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## DVILYPIS DISKURSO ANALIZĖS POBŪDIS

### Dual Character of Discourse Analysis

#### SUMMARY

In modern world, the ability to use the power of words effectively is highly valuable. The present paper looks into communication process as a discourse and provides the insight into different approaches to discourse analysis. Two traditional approaches to discourse analysis – the structuralist approach and the functionalist approach – speak for the difference in the way the accents are placed while defining discourse. The notions of communication and discourse are recognized as interrelated. Discourse can be viewed as an interaction with a certain purpose, rather than isolated articulation of information, it therefore can be used as a synonym of communication. The interaction of the social, economic, political, and other contexts in which the language occurs forms the reality-constructing dimension which means that language represents and contributes to the production and reproduction of social reality. Critical discourse analysis focuses on the approach that language choices are not accidental. The approach of the involvement of rhetoric means focuses on persuasive aspect of language and the tools that assist in achieving a desirable impact of the communication.

#### SANTRAUKA

Šiuolaikiniame pasaulyje gebėjimas veiksmingai naudotis žodžių galia yra labai efektyvus informacijos pateikimo įrankis. Straipsnyje komunikacijos procesas laikomas diskursu, pateikiami įvairūs diskurso analizės metodai. Išskiriami du tradiciniai požiūriai į diskurso analizę – struktūrinis ir funkcinis, kurie akcentuoja arba komunikacinio vieneto formą, arba jo atliekamą funkciją. Teigiama, kad komunikacijos ir diskurso sąvokos tarpusavyje susijusios. Diskursas – tai komunikacija, kuri pateikia informaciją ne izoliuotai, o turint tam tikrą tikslą. Taigi diskursas gali būti vartojamas kaip komunikacijos sinonimas. Socialinių, ekonominių, politinių ir kitų kontekstų, kurie atsiranda vykstant komunikacijai, sąveika formuoja tikrovę kuriantį aspektą, o tai reiškia, kad kalba atspindi socialinę tikrovę ir prisideda prie jos kūrimo ar atkūrimo. Kritinė diskurso analizė remiasi požiūriu, kad kalbos raiškos būdų pasirinkimai nėra atsitiktiniai. Vienas tokių būdų yra retorinės kalbos priemonės, kurios stiprina įtikinimo aspektą ir kuria pageidaujamą komunikacijos poveikį.

RAKTAŽODŽIAI: komunikacija, diskursas, tikrovę kurianti teorija, kritinė diskurso analizė.

KEY WORDS: communication, discourse, reality constructing theory, critical discourse analysis.

*"The essence of language is human activity – activity on the part of one individual to make himself understood by another, activity on the part of that other to understand what was in the mind of the first."*

(Otto Jespersen, *The Philosophy of Grammar*)

## INTRODUCTION

Communication is an integral and critical part of human life. For centuries, it has served as a tie, connecting community together. The essence of communication can be formulated in two simple but crucial facets: revealing and receiving certain information. The main instrument for revealing and receiving information is human speech, which represents a very complicated phenomenon, thus leading to numerous approaches in the way it can be studied.

The present paper considers communication process as a discourse, i.e., connected language unit, be it a speech or a written piece, which is an extended verbalization of a thought on a definite theme.

There are numerous approaches to the term "discourse". The fundamental ideas about discourse were introduced by M. Foucault, a French philosopher, who defined discourse as "a regulated practice that accounts for a number of statements." (Foucault 2005: 80) There also exist two approaches to the term "discourse", providing two different theories of discourse – structuralist and functionalist, which are discussed by J. Richardson and Kortmann. Two traditional fundamental approaches to discourse – formalist, or structuralist approach, and functionalist – represent the difference in the way accents are placed while defining discourse. At the center of F. de Saussure's

