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# INTEGRATIVE METHODOLOGICAL PLATFORM TO RECONSTRUCT MACROUNITS OF DISCOURSE IN FUNCTIONING: BELARUSIAN CASE STUDY

KEYWORDS: Discourse Linguistics, discourse composites and codes, discourse community, image-building type of discourse, a Belarusian discourse community.

ABSTRACT: Discourse Linguistics, an applied field of research focused on complex content-macrostructures open to multiple transformations in functioning, currently raises such a research problem as how to cope with its multidimensional units staying focused on its holistic nature. For this integrative methodological platforms are introduced and tested. The authors, accepting discourse community representations built within the composites of the image-making discourse type as a forefront research object, introduce and verify such kind of a platform both theoretically and practically (on the discourse of respondents who represent one of currently built Belarusian discourse communities). The approaches inbuilt into the platform are Tartu-Moscow semiotic school (Lotman 2005, 205-226), French school of discourse analysis (Maingueneau 2002, 185-190), the causal-genetic approach of discourse modeling / CGA (Oukhvanova 2017, 5-16), and Swales' approach to discourse community research (2016).

#### 1. Introduction

Discourse Linguistics or extended linguistics (Dictionnaire 2002), which can be treated as macrolinguistics as it accepts types of discourses and discourse communities as holistic functional macrostructures built on the same functional primitives. This idea of discourse dynamics and transformational character has been studied since 1993 (Oukhvanova 1993, 10-27) coming to the hypothesis that discourse communities are built on discourse types and can be studied accordingly. This very hypothesis we are testing in the given article.

The methodology introduced by CGA or the causal-genetic approach to discourse theoretical modeling reconstructs a set of discourse models (from structural

to functional) deductively, e.g. from general to particular via confronting, first two types of discourse causes (factors and facta) each producing contents of a different type represented in ideational structures (pragmatic, textual, cognitive and language) and phenomenological structures (referential / thematic and cortege / behavioral, each within its verbal and nonverbal representations). Merged in case of functioning they produced 8 functional primitives (composites) of discourse which, organized in 4-D clusters, form confronted (and, at the same time, complementary) types of discourse (Oukhvanova 2017, 12-13). Among such dichotomies is the dichotomy image-making and identity-building types of discourses.

The first type of discourse (a set of discourse practices of image production) is represented via the 4-D content cluster, which is composed of actual functional primitives and, thus, highly visualized and sensed, while the second one (a set of discourse practices of identity building) is represented via the 4-D cluster, which is composed of latent content primitives and, as such, is as if hidden from an actual vision of the public. Our vision is that discourse community is a mixture of these types and can be studied from both sides.

Our research object is a discourse community actualized by 4 composites actual for the image-building type of discourse and supported by relevant codes that represent these composites.

The research subject-matter is 4 codes of composites representations. Originally, the codes are treated as discourse inherent features (Maingueneau 2002, 187-190) but, while inscribing them into the integrative model of three linguistic approaches (see Fig. 1 in the practical part of the article), it became clear that they play the role of discourse codes of representation.

Finally, the goal of the research is to lay arguments both theoretical and practical to prove the research hypothesis stated in the first paragraph of this section of the article.

## 2. Image-making discourse: an interdisciplinary perspective

Image making is an actual research objects for many disciplines. The fact that its theory for quite a long time was developing within social and communication sciences made us pay a special attention to the approaches of treating it in their research fields. The tendency of discussing image making as both a multidisciplinary concept composed of specific set of practices and a communicative activity means that an ideational parameter and a phenomenological one are not viewed here as contradictory but rather as complementary. Furthermore, the idea of identifying image making practice within a communicative activity brings with itself another actual theoretical dichotomy – the vision of such complementary elements of this practice building as verbal and nonverbal. (Marland 2012, 214-233; 2016). It comes

clear, while studying relevant literature sources closer, that the basics of image-making in Politics and other domains is intertwined with the communicative approach, which, in its turn, attracts the ideas of the strategic development and tactic steps. The latter is actual while focusing on both research practices – packing and unpacking images.

