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**POETICAL DISCOURSE: INSTITUTIONAL AND PERSONAL  
CRITERIA**

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*Abstract*

The paper is devoted to analysis the widely distributed in modern linguistics discourse’s conception in point of such concepts as “poetic diction” and “poetic text”. The correlation of poetic discourse’s institutional and personal criteria permits to describe in a new fashion the linguistic personality of the poet in the context of poetical school and poetry art in general, with a glance on the specifics of his aesthetic and philosophical views. The leading part of the institutional aspect of poetic discourse can be illustrated by the aesthetics of classicism in French poetry, founded on the Descartes’ rationalism, on the aesthetics of equation, adopted in antiquity, on the rigid rules of French verse and poetic diction formation. The bright example of the personal aspect of poetic discourse in these harsh conditions is the poetic work of Jean Racine. The leading part of the personal aspect of poetic discourse is the poetic work of Paul Verlaine with his deviations from rigid rules of French classicism. There are uneven rhythms (13, 11, 9, 7 syllables), colloquial types of short verses (or metres), sound symbolism, that is characteristic of the song genre. The introduction of colloquial language and intonation contributes to loosening and breaking the traditional verse structure. This is a long and advancing process, which many poetical movements and schools went through. It means that the correlation of poetic discourse’s institutional and personal criteria is unstable and mobile.

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## 1. Introduction

In accordance with the anthropocentric linguistics paradigm, in XX century language functioning was studied in the context of “discourse”, which was determined by E. Benveniste. Nowadays, this term has become the object of studies in the sphere of linguistics, literary criticism, semiotics, sociology, philosophy, ethnology and anthropology.

The linguistic interpretation of discourse notion is actively considered by the French discourse school (E. Benveniste, P. Charaudeau, M. Pêcheux, P. Sérieux). The special role in the discourse study belongs to Dutch researcher T.F. Van Dijk, who defines discourse as “the complete or ongoing “product” of communicative action” which includes “product interpretation by the recipients”. It may be “a type of verbal production” or “a type of genre” when the discourse notion refers “to the specific historical period, the social community or the entire culture” (Van Dijk, 1998).

An important contribution to interpretation and development of linguistic discourse definition was made by the Russian linguists. For instance, there is a widely cited definition made by N.D. Arutiunova who defines discourse as “a speech engaged in life”, as a text connected “with the combination of extralinguistic, pragmatic, sociocultural, psychological and other factors” (Arutunova, 2002). Equally relevant is the definition made by E.S. Kubriakova who studies discourse as a cognitive process associated with speech production, creation of speech message and the text, which is a final result of these processes in complete and fixed form. (Kubriakova, 1999).

The definition of “discourse” is one of the most ambiguous notions in the contemporary science and it can be considered from different points of view. In modern linguistics, some discourse typologies have already been established. The most significant types of discourse are the verbal and written discourses; the dialogic, monologic and polylogic discourses. The discourse can be considered on the basis of different human activity areas: the political discourse, the juridical discourse, the legal discourse, the medical discourse, the athletic discourse, the artistic discourse, the poetical discourse, etc. As the Russian researcher C.A. Danilova states, “criteria, which are used to classify discourses, are very diverse”, and “creation of the complete list of discourse’s types seems to be impossible because of objective complexity of the considered phenomenon” (Danilova, 2015).

## 2. Problem Statement

The poetic discourse as an object of our research can be considered in the context of the artistic speech discourse. At the same time, however, within the artistic speech discourse, it is necessary to distinguish, to separate and even to oppose the poetic discourse and the artistic speech discourse. It is for a reason that the philology science always differentiates the poetry from the prose, the poetic text from the narrative text due to the specifics of each type of verbal art.

Therefore, from our point of view, the basic notions of the poetic discourse should be remained those elaborated by the XX century linguistics. They are poetic diction, poetic text and poetic function, whose subject was always interesting for linguists of the XX century (G.O. Vinokur, R.O. Iakobson, J. Cohen, Jur.M. Lotman).

The aforementioned definitions of general notions of the discourse reflect, on the whole, our vision and conception of the poetic discourse notion, which are as follows: 1) the poetic discourse includes the poetic texts, created by the authors of different historical and social periods and different poetic schools; 2) the poetic discourse reflects the processes of comprehension, perception and interpretation of poetic works by the readers;

The interpretation of poetic discourse as a product implies taking into account social, aesthetic and poetic peculiarities, which operated at the time of creation of poetic texts, including the linguistic personality features of the authors of poetic works.

### **3. Research Questions**

The general statement of poetic discourse problem implies that some particular issues should be studied in the context of our research. They are as follows:

- 1) the attitude of the poet towards the poetic school;
- 2) the influence of the poetic school on the poetic personality formation in the context of the school;
- 3) possibilities of the discursive typological approach regarding problems of poetry itself when examining the poetic art apart from the verbal art of prose.