structuralist theory stands "the determination and description of the individual elements of the language system (on all structural levels: sounds, words and their components, sentences and their constituents), and the relations existing between them on each of these levels (Kortmann 2005: 15). The relation of the elements is based on cohesion – both structural and logical. However, as Richardson claims, this definition does not consider "the social ideas that inform the way we use and interpret language, and, since discourse exists in a kind of dialogue with society, such factors as the context, situation, relation between the communicators are more important than the form." (Richardson 2007: 23) This emphasis on function of discourse rather than its form is represented in functionalist approach, which assumes that language cannot be investigated independently from primary function it serves, namely communication, from the participants involved in the act of communication, and from the general (e.g. social and cognitive) conditions, as well as personal, institutional and cultural circumstances (Kortmann 2005: 24; Shi-xu 2005: 8). This emphasis on the purpose and function of language use as opposed to focus on its form enables the researchers in a particular discourse field to conduct manifold studies, which relate the form of utterance to the intention that stands behind the choice of that particular

form. For example, G. Cook stresses the importance of coherence in an utterance, which means the absence of incongruities of meaning, and that the utterances should be grammatically coherent and correct as well (Cook 2001: 6).

Putting all the aspects above together, the discourse can be defined as an articulation of information that has an object, is grammatically and semantically correct, and is uttered in a certain context with a certain purpose.

A special attention should be paid to the fact that in literature the notions of communication and discourse are inter-related. According to Bargiela-Chiappini, "the former is defined as the realization of the latter" (Bargiela-Chiappini 2009: 4). Since discourse can be viewed as an interaction in a context and with a certain purpose, rather than isolated articu-

lation of information, it therefore can be used as a synonym of communication. It also means that discourse cannot be considered in isolation as an object of study. The interaction of the social, economic, political, and other contexts in which the language occurs forms another dimension which cannot be lost from the view of analysis (Cosman 2013: 136). This dimension is called the reality-constructing practice which is understood as a type of linguistic effect with the features expressing intention, planning, combination of rational, or factual, and emotional, or persuasive, appeal. In order to achieve a favorable effect, various communicational strategies are used, which, altogether, are aimed at altering the recipients' impression and attitude towards the issues that are verbalized in a communication unit or discourse.

## THE REALITY-CONSTRUCTING THEORY VS. THE REPRESENTATIONAL THEORY

To establish peculiar features of a particular genre of discourse, it is important to bear in mind its structural features as well as the context and intention. Such situational aspects as the purpose, target audience, the relations between the communicators, social, educational and occupational background of the presenter and the recipient, influence the text. On the other hand, it is also correct to assert that the process of constructing may go the opposite direction as well, that is, all of the stated circumstances make discourse itself shape these features. As B. Johnstone states, "discourse is shaped by the world, and discourse shapes the world" (Johnstone 2005: 9).

This aspect underlies the ground for the reality-constructive theory.

As Richardson explains (with reference to James Paul Gee), discourse exists in interrelation with society: "language simultaneously reflects reality and constructs (construes) it to be a certain way" (Richardson 2007: 26). This means that language represents and contributes to the production and reproduction of social reality. This dual possibility underlies the basis for two different theories of discourse: representational theory and reality constructing theory.

As it has been stated previously, discourse is a part of the surrounding world and thus cannot be separated from it.

The essential aspect of shaping discourse is that discourse is shaped by the world, and discourse shapes the world. This statement is consecutively analyzed by Shixu who provides two views, or theories, of discourse in connection to reality and world: the representational view (or mapping theory) and the reality-constructing view.

The basic assumption of the representational view is that "there is a common world out there and our languages are analogous to maps of this world" (Grace 1987: 7). Therefore, the language serves as a "map" representing or reflecting the reality. Shi-xu defines the essence of representational view as "language is a sort of mirror of reality, or window on to the world, and so is detachable from the objects that it describes" (Shi-xu 2005:13). There are also several different approaches to this view, for example, a functional approach contends that language is a reflection of external social context, or a formal approach, which claims that it is a reflection of mind. However, these assumptions have shortages, represented in the following possible conclusion of these assumptions: if language is able to reflect or represent the surrounding world, then it should not matter whether one language is more expressive than some others are, since the content is of prime importance, but not the possibilities of language. This means that the mental process does not depend on language, as well as that socially and even culturally diverse thoughts can be expressed equally expressively in different languages. Finally, Shi-xu names a neutral scientific language to describe "an independently

given reality, whether social, psychological or linguistic" (Shi-xu 2005: 13).

