

## Discursive Strategies Shaping Media Texts in the Digital Age

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### Abstract

**Background:** Media discourse reflects and shapes social, cultural, and cognitive contexts, yet comprehensive methodologies for analyzing its dynamic structure and purpose remain underexplored. **Gap:** Limited focus on the interplay of stylistic and discursive elements in media texts hinders understanding of their ideological and communicative functions. **Aim:** This study employs discursive analysis to examine the content, structure, and socio-cultural roles of media texts. **Results:** Media discourse integrates linguistic, stylistic, and cultural strategies to influence audiences, with technological advancements reshaping journalistic styles. **Novelty:** The research presents a refined approach combining functional stylistics and cognitive linguistics, highlighting media discourse's evolving role in communication. **Implications:** The findings provide a critical framework for analyzing and enhancing media content in the digital era.

**Keywords:** discursive analysis, media discourse, journalistic style, mediallynguistics, communication

### Introduction

The methodological apparatus of mediallynguistics combines the achievements of all areas that research media texts. These include discursive analysis, functional stylistics, and linguocultural studies. All forms of mass media transmit or disseminate information through a distinct process known as discursive activity. Discourse is a process of language use (speech act) limited to a specific time and general chronological framework. A.A. Kibrick argue that “discourse is a broader concept than text. Discourse is both the process of language activity and its result. And the result is exactly that text” (Kibrik, 2008)

Today, the methodological view of the component of the new discursive analysis is being formed in the modern media discourse, in a certain sense. The use of mass communication products and texts reflects this. N.D. Arutyunova defines discourse as “introducing speech into life” (Arutyunova, 1999)

Linguists, by defining information distribution in the mass media as a discursive activity, emphasize that it is “a means of preparing and conveying messages and comments in a meaningful, open, and understandable manner in order to influence a special audience” (Kubryakova & Tsurikov, 2008). In this process, the media discourse reflects the identity of the

audience, which is intended to accurately explain the real details and most importantly, to determine the actions, attitudes, and knowledge of the special audience. According to M. Makarov, “It is possible to know and realize the linguistic landscape of the language through discourse” (Makarov, 2003). Sh. Safarov says that “discourse and text phenomena are where the conscious activity of the participants of the dialogue connects. Conscious activity always has a spiritual and cultural basis” (Safarov, 2018)

It is worth noting that in the absence of a channel of information dissemination in this process, media discourse is viewed as a mere technological aspect of discursive practice. As in the definition of other discourses, we can justify the existence of media texts as a means of special language in the field of mass media on the basis of media discourse.

## **Methods**

Mass media as a unique type of discursive activity that involves spreading information that is important to society, defining this idea, and thinking about different ways to approach it, we can learn more about the unique aspects of discursive practice in the field of mass media activity. According to E. Kubryakova and L. V. Tsurikov, any media activity is a discursive activity, which is not limited to a purely linguistic process (Kubryakova & Tsurikov, 2008). It helps to better understand the need to consider media activity as a separate type of discursive activity and media language as a language determined by this type of social activity.

Content analysis in mass media materials today is becoming increasingly important due to its focus on specific goals. Currently, the widespread research in the traditional method has very limited possibilities in determining the full meaning of media texts. They do not take into account contextual parameters; they are not convenient for studying the structure of the media text, as well as the methods of its formation.

Media releases: Firstly, it pertains to a single discourse, allowing the analysis of a corpus of texts implementing similar ideological models. Secondly, although it is included in the general structure of the discourse, it is taken into account that discursive analysis is an effective approach in analyzing it, creating unique combinations of text language and compositions, traditionally called “style” which has a special place in the study of media language.

According to the sociolinguistic theory of discourse, different parts (or categories) of discourse are based on their content, while discourse genres include ideas, people who take part, and ways of communicating (Karasik, 2000). Note that the communicative purpose or genre of the text directly influences the figurative means of journalistic language.

Discourse, which is a changing process that reflects the functional features of speech, also has pragmatic, expressive, and cognitive features. Differentiating oral and written discourse is necessary because they are created differently. Discursive research in media language emphasizes the lexical and grammatical differences in oral discourse.

