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**CHALLENGES OF DISCOURSE MODES CATEGORIZATION****T. B. Maslova***Kyiv, National Technical University of Ukraine "Kyiv Polytechnic Institute"*

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With the current tendency to treat discourse phenomena as pragmatic rather than linguistic, the term "modes of discourse" has become an important concept in studying the organization of monological written discourse. However, there are some other linguistic terms which are closely related to, or sometimes even overlapping with, the concept of discourse modes, and this may lead to a problem of confusion. For this reason, the paper first of all elucidates the differences between discourse and text, register and genre, so that to point out the distinction between approaches to dealing with texts of various types. Next, it investigates diverse classifications of text types developed over the years by different authors (J. Kinneavy, E. Werlich, R. Longacre, D. Biber, J.-M. Adam, T. Virtanen, James R. Martin, M. Fludernik, C. Smith), indicating the key principles of categorization, such as correlation with cognitive strategies, speech acts, linguistic features, and so on. Finally, one arrives at the conclusion that modes of discourse, which could be used synonymously with text types, concern the pragmatic properties of the text, and reveal rhetorical patterns used to achieve certain communicative goals in a coherent discourse. It is thus the goal of further research in the field of discourse studies to come up with the typology of modes of discourse applicable for particular types of discourse.

**Keywords:** text, discourse, register, genre, text type, mode of discourse

**Introduction.** In terms of linguistics textual surface structures display a wide spectrum of forms and there have been a great number of concepts developed to account for this variety. However, there is still no general consensus on the principles of classification, to say nothing of terminology used to distinguish between different texts. Text types, genres, registers, modes of discourse are all measures of diversity of communication, which differs in speaker's purposes to be achieved, rhetorical strategies applied, media of interaction, and linguistic resources in use.

The **objective** of the present paper is to give an overview of the relevant foreign linguistic studies and make it clear how such terms as text, discourse, register, genre, text type and mode of discourse differ in meaning as well as to consider the challenges of classifying discourse modes, which are regarded as strategies of choosing specific language items to accomplish the communicative tasks.

**Discourse vs. text, register vs. genre.** It is practicable to start with the fact that both terms "text" and "discourse", being closely related, have been often used interchangeably, or, on the contrary, to denote quite opposite things (e.g. written language and spoken language). In effect, these two represent complimentary perspectives on language, so that a text is viewed as the product of a discourse, while the latter refers to a dynamic process which involves all aspects of communication, including the message with particular grammatical and lexical choices, the addresser, who is the person originating the message, the addressee, or the person the message is addressed to, and the immediate context of situation [8, p. 4; 9, p. 113-115].

The classes of discourses characterized by sharing the same primary social function, communicative goals, and intended audience are called genres. Genres have been well-known since classical times of Aristotle's "Poetics". The broadest and commonest division into poetry, prose and drama was subsequently developed into a more complicated system of genres, which are readily distinguished by speakers of a language as texts used in a particular situation for a specific communicative purpose (e.g. guidebook, poem, business letter, newspaper article, advertisement, etc.). Thus, although being formerly used as a distinctive type of literary composition, the term "genre" is now recognized as a system for accomplishing social purposes by verbal means, and refers to a definite type of discourse, with or without literary aspirations. There is, however, a difficulty in distinguishing it from the term "register", which some linguists still apply to designate functional varieties of language typical of some non-literary situations, or occupational fields, such as the language of religion, politics, sports, the language of newspaper reporting, advertising, medical language, legal language, technical language, telephone talks, interviews, etc.

Having been in use in stylistics and sociolinguistics since the 1950s, the term "register" now suggests a scale of differences in the degrees of formality appropriate to different social uses of language. Speakers of a language are expected to have the communicative competence allowing them to constantly switch between usages of certain features of sound, grammar, and lexis, depending upon which social part they play in various situations of everyday life (cf. a lecture, an online chat, a business letter, a telephone conversation, etc.). In general, there are three main variables that are considered significant for the choice of situational linguistic features:

- “field”, or subject matter;
- “medium”, or channel of communication (e.g. speech or writing);
- “tenor”, or the relations between participants of social interaction.

For example, such register as TV sports commentary is characterized by special vocabulary reflecting the subject, the audio-visual medium of information exchange, and fairly informal relations between commentators and mass audience. It is obvious, however, that some registers may overlap with each other in respect of “field” or “medium”, but it is the contextually determined degree of formality that always makes two registers differ (e.g. sermon vs. prayer) [9, p. 337-338].