The reality-constructing view of discourse provides a sharp contrast to the representational. It also assumes that discourse is inseparable from the world or reality but can be seen as "thoroughly constitutive of it" (Shi-xu 2005: 13). It means that any human experience can be represented, for example, expressed verbally. Since the only way to do it is through language, discourse becomes a means to construct reality. However, it would be incorrect to conclude that discourse functions solely to describe the reality. Through communicating their experiences, people are also interpreting, evaluating and stating their point of view and expressing opinion. This process contributes largely to the construction of reality rather than to its description.

Another contrast of the two theories is their different attitudes towards cultural differences. Reality-constructing view suggests that "a language is shaped by its culture, and a culture is given expression in its language" (Grace 1987: 10). This implies that even the way people think is differently expressed in different cultural and social societies. Moreover, there can be no single scientific language to reflect all the social contexts in one and the same way.

The main challenge, occurring while analyzing the reality-constructing theories, is that reality is difficult to define. It is highly subjective, since every human sees it through a personal prism. As Berger and Luckmann state, "humans are incapable of total objectivity because they are situated in a reality, constructed by subjective experience" (Berger and

Luckmann 1984: 37). In a business setting, it seems to be clear what real economic circumstances of current situation are, but most of the non-specialist recipients draw their knowledge of economic situation from the news. News belong to the media discourse, which is characterized by high levels of subjectivity, and uses a great variety of reality-constructing means as well. Since there is no complete reassurance that the reality of one company corresponds with what other company considers to be real, there seems to be no consensus as to whose reality is more accurate.

The process of constructing reality is for the greater part unconscious. People often recite the facts from their own perspective unaware of giving personal interpretation of actual facts. However,

many spheres exist where the reality is distorted or violated on purpose. These spheres include literature, for example, where the writers often deliberately speculate the reality in order to achieve certain results, and the reader sees the world through the prism of the writer's point of view. Another sphere is media, and mainly - advertising. The producers of advertisements tend to speculate the reality in order to persuade the potential buyer or consumer to use the offered goods or services. Political discourse is also characterized by a profound use of the reality-constructing tools to persuade potential electors. Although it is not that straightforward, it is also essentially construction of the reality that lies in the basis of persuasive impact of annual reports on the recipient.

## THE PRINCIPLES OF DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

The analysis of any discourse field is a complicated process. Hugh Trappes-Lomax defines discourse analysis as "the study of language viewed communicatively and/or of communication viewed linguistically" (Davies and Elder 2006: 134). Moreover, there are four additional references, which come out of the definition of discourse, presented above, that add to the definition and complete it, namely, reference to the language in use, language beyond the sentence, language as meaning in interaction, and language in situational and cultural context. Bearing in mind these four aspects, there arise certain questions that have to be answered in order to understand and interpret some discourse units. In fact,

discourse analysis can be viewed as a set of questions that help to penetrate into the meaning and purpose of discourse utterance.

Some simple but essential questions for discourse analysis are: What is the text about and how is it written? Whom it was written by? What is the purpose of the text? Who is the intended audience and actual audience? From these questions, some crucial aspects of shaping text are derived, which are already mentioned: "Discourse is shaped by the world, and discourse shapes the world" (Johnstone 2005: 9). This aspect underlies the ground for one of the discourse theories, namely for the reality-constructive theory. Another facet of discourse analy-

sis questions, provided by Johnstone, is the notion that discourse is shaped by its purpose and participants, and, on the other hand, discourse shapes the participants and purposes itself (Johnstone 2005: 12). This means that utterances are produced by a human being (a speaker), for a human (i.e. every utterance underlies a hearer), and with a certain purpose.

Various fields of discourse presume various hearers and purposes. There is a specific audience for legal discourse, business discourse or political discourse. Moreover, different spheres of discourse have different functions. For example, business discourse is a multi-genre area, since it involves such sub-genres as for example, document business discourse (internal and external business correspondence, corporate documents, company regulations, etc.), the discourse of business media (news, reports, and reviews), the discourse of professional business communication (negotiations, communication with customers, business slang, etc.), training and academic business discourse (textbooks, manuals, case studies, training, business consulting and coaching, etc.).

