

METHODS OF STUDYING FUTUROLOGY

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Annotation: the shift of futurology from constructing global projects of the future to developing more specific issues and forecasts related to various areas speaks of the high complexity and unpredictability of the modern world. But this trend is also proof of serious transformations within scientific knowledge. In particular, futurology was once divided into theoretical (“abstract reasoning” about the future) and applied directions (forecasting). The future of futurology seems to us to be in the mutual integration and enrichment of these two directions of modern futurological knowledge.

Key words: the relationship, science, futurology, applied direction, forecasting, prognosis, analysis and diagnosis.

The relationship between science and futurology can be seen by turning to its applied direction, that is, forecasting. Based on the generally accepted definition, prognosis, along with analysis and diagnosis, is an inherent function of each scientific discipline. Forecasting can be carried out in almost all sciences in accordance with the tasks and characteristics of each of them. In this regard, forecasting differs between natural history, scientific and technical and social science. Thus, the predictive value of scientific knowledge is obvious. In order for futurology not to slide into the level of predictions on coffee grounds, but to increase its predictive potential, it is necessary to develop scientific features in it.

It is advisable to begin the study of the methodological foundations of modern futurology by clarifying the content of the term “methodology” itself, since its understanding in modern philosophy is ambiguous. There were reasons for the appearance of this uncertainty and ambiguity.

According to most researchers, methodology is “a philosophical discipline that solves two main problems: the analysis of difficulties and problems in scientific and other types of thinking and the development of ways to solve these difficulties and problems.” But there is another definition of methodology, associated with the separation of methodology from philosophy, with the development of methodology as an independent discipline. In this case, methodology is understood as “the study of methods of organizing and constructing theoretical and practical human activity.” Subsequently, the methodology began to be considered outside the framework of science and scientific activity, in relation to human activity in general.

So, at present, two main definitions of methodology can be distinguished:

- the doctrine of means, methods and techniques of cognition;
- the doctrine of the organization of activity. For example, B.G. Yudin writes about this, who understands methodology as a set of cognitive means, methods, techniques used in any science, as well as a field of knowledge that studies the means, prerequisites and principles of organizing cognitive and practically transformative activities. D.A. Novikov and A.M. Novikov also point to this “binary” definition of methodology, defining it as “the doctrine of the organization of activity.” Thus, along with the methodology of scientific and research activities, a new direction began to form - the methodology of practical activity.

These changes within the methodology are associated, in our opinion, with the increasing orientation of science towards practice. The reasons for this are the differentiation of modern scientific knowledge, the complication of the conceptual apparatus of science, the increasing theorization of scientific thinking, and the improvement of cognitive means and methods of scientific knowledge. Each scientific discovery has not only substantive, but also methodological content and is associated with a critical analysis of concepts and approaches to interpreting the material being studied. The use of science as a force that improves our lives, only as a source of creating new technologies, leads to changes not only in the economic system (the so-called innovative economy arises), but also changes science itself.

An important contribution to the study of scientific methodology was made by domestic researchers. In particular, in the works of P.V. Kopnin, V.A. Lektorsky, V.I. Sadovsky, V.S. Shvyrev, G.P. Shchedrovitsky, E.G. Yudin, the methodology was differentiated into four blocks, with each previous a block within the framework of any scientific discipline absorbed the previous one: philosophical; general scientific; private scientific; technological (specific research methods and techniques).

For us, the important question is: "How could the evolution and differentiation of methodology influence the young discipline of futurology?" The answer is obvious: within the framework of futurology, two directions began to emerge that still exist today. For convenience, we propose to call them theoretical and applied directions of futurology. The above four levels of scientific methodology can be easily identified within modern futurology by turning to the analysis of the historical development of futurological knowledge.

So, for example, S.A. Pereslegin proposes to periodize futurological knowledge based on an analysis of the methods by which this or that forecast was created.

In his opinion, the first known tools for long-term forecasting were literary works about the future. Therefore, the first stage of the evolution of futurological knowledge was represented by its literary form. Accordingly, the main methods used in this field of futurology are literary description (author's literary or journalistic text) and "expert" thoughts about the future. At this stage of the development of futurology, such forms as science fiction, future studies and so-called transhumanism arose and developed. In our opinion, these forms of futurological knowledge use methods that can be attributed to the philosophical and general scientific level of scientific methodology.

The second stage in the development of futurological cognition is represented by forecasting techniques associated with the phenomenon of "thought factories". Methods used here include the Delphi method (wide cross-expert op, ros), the scenario method (determining long-term development scenarios), the method of strategic simulation modeling (represents a game modeling of the behavior of subjects in a situation of critical choice), the method of odds, site (multi-stage work of experts) and many others. At this stage of development of futurological knowledge, predominantly private scientific and technological methodology is used. We can say that since the emergence of the first "thought factories", futurology has been transformed into a scientific discipline and has positioned itself as a sphere where accurate knowledge is formed. It was within the framework of the work of these research institutes that specific techniques were developed that had a significant impact on the methodology of futurology.

As you can see, the second stage of the development of futurological knowledge represents the work of a team of specialists and therefore develops collective knowledge, in contrast to literary

artistic or authorial forecast. At the same time, one cannot ignore the fact that even the work of a team of researchers in methodological terms is determined by their ideological positions and the type of scientific rationality used. S.A. Pereslegin, proposing to analyze the currently popular foresight studies as an illustrative example of the work of “thought factories,” points out that “... any prediction, explicitly or implicitly, includes the personal ontology of the forecaster and the dominant ontology of the society or community in which the task of forecasting is set.” He also notes that this circumstance, as a rule, is not reflected either by the authors of the forecast or by the customer. “Therefore, prediction cannot relate to reality more accurately than the intersection of the personal ontology of the forecaster and the collective ontology of the community engaged in forecasting correlates with this reality.” As the number of experts increases, the influence of the collective ontology of the expert community, the researcher points out, leads to the “nullification” of the personal component of the forecast authors. Thus, “with an increase in the number of experts, the “ontological basis” of forecasts narrows and the forecasts themselves become less meaningful and more obvious.”

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