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**ABOUT DIGITAL TEXTS SIGNIFICANCE IN TEXT
CLASSIFICATION**

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Abstract

The article gives a brief overview of the most well-known text's classifications existing in German linguistics. Such classifications are based on the dominant text's function, which is the main categorizing feature for distinguishing of the classes and types of texts. The presence of these classifications raises the problem of their expansion due to the inclusion of texts having a digital speech form. The digital texts (chat rooms, electronic correspondence, private web pages, computer sites, social networks) have been widely spread over the past two decades due to the intensive development of the new computer technologies. Digital speech forms should be considered as special ones because of the specific modus of their formulation. The modus of the formulation is understood as a transient property inherent in the text only in some of its states. The emergence of the digital text's forms in the recent decades required the clarification of the conceptual apparatus relative to existing text classifications. The German researchers expanded the text's classifications by introducing the additional criteria, which include the mediality, the relationship between the text and the reality, the peculiarities of the communicative situation between the sender and the recipient of the message, the subject of the text, the order of the structural elements of the text, the language method of the presentation, the structuring the text speech acts, the intertextuality.

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1. Introduction

The interest in the study of digital texts is caused by the rapid development of computer technologies in the past two decades (1961 magnetic tape recorder, 1971 satellite television, 1973 tapes, 1976 telefax, 1978 cable television, 1980 computers, 1981 personal computer, 1983 CD, 1992 digital compact cassettes DCC, MD, 2000 multimedia, etc.), which led to the emergence of new text forms that need to be studied and, as a consequence, to the need for some rethinking and expansion of existing text classifications that have become classical, paradigmatic. The inevitability of such rethinking is caused by the new medial form of speech utterances, and, therefore, by the new features of their formulation modus as a transient property inherent in the text only in certain states (Goncharova, 2008). The formulation is considered as a language objectification of the text production and the language representation of the text when it is perceived. The concept of “medial” is to be clarified. We use the concept of “mediality” to designate the form of communication - oral or written, i.e. in the traditional sense of linguistic science. When studying digital texts, it is fair to talk about the digital form of communication, which has originated and exists not only as a technology, but primarily as a written communication, constituted by social space. The article is structured in the following way: in water sections 1.1. and 1.2. the main text’s classifications, combined with an orientation to the analysis of various types of texts, are briefly presented, in section 2. the problem of text classification, digital form is formulated, in section 3 the research question is raised, in section 4 the purpose of the study is formulated, in section 5 research methods are described, in section 6 the results of the study are presented, in section 7 the main conclusions are presented.

1.1. Dominant text function as a classification criterion

In Western European studies of text linguistics, classifications of texts based on the dominant text function are widely used. When determining the text’s dominant function, the decisive circumstance for researchers (Schmidt, 1973; Sandig, 1986; Isenberg, 1978; Grosse, 1976; Byuler, 1993; Heinemann & Viehweger, 1991) is the answer to the question of what consequences a text may entail in the act of communication (interaction). The text itself is understood as a complex, specially organized, interrelated unit of speech communication, with the help of which the speaker performs a specific speech act, with an explicit (or implicitly) pronounced communicative meaning. The dominant text’s function is understood as the “dominant communicative intent of the sender expressed in the text in accordance with the existing conventions” (Brinker, 1993, p. 104). With this approach, the scientists distinguish the following main functions of the text: 1) informative (Informationsfunktion), 2) appellative (Appellfunktion), 3) function of imposing responsibilities (Obligationsfunktion), 4) contact (Kontaktfunktion), 5) declarative (Deklarationsfunktion) (Brinker, 1993).

