

Polarity of a construct [*Analysing Identity: Chapter 2* © Peter Weinreich]

The polarity of a bipolar construct of discourses one uses to comprehend the social world is referenced to one's aspirational self, such that the discourse that is in accordance with emulative aspects defines the positive pole of the construct contrasted with the discourse that represents contrary sentiments, being the negative pole.

The positive pole of a construct is designated: + 1, and the negative pole: – 1

In appraising the social world the term 'discourse' refers to the talk and language that people use to appraise themselves and others in the social and material world. 'Discourses' refer to cognitions about oneself and the world. However, the affective or evaluative connotations of discourse vary from person to person, so that by ascertaining the polarity of a discourse the individual's unique value and belief system can be delineated without making a priori assumptions based in the cognitions alone. In ISA 'discourses' and 'bipolar constructs' also refer to people's non-verbal expressions as well as verbal and written ones.