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COGNITIVE AND COMMUNICATIVE BASIS
OF DISCOURSE STUDIES IN PHILOSOPHY AND LINGUISTICS

The article reconstructs cognitive and communicative field of discourse studies according to two principles: the constructive model of communication (linguistic approach) and sense model of communication (philosophical approach). The author analyzes main criteria and features of discourse and its potential for interdisciplinary researches in science. It is outlined that when the structure of discourse is taken into consideration more essential division into formal and informal communicative products gains importance. Identification of linguistic and communicative qualities of various interpretations, together with cultural and social aspects, which support its comprehension, is the domain of discourse analysis. <u>Keywords</u>: *discourse, linguistics, text, communication, formal and informal qualities, understanding.*

Articulation of the issue. Approaches that are commonly included under the term 'discourse studies' (or have overlapping concerns) include critical discourse analysis, critical linguistics, text linguistics, conversation analysis, ethnomethodology, discursive psychology, stylistics, genre studies, mediated discourse analysis, discourse theory, sociolinguistics, rhetorical analysis, argumentation theory, polyphony theory, etc.

Discourse is communication that goes back and forth (from the Latin, discursus, "running to and from"; "conversation, speech"), such as debate or argument. The term is used in semantics and discourse analysis. In semantics, discourses are linguistic units composed of several sentences — in other words, conversations, arguments or speeches. Plato was famous for believing that any problem could be solved by rational and logical discourse.

Research objective settings. The article aims to analyze the studies of discourse in a number of theoretical traditions, such as modernism, structuralism and feminism that investigate the relations between language, structure and agency. The notion of 'discourse' is the subject of debate. Discourse encompasses the use of spoken, written and signed language and multimodal/multimedia forms of communication, and is not restricted to 'non-fictional' nor verbal materials. Challenges to understanding language and discourse are transparent, functional and progressive [6].

In the social sciences (following the work of Michel Foucault), a discourse is considered to be an institutionalized way of thinking, a social boundary defining what can be said about a specific topic. Discourses are seen to affect our views on all things; it is not possible to escape discourse. Discourse is closely linked to different theories of power and state, at least as long as defining discourses is seen to mean defining reality itself.

Seven criteria, which have to be fulfilled to qualify either a written or a spoken text as a discourse, include:

- **Cohesion** - grammatical relationship between parts of a sentence essential for its interpretation;
- **Coherence** - the order of statements relates one another by sense.
- **Intentionality** - the message has to be conveyed deliberately and consciously;
- **Acceptability** - indicates that the communicative product needs to be satisfactory in that the audience approves it;
- **Informativeness** - some new information has to be included in the discourse;
- **Situationality** - circumstances in which the remark is made are important;

- **Intertextuality** - reference to the world outside the text or the interpreters' schemata.

Nowadays, however, not all of the above mentioned criteria are perceived as equally important in discourse studies, therefore some of them are valid only in certain methods of the research.

Features of discourse.

Since it is not easy to unambiguously clarify what a discourse is it seems reasonable to describe features which are mutual to all its kinds. To do it thoroughly Saussurean concepts of langue and parole are of use. Ferdinand de Saussure divided the broad meaning of language into langue, which is understood as a system that enables people to speak as they do, and parole - a particular set of produced statements. Following this division discourse relates more to parole, for it always occurs in time and is internally characterized by successively developing expressions in which the meaning of the latter is influenced by the former, while langue is abstract. To list some additional traits: discourse is always produced by somebody whose identity, as well as the identity of the interpreter, is significant for the proper understanding of the message. On the other hand langue is impersonal that is to say more universal, due to society. Furthermore, discourse always happens in either physical or linguistic context and within a meaningful fixed time, whereas langue does not refer to anything. Consequently, only discourse may convey messages thanks to langue which is its framework.

Not only is discourse difficult to define, but it is also not easy to make a clear cut division of discourse as such. Therefore, depending on the form linguists distinguish various kinds of communicative products. A type of discourse might be characterized as a class of either written or spoken text, which is frequently casually specified, recognition of which aids its perception, and consequently production of potential response [2, p. 156]. One of such divisions, known as the Organon model, distinguishes three types of discourse depending of the aspect of language emphasized in the text. If the relation to the context is prevailing, it conveys some knowledge

Thus it is an informative type of discourse. When the stress is on a symptom aspect the fulfilled function is expression, as a result the discourse type is narrative. Last but not least in this division is argumentative discourse which is characterized by the accent on the signal aspect.

This distinction due to its suitability for written communicative products more than for spoken ones, faced constructive criticism whose accurate observation portrayed that there are more functions performed. Consequently, there ought to be more types of discourse, not to mention the fact that these often mix and overlap. Thorough examination of the matter was conducted, thus leading to the emergence of a new, more detailed classification of kinds of spoken texts.

