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ON NEEDS-INFORMATIONAL APPROACH TO COMMUNICATION AND DISCOURSE CLASSIFICATION

The paper presented focuses upon the needs-informational approach to communication that highlights the interconnection between the types of needs and types of discourse. This interconnection is illustrated by the discursive explication of the need for power that demands a three-leveled discursive system, where need for information plays part of a systematizing vector.

KEY WORDS: *needs, communication, information, discourse.*

When entering the communication process, Homo sapiens meets his needs or demands; they become the major reason for the communication to be necessary. Communication objectives "offer a hand to certain needs, such as survival, cooperation with other people, personal needs, maintaining relationships with other persons, persuasion of others to act and think in some particular way, to obtain power over someone (propaganda is very persistent here), unification of societies and organizations acting as one whole, obtaining and channeling information, cognition of the world together with our experience within it (what we believe in, what we think of ourselves, of personal interrelations, as well as of what is considered true), and the explication of creative nature and imagination¹.

Anyway, being led by needs, Man has to use in some certain language abilities which help him to explicit his needs. When applying to his informational thesaurus that is cognitively obtained as mentally structured², he extracts the necessary cluster of notions and concepts, so as to transform them into language formulae with the intention to structure his own speech within com-

munication by creation of the appropriate discourse that is to coincide with the need – one or several at a time.

The article offered to scientific community is nothing but an attempt to classify discourse on grounds of similarities and differences in human needs with the simultaneous attention to such vital features of the latter as needs' ability to get transformed and formally developed. That means, so called **needs-informational approach to discourse classification** is offered. The idea belongs to Peter Ershov who was a prominent Moscow Khudozhestveny Theater director and considered as one of the most talented Konstantin Stanislavsky's disciples. He applied the needs of being informed to actors' education; in my opinion, the chain 'needs – discourse – communication (information)' might be also ontologically instrumental for linguistic objectives.

Psychology defines needs as individual state created by necessity in obtaining objects that are essential for the human's existence and development. These needs serve as source of human activity. Needs characterize such state of personality, due to which his behavior is regu-

¹ КАШКИН, В. Б. *Введение в теорию коммуникации*. Воронеж, 2000, лекция 9.

² ЗАЛЕВСКАЯ, А. А. *Информационный тезаурус человека как база речемыслительной деятельности*. In *Исследование речевого мышления в психолингвистике*, Москва, 1985, с. 150–171.

lated, his thinking and his will (feelings) are directed. The human needs are determined by the process of his upbringing in wide sense, i.e. his being associated with the world of human culture. While the process of needs' satisfaction is believed as target-oriented activity, needs seem to be the source of such an activity.

Ancient Greeks were the first to notice Man's desire to reshuffle the world according to his notions. Plato and Aristotle discussed needs as the motive to obtain the Good. Plato in "Definitions" to his "Dialogs" defines needs (endeia) as 'shortage of good' (agathon, beltiston), i.e. the source of human well-being as cause of "everything directed into self", as one "which is the source of everything that has to be chosen"³.

Aristotle linked needs and demands to virtue as motivational category of behavior considering the needs as human ethical and social formatives⁴. Needs as category of ethics have given impetus to development of such a branch of ethical theory as *felicitology* (science on happiness)⁵.

The needs' classification has always been extremely perspective for philosophical, cultural, sociological and psychological research. Structuring needs into groups and classes would make it possible to "distinguish social classes and groups so as to organize industry satisfying all human needs"⁶, but closer acquaintance with the human needs' nature "with all their instability and extreme move ability keeps us concerned of this attempt as mere illusion"⁷.

I can hardly agree with such fatal consideration, for, within the human mental structure there exists a specific need to classify and structure outer world. My concern is based upon the idea that all known classifications have a common ground and seem very much alike; therefore, some common cognitive dominant of classifica-

tion object is highly probable to be construed.

The needs are usually considered in three meanings: a) as denotation of an environmental object that is important for normal everyday activities (needs as object); b) as denotation of psychic state that reflects shortage of something (needs as state); c) needs as fundamental human features that determine personality's attitude towards the reality (needs as feature).

Such understanding of needs can be the grounds for the following needs' classification as biological needs, social needs and ideal needs.

