

COMPREHENSION OF DISCOURSE DEFINITION IN THE SYSTEMIC DESCRIPTION OF MIND

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Considerable terminological deliquescence is associated with the notion of *discourse*, which remains at the center of the methodological polemics of philosophers, historians, sociologists, linguists, psychologists, culturologists, and others. We form an idea of discourse basing on the views of the French epistemologist Michel Foucault: «...discourse is constituted by a group of sequences of signs, in so far as they are statements, that is, in so far as they can be assigned particular modalities of existence... The term discourse can be defined as the group of statements that belong to a single system of <discursive> formation; thus I shall be able to speak of clinical discourse, economic discourse, the discourse of natural history, psychiatric discourse»(Foucault, 1972: 107–108).

However, Foucault believes that a discursive formation is formed centrifugally, according to the principle of dispersion: «Paradoxically, to define a group of statements in terms of its individuality would be to define the dispersion of these objects, to grasp all the interstices that separate them, to measure the distances that reign between them – in other words, to formulate their law of division» (Foucault, 1972: 33).

As we can see, Foucault defines discourse through the «sequence of signs», and the «system of dispersion», which reflects such characteristics of discourse as – *sequence* and *entropy*, respectively. We consider a linguistic *sign* with a psycholinguistic emphasis on *meaning*, thus we suggest understanding the discourse as a meaning, generated by the entropy of a sequence of other meanings with a specific structure of their dispersion (dissemination, dissipation,

scattering). Thus, **the discourse is the meaning of the dispersion of meanings.**

We agree with Foucault regarding discreteness and simultaneity of discourse: «Discourse must not be referred to the distant presence of the origin, but treated as and when it occurs» (Foucault, 1972: 25). However, in the system description the discourse cannot be considered arbitrarily, i.e. outside the ontology of the mind. The structure of the dispersion of meanings, which «launches» discourse, does not possess any objectified meaning per se. We believe that discourse (as meaning) arises as a result of the correspondence (interrelation) of a particular dispersion structure with actualized in the mind other structures of the scattering of meanings. In our opinion, the worldview, in fact, is a complex set of discursive formations. In other words, the worldview is a meta-discourse, a global discursive formation. Thus, **the discourse is a meaning constituted by the relation between the actual dispersion of meanings and the worldview, as a meta-discourse.** The proposed definition, at this stage of our thinking, can be depicted in the form of a logical formula:

$$D_m = \frac{(m_1 + m_2 + \dots + m_n) \cdot (H_L \cdot N + H_M)}{(\sum_{m=1}^{\infty} D_M) \cdot H_M}$$

Where, D_m – discourse; $(m_1+m_2+\dots+m_n)$ – the sequence of meanings; N – the number of meanings (signs, words, statements); H_L – the entropy of the language; $\sum D_M$ – the worldview, as a meta-discourse; H_M – the entropy of the worldview. The multiplications in the numerator and denominator are the structures of dispersion of discourse meanings and the worldview, respectively.

In the proposed formula, we introduce two coefficients of entropy, thus differentiating dispersion of the discourse and meta-discourse. Dispersion of the latter is determined by the entropy of the mind, as an energy process. Note that we consider the dispersion of the worldview, as a special case of the entropy of the mind. Dispersion of discourse is determined by the cumulative influence of the entropy of the mind (which realizes the discourse)

and the entropy of the language by which the discourse is realized. For example, for English this parameter is 1.3–2.3 bits per letter (Cover & King, R., 1978; Shannon, 1951).

The main, most obvious hypotheses-consequences of the above formula is that if the worldview ($\Sigma D_M = 0$) is not formed (unavailable) and/or the mind is an inoperative ($H_M = 0$), it makes no sense to speak of discourse. Discourse is absent if there is no sequence of meanings ($m_1 + m_2 + \dots + m_n = 0$) and/or there is no dispersion of meanings ($H_n + H_M = 0$). If $D_m < 1$, the discourse can be considered as potentially adaptive. That is, one that is assimilated by meta-discourse while preserving the architecture of the worldview, as a global discursive formation. If $D_m > 1$, then this discourse is transformational one and has the potential to either qualitatively transform the worldview or cause a maladaptive or reciprocal defensive reaction to discourage discourse. In the latter case, the reactions will be directed to the dysfunction of the sequence of meanings (for example, distortion, substitution or displacement of separate meanings) and/or correction of the structure of their dispersion (for example, by defensive devaluation, intellectualization, moralization) and/or termination of entropy (for example, by distracting the mind's attention from the discourse or its component, refocusing to another discourse). The localization, structure and dynamics of these reactions, as well as other interactions of discourse and meta-discourse, are the subject of our current research activity.