



THE THEORETICAL STATUS OF DISCOURSE IN POLITICAL LINGUISTICS

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Article history:	Abstract:
<p>Received: 24th January 2025 Accepted: 20^h February 2025</p>	<p>In linguopolitology, which is recognized as a new branch of linguistics, discourse, particularly political discourse, holds a special place. The theory of discourse in communication began to take shape as an independent field of study in the mid-1960s. During this period, scholars' tendency to view language as an inseparable means of communication found its expression in the study of texts. As linguistics gradually moved beyond its structural and formal-functional framework, shifting toward a comprehensive, holistic, and consistent study of language, the term discourse started to be actively used. In this process, examining its relationship with the concept of "text" became an important area of research. The social nature of discourse has led to the emergence of new concepts such as innovative discourse, journalistic discourse, political discourse, scientific discourse, literary discourse, and evaluative discourse. This, in turn, underscores the relevance of studying discourse from a theoretical perspective. The following analysis focuses on interpretations of discourse and political speech theory within global linguistics.</p>

Keywords: Political Linguistics, Political Discourse, Discourse, Political Speech

INTRODUCTION

Since the 1990s, research on anthropocentric theory processes has begun in Uzbek linguistics. In works such as N.Mahmudov's "Searching for a Comprehensive Study of Language and Its Methods" and D. Khudoyberganova's "Anthropocentric Study of Text" (Mahmudov, 2012; Khudoyberganova, 2013), the introduction and application of modern linguistic directions into Uzbek linguistics have been scientifically substantiated. Based on this, several new linguistic disciplines emerged in 21st-century Uzbek linguistics, including linguoculturology, psycholinguistics, pragmalinguistics, sociolinguistics, computational linguistics, areal linguistics, and ontolinguistics. The democratization of society and the development of social consciousness and thinking have highlighted the relevance of studying the speech of leaders governing society. As a result, a new field within linguistics-political linguistics-has emerged. Political linguistics is developing as one of the active fields in contemporary linguistics. In foreign higher education institutions, "Political Linguistics" is taught as a separate discipline in bachelor's and master's programs, and its object and subject as a scientific field have been established. In political linguistics, the primary focus is on the study of political language, political communication, and key features of discourses. Moreover, the most important

methods of expressing ideological concepts in political texts and their scientific content are analyzed. The terms "political linguistics" and "linguopolitology" are often used interchangeably. In political linguistics, not only its actual state but also adjacent processes are studied, such as the analysis of political metaphors and determining perlocutionary influence within cognitive linguistics. Sometimes, the term "linguopolitology" is used specifically to refer to this direction. However, some researchers, considering the diversity of research areas within political linguistics, argue that the term "linguopolitology" is more appropriate for fields closely related to political science (Borisova, 2015).

In political linguistics, special attention must be paid to the concept of "discourse." Linguistics has gradually moved beyond the study of individual sentences and transitioned to analyzing sequentially connected utterances—texts characterized by completeness, coherence, consistency, and other defining features (Temnova, 2004). The term "discourse" is not only an object of study in linguistics but also serves as a research subject in sociology, cultural studies, pedagogy, and jurisprudence. The word "discourse" originates from the Latin word *discursus*, meaning "movement," "circulation," "conversation," or "dialogue." As a linguistic term, "discourse" was first introduced in 1952 by American



scholar Z. Harris in his book *Discourse Analysis* (Harris, 1952). Different linguistic dictionaries provide various interpretations of the term. Notably, T. Jerebilo's *Dictionary of Linguistic Terms* provides a detailed explanation of "discourse." According to Jerebilo (2010), the term discourse (German: *Diskurs*, French: *discours*, English: *discourse*) has two main meanings: The original meaning—rational thinking. Later, the term began to be used in the sense of dialogue. Additionally, in global linguistics, the term "discourse" is understood in the following ways:

a) A unique communicative phenomenon that takes place in a specific cognitive and typologically conventional space, as recorded in written texts or spoken discourse;

b) A text that is closely linked to the situational context.