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the research is to consider poetic discourse in the view of criteria introduced by V.I. Karasik to define his general discourse typology that consists of personal (or person-oriented) discourse and institutional discourse (Karacik, 2000). Such differentiation in the context of poetic discourse is possible and essential to have a clear idea of poetry as a form of art in its historical and sociological, philosophic and aesthetic, poetic and linguistic aspects.

### **5. Research Methods**

To solve the problems posed in the study, a number of research methods were used. There are theoretical methods (a classification and systematization method, a generalization and systematization method, a comparative method, forecasting, modelling); empirical methods (an observation, method of experiment, a method of expert evaluation, evaluation and analysis of products of activity, study and generalization of pedagogical experience).

### **6. Findings**

**6.1.** As it mentioned by V.I. Karasik, the personal discourse states that “the speaker (in our case - the author) acts as a person with a rich inner world”. In the context of the personal discourse, V.I. Karasik distinguishes two varieties: common communication and existence communication. The common communication is destined to maintain the contact and to solve some problems. In the poetic discourse, it can be both the colloquial words usage and the usage of common subject’s elements. The existence

discourse is directed to show the wealth of the speaker's inner world; the nature of communication is explicit and meaningful; all forms of literary language are used (Karacik, 2000).

As an illustration of the personal aspect of poetic discourse, we can propose one of the most poetical Paul Verlaine's works, which is known as "It rains in my heart" written in the "common" language, which in the structure of his musical verses acquires the particular poetical senses. The words of common colloquial language (rain, heart, depression, lamentation), united by the long and monotonous sounds [oe:] in the structure of the short metre give to this sound the senses of these words:

Il pleure dans mon coeur  
Comme il pleut sur la ville;  
Quelle est cette langueur  
Qui pénètre mon coeur?

Verlaine created effect of the rain monotony by means of the nasal sounds and different overtones (open, closed, nasal) of the sound [oe:]. In Russian translation by Iliia Ehrenburg, the effect is transferred by repetition of fricative consonants [s - c - h - č - š - ž - z - ě] against the background of lamentably prolonged vowel sounds [e - a - o - e - a]: *Се-ердце тихо пла-ачет, // Словно до-ождик ме-елкий; // Что же это зна-ачит, // Если сердце пла-ачет?*

**6.2.** The institutional discourse is defined by V.I. Karasik as "a communication in the prescribed context of the status and role relations". In that case, the speaker is "a representative of the well-defined social institute". In the way of the poetical discourse, it can be poetic school or poetic tendency with their written declarations and their formal and substantial peculiarities. At the same time in any poetic school with the most rigid rules there are kept "neutral features", though to different extents. These "features" are typical for any type of discourses. There also can appear "the strange features from other strange territory" (Karacik, 2000).

An apt example of the institutional criterion of French poetic discourse are poetic works of Corneille, Racine, Moliere and La Fontaine within the limits of the poetic canon of French classicism with its harsh status rules. These rules include the division of genres in high and low types, the observance of rules of three unities (place, action and time), the speech construction and the text structuring in accord with cause-effect relation of Cartesian syllogism "thesis – antithesis – syllogism". At language level, it is the use of techniques of speech ornamentation in the form of periphrasis and descriptive phrases standard for XVII century.

There is no doubt that the institutional discourse predominate in the French poesy of XVII century. Its bright realization is the poetic work of Racine, who brought to perfection the maintenance of all canons of his day poesy. At the same time the personal criterion of Racine poetic discourse is represented in the characters' intensity of emotions, which becomes apparent at the level of Alexandrian verse in the verse carrying-over (enjambments), translating the speech intonation, that was studied in our research of the poetic text informative value (Popova, 2003). There is a need to explain that the Alexandrian verse is the verse composed of two lines from 12 syllables with caesura on the sixth and twelfth syllables; the lines are rhymed exclusively by the paired rhyme (a – a, b – b). These rules definitely are very rigid limits of the aesthetics of equality and this equality was the ideal of the French classicism. Racine in his poetic work

could realize it brilliantly; he reached the sincerity using the conversational intonation of the verse carrying-over (enjambments).

Phèdre's appeal to her son-in-law Hippolite is given as an example. She loves him as a woman but she can't tell him about it because she is noble and because Hippolite is a son of her husband:

1. Oui, prince, je languis, // je brule pour Thésée:
2. Je l'aime, non point tel // que l'on vu les enfers,
3. Volage adorateur // de mille objets divers,
4. Qui va du dieu des morts // déshonorer la couche;
5. Mais fidèle, mais fier, // et même un peu farouche,
6. Charmant, jeune, trainant // tous les coeurs après soi,
7. Tel qu'on depeint nos dieux, // ou tel que je vous voi.