The analysis of oral communicative products was the domain of Steger, who examined features of various situations and in his categorization divided discourse into six types: presentation, message, report, public debate, conversation and interview. The criteria of this division include such factors as presence, or absence of interaction, number of speakers and their relation to each other (their rights, or as Steger names it 'rank'), flexibility of topic along with selection and attitude of interlocutors towards the subject matter.

However, it is worth mentioning that oral discourse might alter its character, for instance in the case of presenting a lecture when students start asking questions the type changes to interview, or even a conversation. Using this classification, it is possible to anticipate the role of partakers as well as goals of particular acts of communication.

The above mentioned typologies do not exhaust the possible division of discourse types, yet, nowadays endeavor to create a classification that would embrace all potential kinds is being made. Also, a shift of interest in this field might be noticed, presently resulting in focus on similarities and differences between written and spoken communication [5, p. 64].

Apart from obvious differences between speech and writing like the fact that writing includes some medium which keeps record of the conveyed message while speech involves only air; there are certain dissimilarities that are less apparent. Speech develops in time in that the speaker says with speed that is suitable for him, even if it may not be appropriate for the listener and though a request for repetition is possible, it is difficult to imagine a conversation in which every sentence is to be rephrased. Moreover, talking might be spontaneous which results in mistakes, repetition, sometimes less coherent sentences where even grunts, stutters or pauses might be meaningful. The speaker usually knows the listener, or

listeners, or he is at least aware of the fact that he is being listened to, which enables him to adjust the register. As interlocutors are most often in face-to-face encounters (unless using a phone) they take advantage of extralinguistic signals as grimaces, gesticulation, expressions such as 'here', 'now', or 'this' are used. Employment of nonsense vocabulary, slang and contracted forms (we're, you've) is another feature of oral discourse. Among other significant features of speech there are rhythm, intonation, speed of uttering and, what is more important, inability to conceal mistakes made while speaking [3, p. 291].

In contrast, writing develops in space in that it needs a means to carry the information. The author of the text does not often know who is going to read the text; as a result he cannot adjust to readers' specific expectations. The writer is frequently able to consider the content of his work for almost unlimited period of time which makes it more coherent, having complex syntax. What is more, the reader might not instantly respond to the text, ask for clarification, hence neat message organization, division to paragraphs, layout are of vital importance to make comprehension easier. Additionally, owing to the lack of context expressions such as 'now' or 'here' are omitted, since they would be ambiguous as texts might be read at different times and places. One other feature typical of writing, but never of oral discourse, is the organization of tables, formulas, or charts which can be portrayed only in written form [3, p. 291].

Naturally, this division into two ways of producing discourse is quite straightforward, yet, it is possible to combine the two like, for example, in the case of a lesson, when a teacher explains something writing on the blackboard, or when a speaker prepares detailed notes to be read out during his speech. Moreover, some of the foregoing features are not so explicit in the event of sophisticated, formal speech or a friendly letter.

Discourse expressed formally and informally. The difference in construction and reception of language was the basis of its conventional distinction into speaking and writing. Nevertheless, when the structure of discourse is taken into consideration more essential division into formal and informal communicative products gains importance. Formal discourse is more strict in that it requires the use of passive voice, lack of contracted forms together with impersonality, complex sentence structure and, in the case of the English language, vocabulary derived from Latin. That is why formal spoken language has many features very similar to written texts, particularly absence of vernacular vocabulary and slang, as well as the employment of rhetorical devices to make literary-like impact on the listener.

Informal discourse, on the other hand, makes use of active voice mainly, with personal pronouns and verbs which show feelings such as 'I think', 'we believe'. In addition, contractions are frequent in informal discourse, no matter if it is written or spoken. Consequently it may be said that informal communicative products are casual and loose, while formal ones are more solemn and governed by strict rules as they are meant to be used in official and serious circumstances.

The relation of the producer of the message and its receiver, the amount of addressees and factors such as public or private occasion are the most important features influencing selecting either formal or informal language. Therefore, it is not unreasonable to assume that the contemporary learner, who may easily travel and use his linguistic skills outside class, will encounter mainly informal discourse, which due to its flexibility and unpredictability might be the most difficult to comprehend. Accordingly, it seems rational to teach all varieties of language relying on authentic oral and written texts [2, p. 50].

So far, the linguistic models have attempted to place narrative within a broad spectrum of other text types. The most important insights from these contributions can be summarized as follows: (1) One has to distinguish between global text types that are defined as ideal text types, on the one hand, and realizations of these text types on the linguistic surface structure, on the other. (2) On the linguistic surface structure a combination of discourse types is found to interact. Their choice depends on the discourse strategies that speakers or writers deploy. (3) Generic expectations have a great influence on the constitution of text type and on the choice of discourse strategies. (4) Form (i.e., type of text type or discourse type) and function (the specific discourse purpose to be achieved) must be distinguished. A one-to-one relationship between form and function can not necessarily be assumed to exist.

