

Cover Design
IVE Press
© IVE Press, Chillum
All rights reserved

ISSN 2150-9824



5706 Sargent Road
Chillum, MD
20782-2321

Ph. (301) 853 2789
Fax (301) 559 1713

Printed in the United States of America

Manuscript and Book Review Submissions

Article manuscripts should be submitted in two letter-perfect copies (with double-spaced endnotes) to the contact address indicated below. Important: When submitting an article, the author should certify that it is not being submitted simultaneously to another journal.

Guidelines on manuscript formatting for articles and book reviews are available on request, or on our website: www.theincarnateword.org.

Mailing Address:

Rev. Nathaniel Dreyer
IVE Press, The Incarnate Word,
5706 Sargent Rd.
Chillum, MD 20782-2321
USA

Speed-mail delivery requires a street address and telephone number. For that service, add Ph. 301-773-3635.

E-mail: TIWeditor@ive.org

TIW Vol. 9 | No. 1

May 2022

THE THOMISTIC DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE ACT OF
UNDERSTANDING AND THE FORMATION OF A MENTAL
WORD: *INTELLIGERE* AND *DICERE* IN AQUINAS

Fr. Andres Ayala, IVE, Ph.D.

Mt. Rainier, MD

WHAT IS THE DISTINCTION between understanding and forming a concept? In my view, for Aquinas, *intelligere* (the act of understanding) and *dicere* (the forming of a *verbum* or mental word) are not two different acts, but simply two different aspects of the same act of understanding. In the following, I will explore more in depth what this distinction means for Aquinas. Firstly, I will give a mostly doctrinal or systematic overview of the issue and, secondly, I will support my claims with relevant textual evidence, taken exclusively from Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae*.

This study, as an appendix, is part of "The Influence of Kant in Transcendental Thomism: Rahner, Lonergan and Von Balthasar" (forthcoming).¹ In my view, Lonergan's way of distinguishing *intelligere* and *dicere* is different from St. Thomas' way.² In the body of my book, I focus on Lonergan's reasons to distinguish these notions in his own particular way, whereas this study focuses on St. Thomas' doctrine. It is my hope that the following lines will foster an understanding of St. Thomas' epistemology and of its application to Trinitarian theology.

I. NOT TWO DIFFERENT ACTS: SYSTEMATIC OVERVIEW

Intelligere and *dicere* are not two different acts of the possible intellect, because the possible intellect does not essentially have two acts, but one, which is understanding (*intelligere*)

¹ Cf. Bibliography.

² In my book, I focus on Lonergan's doctrine in his *Verbum* articles, cf. Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*, Reprint, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, vol. 2, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014). Lonergan's distinction between *intelligere* and *dicere* may be seen in *ibid.*, 150: "On the level of intellectual apprehension the agent object is the *quidditas rei materialis*, not *to ti estin* but *to ti en einai*, known in and through a phantasm illuminated by agent intellect; this agent object is the *obiectum proprium intellectus humani*; it is the object of insight. Corresponding to this agent object there is the terminal object of the inner word; this is the concept, and the first of concepts is *ens*, the *obiectum commune intellectus*."

through a concept (*verbum*), as I will explain. Additionally, *intelligere* and *dicere* do not correspond to simple apprehension and judgment respectively, because there is a *verbum* in simple apprehension, which is the definition. In other words, simple apprehension is not only *intelligere*, but there is also *dicere* and *verbum* in simple apprehension.

Simple apprehension and judgment are two different operations of the same faculty, but no faculty can have two acts at the same time under the same respect. This is what I mean when I say that the possible intellect, which is the faculty of both simple apprehension and judgment, has essentially only one act which is understanding. Simple apprehension and judgment are two different instances of understanding and, therefore, both of them happen as acts of the possible intellect and both of them through a *verbum*.

We form a *verbum* when we understand. This does not mean that we first understand and then form a *verbum*, but that the very fact that we understand something implies that we have formed a *verbum* of it.³ There is no real difference between the act of understanding and the formation of a *verbum*. We would not have a *verbum* if we had not understood something, but we would not understand something if we did not have a *verbum* of it.

Therefore, to conceive something and to define something is the same as to understand it. If you have no “idea” (*verbum*) of what something is, it is because you have not yet “understood” (*intelligere*) it.