Appealing to Hippolite, Phèdre tells that she loves Thésée, his father (thesis). But she doesn't love Thésée which he becomes, descended in the Hades (antithesis), she loves Thésée such that she sees Hippolite (syllogism). This fiery appeal in the context of syllogism is also kept down between the rigid rules of Alexandrian verse which consists in 12 syllables verses, in the paired rhyme (*enfers = divers; couche = farouche; soi = voi*) and in caesura on the sixth syllables.

Is also institutional the poetic language (diction) of heroine. There are periphrasis in antithesis (2, 3, 4 verses), presented by negation: 1) Phèdre doesn't love Thésée which he became in the Underworld (Hades – in pl.); 2) i.e. she doesn't love Thésée which became frivolous person and loved many women (*Volage adorateur // de mille objets divers*), where “objets” is an abstract synonym of “women”; 3) Thésée, who is going from the God of death (= from Hades) for conjugal infidelity (*déshonorer la couche = dishonor the bed*).

The verses 5, 6, 7, as a conclusion of the whole syllogism, sound very passionate. Phèdre shifts her love from the young Thésée on his son Hippolite. She sees him sure, proud, ardent (*fidèle, fier, farouche*), good-looking and young, taking with him the hearts (*charmant, jeune, trainant tous les coeurs après soi*). She sees him as gods are described and finally she imagines Hippolite in front of herself (*tel qu'on depeint nos dieux, ou tel que je vous voi*).

As show analysis, the institutional and personal criteria in the analyzed extract are in the high degree of realization. Although it is evident, that their correlation in poetic discourse can vary.

**6.3.** In this connection we should go through the study by C.A. Danilova who considers the problem on the basis of the field theory and discerns the core (personal type) and the periphery (institutional type) in each of discourse's type (Danilova, 2015).

From a historical perspective, the personal type of discourse is primary and the institutional type of discourse is, therefore, secondary, because “the institutional criterion is not a rigid discourse characteristic” (Danilova, 2015). And that is undoubtedly true as, historically, the speech is also primary to the language as a system. However, for the period of the French classicism prosperity, the poetic canon strongly predominates as a law and, thus, the creative personality is forced to adapt to it in order to turn the poetic art into the high art. At a later time, as it is shown in our study of French poetic text informativeness (Popova, 1992), the introduction of spoken language and intonation contributes to softening and breaking

the traditional verse structure. This is a long and progressive process which many poetic movements and schools went through. In the time of the French romanticism, for example, so-called “emancipation” of the verse structure took place on the background of “the denial of rationalistic interpretation of the world, dramatic perception of existing reality and individual consciousness hypertrophy” that leads to the modification of “the substantial, compositional and architectonical structures of poetic text”. At the lexical forms level, the periphrasis and the abstract lexis of classicism are substituted by the precise and emotional lexis in the form of individual metaphors, comparisons, hyperboles and antithesis which “are used to express the new metaphoric vision, subjective and individual feelings” (Popova, 1992).

**6.4.** The French symbolism, which is represented by Mallarmé, Verlaine, Rimbaud with their subjective perception of reality through the lyric ego, is sufficiently variously and variably presented in the institutional structure of the French verse. The 12-syllable verse, established by the French classicism, is widely used by almost all of the symbolists. An exception to the standards are the works by Paul Verlaine who also uses the 12-syllable verse, but he usually divides it into two or even three parts, thereby creating the short musical verses with the names of romances and songs. For instance, the aforementioned song called “It rains in my heart”, written by six-syllable verse, can easily be reconstructed into the 12-syllable verse.

However Paul Verlaine made an attempt to go against the aesthetics of equation as he introduces uneven rhythms (13, 11, 9, 7 syllables), colloquial short verses (6, 5, 4, 3 syllables) and a verse melodiousness, achieved by the phonaesthesia or sound symbolization, which is one of the song genre characteristics. Thus he establishes his personal institutional criterion and announces it in his “Poetic art” which sounds like his manifesto:

De la musique avant toute chose,  
Et pour cela préfère l’Impaire  
Plus vague et plus soluble dans l’air,  
Sans rien en lui qui pèse ou qui pose.

*(Give some music above all, and use uneven rhythm to achieve that, for it is vague and more transparent and does not have anything that can be weighted or exhibited).*

## **7. Conclusion**

To sum up, we conclude that the Russian researcher C.A. Danilova is right as the personal discourse is primary because, to a certain extent, it defines the institutional type of poetic discourse with its canons and manifestos. However, it seems rightfully to speak about the mobile nature of core and periphery contents regarding personal and institutional criteria in a context of the poetic discourse study.

Anyway, the poetic discourse study on the basis of personal and institutional criteria seems to be productive and enriching for the interpreting process of the poetic discourse, which can, by-turn, widen the stylistic analysis teaching methodology in higher school and, thereby, bring a positive contribution into the pedagogical discourse.

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