With reference to other researchers, Canadian researchers Marielle Lalancette and Vincent Raynauld (2017) discuss three stages of the image –making, namely (1) image shaping, which is a kind of pre-image aimed at promoting image as a holistic emotionally acceptable pack of positive qualities; (2) message salience, a stage of quantifying a pre-image built, and (3) message credibility that conceptualizes the image via the categories intended public (an addressee-focused image), personal qualities (an addresser-focused image), construction and circulation of narratives (a visual rhetoric or text-focused image), and message framing (a context-focused image).

It is worth remembering these 4 categories given in brackets, which we added to comment on the ideas discussed by Lalancette and Raynauld. In fact, these 4 categories that actualize a finalizing step of image production – the step of image representation – are in coherence with what we did before (Oukhvanova/Markovich/Oukhvanov 2008) and what we are planning to discuss further.

### 3. Methodological background: three linguistic perspectives

Discourse Linguistics is a natural step of the development of contemporary linguistics focused on gradually increasing the volume of linguistic units under research. The volume of the unit of discourse can be well seen, if we refer to this linguistic unit as a phenomenon, idea, and activity that unites the first two. This specifics of discourse vision explains its content-transformative behavior in functioning, while social and individual parameters of content are mixed but stay evident. In order to catch and unpack discourse content within its changeable nature, it is necessary to find its in herent content composites and codes. The inherent composites form discourse semiosis, while the inherent codes form its genesis (Oukhvanova 2015, 46-50).

The approaches involved in the current research accept discourse within its 8-dimension functional structure (see: Maingueneau 2002, 187-190; Oukhvanova 2017, 12-30; Swales 2016). The difference in their nominative representation demonstrates the fact that the mentioned theoretical approaches found out the dimensions on different layers of discourse functioning. For example, particularizing discourse specifics from the bottom of research (an inductive type of discourse thinking), Maingueneau names the inherent codes of discourse, which are: (1) transfrastic, (2) orientational, (3) interactive, (4) action-formed, (5) contextual,

(6) situational, (7) normative, and (8) interdiscursive discourse practices (Maingueneau 2002, 187-190). In her turn, Oukhvanova finds inherent causes (factors) of discourse in people's 4 ideational content-bringing practices (Lotman's semiosphere (Lotman 2005, 205-226) and other causes (facta) in people's 4 types of phenomenological content-bringing activities (key content axes as symbols of verbal and non-verbal unity are as a metaphor of scaffoldings that keeps semiosphere holistic thought segmented into communicative referents and corteges). The causes (factors and facta) married, the composites are borne to be alive and form content clusters – types of discourses (archetypes of functional content patterning). To read these archetypes we are to use the codes presented by Maingueneau (see the integrative discourse model that unites the approaches of Lotman, Maingueneau, and Oukhvanova in Fig. 1).

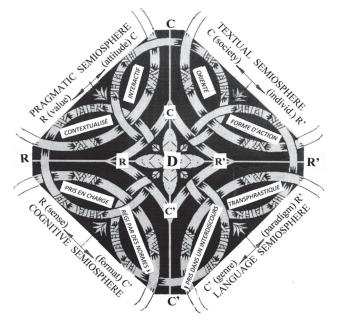


Figure 1. The integrative model of discourse organisation and production inspired by three methodological approaches: CGA, French school of discourse analysis and Tartu-Moscow semiotic school (see in: Oukhvanova, forthcoming in 2020).

### 4. Case study: Conceptual structure

The field of our pilot case study is Discourse Linguistics open to an applied research. The object is its macrocategory – a discourse community with a focus on its self-image-making via discourse practices – codes of discourse representations. The tasksto be solved specify the previously formulated goal of the research:

- to test the theoretical model of image-making type of discourse formed by its 4 inherent codes in their interdependence (a set of such discourse practices as: contextualisation (a social context-focused practice), interaction (an addresser-focused practice), orientation (an addressee-focused practice), and an action-bound textualisation (persuasive rhetoric practice). Reconstruction of the content and specific meanings, which these practices bring, is based on the way they are represented verbally and, within it, explicitly or implicitly. Collecting the verbal forms used in the messages of the respondents from the community's structural segments (groups) and organizing them in tables to make the comparative analysis visual is a necessary technique applied in our research;
- to correlate the findings (on what kind of information about the discourse community under research each of 4 discourse practices collects) with 8 criteria of discourse community in functioning introduced with a renewed with a current expertize information given in a relatively recent article by John Swales (2016). As a result we will check if any criterion is appropriate to apply and, if yes, how abundant is the information presented. Such a task solved will give us a proof whether the community is really a discourse one or whether it is just a kind of a regular social group.