Thus, when one needs to maintain a distinction between genre and register it is advisable to see registers as particular situational constraints at the linguistic level of vocabulary and syntax, while genres had better be viewed as larger or “higher-level” structures, which operate at discourse level and are defined on the basis of systematic non-linguistic criteria, being commonly recognized as performing similar functions in the language community. One register may be realized through various genres (e.g. contracts, wills, and lawyers communications of legal register), but a particular genre may cut across a number of registers (e.g. a research paper in chemistry may look similar to the one in sociology, fulfilling the same communicative purposes).

**Typology of text types.** The change in communicative goal requires different rhetoric strategies, which constitute the mode of discourse realized through text types. The concept of text type enables classifying texts in terms of communicative intentions serving an overall rhetorical purpose. In contrast to genres, the number of which changes historically, text types represent only a limited number of forms of both writing and speaking, defined through a closed set of categories. There are, however, different approaches to choosing which category should underlie the typology. As a result, it is worth making a historical overview of the text taxonomies.

James Kinneavy (1971, 1980) puts forward a classification of text types in terms of cognitive categories, determining the manner in which reality is viewed. Applying the primary distinction between static (looking at something at a particular time) and dynamic (looking at how it changes over time), individual (looking at something in isolation) and collective (looking at parts of a whole), he arrives at the four text types, namely *narration*, *classification*, *description*, and *evaluation*. When focusing on individual characteristics in a static view, we describe; while comparing or contrasting groups we classify. If we discuss changes from a dynamic view of reality, we narrate trying to show causality and chronology of events; if we consider the potential for reality to be different, we evaluate and “pronounce judgment”.

Eron Werlich's (1976, 1979) typology includes five basic classes of non-fictional text types, namely *descriptive*, *narrative*, *expository*, *argumentative*, and *instructive*. The distinction between them is based on cognitive properties of the text, including differentiation of perceptions of factual phenomena in the spacial context (description) or that of factual and/or conceptual phenomena in the temporal context (narration), comprehension of general concepts through differentiation by analysis and/or synthesis (exposition), evaluation of relations between concepts of phenomena through finding out similarities, contrasts, and transformations (argumentation), and planning of future behaviour (instruction) [3, p. 23; 8, p. 15].

Robert Longacre (1982, 1983) outlines a typology of monologue discourse using the combinations of binary oppositions, namely that of temporal succession and agent orientation. As a result, there are four different ideal text types, which differ either in the presence of chronological linkage, or unity of participant reference: *narrative* (both parameters are evident), *procedural* (there is temporal succession, but no agent orientation), *behavioural* (it is the identity of the agent(s) that matters rather than the chronology), and *expository* (it is neither temporally sequenced, nor agent oriented). All of these may be further divided according to the parameters of projection (whether the event has already taken place), and tension (whether there is a kind of struggle or polarization involved) [5].

Text types in Douglas Biber's typology (1989) share frequent use of the same set of co-occurring syntactic and lexical features (e.g. passives, nominalizations, prepositional phrases), the co-occurrence patterns being identified quantitatively (by an in-depth corpus analysis of 481 texts across 23 genres) rather than on an a priori functional basis. As a result, there are five dimensions proposed to label texts of certain communicative function(s) underlying each co-occurrence pattern of formal linguistic features:

1) informational versus involved production, or high informational density (nouns, prepositions and attributive adjectives) versus affective, interactional, and generalized content

(contractions, present tense verbs, first and second person pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, hedges, amplifiers, possibility modals);

2) narrative (past tense verbs, third person pronouns, perfect aspect verbs) versus non-narrative concerns;

3) elaborated, or highly explicit, context-independent reference (wh-relative clauses, nominalizations), versus non-specific situation-dependent reference (time and place adverbials);

4) high or low degree of overt expression of persuasion (infinitives, prediction and necessity modal verbs, conditional subordination);

5) abstract, technical formal style (conjuncts, passives, adverbial subordinators) versus non-abstract style (that-clauses, demonstratives) [2, p. 3-43; 3, p. 31-32].

Jean-Michel Adam (1992) expands Werlich's classification to propose eight text types, focusing on global, deep-structure qualities of texts. Trying to correlate speech acts, discourse functions and cognitive parameters, he distinguishes between *narrative*, *descriptive*, and *explicative* text types aligned with assertive speech acts, and those that conjoin different speech acts, namely *argumentative* (convince), *injunctive* (direct), *predictive* (prophecy), *conversational* (question, excuse, promise), and *rhetorical* (reflect) text types [3, p. 24; 4, p. 278]

Also re-considering Werlich's scheme, in addition to subordinate level of text types Tuija Virtanen (1992) proposes to construct a higher level which relates to the functions of discourse, so that there are *narrative*, *description*, *instruction*, *exposition*, and *argument*. The idea here is that there must be a difference between cognitive process or intention, and the resulting type of discourse. For instance, argumentation can be found in such types of discourse as narration, description or evaluation, and narrative text-type can be used in any discourse type. In this manner, there is one prototypical text type for each discourse type, although such correlation between discourse types and empirical texts may not be observed in practice [3, p. 24-25].