Let me explain this in terms of the process of understanding. Once the agent intellect has abstracted the intelligible

3 Cf. ST, I, q. 27, a. 1, c.: “For whenever we understand, *by the very fact of understanding* there proceeds something within us, which is a conception of the object understood, a conception issuing from our intellectual power and proceeding from our knowledge of that object” [Quicumque enim intelligit, *ex hoc ipso quod intelligit*, procedit aliquid intra ipsum, quod est conceptio rei intellectae, ex vi intellectiva proveniens, et ex eius notitia procedens]. In Aquinas’ text, the emphasis is always mine, unless otherwise indicated.

species, this intelligible species, as agent object, is impressed upon or acts upon the possible intellect. This is not the act of understanding. This is the act of the *species impressa* or, in another sense, of the agent intellect but not the act of the possible intellect. That is, at this point, the possible intellect is acted upon, the possible intellect is actualized (by the *species impressa*) but does not yet act itself.⁴ What makes the possible intellect *able to act* is precisely this being acted upon by the *species impressa*, which is intelligible in act. Once actualized by the *species impressa*, the possible intellect acts: the possible intellect embraces the *species impressa* in a concept. This is the cognitive moment, this is the intentional reception, this is the moment of understanding. The contact of the possible intellect with the intelligibility in act of the *species impressa* is what allows the possible intellect to pass itself from understanding in potency to understanding in act.⁵ Only then, the *species impressa* passes from intelligible in act and in potency to be understood to understood in act (*species expressa* or *verbum*). The *species expressa* is the act of understanding as completed. And this is what it means to say that “*intellectum* in act” (the *verbum* or *species expressa*) is the same as “*intellectus* in act” (which is the act of understanding).⁶

4 Can we not say that if the possible intellect is actualized, then it passes from potency to act and there we have the first act of the possible intellect? Not really. Suppose fire and wood. Does the fire burn the wood, or does the wood burn? Who is the one burning, the fire or the wood? Both, of course. But the wood is burnt, not the fire. Unless there is a fire, the wood does not burn, but to be burnt is not the act of the fire but the act of the wood. Do they not happen at the same time? Yes, of course: as soon as the fire burns the wood, the wood is burnt. Are they not, then, the same act? Of course not: the act of the fire causes the act of the wood, but the act of the wood is its own. The act of the fire is not the act of the wood. In a similar way, the activity of the *species impressa* over the possible intellect is not the act of the possible intellect itself.

5 This is what it means that the *verbum* is “act from act”: the *species expressa* comes from the actuality of the *species impressa*, the act of understanding comes from the actuality of the intelligible. It does not mean that the *verbum* comes from a previous act of understanding.

6 ST, I, q. 85, a. 2 ob. 1: “the understood in act is the intellect itself in act” [intellectum in actu est ipse intellectus in actu].

Certainly, we could never conceive what we have not understood, and St. Thomas says that *verbum* is “*ex eius notitia procedens*.”⁷ This, however, does not mean that the act of understanding is previous to the conception of the word, but that it is the reason of the conception of the word: a concept forms in the intellect because the intellect has understood something. The notional sequence and distinction in our mind (*i.e. distinctio rationis*) do not necessitate metaphysical sequence and distinction (*distinctio realis*), as if the two acts were really distinct and not simply two aspects of the same act.

We may then understand why St. Thomas says that *intelligere* and *dicere* are not the same.⁸ They do not have the same meaning and, therefore, even if they occur at the same time and are aspects of the same act, they must be distinguished. *Intelligere* indicates a relationship of the intellect to that which is understood (we understand *something*), whereas *dicere* indicates a relationship of the intellect to its own act, to its own subjective perfection (we say or speak an *interior word*, we conceive a *concept*). And even if we also say “something,” we say it or speak it through a word: the term “speaking” directly indicates the use of words and indirectly what we say. Clearly, St. Thomas is making this distinction because he wants to attribute *dicere* only to the Father, and understanding to the three Persons in the Blessed Trinity. This distinction, however, does not imply that in the Trinity understanding happens separately from speaking: but that only one person speaks, and the three of them are spoken through the same word.⁹

St. Thomas says that the word proceeds *ex notitia concipientis* in the sense that the word proceeds from the intellect insofar as the intellect understands [something]. We could differentiate notionally the two moments, and put one as the “cause”

7 ST, I, q. 27, a. 1, c.: “proceeding from our knowledge of that object”.

8 Cf. ST I, q. 34, a. 1, ad 3: “Anselmus vero improprie accepit dicere pro intelligere. Quae tamen differunt.” I will explain in detail this text in section 2.

