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Learning to Investigate: A Book for Universities and Multilingual Research Teams

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Abstract

This review discusses the educational value of Dmitry Nikolaenko's Learning to Understand the Object: Scientific Recognition Architecture, published in English and Russian. It highlights the integration of text, diagrams, and learning units, alongside the book's potential for multilingual research training, doctoral education, and preparing teams to investigate complex dynamic natural processes.

Keywords: Scientific Recognition Architecture; doctoral education; multilingual learning; research training; interdisciplinary cooperation; complex dynamic processes.

Review of Dmitry Nikolaenko's Learning to Understand the Object: Scientific Recognition Architecture. Prague: Pollution and Diseases Publisher, 2026. English and Russian editions.

The simultaneous publication of Dmitry Nikolaenko's book in English and Russian reflects an important aspect of its purpose: preparing researchers to investigate complex dynamic processes. Both editions are presented in the publisher's book catalogue, making the work accessible to different linguistic audiences from the outset. Its educational conception deserves particular attention.

In the introduction, Nikolaenko describes the book as a series of "undelivered lectures." This description captures its character well. The volume offers a sustained course of intellectual preparation, moving from encounters with an insufficiently understood object towards the organisation of collective inquiry. Its carefully developed structure, conceptual ambition, and emphasis on independent judgement make it well suited to demanding postgraduate teaching.

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The author brings extensive international academic experience to this undertaking, having worked in universities in the Soviet Union, Russia, Ukraine, South Africa, China, Germany, the Czech Republic, and other countries. This background informs a central educational concern: disciplinary qualifications alone do not ensure readiness to participate in a complex research project. Researchers must also learn to connect their contributions, examine assumptions, work with uncertainty, and reconsider established interpretations.

One of the book's strongest features is the relationship between its main text, logical diagrams, and learning units. These three layers allow readers to examine an argument, follow its conceptual organisation, and practise the corresponding intellectual operations. The operational specification and glossary further support a shared understanding of the approach. This structure provides a substantial foundation for doctoral seminars and for training teams before research begins.

The availability of different language editions is especially significant in this context. Learning in one's native language can facilitate close examination of unfamiliar concepts and more precise discussion of difficult questions. Meanwhile, international cooperation requires participants to retain a common conceptual framework. The book's clearly organised sections, diagrams, and exercises provide reference points for comparing formulations across languages and locating passages when interpretation becomes uncertain.

This organisation also offers a promising basis for further translations undertaken in response to particular research needs. A project using Vietnamese wartime archives to investigate long-term environmental contamination, for example, could benefit from a Vietnamese edition used in team preparation. The existing structure could facilitate its preparation, although careful checking of terminology and conceptual equivalence would remain essential. Translation would thus become part of establishing the conditions for joint scientific work.

The book is particularly recommended for university libraries, doctoral programmes, and research groups studying complex dynamic natural processes. Its most receptive audience is likely to include doctoral students from different disciplines and experienced researchers confronting problems that exceed familiar explanatory frameworks. For these readers, Learning to Understand the Object offers both a substantial course of study and a basis for developing a shared research practice.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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