In general, the concept of “discourse” is a broad concept that is still defined differently among scholars. The results of the discussions proved that there are two different approaches to defining this concept. The first, after dividing the text into sentences or expressions that can

contain any content, the discourse describes it using a specific grammatical category. This approach is particularly suitable for studying the manipulation of words in discourse as a method of comprehension. The French scientist Ferdinand de Saussure proposed the triad “language - speech - speech activity” as the basis for interpreting speech (Saussure, 1996). The discursive approach involves accounting for various paralinguistic factors, including gestures, rhythms, etc., in the analysis of speech in “external” linguistics. The second approach focuses on the structure of text elements within the dialogue, looking at how the discourse reads as a coherent text, how groups of phrases are linked to meaning, including phraseological units, and how sentences are put together in a way that can have more than one meaning.

Discursive analysis is a process that involves identifying both verbal components and pragmatic factors. From a linguistic perspective, we can evaluate people’s speech activity as discursive practice, a specific form of discussion. When viewed from this point of view, it is possible to see the coherence of “discourse” and “style” and “discourse” and “text”. However, discourse is a relatively broader concept. Discourse is a “language within a language”, but it is presented as a special social manifestation. In each discourse, different views can be observed (Stepanov, 1995).

Discourse is defined as a continuous segment of a language larger than a few sentences. It considers texts as discourse units. This approach shows that discursive analysis is about language in use, not structure. Most important in text analysis is how the author formed the idea and conveyed it to the mass audience using mass media. In addition, in the discourse, the researcher should take into account not only the openly expressed opinions of the author in the material being analyzed but also the ideas he put forward in his comments.

The newspaper has an important role in conveying to readers all the realities of modern society through linguistic means and plays a key role in regularly conducting propaganda work among the media. Additionally, the newspaper developed stylistic coverage of events, which is considered the oldest mass media. Thus, newspaper language forms the basis of the speech style of the media.

## **Results and Discussion**

A discursive event causes and creates a social situation. Therefore, discursive analysis is suitable for studying not only the content of the media text but also its meaning. We define any text stylistically and discursively, but the nature of these determinations varies. Texts are the components of style and discourse; their real embodiment is speech. Studying the combination of both methodological and discursive approaches to textual analysis is more productive. The unit of analysis is intended to achieve some result in the texts; for example, it can be a goal devoted to the solution of a certain social problem.

Van Dijk has discussed in detail a consistent model for discursive analysis of news stories in newspaper publications and suggests that discursive analysis begins with an examination of textual content. He asserts that media texts typically organize their topics into approved categories. These categories include title, summary, main story, context, and plot. The semantic

content of the news is sequentially expressed in the text: the most important information is expressed first, then the development of events is reflected using the strategy that forms the appropriate structure of the text presentation. The coherence of the article's content may vary depending on its characteristics and the journalist's comprehensive approach skills.

In this situation, Van Dijk says that the systematic analysis of discourse describes the following levels and norms of speech, along with their social, cultural, and cognitive settings:

syntactic structures of sentences;

word order and sequence;

lexicalization (choice of words);

stylistic changes of expressive structures, for example, lexical and syntactic changes;

rhetorical operations (figures of speech and tropes, such as metaphor or hyperbole);

common generic text forms (news discourse, conversation, or institutional dialogues);

other characteristics of communicative events and situations, for example, relationships between participants, communicative goals and interests, conditions, situations, relationships with other actions, institutional context, etc (Dijk, 1993)

Thus, if the conventional boundaries of style and discourse do not coincide, texts in the same discourse may belong to different styles. "Discourse may constitute a horizontal intersection between different functional styles, and texts of the same style may present different discourses (for example, public texts in television and newspaper discourses)" (Chernyavskaya, 2011). As mentioned, the openness, variability, and mobility of the discursive system lead to an infinite number of discourse classifications. In fact, only one dominant integrative feature can serve as the basis for the typology of discourses. Often this includes the topic (sports discourse), the form of speech (oral and written, dialogic and monologic discourses), characteristics of the interlocutors (fan discourse), or events, celebrations (celebration discourse), etc. However, one can distinguish even the most communicatively insignificant feature at first glance (Lachmann, 2006).