In the Austrian school of German linguistics, discourse is defined as the linguistic expression of a certain social practice, a systematically organized use of language that reflects a mentality conditioned by ideological and historical factors.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

In the works of English scholars, the term "discourse" was initially defined as a coherent text. Later, it came to represent meanings such as the oral-conversational form of a text, dialogue, and a group of semantically connected sentences. Linguist A. Kibrik defines discourse as the processes of constructing and understanding spoken language, while E. Benveniste describes it as speech expressed by a speaker, integrated into life. Dutch linguist T.A. van Dijk proposes analyzing discourse on multiple levels. In a broad sense, he considers discourse a complex communicative event, whereas, in a narrow sense, he views it as the written or spoken verbal product of a communicative act. It is important to note that T.A. van Dijk distinguishes between discourse and text as follows: discourse is an actual spoken text, meaning an active speech act, whereas text is an abstract grammatical structure of ideas related to the language system or formal linguistic knowledge. Discourse is a specific conversation, and its clarity depends equally on the context in which the term is applied, the text, and the object. Discourse is a type of conversation (Van Dijk, 1989). Among the methods of discourse analysis, the following types proposed by T. A. van Dijk are of particular significance:

- **Grammatical analysis** (phonological, syntactic, lexical, and semantic);
- **Pragmatic analysis** of speech and communicative acts;
- **Rhetorical analysis;**
- **Stylistic analysis;**

- **Analysis of structural features** (such as genre, including narratives, news reports, parliamentary debates, lectures, advertisements, etc.);
- **Conversational analysis;**
- **Semiotic analysis** of auditory and visual materials, as well as other multimodal parameters of speech interaction (Van Dijk, 1989).

Discourse functions as a unified "organism" that simultaneously implements linguistic and cognitive processes. Encompassing a wide range of linguistic and extralinguistic features, discourse is the product of speech activity, distinguished by its semantic coherence and connection to a specific context. It is linked to genre and ideological frameworks and is associated with a particular cultural stratum, social community, and historical period. M. Stubbs identifies three key characteristics of discourse within the framework of social context: 1) Formal meaning – a linguistic unit on the surface level of a sentence; 2) Informational meaning – discourse is related to the language used in a social context; Structural form – interactive speech between speakers, i.e., dialogue. Based on the first and second characteristics, it can be concluded that discourse is a linguistic unit connected to the social environment. Linguist T. M. Nikolayeva, who studied discourse as a linguistic text, defines it as a polysemous word and provides several synonyms for it (Arutyunova, 1999).

- (a) Dialogue;
- (b) The oral form of a text;
- (c) A collection of semantically related sentences;
- (d) A speech act or verbal action in oral or written form.

As we have observed, discourse primarily manifests as a dynamic process in spoken or written form. In this regard, the question of whether text and discourse should be considered synonymous or treated as distinct concepts has long been a subject of interest among linguists. N. D. Arutyunova emphasizes that discourse and text are separate linguistic terms, with discourse being a text in motion that encompasses both cultural and social factors. Another prominent linguist who differentiates between discourse and text is H. Haberland. He argues that text is a stable, finished product that can be created in various places and under different conditions, whereas discourse is a phenomenon occurring in a specific time and place.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, discourse is primarily divided into two types: conversational discourse and institutional discourse. This classification



is based on the structure and formation of the communicative act.

All social activities carried out through speech have a discursive nature. The social essence of speech is connected to text, and its distinctive features manifest in different forms of text. Discourse, as a speech act carried out within a specific sociopragmatic context and aimed at a complex purpose, is associated with three key aspects:

1. Historicity of speech,
2. Sociality of speech,
3. Ideological aspects of speech.

The study of a particular individual discourse as a distinct research object allows for deeper insights into the linguopragmatic nature of speech (Pardayev, 2021).

