

On Features of Discourse and Its Representation in Self-Help Literature

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Abstract. The term discourse has been one of the debatable topics not only within linguistics, but also within the scope of other fields of science. Linguists including N.D. Arutyunova, E.S. Kubryakova, V.M. Leichik, V.I. Karasik, M.L. Makarov, L.A. Manerko, M. Stubbs, L.S. Beilinson and many others suggested features of discourse. In the article the specific features of discourse have been discussed and analyzed in the works of American social psychologists, who were prominent representatives of self-help literature.

Key words. Self-help, self-improvement, discourse, self-help discourse, self-help literature.

INTRODUCTION. In the study of discourse, determining criteria for distinguishing between different types of discourse is one of the central issues. Clearly, different researchers employ diverse methods for selecting particular types of discourse.

The classification of discourse types by V.I. Karasik (2004) is the first approach. The researcher categorizes discourse types into two broad categories: personality-oriented discourse and status-oriented discourse. In the first instance, the speaker acts as an individual with a rich inner world, and in the second instance, as a representative of a specific social group or social institution. Status-oriented discourse is defined as "a specialized clichéd type of communication between people who may not know each other but must communicate according to the norms of a given society". To determine the type of communication, it is necessary to consider the status-role characteristics of the participants, the purpose of the communication, and the prototypical location of the communication. According to these criteria, the researcher identifies numerous types of status-oriented discourse, including scientific, mass media, business, and religious.

LITERATURE REVIEW. Alekseeva and Mishlanova (2002) developed a classification of discourse types according to the level of professional competence of the language personality. From their perspective, each individual in this professional field appears to be a "specialist" with varying levels of specialized knowledge and socialization. The type of discourse in this system is determined by the level of expression of the following parameters: 1) the nature of the activity in a specialized/professional field; and 2) the level of specialized education of the discourse participants. According to the aforementioned criteria, there are four distinct types of discourse. The

communication context and specialized knowledge are irrelevant to naive discourse.

Practical discourse participants lack specialized education (Alekseeva and Mishlanova, 2002), but frequently engage in discussions and problem-solving related to this field of knowledge. Professional discourse is also dependent upon the nature of the activity in a special/professional field and the presence or absence of special education. In scientific discourse, specialized knowledge predominates.

According to V.V. Krasnykh (1998), it seems more appropriate to discuss one national discourse over another. Thus, she defines Russian discourse as "a verbalized speech-cogitative activity, understood as a set of process and result, that has both linguistic and extralinguistic goals and is performed in Russian by members of the Russian national cultural community". Moreover, within the framework of a single national-cultural field, political, pedagogical, and other discourses are distinguished, which, according to the author, are merely modified versions of Russian discourse that have been adapted in some way to the area in which they function. This viewpoint is extremely intriguing and not devoid of logic. Nonetheless, institutional types are invariably distinguished within the framework of any national discourse, based on the sphere of communication - political, pedagogical, scientific, medical, religious discourse, etc. In the context of this study, the classification of discourse types according to the specifics of the situation and the communication domain seems more justifiable and practical. Clearly, the characteristics of a discourse vary according to its context of application. In his article "Types of discourse and types of dictems," V.M1 Leichik identifies, according to the sphere of use, the following discourse types: common (everyday discourse), artistic discourse, journalistic discourse, advertising discourse, economic discourse, scientific discourse, etc.

DISCUSSION. Taking into account the aforementioned approaches to the definition of discourse types, the following are the primary criteria for determining the discourse type in this study:

1. The scope of communication and the roles of communication participants
2. The nature of the author's involvement in this field
3. The recipient's special knowledge availability
4. Objective of the communication

The discourse of American social psychologists is a form of communication between individuals who study positive thinking within the context of positive psychology. Positive psychology is a branch of psychological knowledge and practice that focuses on the positive potential of individuals. Its objective is the scientific psychological study of optimal human functioning, as well as the identification of factors that contribute to the flourishing of individuals and communities. In other words, psychology is the professional environment in which communication participants engage in

their activities. According to N.D. Arutyunova, E.S. Kubryakova, V.M. Leichik, V.I. Karasik, M.L. Makarov, L.A. Manerko, M. Stubbs, and L.S. Beilinson, one of the characteristics of professional discourse is the thematic limitation of communication within the context of the relevant objective activity. Considering the role of participants in communication, i.e., author and addressee, it is important to note that professional discourse is based on the specialized training of at least one participant. Within the context of the examined discourse, the authors are American social psychologists who develop the theory of positive thinking as a unique way of thinking to achieve goals. Consequently, they are experts in this field of knowledge. Note that the author's knowledge can be both theoretical and purely practical. In this case, we are referring to authors who demonstrate how positive thinking assisted them in overcoming obstacles and teach the reader how positive thinking functions in practice. The recipient may be someone who studies positive thinking as a psychological phenomenon, or someone who wishes to learn how to think positively and achieve success in life with the aid of such a mindset. In other words, the recipient of the text is not necessarily an expert in the area of positive thinking. The status-role relationships of communication participants are considered asymmetric due to the fact that the author and addressee may have varying degrees of specialized knowledge in the subject matter.

The purpose of communication is to explain the mechanism of positive thinking, persuade individuals of the significance and necessity of positive thinking, and instruct the recipient on how to apply the principles of positive thinking to accomplish their goals. Social psychologists in the United States engage in professional discourse, according to this description. This study defines professional discourse as verbal communication used to solve practical and theoretical problems in a specific field that necessitates specialized training and experience.

Undoubtedly, the aforementioned objectives of communication within the professional discourse of American social psychologists demonstrate their pragmatic worldview. This conclusion is derived from an analysis of the general content of books by American social psychologists, each of which investigates the role of positive thinking in various aspects of American life. For example, the originator of the term "positive thinking" and positive thinking as a technique for self-improvement coined these terms. In his most famous book, "The Power of Positive Thinking," Norman Vincent Peale describes specific techniques for cultivating the optimism that contributes to life success. In addition, according to the pastor, these techniques are accessible and well-known to anyone who believes in God and reads the Bible carefully. Peel identifies faith in God as the central component of optimistic thought. In other words, in analyzing the relationship between religion and positive thinking, the author views these phenomena pragmatically as material, material substances that can be

used to achieve a particular objective.

CONCLUSION. Within the scope of this investigation, written discourse is analyzed. Notably, the discourse of American social psychologists is marked by a high degree of emotionality and conversational elements. This distinction may be the result of a unique set of correlations between the components of personal and status communication for each discourse type. Due to the fact that one of the goals of communication, as previously stated, is to convince people of the importance of positive thinking and teach them this way of thinking, it is extremely difficult to do so without expressing a personal attitude toward the interlocutor.

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