The material involved for our case study is the discourse of respondents (as expected, members of a holistic discourse community) presented in Russian and Belarusian languages (in rare cases words in English are used). The forms of messages are isolated words, word expressions, phrases, sentences. The latter does not interfere with the idea of the discourse under analysis as all of them are messages rooted in questions becoming, as a result, their continuation.

To make the previous information about the conceptual structure of our case study really informative, let us place it in the terminological context of research. The key terms of our pilot case study are:

Questions) and a narrowed down versions (24 questions), the first one designed for those who realize the project, while the second one – for the participants and spectators. The repeated set of questions for both versions was the questions on Project as a phenomenon, an idea and an activity. The open questions covered mostly the tasks to present the associations on the key words and notion of the project. Among the latter are those, which help to recover the image of the event and people in it together with their activities contextualized, aims, orientation (target groups) and the attitudes to caused interactive patterns viewed by the respondents. Among the words in the focus is Project's title and its location as they being interconnected still open to produce different associations, which also reveal the respondents themselves. The time of filling in the questionnaire is from August 20 (two weeks after Festival-2019) till the end of December 2019;

D i s c o u r s e is positioned as content within its phenomenological, ideational and activity based representations actualized by respondents in the frame of the research context;

Project. It is titled 'Vulica Brasil'. Vulica in Belarusian means street as initially (in 2014) its location in Minsk was a part of a remote territory of an 1,3 km length street (Octjabrskaja / October street), which looked unpopulated with closed industrial buildings of the factories that stopped functioning; besides the street was closed for public transport (before there used to be the tram transport going along it and tram tracks are still there). At the same time at the very beginning of the street there is a university set of hostels with spot grounds as the street is still close to the city centre. So in 2014 the remote part of this street was given for 2 weeks to the street-artists from Belarus and Brasil to conduct a first, not numerous and not-really advertised festival of street-art sponsored at first by a few private and state Belarusian institutions and by a cultural program of the Brazilian Embassy in Belarus (Minsk). And that is how Project started becoming at present (within its 5 festivals took place) a self-organized and much wider sponsored by the Belarusian side event involving the activities of street-artists and architects of both countries (Belarus and Brasil) but also ecologists, designers, and all others whose individual or teams' coordinated projects are accepted to add their mark on the area open for Project activities.

For us Project is being treated as Discourse within its 5 festivals open to be monitored by quantitative and qualitative research sponsored by the researchers themselves. That is the history of Questionnaire appearing on the Project Web-site and conducted via google forms.

Festival – a Project produced event with its discourse content verified by representation analysis;

Discourse community. It is a holistic social group, the members of which, while communicating, realize themselves as its inherent part, the fact proved by the image collectively formed by its members, while sharing their discourse practices with others;

I mage of discourse community as a set of discourse practices, which actualize representation of the referential content plan of discourse (the axes R-R') via contextualisation and textual / social action techniques of discourse representation together with a partial representation of the cortege content plan of discourse (the axes C-C' with its C-focus of attention) via interactive and orientation techniques of discourse representation;

Respondents as representatives of a holistic discourse community (as a hypothesis to be checked) and so actualising a certain Image of the whole discourse community built on relevant discourse categories.

Let us look at the research material of the case study closer.

The total number of respondents is 111, all participated in Project and its five festivals are grouped into three sub-communities, which are categorized as:

- (1) Project r e a l i z e r s (total 22); within them: 6 organizers, 3 those who realize their individual projects or were leaders of a small team project; 11 volunteers assisting the first two subgroups; 4 active participants (those who worked in festivals' workshops and were members of other sub-groups. Each respondent presented their history of inclusion into the community, which showed that if someone at first was active spectator or volunteer, next year they were already individual or team project realizers or became one of organizers. Tough Festival-2019 showed another tendency. Those, who were too small to participate in previous festivals, managed to be worthy joining in 2019 all three subgroups of Project community volunteers, individual or team project realizers, and even organizers;
- (2) Project p a r t i c i p a n t s (total 68); they were the participants in suggested Festival activities (workshops, film sessions, trees planting, etc.) or just spectators of the activities who expressed their positive attitude to and enthusiasm in connection with Project, Festival, and the events involved;
- (3) Project spectators (total 21); they are mostly (more than a half) young people under 20, studying at different Belarusian universities (mostly arts and humanities).