In Uzbek linguistic sources, the term "discourse" has been explained in various ways. It is derived from the Latin word *discurrere*, meaning discussion. Unlike immediate, intuitive, or sensory knowledge, discourse involves logical reasoning and argumentation achieved through discussion (Abdullaeva et al., 2004). Another definition describes discourse as a mutual conversation between a speaker and a listener, where a response is given to a question (Toirova, 2016). The second source provides a broader explanation of discourse within pragmalinguistics. It highlights that during communication, the speaker (referred to as the communicator in discourse theory) introduces themselves to the listener (the addressee) through speech or interaction. Discourse is the process of expressing thought, realized in both written and spoken forms, combining linguistic and non-linguistic means, and shaped by linguistic, ethnocultural, psychological, and situational factors. Thus, while discourse in traditional linguistics was understood as a connected and coherent sequence of speech or text, modern linguistics interprets it as a complex communicative phenomenon. Studies on the pragmatic aspects of language indicate that the term "discourse" has been used in eight different meanings (Karasik, 2000):

1. A synonym for speech;
2. A unit larger than a phrase;
3. The effect of thought on the addressee, considering the speech situation;
4. A conversation;
5. The speaker's position in speech;
6. The use of linguistic units;
7. A socially or ideologically restricted form of thought;
8. A theoretical framework for studying the conditions of text formation.

Linguist Z. Pardayev emphasizes that discourse encompasses subjective, socio-cultural aspects, as well as stereotypes, precedent (exemplary) thoughts, and speech activities in monologic and dialogic forms. He argues that discourse is the method of text formation,

focusing on its syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic properties as a scientific term (Pardayev, 2013). Pardayev's reflections on discourse align with its interpretation in modern linguistics as a complex communicative phenomenon. In practice, discourse is a dynamic process that retains pragmatic characteristics. These characteristics manifest in pragmatic acts and exhibit a tendency for change and adaptation. The diversity of interpretations and definitions highlights the multifaceted and comprehensive nature of discourse. All social activities conducted through speech possess a discursive character. The social essence of speech is intrinsically connected to text, with its unique features appearing in various textual forms.

Among the various branches of discourse, political discourse holds a significant place. Let us continue our discussion with reflections on political discourse. Various studies on political discourse reveal different terminological variations for this concept. In scientific literature, it has been referred to as: "Political discourse" (*политический дискурс*; E. I. Sheygal, A. N. Baranov), "Socio-political speech" (*общественно-политическая речь*; T. V. Yudina), "Political propaganda speech" (*агитационно-политическая речь*; A. P. Chudinov), "The language of public opinion" (*язык общественной мысли*; P. N. Denesov), "Political language" (*политический язык*; O. I. Vorobeva) (Wu Anna, 2019).

The most crucial element of discursive practice is political discourse, as it always reflects the key characteristics of a political system. Political discourse is strongly infused with a spirit of populism, which is conveyed through various means and methods. This spirit aligns with the goals and objectives that political discourse aims to achieve. Since words and expressions that resonate with the people's mindset and language can effectively engage an audience, political discourse strategically utilizes language tailored to its audience. Unlike personal speech, political speech is considered an institutional form of communication. It relies on a professionally oriented system of linguistic elements, including vocabulary, phraseology, and paremiology (proverbs and sayings), to convey its message effectively.

By the late 1990s, a number of noteworthy studies emerged in this field, conducted by scholars such as Altunyan, Proskuryakov, E. Sheygal, and V. Dijk. These studies played a pivotal role in shaping the further development of political linguistics.

In 2003, the first Russian-language textbook on this subject - A. P. Chudinov's "Political Linguistics" was published. Later, in 2011, a study guide was developed by E. V. Budaev and co-authors. Among the existing



scientific works on political linguistics, E. I. Sheygal's dissertation titled "*Semiotics of Political Discourse*" (Sheygal, 2005) holds a significant place.

In political discourse, political rhetoric holds a significant place. It manifests through an individual's political oratory skills. The rhetorical analysis of political speech examines aspects such as: Aggressiveness in speech, Social stratification of language, Rhetorical portraits of leaders, Rhetorical characteristics of political speech (e.g., a politician's speech, image, and rhetorical strategies in political activity) (Repina, 2017). According to M. Eshanova (2013), "*Political discourse takes place through forms of official communication such as interviews, speeches, and formal discussions.*" This suggests that political oratory is a crucial component of political discourse. Through it, a leader's rhetorical and political thought culture is shaped and developed. In Uzbek linguistic studies, the concept of political speech has been widely discussed. Professor Kasimjan Sadikov (2022) defines it as: "*Political speech is a type of address delivered at meetings, congresses, and councils, in which a leader presents key political issues relevant to the time.*" Additionally, K. Sadikov provides an interpretation of political and formal-diplomatic speech, describing it as: "*Official diplomatic speech refers to the words, official addresses, decrees, and orders of rulers—such as khans, sultans, and state officials—directed at the people or government institutions, as well as written diplomatic exchanges with other states.*" This implies that in historical linguistics, formal addresses, decrees, and diplomatic correspondences issued by rulers can also be considered political speech.