Biological needs are vital for individual existence and existence of the human as species. Such needs as economizing efforts that impels Man to seek the easiest and shortest ways of obtaining goals, can be considered biological.

Social needs are based on the desire of belonging to social groups and being properly positioned within these groups, as well as the desire to use close relations with the other group members and be the object of their love and respect. Social needs to defend one's rights ("needs for oneself") are juxtaposed to above-mentioned, and, at the same time they correlate with needs to be responsible ("needs for others"). Both types of such needs are controlled by social norms that regulate needs' satisfaction. These norms are formed as a result of extremely complicated interaction of historical, economic, national and other factors.

Ideal needs are targeted at the cognition of the world taken both as a whole and in its parts, together with human's search of his specific position in this world. These needs are connected with the human speculations on his mission upon Earth and the sense of human existence.

Every group of needs initiates appropriate types of activities, such as material (industrial),

³ ПЛАТОН, Определения: потребности. In ПЛАТОН, *Диалоги*. Москва, 1986, с. 435.

⁴ АРИСТОТЕЛЬ, Никомахова этика. In АРИСТОТЕЛЬ, *Собрание сочинений*. Москва, 1986, т. IV, с. 147.

⁵ ВОРКАЧЕВ, С. Г. *Концепт счастья в русском языковом сознании: опыт лингвокультурологического анализа*. Краснодар, 2002.

⁶ БЕРЕЖНОЙ, Н. М. *Человек и его потребности*. Москва, 2000, с. 22.

⁷ БЕРЕЖНОЙ, сноски 6, с. 23.

socio-political, and spiritual ones. Accordingly, each type is classified as *survival needs* and *development needs*. Survival needs are satisfied within social norms, while development needs most frequently exceed such norms.

Needs' pluralism is determined by human versatile nature and variety of natural and social conditions in which this nature becomes apparent. Difficulty to highlight most stable groups of needs did not (and does not) hinder researchers from seeking most adequate needs classification⁸.

The most reasonable classification seems the one made by N.M. Bereznoj who classifies needs on grounds of human existence types (biological, social and spiritual). He suggests that needs should be classified as hierarchy of ascendance from lowest needs to higher ones, with simultaneous consideration of those that hamper reasonable needs development (so called perverted needs). The author highlights the following two big classes:

1. **Basic needs** (biological, material, social, spiritual) as needs expressed by every human being. Within basic needs one can distinguish lots of such needs' modifications and additional features. These needs apply additional meaning to basic ones, so they can be characterized as *special* or *additional needs*.

2. **Value-oriented needs** highlighted by principle of socio-humanistic orientation. Such approach gives the author an opportunity to classify needs as *rational* and *irrational (perverted)*, *true* and *false*, *progressive* and *regressive* ones.

Such classification may be less effective in case every need is defined as disconnected from other needs; none of the needs can exist as pure and ideal; they are all intertwined in the way that they represent a mosaic with different links that support their ability to influence everyday hu-

man activity. The need as concept represents nothing but a fragment of inner human world, and, to be manifested, it should be motivated through interests and activity targets. During the motivational choice procedure the need is exposed to serious transformation, sometimes it even gets transformed into its opposed issue.

The needs transformation is ever dependant of life quality change together with the shift in time demand (fashion, technology progress, new knowledge), and it develops in accordance with *the needs ascending rule*. The needs ascendance is not just mere development of older needs; it is nothing but progressive and on-going change based on retaining everything valuable that has been achieved in the past. Unlike animal drive to survival (survival needs), the needs of a Man as a creature of highest psycho physiological organization are determined by cognitive emotional experience (emotions)⁹.

Emotions play an important role in needs transformation: "emotions' function as needs transformation into absolutely concrete goals with the search of possibilities to satisfy them *cum praxis*"¹⁰. Emotion depends on need and sometimes even provokes specific needs; it does not only follow needs, but also directs the need formation and thus it directs human *discursive intentions*. This is exactly where a linguist can find an opportunity to investigate discourse *dependability of needs*. The needs' typology can become the basis of the typology of texts produced by humans in the situation of communication.

