Linguistic Analysis of the Correlation Between Text and Discourse

Aynur V. Muradova
Azerbaijan State Economic University (UNEC)

ABSTRACT

The current study is mainly intended to examine systematic textual analysis as a part of discourse analysis and stimulate debate on this issue between various procedures to discourse analysis. In modern linguistics, one of the most controversial problems is correlating the concepts of “discourse” and “text”, which is a consequence of the lack of unified, generally accepted definitions of the concepts themselves. In most linguistic studies, both concepts are considered as complementary. Therefore, the concept of “discourse” is often defined through the concept of “text”, and the definitions themselves mention certain aspects of their interaction.

The goal. The main aim of the article is to analyze the correlation between text and discourse linguistically. In fact, the article deals with the controversial issue of the ratio of related linguistic concepts (text and discourse), which is of fundamental importance for their most consistent interpretation. An attempt is made to reveal this relationship by determining the concepts of text and discourse in the language or speech system.

Research procedure and methods. Based on the work of domestic and foreign researchers, the author identifies the features of each concept and their key differences.

Results of the conducted research. As a result of the research, the author concluded that the text as a single phenomenon is opposed to discourse as a set of texts.

Theoretical and practical significance. The results of the research make a certain contribution to the development of the theory of discourse, contribute to the clarification and clarification of the terminological apparatus of the research. The practical significance is determined by the possibility of using data for the preparation of lectures and practical classes devoted to the theory of discourse and its analysis.

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

Introduction

The correlation between text and discourse is still a disputable matter in modern English linguistics. At the same time, it has fundamental importance in the interpretation of these concepts which is also ambiguous. It is an indisputable fact that text and discourse are adjacent notions. Reviews of scientific literature show that definition of discourse is given through text, but mostly the text complicated by some characteristics: "Discourse is a text...." (There are of course the papers where the terms “text” and “discourse” are used as identical or interchangeable units [14].

Corresponding Author: Aynur V. Muradova
E-mail: aynurmuradova.1975@mail.ru


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But according to this work, it is wrong at least because it seems impractical to name one phenomenon with different terms. Besides, their interchangeable usage is not appropriate in every context. Therefore, it is more logical to build reasoning from defining the text though clarifying the correlation of text and discourse to defining the discourse itself.

Literature review

The disagreement in the interpretation of the text is due to an ambiguous understanding of its status concerning the language/speech dichotomy coming from V. von Humboldt and scientifically justified by F. de Saussure. As is known, F.de Saussure distinguishes two main components of the language langue (language) and parole (speaking)[16, c. 21–23]. He recognizes language as social, stable and systematic while speech as a real, free character notion. When he talks about speech activity (language), he means the integrity of all linguistic phenomena. The latest features in linguistics are amenable to some adjustments. Thus, speech is considered as systematic and social. L.V.Shcherba talking about three aspects of the language (speech activity="process of speaking and understanding", language system="vocabulary and grammar", language material- "integrity of all speech and understanding in a definite situation") specifies the dichotomy of F.de Saussure (language/speech as process, speech as result).

Text is referred to as the sphere of language (narrow linguistic approach) then more often to the sphere of speech (L.M.Vasilyev, I.R.Qalperin, A.Z.Abdullayev, T.V.Matveyeva, and so on). The first interpretation comes from the understanding of the text as a high-level unit of language system (traditional understanding of language system), is limited with the analysis of the formal grammatical structure of a text — types of intertextual links, means of realization [1, c. 528–529]. But quite obvious that the text analysis cannot be limited to its grammatical aspect, as this approach is leveling lots of other aspects of a text, especially its communicative side.