The study of the classification of discourses has attracted scientists recognized by world linguists. For instance, consider the work of V.I. Karasik divides discourses into institutional and individual categories (Karasik, 2002). E.O. Menjeritskaya stated, "Mediadiscourse is a cognitive process, which includes the features of information presentation and its perception. Taking this principle into account when analyzing newspapers, we can talk about the following types of speech: socio-political newspaper speech; popular newspaper speech; the discourse of newspapers specialized in scientific and special fields" and "...discourse is the delivery of the content of knowledge introduced by the author to the audience through his text in linguistics and certain strategies of presenting specific information (Mendzheritskaya, 2006)

According to the above considerations, the scientist believes that there are no such features in media discourses. Their non-uniformity serves as preliminary evidence (radio discourse-oral; newspaper discourse-written), and media discourses are diverse in terms of genre. M.N. Kozhina says, "Given the main non-linguistic factors, the constructive principle of the functional style is formed as a style-creating factor that decides the choice and combination of

language tools and brings them together into one system” (Kozhina, 2003). According to V.G. Kostomarov, the priority of the informative and influencing functions in the journalistic text determines its general constructive principle, that is, the alternate combination of standard and expression (Kostomarov, 1971).

It is certain that the principle of alternating standards and anti-standards in the linguistic and stylistic structure of modern media texts is considered legitimate. We can assume that different models of standardity and expressiveness structure media texts. But the standardization and sequentiality of expression principle, which makes sure that media texts are discursively and methodically consistent, is still the only reliable methodological principle used to make texts in modern media, even when it is used in different ways.

The second reason to study how speech changes in modern media is to see how better new linguistic and methodological approaches are at changing the way media texts are spoken, based on a comparison of different approaches. Uniformity of approach, exclusion of the author’s identity, etc., is not very relevant nowadays. Perception of mass communication as a rare phenomenon indicates not that the concept of journalistic style is outdated, but that the scope of scientific research in science is expanding in the era of global changes. At the same time, journalistic style has discovered many types of texts, such as advertising texts, PR texts, popular texts, and social media texts.

A word or phrase has an expressive status in the language system as a result of the influence of special techniques that give additional imagery to any unit of a certain level. N.A.Lukyanova defines expressiveness as “the semantic nature of a linguistic sign, its ability to express non-linguistic content in order to express the meaning of a person, object, event, emotional assessment of the subject, the author through a holistic pictorial representation of the image. (Lukyanova, 1986).

Discourse can be understood as related to texts united around a single communicative goal (journalistic, scientific, and official discourse) or as a topic (medical, sports, or economic discourse). We can identify publicistic, political, social, and advertising discourses as their influential types. These types of discourse are substyles that make up the mass communicative style (Chernyshova, 2005).

For example, K.V.Tulupova states, “if journalism is understood as an activity related to receiving, processing, and conveying information, then it should be considered a type of creative activity intended to actively influence the audience through mass media channels”. It is for this reason that it is permissible to talk about the existence of non-journalistic but publicistic texts. It can be clearly said that it is out of date to think of journalism as a text that expresses the views of the author through unique methods, has a special style, and is presented with well-founded arguments (Tulupova, 2008).

Summarizing views on this matter, K.V.Tulupova also touches on the concept of media text: “The author's communication with the audience with the help of journalistic text takes place within the framework of public communication. We refer to such types of texts as “media texts”.

To include a text in the media, it must be broadcast on mass media channels to influence public consciousness” (Tulupova, 2007)

It should also be recognized that views on this issue are controversial. Traditionally, many researchers equate journalistic discourse with media discourse or do not differentiate between them. Some studies have expressed conflicting opinions about the need for a broader understanding of the word publicistic. Additionally, we actively use the term media discourse, which we believe is more appropriate than the word publicistic.

## **Conclusion**

It is natural that linguists are increasingly interested in studying the language of newspapers. There are reasons for this. First, newspapers are the oldest form of mass media that still uses the main stylistic methods and tools of media language. Second, newspaper texts are easy to study in depth and for scientific research because they are written in a way that describes language.

The term “newspaper language” is often synonymous with the term “newspaper-publicistic style”, which is widely used in the study of newspaper texts from the point of view of the general system of functional-stylistic differentiation of speech. Similar to newspaper and magazine articles, it is considered a form of mass communication. As it reflects almost all styles of modern linguistics within the system of newspapers and publicistic speech, researchers describe this style as a complex and multifaceted phenomenon (Vasilyeva, 1982). Because of these factors, the discursive analysis of mass media text method was created as an alternative to the original method for a deeper study of newspaper language. Discursive analysis is an exciting and necessary research method in modern mediallynguistics.

## **Originality Statement**

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