According to professor Kasimjan Sadikov, the use of political speech in linguistic history can be classified into two types: 1) Oral speech – This includes verbal orders and directives issued by khans and sultans, as well as their formal interactions with people. 2) Written speech – This refers to formal diplomatic communication in written form. This classification highlights how political speech has evolved in both spoken and written forms, playing a significant role in governance, diplomacy, and historical communication.

Considering that this classification is important in studying political speech in a diachronic perspective,

we can say that the historical form of political speech can only be studied based on sources in the present day. Accordingly, if a recorded dialogue in historical sources is related to the political sphere, it would be appropriate to classify it as an oral form of political speech. Indeed, political speech is closely linked to the development and evolution of the Turkic formal style, state documentation, and diplomacy. It has been preserved in ancient inscriptions, historical books, decrees, orders, official correspondence between rulers, and various official documents issued in the name of state leaders. These documents serve as crucial sources for studying political and official-diplomatic speech at different stages of language history, reflecting the linguistic-cultural, ethical-aesthetic, and international-diplomatic dimensions of formal communication (Sodiqov, 2022).

The Russian scholar A. Chudinov also emphasizes that in linguistics, a text is a sequence of words (sentences) connected through semantic cohesion and that its main characteristics are consistency and integrity. He notes that political texts can be expressed in both oral (such as speeches at rallies or parliamentary debates, party congress addresses, television interviews with political leaders, etc.) and written forms (such as newspaper articles, leaflets, political party programs, etc.) (Chudinov, 2006). In this context, the scholar also discusses the connection between a text and its context, stating that regardless of whether a text is oral or written, it reflects the socio-economic activities of those who use it for specific purposes—such as state leaders, party programs, government institutions, and public organizations. Indeed, whether oral or written, political texts serve the primary function of promoting ideas, exerting emotional influence, and persuading audiences toward political objectives.

At this point, it is also appropriate to discuss the concept of a political text. Political texts appear in a structured and coherent manner, with clearly defined boundaries. In this regard, based on the philosophical relationship between part and whole, any text constitutes a unified whole, and in turn, a political text is considered one of its integral components. In general, literature on the problems of political texts highlights the following characteristics of political texts:

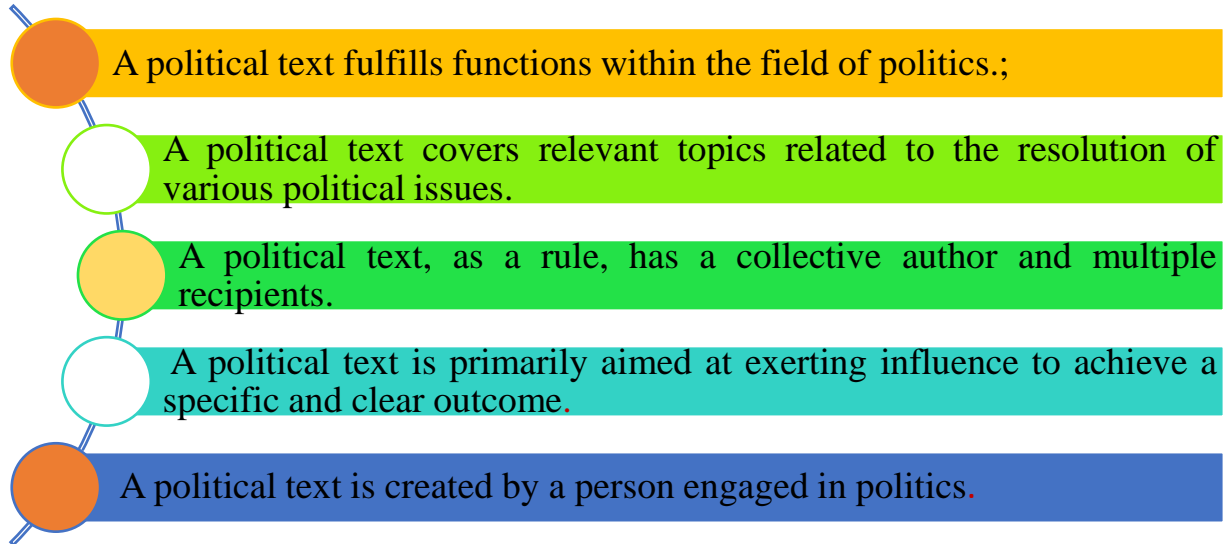


Table 1

From these definitions, it can be understood that a political text is intended to fulfill theoretical, practical, and communicative functions. It presents the relationship, communication, and discussions between the addresser and the addressee within a political context. In this regard, a political text appears as the primary existence and reference point of socio-political reality.

The primary goal of political communication is the struggle for power. According to many scholars, within the framework of the semiotic approach, any form of power is expressed through language. Politics, in turn, is understood as a set of practices consisting of encoded symbols introduced into the socio-semiotic process through speech acts (Romanov, 2022). In contemporary world linguistics, the main directions of modern political linguistics have been developed and are being studied in various categories. If we outline their classifications, they include:

1. Research in the theoretical field of political linguistics – the analysis of specific units in political texts. The first group includes political linguistics, the theoretical formation of the discipline, its conceptual structure, terminology, and similar aspects. This category defines the subject, tasks, and methods of different directions within political linguistics. Linguist A.N. Baranova also discusses the practical issues facing the discipline in her manual (Baranov, 2001). 2. Descriptive and normative approaches to the study of political language. 3. The study of genres and styles of political language. In this category, linguists examine the distinctive features of individual genres and styles of political language, particularly the specifics of parliamentary debates, the

uniqueness of rally speeches, slogans, election debates, and the characteristics of “political discussions.”

In political discourse, the spirit of populism, expressed through various means and methods, is strong. This is directly related to the objectives set by political discourse. Words and phrases that resonate with the people's mentality and language can attract the audience's attention. These types of expressions can be expanded further, but they all systematically study various methods and approaches to political sciences, linguistic levels, and textual characteristics. Linguopolitology or political linguistics emerged at the intersection of two independent disciplines—political science and linguistics—and is considered an independent branch of linguistics (Ruziyev, 2021). The Russian scholar A. Chudinov, who studied political linguistics, emphasized that political linguistics is closely connected with other linguistic fields. He highlighted its relationship with sociolinguistics, functional stylistics—especially the study of journalistic style—classical and modern rhetoric, cognitive linguistics, and text linguistics (Chudinov, 2006). As the interrelation between language, state, and society continues to expand, interest in political linguistics is also growing. Scholars specializing in political linguistics identify four autonomous internal directions of modern political linguistics (E.V. Budaev et al., 2011). These are:

1. Critical analysis of political discourse;
2. Analysis of the structure of political discourse;
3. Rhetorical analysis of political discourse;
4. Cognitive research of political discourse.

CONCLUSION.



These directions cannot be considered separately; they serve as complementary tools to one another. The cognitive approach can be combined with critical discourse analysis, which, in turn, can be supplemented with psycholinguistic methods. The critical analysis of political discourse is aimed at studying the ways in which social power exercises dominance in society. Rhetorical speech cannot be limited to a single topic, as rhetoric is used in all areas of life. Moreover, since any topic, any opinion, reality, fact, or thought can be discussed, it can become the subject of speech (Ahmet Yüzendağ, 1964). Political and social oratory is distinguished by its significance in state and societal governance. The following types of speeches are distinguished in political and social oratory:

1. Lectures on socio-political and political-economic topics;
2. Report speeches at conferences;
3. Political speech;
4. Diplomatic speech;
5. Political information;
6. Military-patriotic speech;
7. Propaganda speech;
8. Popular-scientific speech.

In summary, political discourse is a complex object of study as it is situated at the intersection of various disciplines - political science, social psychology, and linguistics. It involves analyzing the forms, functions, and content of speech used in specific political contexts.

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