Just as human needs intertwine, get transformed and strive to higher levels of realization, human speech is transformed; different types of discourse immerse into each other. Therefore, the typology of discourse on grounds of different types of needs is quite possible. The correlation between needs

⁸ ГЕГЕЛЬ, Г. В. Ф. *Философия истории*. In ГЕГЕЛЬ, Г. В. Ф. *Собрание сочинений*. Москва, 1977, т. VII, с. 167; ЕРШОВ, П. М. *Потребности человека*. Москва, 1990, с. 327; КАКАБАДЗЕ, З. М. *Проблемы человеческого бытия*. Тбилиси, 1985; MASLOW, A. A. *Theory of Human Motivation*. In *Psychological Review*. London; New York, 1943, Nr 50, p. 370-396.

⁹ IZARD, CARROLL, E. *The Psychology of Emotions*. New York, 1991; DIMBLEBY, R.; BURTON, G. *More than Words. An Introduction to Communication*. London; New York, 1998.

¹⁰ ЕРШОВ, сноска 8, с. 145.

and discourse types in which these needs get manifested, is displayed in the following table (*Correlation of Needs and Types of Discourse*).

One can easily see how needs getting more complicated, provoke the increase of discourse number that support a complicated need. It is especially true when ideal or value-oriented needs are considered.

Thus, such complicated need as the **need of power** comprised of a) need of material goods,

b) need of creating social order inside the society as the exercise of power which supply material goods, c) need to apply control to society, becomes dominant and brings to life a chain of other needs. To create social order one has to persuade the socium that order is needed; to persuade that socium, one has to create tradition, i.e. the recursive regulated events (creation of ritual); ritualization of human existence will lead to formation of certain historic-cultural values.

Correlation of Needs and Types of Discourse

<i>Needs</i>	<i>Type of Discourse</i>
Species survival needs	Sexual discourse (pick up lines, dating, love messages, copulation offers, etc.)
Needs of physical survival	Gluttony (gastronomic) discourse ¹¹ as instructions how to obtain food, how to process it, and how to cook it
Needs in material goods	1) Business discourse as communication within industrial activity as well as activity in obtaining legal income 2) Criminal discourse as communication within activity to obtain illegal income
Information needs	1) Mass media discourse as socially-oriented communication 2) Computer discourse as communication by means of electronic instruments
Needs of power	Political discourse as communication targeted at obtaining control over the society
Needs of belief	Religious or theological discourse
Needs of equality of human rights and of providing individual safety	1) Judicial (legal) discourse 2) Military discourse
Needs of knowledge (information) transmittance	1) Pedagogy discourse 2) Scientific discourse
Needs to impart skills and habits	Professional (manipulative-instructive) discourse
Aesthetic needs	1) Fictional discourse 2) Ritual (etiquette) discourse 3) Gluttony (gastronomic) discourse as rules of table manners 4) Mythological discourse
Needs to protect health	1) Medical discourse 2) Medico-prophylaxes discourse
Needs to maintain social order and society control	1) Ritual discourse 2) Management discourse
Needs to relieve from individual and social psychological tension	1) Invective discourse 2) Humoristic discourse
Needs of argumentation	Argumentation discourse (rhetoric discourse)
Self-presentation needs	1) Presentational discourse 2) Pedagogy discourse 3) Argumentation discourse (rhetoric discourse)
Needs to retain historical and cultural values	1) Historical discourse 2) Pedagogy discourse

¹¹ OLYANIČ, A. Gluttony Discourse as an Important Anthropological Component of Language and Culture. In *Humankind/Nature Interaction: Past, Present and Future*. Florence, 2003, v. 1, p. 318.

The whole chain of needs inevitably brings to life instrumental implementation of needs that appeared earlier, but the dominant need remains the same – the need of power is the need of informational impact laid upon society. Such hierarchy of needs demands a hierarchy of discourses clustered into three-leveled systems:

- 1) First level discourse system (argumentation or rhetoric discourse plus mass media discourse);
- 2) Second level discourse system (political discourse as means of keeping up power, and ritual discourse as means of power tradition formation);
- 3) Third level discourse system (presentational, historical, aesthetical, fictional, pedagogical discourses).

These systems put into living needs of authorities of recursive abilities of power, as well as mythologization of aesthetic importance of power implementation.