Table 1 represents the respondents structure within its three social groups accepted as segments of Project discourse community.

Categories	Variables	Group 1 (22 people)	Group 2 (68 people)	Group 3 (21 people)
Age	Under 20	11,1%	24,2%	57,1%
0	From 20 to 29	27,9%	22,7%	33,3%
	From 30 to 39	44,5%	33,3%	9,6%
	From 40 to 49	5,5%	10,6%	10,6%
	From 50 to 59	5,5%	4,6	_
	No answer	5,5%	4,6%	-
Gender	Women	50%	82,4%	66,6%
	Men	50%	17,6%	33,3%
Education	Secondary	5,5%	_	19%
	Undergraduates	11,1%	33,3%	52,5%
	MA students	11,1	7,6%	19%
	Higher	72,3%	57,6%	_
	No answer	-	1,5%	9,5%
Professional	social communication	-	19,7%	23,7%
profile	design and fine arts	33,4%	16,7%	4,8%
	education and philology	11%	13,6%	7,8%
	architects	5,5%	_	_
	psychologists	5,5%	_	_
	mass media	_	9,0%	4,8%
	services	-	7,6%	4,8%
	law	_	6,1%	_
	sociology	_	3%	14,3%
	others	39,1%	3% and less	4,8%
	no answer	_	10,6%	33,3%

Table 1. The structural specification of the discourse community under research

Group 1 (22 respondents). This group of those who realize the project includes equal number or women and men. The group is represented by people from 30 to 40 (almost half) or younger (from 20 to  $30 - 1/4^{th}$  of the group). Almost all have a higher education. What concerns their professional profiles, one third of the respondents work in the domains of design and fine arts, a lesser part is in philology and education, still lesser part is composed of architects and psychologists; the smallest group represents a rarely met professional domains, as, for example, a specialist in content expertize or a person, who answered "I am in many professions at once".

Group 2 (68 respondents) is represented by all age groups up to 40 almost equally. The majority of them are with higher education. They are interested in the art-project and its activities.

Group 3 (21 respondents) is represented mostly by young people under 20, mostly university students. They are interested in street art and it made them come to the festival to see murals and graffiti. Though they were not interested in the art project as such in the frame of which the recent festival was organized. Their interest was exclusively to see the newly produced murals and graffiti in the Oktjabrskaja Street (October Street).

#### 5. Case study: Results and discussion

While collecting a representative data for reconstructing and commenting on Project discourse community and its image-produced discourse practices, we focused on the categories of contextualisation, textual action, interaction and orientation.

Below there are four tables (tables 2-5), which illustrate the data collected, followed by the community's and its structural group's description of the information gathered. As a final touch, a result of the search of a relevant criterion of the discourse community realisation is given. The criterion is chosen from Swales' set of 8 statements on the base of which we can consider whether the group in the focus can be qualified as a discourse community or not (Swales 2016).

1. Contextualisation. This technique of Respondents' discourse organisation is well seen in the question on naming the associations to the key words of Festival. All three group explicitly formulate their vision of the event via the frame of its actualization, which, nevertheless, differs in the scale of vision. While group 2 actualizes mostly an international (European and North American) together with local contexts (other parts of Minsk where streetart is represented in its different forms) (ted Belarusian settings suggesting the frames of similar events and streets (as the event location), group 3 actualizes exclusively local context (naming the neighboring to the Festival street institutions as, if knowing their geographical position, it is easier to find the location of Festival). Besides, this group mentions a historical context as the original name of Festival

Street – October Street – is associated with October revolution of 1917. In its turn, members of g r o u p 1 are more creative (which seems quite natural). Respondents actualize a historical context of October Street before it unofficially changed its name to Vulica Brasil. This contextualisation brings the vision of a quick change both of a phenomenological and ideational nature. The social context is explicitly present and within it the context of a person, creator changing its environment. The additional contexts are given in the question on adding the key terminology apart the commonly seen. As we see the general tendency of applying this technique has the common ground (see table 2).

