Секция «Философия и методология науки»

Methodology of Complex Discourse Analysis

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This research is aimed at proposing a new kind of discourse analysis based on the Complexity Theory. Its method is founded on a systemic conception focused on the emerging and adaptable properties that compose it. With these emerged a model that allowed us to see among apparent discursive contradictions an entire coherent structure. This enhanced the study and provided new epistemic clues to the theoretical development.

We must say that the classic Political Discourse and Critical Discourse Analyses were not the best modern tools to deal with such phenomena and make science. Following the Complexity Paradigm with all its theories and basic principles allowed us to take the discourse to a qualitatively new level.

In order to conduct this research we had to define a methodology that could be applied to all theoretical postulates. The so-called "Third Way", found between the induction and the hypothetical-deductive model, also demanded the use and integration of principles of the the agent-based simulation models (ABM) and the System Dynamics.

According to Marc and Picard (1992), if we analyze communication from this perspective we would understand it as a "group of elements interacting in such a way that the modification of one of them affects the relations among the other elements", [5]. To be more precise, it is an open system of interactions that always falls within a specific context. And, due to this nature, it follows particular principles such as totality, circular causality and regulation.

Therefore, we think that the elements that characterize social complexity are those phenomena or systems composed by different social agents that interact with different resources in a non-lineal way. Their evolution is subject to the changes that take place in the original conditions.

It is important to highlight that time is a key variable in complex systems because they are dynamic and evolutionary. That is why it is necessary to study the very own temporality of complex systems and the periodicity of their stability, development, change and phases of transition, [2].

For Holland, "A basic characteristic of the adaptable complex systems is that nobody is the best, there are many individuals with different tasks", [1]. Another typical quality is that they never stabilize and if they do they would die because they reproduce themselves due to the constant creation of new elements.

Therefore, with the theoretical elements we have exposed so far we have some clues that can help us to explain how we are going to do our discourse analysis. To summarize, these elements are: 1) the description of the construction of key arguments in the formalization of the significant moments of the discourse based on more basic ideas; 2) the explanation of the interconnection among the ideas that bring life to the discourse; 3) the search and revelation of those moments in which the discourse makes an argumentative turn -this made taking into account the internal and external contexts that may impact upon them-; 4) tracking the subliminal lines when giving value to the semantic burdens that gives the discourse its communicative-ideological power (also taking into account the burden of the political aspect).

Modeling complex systems means, first of all, abstraction and making an intermediate or "abstract" model based on the real system. Then, the subsequent inferences are considered and later expressed in another "formal model". It is then when conclusions obtained are applied to the study object taking from reality.

Agent-based models are: "a type of models of simulation whose main characteristics are the generation of emergent properties (non-deducible from the individual behavior of the actors), the local interaction with partial information by the intervening agents and the sensitivity of the original conditions", [3].

In this theoretical line we can find a peculiarity: the determining role of the individual in social interactions. These authors justify this based on the non-lineal, simultaneous and discreet character of the models.

"the elements that form an ABM are: 1) the Agents themselves; they have internal conditions and rules of conduct. These internal conditions can be fixed or changing. Rules of conduct can referrer to the interaction between the Agents or between the Agents and the Environment, 2) the context which is the medium upon which Agents operate and with which they interact, 3) the rules that apply to the Agents among themselves, and the interaction of the Agents with the environment and the environment itself", [3].

The basic purpose of the System Dynamics is to understand the structural causes that provoke the behavior of the system. This implies increasing the knowledge about the role of every element within itself and see how different actions carry out on the parts of the system stresses or reduces the behavior trends implied, [4].

This research was able to identify within the internal structure of the discourse the mechanisms and basic properties of its evolution. And this is actually the importance of the Complex Discourse Analysis. It rules out the primacy of the subjectified interpretations of researchers and promotes the systemic approach.

Источники и литература

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