

THE CONCEPT OF DISCOURSE IN WORLD AND UZBEK LINGUISTICS

Ubaydullayeva Xolida Manopovna,

lecturer at the Asia International University.

Email: xolidaubaydullayeva066@gmail.com

Tel:+998906365603

Annotation: This article analyzes the essence and meaning of the concept of “discourse” from the perspective of world and Uzbek linguistics. The relationship between discourse and text, as well as their semantic and pragmatic distinctions, are examined. The views of scholars such as A.I. Kaplunenko, M.A.K. Halliday, T. van Dijk, M. Foucault, and V.V. Krasnykh are analyzed to demonstrate classifications of discourse based on communicative, socio-cultural, genre-based, and modality-oriented approaches. Furthermore, the formation of legal discourse, its anthropolinguistic, pragmatic, semiotic, and linguoculturological aspects are discussed. The role of discourse analysis in Uzbek legal language, along with the connection between social-pragmatic factors and personal positioning in communication, is also highlighted.

Keywords: discourse, text, communicative approach, legal discourse, linguopragmatics, anthropolinguistics, socio-cultural context, language system, power and knowledge, legal speech.

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, the concept of discourse has become one of the key categories in modern linguistics. Unlike text, discourse represents not only linguistic units but also the communicative situation, socio-cultural environment, participants’ speech strategies, and communicative goals. Therefore, discourse analysis has developed as an interdisciplinary field that combines linguistic, sociological, psychological, cultural, and philosophical approaches.

In world linguistics, this term has been interpreted in different ways.

M.A.K. Halliday defined discourse through the field–tenor–mode triad as a contextual process; T. van Dijk viewed it as a cognitive activity linked to the social situation; M. Foucault conceptualized discourse as a cultural-institutional system — an episteme, that is, a historically conditioned form of thought and power.

In Uzbek linguistics, increasing attention has been given to the study of discourse, particularly to the linguistic, pragmatic, and sociocultural foundations of legal discourse. Legal discourse reveals the social values expressed in legal language, the communicative relations between the state and the citizen, and the role of language in the realization of power.

This article examines the theoretical development of the discourse concept, its types, the specific features of legal discourse, and its importance within the linguistic system.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODS

The universality of the concept of discourse in relation to text has been emphasized by A.I. Kaplunenko, who defines discourse as encompassing not only the linguistic structure of an utterance but also the parameters of the communicative situation, the individuality of participants, and the interaction strategies. In contrast, text is considered a narrower phenomenon limited to the structural and semantic parameters of an utterance [Kaplunenko, 1992, p. 100].

In short, within the “text–discourse” dichotomy, the most universal category is discourse, as it covers linguistic, pragmatic, sociocultural, psychological, and other extralinguistic factors such as participants, communicative purpose, temporal frame, and social context.

Among numerous definitions of discourse, M.A.K. Halliday’s concept is particularly notable. He explains discourse through the triad of field, tenor, and mode, defining it as a text functioning within situational and cultural contexts [Halliday, 1985].

Similar situational approaches are found in the works of T. van Dijk, V.Z. Demyankov, and V.I. Kurbatov. According to van Dijk, “the most essential component in producing and interpreting texts is the understanding of the social situation and its cognitive representation” [Van Dijk, 1989, p. 161]. The situational context serves as the condition for the formation of discourse, which is seen as a communicative event — an interaction between speaker and listener — that goes beyond the textual meaning itself. In legal discourse, a courtroom hearing may serve as such a communicative event, subdivided into smaller communicative acts — what V.V. Krasnykh defines as “functionally integral fragments of communication”: the lawyer’s defense speech, the prosecutor’s accusation, witnesses’ testimonies, etc.