Discourse analysis is a primarily linguistic study examining the use of language by its native population whose major concern is investigating language functions along with its forms, produced both orally and in writing. Moreover, identification of linguistic qualities of various genres, vital for their recognition and

interpretation, together with cultural and social aspects which support its comprehension, is the domain of discourse analysis. To put it in another way, the branch of applied linguistics dealing with the examination of discourse attempts to find patterns in communicative products as well as and their correlation with the circumstances in which they occur, which are not explainable at the grammatical level [1, p.23].

The range of inquiry of discourse analysis not only covers linguistic issues, but is also concerned with other matters, such as: enabling computers to comprehend and produce intelligible texts, thus contributing to progress in the study of Artificial Intelligence. Out of these investigations a very important concept of schemata emerged. It might be defined as prior knowledge of typical situations which enables people to understand the underlying meaning of words in a given text. This mental framework is thought to be shared by a language community and to be activated by key words or context in order for people to understand the message. To implement schemata to a computer, however, is yet impossible [2, p. 69].

Discourse analysts carefully scrutinize universal circumstances of the occurrence of communicative products, particularly within state institutions. Numerous attempts to minimize misunderstandings between bureaucrats and citizens were made, resulting in user-friendly design of documents. The world of politics and features of its peculiar communicative products are also of concern to discourse analysts. Having carefully investigated that area of human activity scholars depicted it as characterized by frequent occurrence of face saving acts and euphemisms. One other sphere of life of particular interest to applied linguists is the judicature and its language which is incomprehensible to most common citizens, especially due to pages-long sentences, as well as peculiar terminology. Moreover, educational institutions, classroom language and the language that ought to be taught to enable learners to successfully comprehend both oral and written texts, as well as participate in real life conversations and produce native-like communicative products is the domain of discourse analysis. Last but not least, influence of gender on language production and perception is also examined [7].

Since the examination of written language is easier to conduct than the scrutiny of oral texts, in that more data is available in different genres, produced by people form different backgrounds as well as with disparate purposes, it is more developed and of interest not only to linguists but also language teachers and literary scholars. Each of them, however, approaches this study in a different way, reaching diverse conclusions, therefore only notions that are mutual for them and especially those significant for language methodology are accounted for here. What is worth mentioning is the fact that in that type of analysis scholars do not evaluate the content in terms of literary qualities, or grammatical appropriateness, but how readers can infer the message that the author intended to convey [7, p. 133].

Apart from differences between written and spoken language described beforehand it is obviously possible to find various types and classes of discourse depending on their purpose. Written texts differ from one another not only in genre and function, but also in their structure and form, which is of primary importance to language teachers, as the knowledge of arrangement and variety of writing influences readers' understanding, memory of messages included in the discourse, as well as the speed of perception. Moreover, written texts analysis provides teachers with systematic knowledge of the ways of describing texts, thanks to which they can make their students aware of characteristic features of discourse to which the learners should pay particularly close attention, such as cohesion and coherence. In addition, understanding these concepts should also improve learners' writing skills as they would become aware of traits essential for a good written text (3).

One of the major concerns of written discourse analysts is the relation of neighboring sentences and, in particular, factors attesting to the fact that a given text is more than only the sum of its components. It is only with written language analysis that certain features of communicative products started to be satisfactorily described, despite the fact that they were present also in speech, like for instance the use of 'that' to refer to a previous phrase, or clause [4, p. 37].

Conclusion. From studies conducted by discourse analysts emerged an important idea of lexical chains present in all consistent texts. Such a chain is thought to be a series of related words which, referring to the same thing, contribute to the unity of a communicative product and make its perception relatively easy. Additionally, they provide a semantic context which is useful for understanding, or inferring the meaning of words, notions and sentences. Links of a chain are not usually limited to one

sentence, as they may connect pairs of words that are next to one another, as well as stretch to several sentences or a whole text. The relation of words in a given sequence might be that of reiteration or collocation, however, analyst are reluctant to denote collocation as a fully reliable element of lexical cohesion as it refers only to the likelihood of occurrence of some lexical items. Nevertheless, it is undeniably helpful to know collocations as they might assist in understanding of communicative products and producing native-like discourse [4, p. 65].

Since lexical chains are present in every type of discourse it is advisable to familiarize learners with the way they function in, not merely because they are there, but to improve students' perception and production of expressive discourse. Reiteration is simply a repetition of a word later in the text, or the use of synonymy, but what might require paying particularly close attention in classroom situation is hyponymy. While synonymy is relatively easy to master simply by learning new vocabulary dividing new words into groups with similar meaning, or using thesauri, hyponymy and superordination are more abstract and it appears that they require tutelage. Hyponym is a particular case of a more general word, in other words a hyponym belongs to a subcategory of a superordinate with narrower meaning.

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