9 Cf. ST, I, q. 34, a. 1, ad 3.

of the other, but in reality both are the same thing. In order to conceive something, we must see it first; the moment of seeing something could be called *intelligere*, and the moment of conceiving, *verbum*. But if seeing is the act of the intellect with reference to the object seen, what is the difference with the *verbum*? There is no difference in reality: we are talking about the same act of the intellect. But there is a difference in the signification, because the act of the intellect has two different aspects, and this is exactly Aquinas' point in distinguishing *intelligere* and *dicere*. Insofar as the intellect refers to the thing understood, we use the term "understanding": we understand something. Insofar as the intellect is referred to its own act, that is, to the word by which it understands, we use the term "speaking": we speak a word. The notion of "understanding" in itself does not imply procession, but rather possession and perfection. "Speaking" implies procession, because we issue a word. Again, we do not "issue" something insofar as we understand it, but we *possess* that something as our own perfection. The word instead issues from the one who speaks the word.

Therefore, and coming back to the Blessed Trinity, because understanding implies only a relationship to that which is understood, the Three Divine Persons understand, insofar as they know themselves and in themselves know everything else; whereas because speaking or conceiving implies a relationship to that by which something is spoken or conceived, only the Father speaks.

II. ANALYSIS OF TEXTUAL EVIDENCE

Let me support my claims with the Thomistic text. In *Summa* I, q. 34, a. 1, c., St. Thomas quotes with approval St. John Damascene: "he says that 'word' is called 'the natural movement of the intellect, by which the intellect moves, understands and thinks'"¹⁰ The *verbum* is always related to the act of under-

¹⁰ ST I, q. 34, a. 1, c.: "dicens [Damascenus] quod 'verbum dicitur *naturalis intellectus motus*, secundum quem movetur et intelligit et cogitat.'"

standing, in the sense that we conceive [a word] by understanding [something], and we understand something by conceiving a word.

On the other hand, "to be spoken" belongs to each Person, for not only is the word spoken, but also the thing *understood* or signified *by the word*. Therefore, in this manner, to one person alone in God does it belong to be spoken in the same way as a word is spoken; whereas in the way whereby a thing is spoken as *being understood in the word*, it belongs to each Person to be spoken. For the Father, *by understanding* Himself, the Son and the Holy Ghost, and all other things comprised in this knowledge, *conceives the Word*; so that thus the whole Trinity is "spoken" in the Word; and likewise also all creatures: as the intellect of a man by the word *he conceives in the act of understanding* a stone, speaks a stone.¹¹

Clearly, in this text¹² and for St. Thomas, we conceive by understanding: "The Father... by understanding... conceives" [Pater... intelligendo... concipit], "as the intellect of a man by the word he conceives in the act of understanding a stone..." [sicut intellectus hominis verbo quod concipit intelligendo lapidem...]; and we understand by conceiving, by a word: "the

¹¹ ST I, q. 34, a. 1 ad 3: "Sed dici convenit cuilibet personae, dicitur enim non solum verbum sed res quae *verbo intelligitur* vel significatur. Sic ergo uni soli personae in divinis convenit dici eo modo quo dicitur verbum, eo vero modo quo dicitur *res in verbo intellecta*, cuilibet personae convenit dici. Pater enim, *intelligendo* se et filium et spiritum sanctum, et omnia alia quae eius scientia continentur, *concipit verbum*, ut sic tota Trinitas verbo dicatur, et etiam omnis creatura; sicut intellectus hominis *verbo quod concipit intelligendo lapidem*, lapidem dicit."

¹² All of the following quotations in this paragraph are excerpts from the text just quoted, that is, ST I, q. 34, a. 1 ad 3.

thing understood or signified by the word” [res quae verbo intelligitur], “a thing is spoken as being understood in the word” [res in verbo intellecta].

“For whenever we understand, *by the very fact of understanding* [ex hoc ipso quod intelligit] there proceeds something within us, which is a conception of the thing understood, a conception issuing from our intellectual power and *proceeding from our knowledge* of that object [ex eius notitia procedens].”¹³ I do not think it can be said more clearly that the concept forms precisely in the very act of understanding and as the very act of understanding. “Notitia” refers to the act of understanding in the same way as “*ex hoc ipso quod intelligit*”; that is, the word proceeds from the act of understanding (*ex eius notitia procedens*)¹⁴ insofar as the word proceeds by the very fact that we understand something (*ex hoc ipso quod intelligit*).