M. Foucault, in turn, interprets discourse as a cultural-institutional phenomenon. The condition for the emergence of discourse is the episteme — a set of assumptions, stereotypes, and modes of thought typical of a specific historical period. Unlike van Dijk, Foucault identifies the statement as the basic unit of discourse, defining it as “a sequence of utterances subordinated to the same system of formation and belonging to the same discursive structure” [Foucault, 1996a, p. 107].

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

Discursive formation, in this sense, refers to a socio-practical domain of human knowledge that determines what can and cannot be said. Therefore, the meaning of statements is not constant but is defined within the boundaries of discursive formation [ibid.].

Discourse classifications and approaches can be summarized as follows:

1.1. Communicative-functional approach

According to this approach, discourses are classified based on their communicative purposes: political, legal, religious, pedagogical, scientific, etc. Each type of discourse has its own linguistic, stylistic, and pragmatic characteristics.

1.2. Socio-cultural approach

Here, discourse is studied in connection with social institutions and cultural values. According to M. Foucault (1972), discourse functions as an instrument for the transmission of knowledge and power.

1.3. Genre-based approach

Discourse may also be classified according to text genres such as conversation, interview, lecture, article, law, or advertisement. This approach was developed extensively by M. Swales (1990).

1.4. Modality-based approach

Modern studies also distinguish discourses based on modality — oral or written, as well as visual and multimodal forms. For instance, television debates and online blogs belong to multimodal discourse.

The social and ideological dimensions of discourse are also emphasized in critical discourse analysis. Scholars such as N. Fairclough and T. van Dijk assert that discourse serves as a mechanism of exercising power and maintaining social inequality.

The classification of discourse is thus context-dependent and variable. The diversity of approaches reflects the complexity of the phenomenon itself.

Language innovations and the increasing role of communication have influenced the emergence of legal discourse as a distinct anthropolinguistic field. Law functions through language and speech, and legal norms are realized through textual and semantic structures that attract the attention of both linguists and jurists.

The study of legal speech involves considering linguistic and extralinguistic factors, such as the legal field and meta-information level. Legal documents represent textual manifestations of law, reflecting general social interests through the language of legislation.

Consequently, the analysis of legal speech has led to the development of new interdisciplinary fields such as jurislinguistics and linguocriminalistics. Legal discourse includes several subtypes:

1. Institutional discourse
2. Personal discourse
3. Judicial discourse
4. Legislative discourse, etc.

Within legal discourse, the following key objectives are addressed:

- defining the concept and parameters of legal speech;
- identifying the implementation of legal mechanisms within the text;
- analyzing linguistic and extralinguistic factors influencing the interpretation of legal texts;
- describing the metalinguistic essence of legal thesauri;
- studying legal language from semantic, pragmatic, and linguocultural perspectives.

Legal documents are the central object of study in legal discourse. Such texts not only convey information but also reveal the author's socio-pragmatic stance. Changes in political and legal

systems also transform the speaker's communicative position. Legal acts are examined as personalized genres where linguistic means and their interpretation play a decisive role.

In determining the subject's position in legal discourse, documents such as claims, complaints, explanatory notes (by victims or offenders), reports, statements, and official replies are analyzed from theoretical, semiotic, linguocultural, and sociopragmatic perspectives.

CONCLUSION

In contemporary linguistics, discourse is regarded as a universal and multidimensional phenomenon. It studies not merely the structural units of language but also their functioning mechanisms in social, psychological, cultural, and communicative contexts. Discourse analysis transcends textual boundaries to reveal the contextual and pragmatic nature of speech activity.

In the example of legal discourse, the role of language in expressing and legitimizing power becomes evident. The communicative structure of legal speech, the socio-cultural relations between participants, and the linguistic expression of legal truth all constitute the core of discursive analysis.

In conclusion, in both world and Uzbek linguistics, the concept of discourse extends beyond linguistics to encompass social, cultural, and ideological dimensions. Discourse analysis, therefore, serves not only to uncover the semantic structure of texts but also the meaning-producing forces behind them — the individual, context, power, and social consciousness.

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