1.2. Text classifications based on speech acts

Text classifications based on the theory of speech acts depend on the classification of speech acts of Searle (1986). In the classification with a similar basis, it is necessarily distinguished (Sandig, 1986): the directive type of texts with the function of prompting the addressee to a certain action, the commissary type of texts expressing certain obligations of the addressee towards the addressee, the

expressive type of texts reacting to already occurring circumstances, declarative type of texts with the function of reporting circumstances. Classifications based on the dominant text's function and on the theory of speech acts are close with their main conceptual positions, since these classifications define the text as the actual functioning of the language. The functional criterion here is also the main thing in the typology of texts; the function of the text is interpreted from the perspective of the theory of speech acts: "In kommunikativer Hinsicht wird die Einheit „Text“ durch das Konzept der kommunikativen Funktion charakterisiert, das am Begriff des illokutiven Akts der Sprechakttheorie (Austin, Searl, Wunderlich) orientiert ist" (Schmidt, 1973, p. 18).

2. Problem Statement

The text classification models presented in a brief review are united by their common focus on the analysis of various types of texts. At the same time, the medial character of the written and oral forms is considered only as a marginal situational feature or completely leveled. The problem of the classification of digital form texts is one of the urgent in modern linguistics because of the presence of new text forms that have emerged as a result of the development of computer technology.

For the first time, mediality as a criterion for the classification of texts is mentioned in the model proposed by the German researcher Raible (1996). This model focuses on the description and differentiation of digital text types. Raible (1996) establishes that all digital types of texts are dependent upon the certain patterns. The presence of "mediality" as an additional criterion of text classification leads research on the linguistics of the text to the allocation of new text types that exist in digital format (private home page on the Internet, e-mail, web site. In addition to the dominant text's function, as the main criterion of text's classification, Raible (1996) offers seven additional criteria for describing the characteristics of digital text types. Additional criteria include mediality, the relationship between text and reality, features of the communicative situation between the sender and the recipient of the message, the subject of the text, the order of the structural elements of the text, the language mode of speech, speech acts, intertextuality. In this case, mediality is the main additional criterion that determines the characteristics of all the others.

The relationship between the text and reality as an additional criterion for the description of digital texts requires certain clarification. As is well known, with regard to non-artistic types of texts, the recipient (addressee) has an expectation that the text's relation to reality is stable. Television news is perceived with the expectation that nothing is untrue. The maintenance manual should explain the features of the processes occurring in the instrument. Texts always provide a certain perspective on the perception of reality. Texts, as excerpts and abbreviations of reality, model its perception by the addressee. At the same time, the medial possibilities in many respects determine the boundaries and the method of this simulation (Bittner, 2003). In this regard, an important question arises: how reality is modeled in the types of texts that exist (were established) in digital mediality, for example, in electronic correspondence, on computer sites, on private Internet pages. According to a fair comment of Bittner (2003), the very name "private page on the Internet", "Private Homepage in the World Wide Web", the Internet site "Web Site" is internally connected with the media: with a personal computer, the Internet (p. 130). The attitude to reality of such digital texts is unequivocally difficult to determine. Apparently, the

difficulty for the perception of digital texts is in the differentiation between the reflection of reality, the modeling of reality and the separation of reality from virtual reality.

Considering the sequence of the structural elements of digital texts, Bittner (2003) distinguishes technical levels. In comparison with traditional texts, the researcher notes a tendency towards freer structuring and, at the same time, the development of navigational orientation tools for obtaining information in order to achieve coherence in general.

The peculiarities of the presentation language method in digital texts gradually change the relationship between the text corresponding to norms and the text not corresponding to the norms, and the text of non-conforming norms, in addition, in digital texts there is a relatively low level of sentence prevalence, violation of the syntactic system (Bittner, 2003). Such features have arisen, apparently, due to the intensive visualization of digital texts, their polycodicity. Polycodicity of digital texts is achieved by integrating a visual image (illustrations, photographs, computer graphics, etc.) with audio components (for example, the soundtrack of a virtual greeting card).