That the term “notitia”, for St. Thomas, signifies the act of understanding may be taken from the following text. Here, St. Thomas is clarifying St. Augustine’s use of the term “notitia”, because St. Augustine has used this term to indicate the concept, which is not the way St. Thomas uses it. “Therefore when we say that ‘word is knowledge’ [notitia], the term ‘knowledge’ does not mean the act of a knowing intellect, or any one of its habits, but stands for what the intellect conceives by knowing.”¹⁵ That is to say, *notitia* is commonly used to indicate the act of understanding (or its habit), but here is used by St. Augustine to indicate the concept. Significantly, St. Thomas says that the concept is that which the intellect conceives pre-

¹³ ST I, q. 27, a. 1 c.: “Quicumque enim intelligit, *ex hoc ipso quod intelligit*, procedit aliquid intra ipsum, quod est conceptio rei intellectae, ex vi intellectiva procedens, et *ex eius notitia procedens*.”

¹⁴ Cf. ST I, q. 34, a. 1 c.: “The concept of the heart has of its own nature to proceed from something other than itself—namely, *from the knowledge of the one conceiving*.” [Ipse autem conceptus cordis de ratione sua habet quod alio procedat, scilicet *a notitia concipientis*.]

¹⁵ ST I, q. 34, a. 1 ad 2: “Cum ergo dicitur quod verbum est notitia, non accipitur notitia pro actu intellectus cognoscentis, vel pro aliquo eius habitu, sed pro eo quod intellectus concipit cognoscendo.”

cisely in the act of knowing something, in the act of understanding (“what the intellect conceives *by knowing*” [quod intellectus concipit *cognoscendo*]). Understanding and the issuing of a word are not two different acts of the intellect, but two different aspects of the intellect in the same act of understanding.

The concept “*proceeds by way of intelligible action*, which is a vital operation; from a conjoined principle (as above described); by way of similitude, inasmuch as the concept of the intellect is a likeness of the thing understood.”¹⁶ The concept proceeds by way of an operation of the intellect from the intellect itself. What operation of the intellect if not understanding, which is an assimilation regarding the thing understood? If *intelligere* were an act different from *dicere*, what would be the difference? Both would be operations from the intellect in which the intellect is assimilated to that which is understood: again, what would be the difference? The concept’s assimilation regarding the thing understood is stressed also in the following text: “Regarding our intellect, instead, we use the word ‘conception’ in order to signify that in the word of our intellect is found the likeness of the thing understood, although there be no identity of nature.”¹⁷

The concept is “what the intellect conceives by knowing,”¹⁸ that is, what is conceived by the very act of understanding. There is no understanding without word. There is a distinction in the way of signifying that allows for confusion perhaps, insofar as *intelligere* could be considered the operation essentially, in itself, as operation, as *in fieri*, and the concept signifies the operation *in facto esse*, as completed. However, because of the

16 ST I, q. 27, a. 2, c.: “*Procedit enim per modum intelligibilis actionis, quae est operatio vitae, et a principio coniuncto, ut supra iam dictum est, et secundum rationem similitudinis, quia conceptio intellectus est similitudo rei intellectae.*” Aquinas is speaking directly about the Word in God, but what is quoted here applies to the human concept also.

17 ST I, q. 27, a. 2 ad 2: “*Sed in intellectu nostro utimur nomine conceptionis, secundum quod in verbo nostri intellectus invenitur similitudo rei intellectae, licet non inveniatur naturae identitas.*”

18 ST I, q. 34, a. 1 ad 2: “*quod intellectus concipit cognoscendo.*”

particular characteristics of understanding, there is no real distinction between *in fieri* or *in facto esse*: either we understand or we do not.

So much so that whoever understands, understands in the concept: the thing understood is manifested to the one who understands “in the word uttered.”¹⁹ And that is why Aquinas says that the three Persons in the Trinity are understood and *therefore* said in the concept: “although each Person understands and is understood, and consequently is spoken by the Word.”²⁰

If *intelligere* and *dicere* correspond to the same act of understanding, why does Aquinas make a distinction between these two notions?

Anselm took the term “speak” [*dicere*] improperly for the act of understanding [*intelligere*]; whereas they really differ from each other. For “to understand” [*intelligere*] means only the relationship of the one who understands to the thing understood, in which relationship nothing about origin is conveyed, but only a certain information of our intellect, forasmuch as our intellect is made actual by the form of the thing understood. In God, however, it [i.e. *intelligere*] means complete identity, because in God the intellect and the thing understood are altogether the same, as was proved above. Whereas “to speak” [*dicere*] means chiefly the relationship to the word conceived: for “to speak” is nothing but to utter a word. But by means of the word it [i.e. *dicere*] imports a relationship to the thing understood which in the word uttered is manifested to the one who understands.²¹

¹⁹ ST I, q. 34, a. 1 ad 3: “in verbo prolato manifestatur intelligenti.”

