



THEORETICAL PREREQUISITES FOR STUDYING DISCOURSE UNITS IN FOREIGN LINGUISTICS

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Amira Muminovna Azimova

The Researcher For The Degree Of Doctor Of Philosophy (Phd) In Philological Sciences Uzbek State World Languages University, Uzbekistan

ABSTRACT

Interpretations of the concept “discourse” differ depending on the context: sometimes it means speech, and sometimes it means the process of conversation. In the philosophy of postmodernism, this even means a special mentality.

It should be noted that there is no common understanding of the meaning of this term, but you can understand several of its definitions. This article is of great interest to both scientific linguists - Korean historians, and philologists, scientific researchers in the field of psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics, too.

KEYWORDS

Discourse, communication, speech, text, coherent speech, communicative process, context, discourse analysis, word, language.

INTRODUCTION

According to a number of foreign linguists, such as I.T. Kasavin, who defined the concept of “discourse” as “the connective tissue between text and context, which has turned into something inexpressible, lost”, T.A. Dake defined this concept in a broad way sense, as a complex communicative event that occurs between a speaker, a listener or an observer in the process of

communicative action in a certain temporal, spatial context. This communicative action, according to T.A. Dake, could be verbal or written, which had verbal and nonverbal components. Examples included an ordinary conversation with a friend, a dialogue between a doctor and a patient, or reading a newspaper. In the narrow understanding of the scientist, discourse was



defined as a text or conversation that highlighted only the verbal component. According to M. Foucault, “discourse” was a set of statements regarding a particular area that structures the way of speaking on a particular topic, about a particular object, process,” Yu.V. Rudnev defined three main parts of the concept of “discourse”: 1) S discourse – text as a process and result of a speech act; 2) P discourse is a system of rules and restrictions, the criterion for identifying which can be both objective (for example, genre) and subjective factors, with the help of which systemic contradictions within discourse are eliminated at the level of interdiscourse; 3) Interdiscourse – (equivalent to style) field of interaction of p-discourses within s-discourse.

At the same time, there is a need for a clearer definition of discourse and consideration of it not only in synchrony (as a set of texts), and not only in diachronic (as a process), but in the totality of these two approaches, that is, as a dynamic, constantly developing system, the structural elements and at the same time the products of functioning of which are texts.

It should also be noted that the term “discourse” is currently quite firmly fixed in world linguistics, having replaced the synonymous concept that was given and considered by I.N. Lebedeva, according to whom “the text is coherent speech». In addition, the term “discourse” has crossed the boundaries of linguistics and is widely used not only in linguistics, but also in philosophy, sociology, political science, cultural studies, as well as in works on psychoanalysis, etc.

If we consider the definition of the concept of “discourse” in philosophy, then the interpretation of the new vision of discourse in the philosophy of the 20th century resulted in the fact that it is understood as a linguistic-speech construction developed in a monologue, for example, speech or text. At the same

time, discourse is often understood as the sequence of communicative acts performed in language.

In sociology, the use of the term “discourse” is most often associated with discourse analysis. According to sociologists, discourse is speech immersed in life, that is, what we say is considered as a communication event, in conjunction with gestures, facial expressions, speech rhythm, emotional assessment, experience and worldview of the communicants. Sociological analysis of discourse involves the study of cultural, social, political, etc. conditions of its generation. Conceptually, this approach is expressed in the methodology of discourse analysis. O.A. Voronkova defined discourse as “a communicative process that includes successive periods of collective discussions of socially significant issues and subsequent decisions that influence the course of social practice”. According to O.A. Voronkov, the purpose of discourse analysis is to identify the deep meanings of social communication (i.e., in essence, to deconstruct the semantic content of the results of communication - texts), as well as to determine the influence of cultural, social, political and different context. Therefore, discourse analysis belongs to qualitative sociological methods directly related to narrative analysis, analysis of documents, etc. Within the framework of sociological theory, it is also common to use the category of discourse to designate communication practices associated with a specific agent or social practice, for example, medical discourse, presidential discourse, violence discourse, etc.

In political science, it is customary to consider “discourse” as the degree of influence on the addressee, which is defined as a kind of sign system in which modification of the semantics and functions of different types of language units and standard speech actions occurs. In cultural studies, discourse is a



language that changes during speech and is included in a sociocultural text. .

Despite the presence of a significant number of definitions of discourse and the growing interest of other sciences in the study of this term, discourse as a phenomenon remains one of the least defined objects of analysis, especially in domestic linguistics.

For a clearer understanding of the development of scientific research on the definition of the concept of “discourse” and its variations, the definitions given by foreign scientists will be considered below:

If we start with Korean linguistics, then when considering the definition of “discourse” we encounter the following analogues: 담론, 언어 담화, 담화 표지/담화표지어, 논담 (論談), 논술 (論述), 화법 (話法) . 담론 – discussion, controversy; 언어 담화: 언어 – language, speech, word; 담화 – conversation, utterance, exposition, statement, discourse; 담화 표지 / 담화표지어 – discourse marker; 논담 – discussion, dispute; 논술 – presentation, statement, discussion; 화법 – speech. Based on these definitions, a number of scientific articles devoted to 언어 담화 (linguistic discourse) and 담화 표지 (discourse marker).