It can be assumed that the linguistic features of digital texts are related to their mode of formulation. On the one hand, the mode of formulation of these texts includes their mandatory "written" fixation, but, at the same time, this fixation does not ensure their long-term and repeated public use. The society of addressees of these texts is distinguished by its heterogeneity. In fact, we can talk about the public, which is limited to a circle of close friends and distant acquaintances, as well as random visitors to sites, unfamiliar recipients of emails. The «mixed character» of the addressee is one of the characteristics of the communicative situation in which the digital text appears. The addressee opening the website, personal page on the Internet, entering into private correspondence by e-mail with an unknown addressee also has an ambiguous character. Personal characteristics (gender, age), status differences, professional affiliation, degree of acquaintance are becoming less and less the defining community that determines private contacts. In addition, a certain contradiction lies in the functioning of digital texts, which are conceived as a private page on the Internet, a personal mailbox, a personal channel on YouTube, but at the same time have general accessibility. The addressing of the digital text, as one of the text categories, becomes widespread. The text font itself lacks the personal style that characterizes the author's calligraphic features. All digital text types (chat, private Internet homepage, website, email) show signs of intertextuality. External text features are important for the classification text types. Internal text's signs are secondary, but they are taken into account when classifying and describing texts. The intertextual sign of all digital texts is their striving for dialogue. The main body of digital texts is formulated with the support of a dialogue, not bound by speech standards, having signs of a spontaneous reaction of communication partners.

3. Research Questions

Despite a number of already established, seemingly strong traditional views existing in linguistics on the typology of texts, this issue cannot be considered finally studied. The presence of a vast amount of theoretical and applied research in the field of text linguistics, the criteria for the classification of texts continue to be controversial, which obviously depends on the theoretical and methodological approach to the definition of the text. In existing typologies there is a discrepancy of the original typological bases.

The whole set of grounds for the typology of texts can be reduced to three concepts: 1) linguistic, which are based on purely linguistic factors; 2) functional-stylistic, which formulated the criterion of correlation and extra-linguistic socio-communicative inter linguistics in different kinds of text; 3) communicative speech oriented to the characteristics of communication, especially on the communication's aim. At the same time, the question of the place of digital texts in existing classifications remains open.

4. Purpose of the Study

The rapid development of the media in the second half of the twentieth century leads to the need to consider mediality in the description and typology of texts as one of the important criteria for text's classification. The aim of the study is the classification of modern forms of digital communication. When studying digital forms of communication, such categories of mediality as written language and orality obviously require some revision, since digital communication is a borderline form that combines the features of oral and written medial forms.

5. Research Methods

In accordance with the purpose and objectives of the study, its methodology was generally determined by an integrative approach necessary for the systematic and holistic study of the essential features and structural components of digital texts as a subject of scientific interpretation. As research methods in the work the method of direct observation and context's interpretation of the text's material were also used.

6. Findings

The idea of the need to distinguish between written and oral texts as medial forms is not new in text linguistics. The emergence of new digital forms of texts should expand text's classifications by the appearance of a classifying feature of mediality. Digital monologue and dialogic texts cannot be fully compared with monologue or dialogic texts in written and oral fixation. Digital texts should be considered as a separate subclass, the texts of which combine the features of oral and written medial forms. The exchange of digital texts (for example, chat or e-mail communication) proceeds on a very dynamic basis of a digital sign system that is as close as possible to the exchange of remarks in an oral dialogue, which indicates the availability of procedural, maximal dialogical openness of digital texts contributing to the effective impact on the addressee.

7. Conclusion

Concluding consideration of the range of issues related to mediality, as an additional criterion for describing the characteristics of digital texts, it should be noted that this criterion is important for studying and classifying modern forms of communication, the possession of which ensures media literacy of native speakers. The digital form of existence, the complicated medial structure of digital texts, the synthesis of written, book and oral, spontaneous languages, polycodicity, dialogical openness determine their

difference from analog non-digital texts, belonging to a separate subclass. Digital texts are included in the text's classifications described above, based on the presence of the dominant text's function (informative, appealing, contact setting, etc.), but possess, in comparison with analogue non-digit texts, additional polycode methods of influence borrowed from other sign systems (painting, graphics, music).

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