A specific approach to media discourse studies is provided by Teun A. Van Dijk (1985),

who claims that the research of the second half of the 20th century was predominated with "[...] various sociological or socio-psychological theories of mass media institutions, of audiences or effects, or the relations between media on the one hand and society and culture on the other" (Van Dijk 1985: 1). He distin-

guishes several approaches to the discourse analysis: content analysis, structuralist or semiological approaches, critical discourse analysis and others. Content and critical discourse analyses are the most relevant since they share similar approaches with structuralist and functionalist views of language.

First and foremost, it has to be taken into account that any discourse research (with exception for the content analysis) is mainly qualitative due to the fact that, according to Trappes-Lomax, "it is inherently interpretive" (in Davies and Elder 2006: 141). Referring to Berelson (1952), in "Analyzing Newspapers" Richardson defines content analysis as "a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication" (Richardson 2007: 16). In other words, this type of analysis deals mainly with what is said, but not with the motives, appeals or responses, therefore, it is rather quantitative than qualitative. Richardson also adopts Berelson's idea that content analysis presupposes that the communicator, analysts and the audience understand the meanings in the same way, which was intended by the communicator. In practice, this feature would be difficult to apply to literary discourse, since it needs much room for the interpretation and even personal evaluation of the text by the reader. It is otherwise, however, in analyzing, for example legal, business or political discourse, since the communicator would expect the recipient to understand exactly the intended meaning in order to shape a desired opinion.

## CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

As Carter notices in "Investigating English Discourse" "there is a social responsibility on the part of linguists not exclusively to analyze textual structure but also to show how language choices are not simple choices." (Carter 1997: 119) This investigation of language choices is in the focus of critical discourse analysis. The importance and wide applicability of critical discourse analysis is mostly predetermined by the fact that it rests on the principles of the functionalist definition of discourse, for the function of the text is of greater importance here than its form.

The basic aim of critical discourse analysis, on the other hand, rests on the necessity not only to analyze the structure of the text, but rather to indicate that language choices are not accidental. One of the founders of critical discourse analysis Norman Fairclough has described it as aiming "to systematically explore [...] relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes." (Fairclough 2010: 132). This type of analysis implies interpretive, contextual and constructivist approach: it concentrates on interpretation of the meanings rather than on mere qualification, it considers context in which the utterance appears rather than summarizes its patterns, and stresses that the meaning is constructed through an interrelation between communicator, his text and the audience. This model of analysis suggests that cooperation of the form of the text and its function is of prime importance. These basic distinc-

tions from content analysis contribute greatly to the prevalent usage of critical discourse analysis. For example, Aerts defines the function of the explanatory texts in the following way:

"Narrative accounting reports are one of the means by which corporate management can legitimise the company's activities and outcomes. Verbal behavior and more specifically, the way in which facts, events and actions are explained, is important, certainly in external relations, because it defines the essential elements of the corporate performance environment and portrays the normative and empirical bases on which to judge the appropriateness of the company actions." (Aerts 1994: 338)

What follows from this definition is that annual reports, first of all, are aimed at a much larger audience than merely company's shareholders, and that the reports are used to provide justification for certain actions. This justification is given to auditors, shareholders, investors, clients, and society in general.

Precisely the relation of discourse with society, discerned by Richardson, Fairclough and Aerts, provides the framework that discourse uses the means of language not to represent the reality as it is, but rather to construct the kind of reality the communicators want the audience to perceive. As Johnstone puts it, "ways of talking produce and reproduce ways of thinking, and ways of thinking can be manipulated via choices about grammar, style, wording and every other aspect of language" (Johnstone 2005: 45) In order to serve

the purpose, namely, to construct the reality, these means of language have to be persuasive.

