

# The Concept of Discourse. Correlation Between the Concepts of Discourse and Text

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**Annotation.** The debatable question of the correlation of related linguistic concepts (text and discourse), which is of fundamental importance for the most consistent and consistent interpretation of them, is considered. An attempt is made to identify this relationship through the determination of the concepts of text and discourse in the system of language/speech. A definition of discourse in line with the issue being addressed is proposed.

**Keywords:** text, discourse, language, speech, language system, speech system, textual analysis, discursive analysis.

## Introduction

The question of the relationship between text and discourse is controversial in modern linguistics. At the same time, it is of fundamental importance for the interpretation of these concepts, which, by the way, is also far from unambiguous. What is undeniable is that text and discourse are related concepts. As the review of scientific literature shows, most definitions of discourse are given through the text, but, most often, the text is complicated by some characteristics: "Discourse is a text...". (There are, of course, works where the terms "text" and "discourse" are used as identical, interchangeable [1]. But this, in our opinion, is illegal, if only because it is inappropriate to designate one phenomenon by different terms (in addition, not in all contexts it is possible to interchange them). Therefore, in our opinion, it is most logical to build reasoning from the definition of the text through the clarification of the relationship between text and discourse to the definition of discourse.

## Materials And Methods

Differences in the interpretation of the text are largely due to an ambiguous understanding of its status in relation to the dichotomy of language / speech, coming from W. von Humboldt and scientifically substantiated by F. de Saussure. As you know, F. de Saussure, speaking of speech activity (langage) as a set of all linguistic phenomena, distinguishes two main components in it - language, langue (proper language) and speech, parole (specific speech acts) and recognizes the social, stable, systemic character of language, and the individual, free character of speech [2, p. 21–23]. The latter characteristics in modern linguistics lend themselves to some adjustment. So, speech is considered systemic and social. L.V. Shcherba, speaking about three aspects of the language (speech activity - "processes of speaking and understanding"; language system - "dictionary and grammar"; "linguistic material" - "the totality of everything spoken and understood in a certain specific - innovation in one or another era of the life of a given social group" [6, pp. 24–26]), clarifies the dichotomy of F. de Saussure (language / speech as a process / speech as a result).

## Results And Discussion

The text is referred to the sphere of language (narrow linguistic approach) [3, p. 528–529], then – more often – to the sphere of speech (L.M. Vasiliev, I.R. Galperin, E.A. Referovskaya, T.V. Matveeva, E.V. Erofeeva, A.N. Kudlaeva, V G. Kostomarov, E. A. Bazhenova, M. P. Kotyurova, N. S. Valgina, K. A. Filippov, etc.). The first interpretation proceeds from the understanding of the text as a unit of the highest level of the language system (in the traditional understanding of the language system), is limited to the analysis of the formal grammatical structure of the text - the types of intratextual links, the means of their

implementation [4, p. 528-529]. But it is quite obvious that the analysis of the text cannot be limited only by its grammar, since such an approach levels out many properties of the text, primarily communicative ones.

In addition, according to researchers, the meaning of the text is not reduced to the sum of the meanings of its constituent linguistic units, it is much wider, as it is complicated by individual intentions, extralinguistic knowledge. And this is a qualitative difference from linguistic units [1, p. 530]. This, on the other hand, is the similarity of the text with a recognized speech unit, a statement, which is also “built not on the principle of additivity, the addition of its constituent values, but on the principle of integrativity” [5, p. 77].

Taking into account all that has been said, we agree with the following definition of the text proposed by L.M. Vasiliev: “Text is a set of speech acts structurally organized both in form and content, characterized by integrity, completeness and communicative motivation, i.e. appropriateness, expediency and purposefulness”. This definition, firstly, reflects the speech essence of the text; secondly, there are no restrictions on the basis of the form of speech (oral / written); thirdly, the essential features of the text are reflected. Let us turn to the question of the relationship between the concepts of “text” and “discourse”. The whole multitude of interpretations of this issue, in our opinion, comes from how researchers fit the concepts of text and discourse into the systems of language/speech.

The most generally accepted point of view, according to which discourse is correlated with the second member of the language/speech pair. But this ratio is interpreted in different ways. It all depends on which aspect of speech is taken as the starting point of the analysis.

1. Based on the understanding of the systemic, structured speech. There is a widespread opinion that text is a linguistic unit, and discourse is a speech unit. Such opposition of the maximum units of language and speech, it would seem, logically completes the opposition of smaller units: phoneme – sound; morpheme - morph, lexeme - word-form, sentence - statement, text - discourse. Probably, the proposed opposition by T. van Dyck and a fairly common opinion about the text as an abstract entity that is actualized in discourse is connected with the indicated opposition. Such an understanding contradicts our point of view about the text as a speech unit, a product of speech activity.

2. Proceeds from the interpretation of discourse as sounding speech, associated only with the oral form of information transfer. The text is related to the written form. Hence the opposition “written text vs oral discourse” proclaimed by a number of scientists, as well as the distinction between linguistics of (written) text and discourse analysis (oral speech). This understanding goes back to the Anglo-American linguistic tradition, where the subject of discourse analysis is oral dialogue.

3. Proceeds from the identification of the discourse of speech in its broad (Saussurean) understanding - as a process and result (“speech activity” and “linguistic material” in the triad L.V. Shcherba). The consequence of this understanding is the elevation of discourse to the status of a generic concept that combines speech (oral) and text (written) [6, p. 89–90]. The last two interpretations are unacceptable due to the narrowing of the concepts under consideration (speech, discourse, text), their reduction to one of the forms (oral/written).

4. Initially proceeds from the correlation of discourse with speech in its procedural aspect (speech activity, according to L.V. Shcherba). This gives grounds for a significant part of researchers to consider the ratio of discourse/text as a process/result of the process as legitimate (V.E. Chernyavskaya, T.V. Milevskaya, E.S. Kubryakova, O.V. Alexandrova, N. V. Petrova, V. Z. Demyankov, A. V. Zelenshchikov, etc.). It is believed that this does not contradict the very etymology of the words “discourse” (“running in different directions”, that is, a process) and “text” (“fabric, plexus, connection”, that is, an object, the result of an action) [6].

So, we believe that both text and discourse can be legitimately considered the results of speech activity. Discourse is understood by us as the maximum unit of the text, the subject of discursive analysis. Discourse, therefore, will have all the textual features, but they will be considered under the prism of discourse analysis, that is, taking into account the mechanisms of generation and perception of the text, the communicative situation, and also in the light of a broad extralinguistic and intertextual context.

Along with this understanding, one should not abandon the definition of discourse as a certain set of texts, with the only clarification that this is a set of texts of the discursive level, that is, the level of discursive analysis.

## Conclusion

So, as a result of the relationship between the concepts of text and discourse that we have traced, two definitions of discourse have been outlined: discourse as a discursive text, that is, text-discourse, and discourse as a type of discourse. This allows us to define discourse in the following way. Discourse is 1) a text correlated with the situation of communication (historical, socio-cultural, political, ideological, psychological, etc. context), with a system of communicative-pragmatic attitudes, with cognitive processes of its generation and perception; integrated into the intertextual space (discourse as a discursive text, text-discourse); 2) discourse is a set of designated texts based on the commonality of some features (discourse as a type of discourse).

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