point of view, the fundamental forms of reflection of the outer world and the regulation of behaviour are carried out in man by means of the analysis and synthesis of immediate signals impinging on the organism, and also by means of the "second system of signals" (at whose base lies speech) which processes the immediate impressions and forms a higher level of indirect, or "symbolic", reflection of reality.

Man's speech activity, which is based on the interaction of separate analysers, not only participates in the creation of an abstract and generalized picture of the world, but also creates new conditions for the regulation of human behaviour. Speech allows us to single out the essential aspects of the stimulation which impinges on us, to analyse the conditions of the tasks which are posed, to formulate an intention, to plan for their solution and to collate the results obtained with the initial plans. In all of these ways, speech provides for flexible self-regulation of man's psychological activity.

* Professor Luria was unable to attend the meeting and his paper was read for him by Dr. Macdonald Critchley.