Besides, according to researchers, the meaning of the text is not reduced to the sum of the meanings carried by its integral parts; it is much wider, as it is complicated by individual intentions and extralinguistic knowledge. And this is what qualitatively differentiates them. On the other hand, it is at the same time a similarity of a text with recognized speech units, phrases which are also "built not on the principle of additivity, the addition of the units making them up, but on the principle of integration"

Moreover, the narrow linguistic understanding of the text contradicts the language functioning mechanism. First of all, the text is a result of individual speech activity. According to many researchers, we express our thoughts not through separate statements but whole texts. And if we follow F.de Saussure by acknowledging historical primacy of speech over language, then it is clear that the text will determine the language system by playing the role of, as L.V.Shcherba puts it, "language material" (not individual but generalized). L.M.Vasilyev describes the functioning mechanism of language in the following way: "speech activity texts language system speech activity texts and so on", text is an outcome of speech activity which has individual features; by socially generalizing texts we get an abstract language system that gives us opportunity and tools for further speech activity.

It is necessary to mention the third point of view in defining the language/speech status of text, recognizing its intrinsic correlation: "Specific, individual text is a unit of speech....text as a language unit may be defined as general that lies on the basis of separate specific texts, i.e. "construction scheme" and "structural formulas" of texts or different types of texts" [5, p.7]. Such a concept would be acceptable (according to the traditional approach of the language system) if it were not for the feature of integrability of the text value indicated above.

Discussion

It is very crucial to go beyond the language to understand the text, and this allows us to consider it from the point of view of different directions: psycholinguistic (A.M.Qurbanov, O.S.Zorkina and so on), communicative-pragmatic (N.S.Valgina, O.L.Kamenskaya, A.Z.Abdullayev, K.M.Abdullayev, V.I.Shakovskiy and so on), stylistic (V.V.Odinov, T.V.Matveyeva, N.I.Klushina, V.G.Kostomarov and so on), semiotic (T.M.Nikolayeva and so on)

The second important matter of argument is the correlation of the text with the opposition of "oral/written speech". There is an opinion according to which only a written speech is considered as a text (I.R.Qalperin, A.Z.Abdullayev, T.I.Popova and so on). Wherein, speech recorded on electronic devices is not included in the list of texts. According to researchers, only in written speech appear all signs of text. I.R.Qalperin dissertates that observing language functioning is like searching there for regular patterns or in other words "islets of the organization". A text, being that "islet of the organization", "result of language expression processing" should lack spontaneity [4, p.11, 15]. Exactly this aspect binds text with writing, which, unlike oral speech, is characterized by preparedness, thoughtfulness. Most scholars quite rightly comprise the concept of text in both written and oral forms of speech.

The key detail for solving our question - correlation of text and discourse - is the designation of defining features of a text, which will contribute to the meaningful dissemination of these concepts. The set of text defining attributes varies, just as different researchers have different definitions of the text, which is largely due to the aspect of the diversity of these signs. The vast majority of scholars, with all variety of these signs, assert the following:
structural (formally expressed) connectedness – cohesion, substantial integrity (semantic and compositional completeness) – coherence. More selectively are talked the features like informativeness, semantic unity, structural order, differentiation, correlation with styles and genres, intertextuality, communicative significance, pragmatic attitude and intention, bidirectionality, text perception by the recipient, extralinguistic background, etc.

Considering foregoing statements, we agree with the following definition of the text proposed by L.M.Vasiliyev: "The text, according to its shape and content, is structurally organized integrity of oral acts, characterized by completeness, entirety and speech motivation, i.e. appropriateness, expediency and purposefulness" [3, p.20]. In this definition, firstly, the speech essence of the text is reflected; secondly, there are no restrictions based on the form of speech (oral/written); thirdly, significant features of the text are reflected.