The effect behind persuasive language is explained by Austin's speech act theory, which states that there are three levels of utterance analysis: the level of locution (the words themselves), the illocutionary force (the function of the words, the specific purpose that the speakers have in mind), and the perlocutionary effect (the effect on the hearer and the hearer's reaction) (Cutting 2002: 16). It is the illocutionary force that is at the center of critical discourse analysis. The perlocutionary force is much more evident in advertising or political dis-

course – it implies purchasing the goods that are advertised, or voting for a candidate who is promoted. In business discourse, it might be expressed as concluding a contract, getting an agreement of investment, or accepting a project proposal, for example. In annual reports, it is rather difficult to discern the immediate perlocutionary effect, since the target audience is multifaceted. It might involve shareholders' approval of a company's management, which could result in rather tangible bonuses for the managers. It might also result in more active investments. In discourse analysis, the means to achieved perlocutionary force are investigated in rhetoric analysis.

## RHETORIC DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Rhetoric analysis is based on similar assumptions as Critical Discourse Analysis. It studies how the speakers formulate language for the readers. Therefore, rhetoric focuses on persuasive aspect of language and the tools that assist in achieving a desirable impact on the audience. The history of rhetoric analysis goes back for centuries, although first rhetoric analysis aspirations were mostly related to literature genres. As Rivkin and Ryan state,

“In ancient Greece and Rome, language was recognized as an important feature of social and political life. Training in how to think properly took the form of training in how to use language effectively. Logic, the right use of such mental processes as induction and deduction, was studied in conjunction with rhetoric, the use of forms to give shape to language and the use of language to make argu-

mentative points and attain emotional effects.” (Rivkin, Ryan 2004: 127)

Well-known ideas expressed by Aristotle are also related to rhetoric. Aristotle's threefold set of rhetoric means includes *ethos*, or appeal to the authority and credibility of a presenter; *logos* – appeal to a recipients logic by using argumentative techniques, and, finally, *pathos*, which implies appealing to a recipient's emotions. Originally deployed in literature genres, in modern times the same rhetoric means are used in a wide variety of discourse spheres – mass media, politics, economy, business, etc.

It can be assumed that rhetorical analysis focuses on argumentative and emotional appeals to the recipient. The need for argumentative appeal rises from the function of communication units.

Young argues that rhetoric is:



"a pervasive element within our lives as we argue with and attempt to persuade others and ourselves of the viability, credibility, and plausibility of our positions, beliefs, problems, solution and perspectives. Through persuasion, significances and meaning are established in our lives as well as in the more specialized arenas of politics and policy making...mathematics...and economics. This implies that rhetoric tends to be argumentative." (Young 2003: 623)

Indeed, the perception of rhetoric involvement in more spheres than only literature has been developing over the past decades. Modern rhetoricians examine, for example, the use of language in the discourse of medicine, economics, e-mail language, etc. They are concerned "particularly with the way language contains embedded within it schemas for understanding the world in a particular way." (Rivkin, Ryan 2004: 128). This assumption once again proves the hypothesis that there is a dual relationship be-

tween language and reality construction: language helps to form a reality, while reality influences the choices of language.

It is an important assumption of rhetoric discourse analysis that language shapes people's perceptions of the world. Further developments in speech-act theory contend that language also actively constructs social reality. "Rhetorical analysis thus provides a new way to challenge capitalist social relations and the economic-centered institutional arrangements that accompany this ideology. [...] By exposing the persuasive techniques used in these reports, we provide, a more nuanced picture of how the language used in social/environmental reports has broader socio-structural effects" (Higgins, Walker 2012: 205).

Well-thought rhetoric strategies in different discourses may considerably influence the efficiency of the communicative unit.

## CONCLUSION

There is a certain duality in everything that concerns discourse. First, it is the duality in fundamental classical approaches, which place accents differently on form and function of discourse (formalist and functionalist theories, respectively). Second, there are two main ways to analyze discourse – basing on formal features of utterances in isolation, or basing on pragmatic aims of a speak-

er. Critical Discourse Analysis discerns the communicators' intention, since this method is based on analyzing discourse in a context. Finally, it has been ascertained that, in order to conduct a full analysis of discourse in context, it is important to apply the rhetoric analysis, i.e., to search for means that assist in creating a favorable reality.

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