²⁰ ST I, q. 34, a. 1 ad 3 in finem: “cum tamen singula personarum sit intelligens et intellecta, et per consequens Verbo dicta.”

²¹ ST I, q. 34, a. 1, ad 3: “Anselmus vero improprie accepit dicere pro intelligere. Quae tamen differunt. Nam intelligere *importat* solam habitudinem

St. Thomas is not saying that the terms *intelligere* and *dicere* correspond to different acts of the intellect, but that they indicate different relationships in the same act of understanding. *Intelligere* indicates the relationship of the intellect to that which is understood: now, given that in God the intellect and that which is understood are the same thing, here, in God, there is no real relation. *Dicere* is the relationship of the intellect to its word: now, because this relationship is a relationship of origin, here, in God, there is a real relation.

Intelligere is the relationship of the intellect to its object; *dicere* is the relationship of the intellect as principle of operation to its operation. Now, the relationship of the intellect to its object (understanding) is through its operation, through the intellect's "reaching out" to the object, through the concept. That is why, even if *intelligere* indicates the relationship of the intellect to the thing understood, *dicere* relates also, through the word, to the thing understood because it is precisely the word that manifests to the one who understands that which is understood:²² we understand in the word. In my view, this explanation and the fact that Aquinas, in this text (ST I, q. 34, a. 1, ad 3), emphasizes the connotation of each term, as each term indicating different relationships regarding the intellect's operation,²³ show

intelligentis ad rem intellectam; in qua nulla ratio originis importatur, sed solum informatio quaedam in intellectu nostro, prout intellectus noster fit in actu per formam rei intellectae. In Deo autem importat omnimodam identitatem, quia in Deo est omnino idem intellectus et intellectum, ut supra ostensum est. Sed dicere importat principaliter habitudinem ad verbum conceptum; nihil enim est aliud dicere quam proferre verbum. Sed mediante verbo importat habitudinem ad rem intellectam, quae in verbo prolato manifestatur intelligenti."

22 Cf. ST I, q. 34, a. 1, ad 3: "...the thing understood which in the word uttered is manifested to the one who understands" [...rem intellectam, quae in verbo prolato manifestatur intelligenti].

23 Cf. ST I, q. 34, a. 1, ad 2: "Nothing belonging to the intellect can be applied to God personally, except word alone; for word alone *signifies* that which emanates from another. For what the intellect forms in its conception is the word. Now, the intellect itself, according as it is made actual by the intelligible species, *is considered* absolutely" [Nihil eorum quae ad intellectum perti-

clearly that, for Aquinas, understanding and the production of a concept are not two different operations. They are, instead, two different aspects of the same operation: *intelligere* is the relationship of the intellect to its object, and *dicere* the relationship of the intellect to its own operation on the object.

Other texts that may confirm our interpretation:

In those things in which there is a difference between the intellect and its object,²⁴ and the will and its object, there can be a real relation, both of science to its object, and of the willer to the object willed. In God, however, the intellect and its object are one and the same; because by understanding Himself, God understands all other things; and

ment, personaliter dicitur in divinis, nisi solum verbum, solum enim verbum significat aliquid ab alio emanans. Id enim quod intellectus in concipiendo format, est verbum. Intellectus autem ipse, secundum quod est per speciem intelligibilem in actu, consideratur absolute].

In my view, here and because of the context, “species intelligibilem” stands for the *species expressa*, that is, for the concept, and not for the *species impressa*. Certainly, in many places Aquinas uses this terminology “species intelligibilis” for the *species impressa* instead. However, that the concept, in Aquinas, can be considered an intelligible species can be taken from the following passages as well. Cf. ST I, q. 27, a. 2, c.: “for He proceeds by way of intelligible action, which is a vital operation; and from a conjoined principle (as above described); and by way of similitude, inasmuch as the concept of the intellect is a likeness of the object conceived” [Procedit enim per modum intelligibilis actionis, quae est operatio vitae, et a principio coniuncto, ut supra iam dictum est, et secundum rationem similitudinis, quia conceptio intellectus est similitudo rei intellectae]; ST I, q. 27, a. 2, ad 2: “In our way of understanding we use the word ‘conception’ in order to signify that in the word of our intellect is found the likeness of the thing understood, although there be no identity of nature” [Sed in intellectu nostro utimur nomine conceptionis, secundum quod in verbo nostri intellectus invenitur similitudo rei intellectae, licet non inveniatur naturae identitas].