Research methods

Let us move to the concept of "text" and "discourse" correlation. In our opinion, all possible interpretations of this issue arise from the angle that researchers present the text – discourse notion to the language/speech system. There is a belief that discourse is the third member of language/speech opposition. Belgian linguist E.Buisance talked about it back in the 1940s. He introduces to the binary Saussure's opposition new element – discourse, defining it as a guide between abstract language system and live speech; as a mechanism for updating the language in speech [11]. Discourse is "something paradoxical and more verbal" rather than speech itself and at the same time easier to study using traditional linguistic methods, more formal and thereby "more linguistic" [9]. This understanding is associated with the reduction of discourse to dialogue interaction as an exchange of replicas. This can be attributed to the well-known opposition of discourse/ dialogue to text/monologue, which is completely unacceptable, since we believe (in spite of M.M.Bakhtin, E.Benvenist) than any text, by and large, is a dialogue (even if the interlocutor is potential, and his reaction is slow).

The most common point of view is that the discourse is correlated with the second term language/speech pairs. But this ratio is interpreted differently. It all depends on what aspect of speech is taken as the starting point of the analysis.

1. Based on an understanding of systematic, structured speech, it is widely believed that text is a language unit, and discourse is a speech unit. It would seem that such a juxtaposition of the maximum units of language and speech logically completes the opposition of smaller units: phoneme - sound; morpheme - morph, lexeme - word form, sentence - utterance, text - discourse. Probably, the proposed opposition by T. van Dyck and a fairly widespread opinion about the text as abstract is connected with the designated opposition essence, actualized in the discourse [6]. This understanding contradicts our point vision of the text as a speech unit and a product of speech activity.

2. Based on the interpretation of discourse as speech sounding, it is associated only with the oral form of transferring the information. The text, in this case, correlates with writing. Hence, there is a proclaimed scholar opposition "written text vs oral discourse", as well as the distinction between linguistic text (written) and discourse analysis (oral speech) [12, p. 87–88]. This understanding goes back to the Anglo-American linguistic tradition, where the subject of discourse analysis is oral dialogue.

3. Based on the identification of speech discourse in its broad (Saussure) understanding – as process and result ("speech activity" and "Language material" in the triad of L.V. Shcherba). The consequence of this understanding is the erection of discourse to the status of a generic concept, combining speech (oral) and text (written) [12, p. 89–90; 2, p. 4–6]. The last two interpretations unacceptable due to the narrowing of the concepts (speech, discourse, text), reducing them to one of the forms (oral / written).

4. It proceeds initially from the correlation of discourse with the speech in its procedural aspect (speech activity, according to LV Shcherba). This gives grounds for a significant part of researchers to consider the discourse/text ratio legitimate as a process/result of a process (V.E. Chernyavskaya, T.V. Milevskaya, E.S. Kubryakova, O.V. Aleksandrova, N.V. Petrova, V.Z. Demyankov, A.V. Zelenshchikov, and others). It is believed that this does not contradict the etymology of the words "discourse" ("running in different directions", i.e. the process) and "text" ("fabric, plexus, connection", i.e., an object, the result of an action) [7]. From our perspective, with this understanding, the analysis of the discourse is difficult, since it is completely unclear what will be the subject of such an analysis. Additionally, owing to a solid observation of K.Y.Seagal, "from an ontological point of view, the result of any human activity, including speech, cannot be fundamentally alienated from the activity itself and its laws but its structure, in a certain way, is due to the structure of its production " [15, p. 42].

Perhaps, realizing this, the indicated interpretation is often logically brought to an understanding of the text as part of a discourse, raising the discourse to the status of speech in a broad sense, while delimiting its procedural and productive aspects (discourse as a process is a discourse; discourse, as a result, are texts and their combinations) (V.V. Krasnykh, E.S. Kubryakova, O.V. Aleksandrova, N.V. Petrova, V.E. Chernyavskaya, T.V. Milevskaya and others). Then, in terms of analysis, everything rises to their places: discourse research will include text analysis (with its textual characteristics) plus "procedural features" - an analysis of the cognitive mechanisms of its generation and
perception, communicative conditions of its implementation, the situation of its course [13, p. 129; 18, p. 231-232]. But the understanding of discourse, as a result, gives the identification of the terms "text" and "discourse" (discourse-result = text). In the text as a result of the discourse-process, logically, it can be realized all "procedural discursive signs", and therefore the text in this sense is more than text; it equates to discourse.