Table 2. Evaluation of referential content of discourse via its contextualisation/framing

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Бывшая мертвая улица, быстро меняющаяся; рапах баллонов, малярка на обуви, командная работа; смесь города и человека, веселье, живость, агрегатное состояние вневременного лета; современный социальный контекст; сверхзадача, миссия художника, цели должны быть гигантские, стремлюсь к осуществлению давней мечты, новые цели	(Москва), УЖУПИС, Бэнк- си, Нью-Йорк; мальчик на Лещинского, девушки на Городском валу'	щадь, правительство, центр, студенческий

If we have a look at the 1 st criterion of discourse community introduced and in 2016 reconsidered by Swales, we shall see that it is in a direct correspondence with the first discourse practice, which we have just reconstructed and commented on. Swales comments on it in the following way: "A DC has a potentially discoverable set of goals. These may be publicly and explicitly formulated (as in "mission" or "vision" statements); they may be generally or partially recognized by its members; they may be broadly consensual; or they may be separate but continuous (as when older and younger members have different ideas about something)" (Swales, 2016).

2. In teractive, In a most general way the attitude to Festival interaction patterns is represented by the members of group 3 – they simply name patterns of interactive behavior that they accept (hanging out, making noise, having fun). The same positive attitude actualizes group 2 but their realities are different – they accept justice in relationship and effective intercultural communication. Together with this, they prefer meaning-bringing interaction and attempt to enquire whatever is necessary. The members of group 1, in their turn, actualize what is closer to them. They express their positive attitude to the corteges formed during Festival emotionally evaluating friendship, cooperation in work, learning habits, sharing creativity. This seems so natural that the expression 'no comment' adds the idea that such an attitude is so natural that words does not add anything to the feelings experienced (see the data collected in Table 3).

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Согласование, теперь обращаю внимание на все теги, встреча-	все люди равны; специ-	тусовки, шум,
ющиеся по пути; тесли готовы взаимодействовать, то детали	ально для минчан: ред-	веселье; sms
по типу национальности не имеют никакого значения, можно	кий повод увидеть го-	
учиться друг у друга; уставшие улыбки тех, с кем работаешь,	род под другим углом.	
время проведенное с Хайпером и его командой добавляет тепло-	Что хотел сказать ими	
ты в работу; гремучая смесь бразильских и беларусских взгля-	(своими работами) ав-	
дов на быт дало красочную вспышку длинной в 13 солнечных	тор?	
дней;любые 2 культуры в сотрудничестве интереснее, чем по		
отдельности, дружба, без комментариев.		

Table 3. Actualization of attitude to cortege content via interactivity discourse practice

Here it is worth to refer to the  $2^{nd}$  criterion of discourse community specified in a new way by the founder of the discourse community theory:

"A DC has mechanisms of intercommunication among its members. Fine, but we now need to emphasize the roles of new digital channels, such as emails, blogs, tweets, etc., and we also need to stress that without any means of intercommunication of any kind, there is no real community" (Swales, 2016).

3. Discourse as a textual form of action chosen by individuals actualized information about the referential reality of each segment of the discourse community (each group) and the community in general. The referential reality of the respondents from group 1 is the one that makes them competitive in action; it mobilizes their will, attention, brains and are open to influence the way people live in the city. In discourse they are in the center of action. The referential reality of the respondents of group 2 is the one, which actualizes both centers. On one hand, it is Festival activities which make them act with optimism, positive emotions, and open to widen their knowledge andto make them feelinvolved being within the community. Moreover, the referential reality seems to be able to widen the experience of the others ('will teach them to love their Motherland'). On the other hand, they feel themselves open to a somewhat new action, e.g.ready to travel (to Brazil).

The members of group 3 continue to apply minimalized forms of discourse as their messages are just words or expressions. They view action whether in a dichotomy set of notions ('hanging out – studying') or in a vector way ('extension').

Table 4. Textualizing referential content by individuals via performing the choice of the form of action

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Шрифтовая графика так и тянет на то,	(Festival) для людей;(он) вытащил меня	расширение, посыл,
чтобы научиться делать круче; (festival)	из депрессии, дал ярких эмоций, расши-	опасность; тусовка
	рил кругозор; объединить независимо	
	от менталитета; научит их любить свой	
с кем-нибудь побомбить новые смыслы;	город; паехаць у Бразілію	
(надо) беречь, ценить		

As we can see, the data given in Table 3 works in correspondence with the  $3^{rd}$  criterion of discourse community, which in its newer version presented as:

A DC uses its participatory mechanisms to provide information and feedback. This third criterion was always sadly incomplete. A DC uses its participatory mechanisms to manage the operations of the DC and to promote (usually) recruitment, change, growth, and development, and to orchestrate (rarely) retrenchment and demise. In other words, these mechanisms are used to initiate actions and activities, rather than simply providing information (Swales 2016).