In most scientific articles by Korean linguists the term 담화 표지 / 담화표지어 is used, which translates as “discourse marker”; discourse markers, in turn, are defined as units characterized by the absence of propositional content and functioning as connecting elements of discourse. According to scientists, in a broad sense they also include non-verbal markers, for example, intonation. Additionally, in Korean linguistics, 담화표지 / 담화표지어 (discourse markers) are

defined as expressions that do not fit into regular grammatical categories (such as nouns, verbs, etc.) since they can consist of different types of words and even entire expressions, and their function is to control and express politeness in a conversation, social status, attitude of the speaker or during the conversation itself . 담화표지 / 담화표지어 (discourse markers) can include adverbs, verb endings, transition words or connectors (관계 표현), discourse particles (담화입자), and even comment sentences. As an example, connectors are given that can be called introductory words, such as 첫 (번)째 - first, 마지막의 – the last one, 그러므로, 그러니 – therefore, 그러나[이나], 하지만[지만] – but also and many others.

At the same time, discourse particles include minor words that are not part of the syntax of an ordinary sentence, and whose function is purely pragmatic , for example, conversation control or politeness considerations. Commentary sentences, in turn, are entire expressions that have been shortened, stripped of their original meaning, and used as discourse markers. Also in Korean linguistics, it is believed that one discourse marker can have several functions. Below we will look at examples, as well as expressions that are used as adverbs in a sentence (문장부사). These adverbs modify the whole sentence and indicate the attitude or position of the speaker in relation to what was said: 가끔 – Sometimes; 간단하게 – simple, short; 간단히 – Briefly, succinctly; 거의 – Almost; 게다가 – in addition, additionally; 결국 – in the end; 결코 – never, under no circumstances; 계속 – constantly; 과연 – indeed, of course; 그래도 – nevertheless, it's all the same; 그래서 – therefore, so;



그리고 - besides (informal); 끝내 - finally, in the end;
다른 - different; 다소 - to some extent; 당연히 - of
course, naturally; 대개 - mostly; 대충 - approximately,
approximately; 덧붙이자면 - in addition, if you add a
plus to this; 딱 - exactly, exactly; 또 - in addition;
마지막으로 - finally; 마찬가지로 - similar; 말하면 -
honestly, frankly; 모두 - everything; 가끔 - sometimes,
etc..

Turning to the history of the issue in Russian linguistics,
one should cite as an example the judgment of the
following linguist I.T. Kasavin, where it was said about
the appearance of the term “discourse” in a later
historical period, that is, in his opinion, the appearance
of the term “discourse” can be attributed to the
Renaissance.

Speaking about Russian linguists, we should consider
their opinion on the contribution of ancient thinkers to
the science of language. Since it is known that ancient
culture paid special attention to the sounding word, it
is impossible not to take into account the fact that the
very approach to understanding the nature of
language that existed in ancient culture was fruitful for
linguistic knowledge. The influence of this approach
can be seen in the works of Russian scientists on the
theory of literature, rhetoric and eloquence of the
18th–19th centuries. However, despite the fact that the
word “discourse” has appeared in the Russian
language since the end of the 18th century, there is no
need to talk about the existence of the term
“discourse” in Russian humanities of this period. We
did not find this lexeme in the works on speech theory
by M.V. Lomonosov, I.S. Rizhsky, M.M. Speransky, N.F.
Koshansky, K.P. Zelenetsky and other authors who
created their works based on ancient traditions. It can
be assumed that this happened more quickly because

only the concept of “speech” entered scientific use. A
possible exception related to the use of the lexeme
“discourse” instead of the concept “speech” could
exist in the Latin-language manuals on rhetoric that
were created during the Lomonosov period. However,
this layer of written monuments has been practically
unstudied. At the end of the 19th century. The adjective
“discursive” entered the Russian scientific style. It was
used in the philosophical scientific tradition of the late
19th - early 20th centuries. In linguistic research at the
beginning of the 20th century. The expression
“discursive speaking” was used by the Russian linguist
L.P. Yakubinsky, convinced that the consideration of
language depending on the conditions of
communication should be the basis of linguistics. In the
first half of the 20th century, the Russian scientific
sphere of use included the combination “discursive
thinking.” It appeared in works related to the study of
speech activity and speech behavior of a linguistic
personality, in research on speech psychology and
psycholinguistics.

Also, considering the Russian linguistic school, one
should cite as an example the definition given by the
scientist Yu.V. Rudnev, who defined discourse as “a
dimension of text taken as a chain/complex of
utterances (i.e., as a process and result of a speech
(communicative) act), which presupposed
syntagmatic and paradigmatic relationships between
the formal elements forming the system and revealed
the pragmatic ideological attitudes of the subject of
the statement, limiting the potential inexhaustibility of
the meanings of the text ».

As the work of the next Russian scientist V.Z.
Demyankov, in classical Latin the lexeme “discursus”
in the meaning of “conversation, conversation” was
recorded late - in the 5th century AD. Scientist V.Z.
Demyankov pointed out the impossibility of



unambiguously stating discourse only in the meaning of “conversation”.