5. It is based on the correlation of discourse with speech as a result ("language material", according to L.V. Shcherba). discourse is understood as a structure-larger than text, a collection of texts. The text is defined either as the minimum unit of the hierarchical structure of discourse [8, p. 28-36]; or "composite element of discourse, with respective mental sphere" included in this discourse, along with other texts, based on a thematic or communicatively determined community [10, p. 24]. But understanding of discourses aggregate texts, by and large, does not breed concepts of text and discourse; on the contrary, it brings it as close as possible.

To avoid such an undesirable convergence of concepts, against which we spoke out initially, the considered point of view (discourse as a result of speech activity) needs to be clarified. Here, in our opinion, interpretation of discourse will not help as text and not as a collection of texts, but as the maximum unit of text, namely, "interpreted by the author or reader (s) of the text, that is, a text which is understood (conceived) and taken into account its social, situational, communicative, cultural and other conditions (prerequisites) for generation (creation) and functioning" [3, p. 20-21]. This point of view is good at logical creation of the maximum unit of text analysis, analysis of higher stage, and discursive analysis. Discourse analysis begins with text analysis, as it is based on it. The text becomes a discourse when we move from analysis of text attributes (as we mentioned above) to highlighting of discursive issues. In connection with this, a question can arise: where does the textual analysis end and discursive begins?

According to V.E. Chernyavskoy, at the level text analysis "communicative is established function of the text, its communication centers, it is revealed that it is reported in the text to whom a message is entered, as updated in the text addressee fabrics what are the thematic strategies deployments that provide connectivity to individual statements among themselves and their thematic progression, as certain segments of knowledge, etc. ". According to Chernyavskoy on the level of text analyses "there is ascertained the communicative function of the text, its communication centers, what is reported in the text, whom a message is sent to, what are the deployments of thematic strategies that provide connectivity to individual statements among themselves and their thematic progression, as certain segments of knowledge, etc." The analysis of discourse begins "from projecting the text onto elements of meaningful and compositional speech according to the psychological, political, cultural, pragmatic and other factors" [17, p. 78-79]. So, in the center of discursive analysis – there is a volumetric interpretation of the text achieved through invoking the interpretation of extralinguistic context based on those cognitive processes of generation and perception of the text, communicative situation, and also the widespread extralinguistic and intertextual context.

Results

So, we believe that it is reasonable to consider both the text and the discourse as the results of speech activity. We accept discourse as a maximum unit of text, subject of discursive analysis. Thus, discourse will possess all textual signs, but they will be considered under the prism of discourse analysis, that is, taking into account the volume of mechanisms of generation and perception of the text, communicative situation, and also the widespread extralinguistic and intertextual context.

Conclusions

Over the course of this study, the linguistic correlation between text and discourse was comprehensively investigated. In conclusion, together with such an understanding, the definition of discourse as a certain set of texts should not be denied, including the only clarification, that this is a collection of texts of the discursive level, that is, the level of discursive analysis. So, as a result of the correlation of the concepts of text and discourse that we traced two definitions of discourse: discourse as a discursive text, that is, text discourse, and discourse as a type discourse. This allows you to define the discourse as follows. A discourse is - 1) a text related with the situation of communication (with historical, socio-cultural, political, ideological, psychological and another context), with a system of communicative-pragmatic settings, with cognitive processes of its generation and perception; integrated into the intertextual space (discourse as discursive text, text discourse); 2) a discourse is a complex of the designated texts based on the commonality of certain features (as a type of discourse). Thus, the appeal to identify the relationship between the concepts of text and discourse has a defining significance for both text theory and discourse theory. The course of reasoning that we proposed is the definition of the text through the identification of the text-discourse correlation, to the definition of discourse - allows you to come to the most consistent and sequential understanding of the nature of considered concepts.
References