²⁴ Notice how, for Aquinas, the Aristotelian identity between “intellectus in actu” (the intellect in act) and “intellectum in actu” (the understood in act) does not mean that *intellectus* (the intellect) and *intellectum* (the understood or the object) are always the same thing. They are the same thing only in God, not in us.

the same applies to His will and the object that He wills. Hence it follows that in God these kinds of relations are not real; as neither is the relation of a thing to itself. Nevertheless, the relation to the word is a real relation; because *the word is understood as proceeding by an intelligible action*; and not as a thing understood. For, when we understand a stone, that which the intellect conceives from the thing understood, is called the word.²⁵

The word is that which proceeds by means of an intellectual action. What intellectual action, if not the act of understanding? This is why St. Thomas mentions immediately the example of the act of understanding a stone.

St. Thomas, as part of an objection, affirms the following principle: “whoever understands, by understanding conceives a word.”²⁶ Therefore—the objection continues—if the three Persons in the Trinity understand, the three of them should conceive a word, and therefore word is not a personal name, but something regarding the three Persons. St. Thomas’ answer to this objection does not deny the aforementioned principle:

To be intelligent belongs to the Son, in the same way as it belongs to Him to be God, since to understand is said of God essentially, as stated above.

²⁵ Cf. ST I, q. 28, a. 4, ad 1: “In his in quibus differt intellectus et intellectum, volens et volitum, potest esse realis relatio et scientiae ad rem scitam, et volentis ad rem volitam. Sed in Deo est idem omnino intellectus et intellectum, quia intelligendo se intelligit omnia alia, et eadem ratione voluntas et volitum. Unde in Deo huiusmodi relationes non sunt reales, sicut neque relatio eiusdem ad idem. Sed tamen relatio ad verbum est realis, quia *verbum intelligitur ut procedens per actionem intelligibilem*, non autem ut res intellecta. Cum enim intelligimus lapidem, id quod ex re intellecta concipit intellectus, vocatur verbum.” This text shows also that, for Aquinas, there is concept not only in judgment but in simple apprehension as well. We form a concept in understanding “stone”.

²⁶ ST I, q. 34, a. 2, ob. 4: “Quicumque intelligit, intelligendo concipit verbum.”

Now the Son is God begotten, and not God begetting; and hence He is *intelligent, not as producing a Word*, but as the Word proceeding; forasmuch as in God the Word proceeding does not differ really from the divine intellect, but is distinguished from the principle of the Word only by relation.²⁷

The act of understanding implies issuing a word, the act of understanding happens by means of the issuing of a word. In the Trinity, the act of understanding is one and the Word is also one: but the act of understanding is essential and instead the Word, because it implies a real relationship to its principle, is Personal. What I find relevant for my present purpose is that, for Aquinas, the principle remains: “whoever understands, by understanding conceives a word.”²⁸ The act of understanding happens by issuing a word.

CONCLUSION

Our purpose has been to show that, for Aquinas, *intelligere* and *dicere* are not two different acts of the intellect, but two different considerations of the same act of understanding, based on two different relationships of the intellect: the relationship between the intellect and that which is understood, and the relationship between the intellect and its own operation or act. In the *Summa Theologiae*, there is textual evidence that St. Thomas makes a distinction between *intelligere* and *dicere*, but no textual evidence refers this distinction to two different acts. Textual evidence refers this distinction to two different relationships in

27 ST I, q. 34, a. 2, ad 4: “Eo modo convenit Filio esse intelligentem, quo convenit ei esse Deum, *cum intelligere essentialiter dicatur in divinis*, ut dictum est. Est autem Filius Deus genitus, non autem generans Deus. Unde est quidem *intelligens, non ut producens verbum*, sed ut verbum procedens; prout scilicet in Deo verbum procedens secundum rem non differt ab intellectu divino, sed relatione sola distinguitur a principio verbi.”

28 ST I, q. 34, a. 2, ob. 4: “Quicumque intelligit, intelligendo concipit verbum.”

the intellect itself, and leads to affirm that these two different relationships happen in the same act of understanding.