The next Russian linguist L.S. Vygotsky in his work “Thinking and Speech” , describing the phenomenon of contraction of external speech in dialogue, relied on the observations of L.P. Yakubinsky and quoted his statements about the process of “discursive speaking”. In his other work “Psychology of Art” L.S. Vygotsky used the concepts of “discursive thinking” and “logical-discursive thinking,” contrasting it with “emotional thinking,” but did not specify the meaning of this term.

Based on the studied works, we can conclude that various variants of combinations derived from the lexeme “discourse” existed in the context of Russian scientific research in psycholinguistics and linguo-pragmatics since the beginning of the twentieth century. Only in the 70s did the concept of “discourse” begin to acquire terminological status in the series of the scientific collection “New in Foreign Linguistics” , began to appear on sociolinguistics (1975), text linguistics (1978), theory of speech acts (1986), and others where this term was used. Since this period, foreign linguists, when studying text as a communicative unit, began to use the concept of “discourse” in a terminological sense.

Considering the scientific activity of French linguists, one should cite the example of R. Barthes, as well as his next statement, the text - in his opinion, is texture or fabric. “If earlier linguists always took this fabric as a product, a finished matter, behind which lies a hidden meaning or truth, now it is necessary to emphasize in this fabric the generative idea that the text is developed in a process of continuous weaving. Lost in this fabric, in this texture, the subject unfolds itself like a spider, pouring out secretions that construct a web ”. Despite the fact that in French linguistics there was

a long tradition of studying texts, especially written ones, as immovable objects that exist regardless of the circumstances of their occurrence, by the mid-1970s the text was rethought as a communicative process, and after this the linguistics of the text became “degenerate” into discourse analysis.

Representatives of the Western European and American linguistic tradition, such linguists as T.A. Dake (Dutch linguist), Z. Harris (American linguist, Russian by birth), in the second half of the 1970s switched from textual to discursive terminology, which determined the transition from fixed to a dynamic, procedural approach. These scientists considered discourse as connected speech in oral and written form, in which the factor of interaction between the sender and recipient of the message clearly appears. It is worth noting that the above statement is quite important for the dissertation research we have chosen.

In particular, the Dutch linguist T.A. Dake noted in his work that discourse is a complex communicative phenomenon that, in addition to the text, also includes extra linguistic factors, such as knowledge about the world, opinions, attitudes, and goals of the addressee, necessary for understanding this text. The speech flow, in his opinion, is a language in its constant movement, absorbing all the diversity of the historical era, individual and social characteristics of both the communicant and the communicative situation in which communication takes place . He placed great importance on an expanded understanding of the contextual perspective of discourse, especially in the study of mass media texts .

If we consider the German-Austrian school of discourse analysis and its representatives U. Maas (German scientist), Z. Jäger (German linguist), J. Link, J. Habermas (German philosopher, sociologist), R. Wodak (Austrian linguist) we can say that this school



developed on the basis of the concept of discourse of the French historian and sociologist M. Foucault, in whose work discourse was considered as a linguistic expression of a certain social practice, an ordered and systematized use of language in a special way, behind which stands an ideologically and historically conditioned mentality.

Also, the concept of “discourse” is widely used in various scientific fields directly or indirectly involved in the study of language and its functioning. These can be such humanities as linguistics, literary criticism, semiotics, sociology and a number of others.

It is worth noting that such an important term for our dissertation research as media discourse, is also included in the circle of key areas of the new linguistic discipline.

Russian linguists A.A. Kibrik and P.B. Parshin in their article “Discourse” note that scientists usually distinguish three main classes of use of this term:

- 1) The concept used by French structuralists and post-structuralists;
- 2) Discourse by Habermas;
- 3) Linguistic use of the term.

French structuralists and post-structuralists P.M. Foucault, A. Greimas, J. Derrida and others used the term “discourse” to describe style and individual language, which means it is necessary to clarify what kind of discourse is under consideration. Researchers were mainly interested in individual types of discourse, and to a lesser extent in discourse in general.

For example, the discourse on the theory of communicative action by J. Habermas – this is an ideal type of communication, located as far as possible from social reality, traditions, authority, etc.

Basically, the linguistic use of discourse comes down to the concept of “speech inscribed in a communicative situation”, that is, as a term that delimits the Saussurean opposition between language and speech, being an additional third element.

So we can say that discourse units indicate different relationships between the speaker and the listener, ensure the coherence of the text, and express logical and other relationships between its individual fragments. Units of this kind control the process of communication: they express truthful and ethical assessments, opinions, relate, compare and contrast various statements of the speaker or speakers with each other. In addition, the concept of discourse arose in connection with the expansion of linguistic research beyond the sentence into the area of super phrasal syntax. Therefore, from the point of view of linguistics, it can be argued that discourse is, first of all, a complex unit, which consists of a sequence of sentences that are in a semantic connection. The search for typical discourse structures comparable to typical sentence structures has not yet led to significant theoretical generalizations due to the extreme complexity and exceptional versatility of the phenomenon behind the above term.

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