

TEXT LINGUISTICS – HISTORY, EVOLUTION AND APPROACHES

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ABSTRACT:

The article deals with the problems of text linguistics are still in the focus of attention. A great deal of research has been done in this field, and yet there are still significant gaps in the knowledge both in text theory and text analysis. Besides, at the present stage of development text linguistics undergoes some changes under the influence of new anthropocentric trends in linguistics.

Keywords: text linguistics, discourse analysis, science, aspects, textuality, theory.

INTRODUCTION

During many decades of text linguistics development there appeared a great many works (monographs, dissertations, articles) devoted to various aspects of this science. Being unable to embrace all of them we shall briefly dwell on the works which seem to be most significant.

The well-known linguist, T. van Dijk made a valuable contribution to text linguistics. He states that text theory is an interdisciplinary science, which integrates separate independent scientific trends such as linguistics, history, theology, jurisprudence and others. The object of all these sciences is text which is studied from different angles and with different aims. In text linguistics T. van Dijk differentiates three aspects: syntax, semantics and pragmatics. T. van Dijk was the first to introduce the notion of semantic macrostructure, characterizing the semantic content of the text, its global integrity. Further on the Amsterdam scholar uses the term – discourse, and studies its pragmatic and cognitive aspects. He argues that text can be understood only within the framework of a certain situation, and introduces the notion of – situational models, which is considered a basis of cognitive discourse processing. Much attention is directed to discourse analysis, knowledge structures, the ways of their presentation in the text and conceptual organization [1, 84].

Another work which left noticeable traces in text linguistics is the monograph by I.R.Galperin – “Stylistics” [2, 256]. The book covers a wide range of questions such as the definition of text, text categories, text units, text parameters, etc. The author states that the notion of text being very complicated and multifold should be analysed from different angles including static and dynamic aspects,

paradigmatic and syntagmatic axes, language and speech levels, semantic and structural planes of the text. According to I.R. Galperin grammatical methods of analysis can be applied to the text. As is known, grammar tends to trace certain regularities out of multiple, and seemingly chaotic language usage. Similarly, any text despite its unique and individual character is subordinated to some rules, principles, models and regularities. For this reason so much attention is attached to text categories constituting the essence of any text. I.R. Galperin considers a great number of text categories such as informativity, segmentation, cohesion, continuum, prospection, and retrospection, modality, integration and completeness. Each category has been subjected to a scrupulous analysis providing a sufficient grounding for convincing conclusions [2, 301].

A distinctive feature of Galperin's conception lies in the argument that the notion of text is confined only to the written variety. Text is opposed to the oral speech inasmuch as the latter is spontaneous, inconsistent and unorganized. With regard to text, there are quite opposite features: it is not spontaneous, it is consistent and well-organized. This viewpoint has got both supporters and opponents [2, 309-310]. For example, D.Ashurova adheres to Galperin's conception stressing the fact that text is multi-dimensional and reversible, whereas the oral speech is linear and irreversible [6, 41]. However, Leech G.N. strongly objects to this opinion. He argues that text can be presented both in the written and oral forms, the latter, being primary, possesses all text characteristics [5, 143].

Another book worth mentioning is – Introduction to Text Linguistics by Jucker A. [4, 130-131]. It brings up the problem of textuality which meets seven standards: cohesion, coherence, intentionality, acceptability, informativity, situationality, intertextuality. Besides the authors devote some space to comparing the – paradigm of text linguistics with other linguistic paradigms, viz., cognitive linguistics.

The problems of text linguistics are still in the focus of attention. A great deal of research has been done in this field, and yet there are still significant gaps in the knowledge both in text theory and text analysis. Besides, at the present stage of development text linguistics undergoes some changes under the influence of new anthropocentric trends in linguistics, and the tendency to study – human factor in language. The most important publications of recent years deal with the problems of a) text and discourse (Карасик, 2004); b) the cognitive paradigm of the text (Кубрякова, 2001); c) text and culture (Вежбицкая, 1996; Молчанова, 2007); d) text and intertextuality (Чернявская, 2008).

One of the main features of text linguistics is its interdisciplinary character. Text is a meeting-ground of all aspects of language theory: semantics, grammar, syntax, stylistics, etc. Consequently, each of these aspects can be subjected to

investigation in text linguistics. For example, there are close links between text linguistics and stylistics. Moreover, many problems under discussion in text linguistics had long been put forward in stylistics. Thus, the problems of text typology closely correlate with the theory of functional styles, because every text is built according to stylistic norms of a definite functional style. Literary texts (fiction), for example, are faced with all the properties of the belles-letters style such as emotiveness, expressiveness, imagery. In passing, it should be noted that stylistic problems of the text are of such importance that there appeared an independent trend – text stylistics.

Text as a complex unit is studied not only by text linguistics, but also linguopragmatics, cognitive linguistics, sociolinguistics, theory of literature and so on. There are also definite links between text linguistics and psycholinguistics because the problems of impact and perception claim attention of the both sciences.

So, a brief survey of the linguistic literature has shown a great variety of views, attitudes and opinions, concerning the notions of text and text linguistics. This is evidenced by the fact that there are many definitions of text linguistics, each of them laying emphasis on different aspects of this science. For example, Harris Z. focuses his attention on the rules and regularities of text construction and its cohesion [3, 103]. I.R. Galperin concentrates on text categories [2, 104]. Leech G.N. draws attention to the communicative aspect of this discipline [5, 96], Harris Z. deals with the grammatical aspects [3, 118].

CONCLUSION

Summing up all the definitions, we can point out the main characteristics peculiar to text linguistics and acknowledged by many scholars:

- text linguistics is an independent scientific branch of linguistics;
- text linguistics studies –language in action|;
- the object of text linguistics is text or textual phenomena (parts, fragments, units, exceeding the limits of a sentence);
- text linguistics studies constituent categories of the text.

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