It seems clear that structuring of interrelation between needs and types of discourse suggested is quite conditional. Nevertheless, one can get a clear image of how closely need of power and verbal instruments of its implementation are connected. Metaphoric of need for power can signal such interconnection: every Russian is familiar with such metaphors, as «*проявить (показать) власть*», «*показать, кто в доме хозяин*», «*принять меры*», «*привести в порядок*», «*справедливый государственный строй*», «*общественные устои*», «*народные ценности*», «*верность традициям отцов*», etc., that appear to be verbal signs responsible for power impact function and denote directions of such impact. These impacts are multi-leveled and multi-systemic, as multi-leveled and multi-systemic are needs that form the dominant – **need for power**.

Obtaining of power demands verbal self-presentation of agent who gets into contact with socium. This obtaining also requires intentions being motivated. This new motivation has to be

approved by socium and get the vector of impact, which would positively emotionalize the latter, that is linguistically and paralinguistically denoted by approval signs¹². Discourse of argumentation becomes the instrument of such impact (rhetoric of persuasion), which is, in its turn, connected with information inject into masses (socium) that initiates authorities' power intentions. In other words, mass media discourse gets involved.

The power obtained creates a beneficial social order and forms up a beneficial social environment for social groups and classes loyal to the given power. The next row of demands is related to maintaining the order and vitality of the social environment created. In this situation all sorts of political verbal formulae are employed in order to maintain and reinforce this power (political discourse), some special traditions and rituals are created to exercise this power, and they are all verbalized in the ritual discourse. No doubt the power intends to sustain itself as long as possible (if not for ages), the argumentation for this intention finds its support in the judicial or legal discourse. The acme (the highest) need of the power in its strife to maintain, sustain or perpetuate it is, of course: a) need in its own worship and idolization that finds its reflection in the religious discourse (in case the religion is at the maximum proximity to power ideologically); b) need for mythologization and beautification of power (making power seem aesthetical) as some special value-maintained foundation for peace and order. To achieve the latter, a number of discourses are employed: the presentational discourses and some other related discourses, such as historic, cultural, educational, pedagogical, fictional (fiction prose, fantasy, fables), aesthetical.

In any case, the major need systematizing all the discourses involved, is the need for information, since it is this very need which might be the ground for both: the whole spectrum of needs and the appropriate verbal instruments involved

¹² ОЛЯНИЧ, А. В. Аплодисменты, аплодисменты! (Семантика и семиотика одобрения в массово-информационном дискурсе). In *Чествая филолога: к 75-летию Ф. А. Литвина*. Орел, 2002, с. 104–116.

to meet these needs. It is due to this information that enables one to transform the needs and switch from one discursive system to another. Changes in the informational field entail discursive

transformations which make a natural impact on the changes in the communicational environment. The "circle", specified as "needs - discourse - communication", is closed.

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KOMUNIKACIJA IR DISKURSO KLASIFIKACIJA POREIKIŲ BEI INFORMATYVUMO POŹIŪRIU

Santrauka

Straipsnyje ryškinama koreliacija tarp žmogaus poreikių rūšių bei tipų ir diskurso tipų (diskursinių sistemų) komunikacijoje. Tokios koreliacijos pavyzdžiu pasirinkta vieno iš svarbiausių socialinių poreikių – valdžios poreikio diskursinė eksplikacija. Ji pateikiama kaip trijų lygmenų diskursinė sistema, kurioje informacijos poreikis yra sistematizuojantis veiksnys.

REIKŠMINIAI ŽODŽIAI: poreikiai, komunikacija, informacija, diskursas.

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O UŻYTKOWO-INFORMACYJNYM PODEJŚCIU DO KOMUNIKACJI I KLASYFIKACJI DYSKURSU

Streszczenie

Niniejszy artykuł ma na celu wykrycie korelacji między rodzajami / typami potrzeb człowieka a typami dyskursu w komunikacji (systemy dyskursów). W celu zilustrowania takiej korelacji wybrano dyskursywną eksplikację potrzeby władzy jako jednej z dominujących potrzeb społecznych. Eksplikacja ta została przedstawiona w postaci trójpoziomowego systemu dyskursywnego, w którym potrzeba informacji odgrywa rolę czynnika systematyzującego.

SŁOWA KLUCZE: potrzeby, komunikacja, informacja, dyskurs.

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