4. Discourse as a discourse community itself, e.g. a society inside the society. It actualized information about the common cortege reality and each of its segment indirectly and in some cases implicitly (though for the community it is definitely explicitly: they read the words / terms in their own way If to specify, the cortege reality of the respondents from g r o u p 1 (those who realize Project) is, firstly their colleagues with whom they work to realize their common creative, result-focused urge ('the more visible work aims, the easier to follow the path') designed for the others who are participants and spectators (suggested logo of Festival as Belarusian folk musician – 'huslar' ('as a junction of graffiti culture of Brazil and the Belarusian soal'). The society is narrated by them s the reality for themselves and the whole community, otherwise, why they have numerous followers (participants and spectators). The members of group 2 (Project participants) actualize, as their cortege, Project realizers and their creativity ('by the efforts of many motivated and talented people') together with the whole community's international attitude ('we have what to show foreigners') and a wider Belarusian community (start-ups as a supportive reality). The members of group 3 are also discourse community oriented narrating their reality in their vocabulary though understood as appreciation of what the others are engaged in. In their group 3 they are 'hanging out' enjoying what is realized by group 1 by naming street-art key genres; they also sharing a general spirit of the whole discourse community expressed by the members of group 2 – the spirit of something new, the spirit

Table 5. Actualizing cortege content via representational forms relevant in the community as a society inside the society – an orientation discourse practice

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Запах баллонов похож на конфеты барбариски;	у нас есть что показать	тусовка, посыл,
чем нагляднее работа и чем проходимее маршрут, тем	иностранцу; появилось	учеба
больше восторга; скульптура окунает в художественное	уникальное место в доста-	
монументальное прошлое; отличный мужик, в этом году	точно одноликом городе	
Хайпер привез с собой прекрасный трек-гимн для Вуліцы;	усилиями многих моти-	
постоянно меняющийся логотип или гусляр как стык граф-	вированных и талантли-	
фити-культуры Бразилии и белорусского духа.	вых людей; старт-апы	
Холодный ум, горячее сердце, свободная душа.		

of a positive bright presence (within Festival's hanging out) and future preferring not to verbalize whatever is around as the main thing is that it is accepted as such. Implicit discourse in this case is what finally makes the discourse community.

Finally, let us compare the comments and data given in table 4 with a relevant criterion of the discourse community from the revisited version of 6 previous criteria developed by Swales and the two one added (Swales 2016). While doing it we have find out that it is a new criterion – number 7 – which suits our case, which says: "A DC develops a sense of 'silential relations' (Becker 1995), whereby there is a sense of things that do not need to be said or to be spelt out in detail in either words or writing". As the reader would definitely agree, these words says for themselves.

#### 6. Conclusions

We consider that the following 5 thesis reflect the essense of the research presented in this article:

- The idea of introducing Discourse Linguistics as macrolinguistics helps focusing on adequate methods, which, making macro categories a priority, keeps pace of micro and meso categories of discourse as still influential content-building elements.
- The integrative method chosen within its multileveled terminological items being coherent, the research object stayed holistic within its centrifugal and centripetal vectors inbuilt and balanced.
- The application of the integrative method (involving its intra references and, thus, verification) and visualized techniques (including the usage of tables for data organisation within confronting the messages produced by the respondents of the sub-communities (groups) keeping a holistic nature of the discourse community) permitted to deal with the research problem most effectively.
- The research hypothesis on the discourse nature of the holistic though segmented Belarusian community newly formed but still in its development is proved with a focus on its image, naturally build within selfimage-making discourse techniques.
- The pilot study shows that the research should be continued to check the way the 4 left inherent discourse composites are represented and how effective are the codes of the identity-building technique within this open discourse community under research as the latter is the result of both.
- Finally, we want to underline the applied character of the given article. With the integrative model introduced, the method born and described, and the research procedure tested, its application in other research projects for reconstructing discourse portraits of different discourse communities currently in development is possible.

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