Over the years James R. Martin and others (1985, 1991, 2008) have elaborated a schemata of "genres", which are used to denote configurations of meaning in a culture, reflecting socio-cultural categories and processes. Although the authors use the term "genres", it is obvious that this approach touches upon the classification of text types, which possess prototypical functional, structural and linguistic features. Considering similarities and differences in social functions and their linguistic realization between "genres", a few large "families of genres" have been identified and these are widely used for educational purposes at present. In practice, all texts are broadly divided into academic and non-academic, the latter being represented by poems, informal letters, and songs. With respect to the general purpose achieved, on the other hand, academic texts can present personal experience (*narrative*, *recount*), factual information (*procedure*, *report*), and analyzing and debating (*discussion*, *explanation*, *exposition*).

Having the purpose to entertain, narratives introduce characters in some setting and tell a story, unfolding a series of events, eventually bringing about some resolution. Narratives are generally imaginative, or can be based on real facts, and are found in story books and literary texts of many kinds, containing a variety of process verbs and verb tenses, clauses, nominal groups, adverbs of time and manner, etc.

Recounts reconstruct experience in temporal sequence and tell what and when occurred, with the aim to inform. These can be found, for example, in newspaper and television or history reports, autobiographies, diaries, etc. There are usually proper nouns, personal pronouns, descriptive words, additive and temporal conjunctions, process clauses and past tenses in use.

Procedures direct one's behaviour in undertaking activities, and can be found in games, itineraries, instructions, recipes, manuals and science experiments. The use of present tense, impersonal pronouns and imperatives are typical and there might be even diagrams or schemes for illustrating what to do in order to achieve the goal.

Reports classify some phenomena and describe characteristics. They are often used in the social and the natural sciences (e.g. formal scientific report, book review, newspaper article), and organize all the facts clearly by making use of technical language, the third person, action verbs, and doing without any evaluative words.

Explanations identify some phenomenon or historical event and explain how or why it occurs, or what its consequences are. They also tend to use technical language, specific-subject vocabulary and words that show the cause and effect relationship.

Expositions put forward an argument, and try to persuade the audience, say, in essays, advertisements, editorials, etc. They mostly rely upon generalization, classification, and

categorization. Thus, reasoning is expressed through abstract nouns, markers of contrast, logical sequence; there are a lot of emotive and qualifying words, modals of probability, and visuals.

Discussions involve exploring issues and arriving at opinions or recommendations on the basis of evidence. While expositions take up one general position, and argue it at some length, discussions are concerned with examination of different arguments for and against an issue. For this reason, there are linking words used to show a comparison, and the language is normally rather formal, whether it is a radio debate, or a newspaper article. A special type of discussion is exploration, which aims to find out about something which is still debatable and in a theoretical framework. To put it simply, the following table displays the “genres” by the purpose they are used for, and sequencing of events (Table 1) [6, p. 563].

*Table 1. Classification of factual genres, by James R. Martin.*

function sequence	to generalize	to generalize as a document	to explain and find resolution	to debate
actions are not necessarily structured	narrative	report	exposition	discussion
actions must be structured	recount	procedure	explanation	exploration

**Discourse modes.** As we can see, these are all the attempts to treat the nature of texts of different genres by finding the relation between linguistic/structural features and functional criteria, the latter referring to either a set of general textual functions, or diversity of speech acts. Actually, the term “mode of discourse” is sometimes used as a synonym to “text type” to label strategies of text organization, but modes of discourse should be restricted to the characterization of texts according to pragmatic properties (e.g. the speaker’s purpose). In this connection it is worth mentioning Monika Fludernik’s three-level model, in which text types are viewed as broad communicative functions on the general level of macro-genre, traditional concept of genre being the second level, and micro-genre is the level of discourse mode, where “internal”, or linguistic, aspects of texts acquire specific functions, depending on the kind of genre involved and the choice of discourse strategies. For example, description in narrative genres provides background information, it serves as exposition in scientific prose, or is part of a directive sequence in a guide book. It follows that the list of modes of discourse, which refer to passages of texts instead of entire texts, is open as they may perform entirely different functions in various generic contexts [1, p. 863-865; 4, p. 280].

In the recent research conducted by Carlota S. Smith (2003) it is said that discourse should be studied at the level of passage, which is a contiguous region of text, usually made up of one or more paragraphs with particular discourse functions, because of its strong pragmatic basis. In this respect, the discourse mode represents a level of local text structure. Five modes of discourse that commonly appear in written texts are considered in detail; these are narrative, description, report, informative, and commentary/argument. The modes are characterized by the type of situation introduced into the discourse (event, state, generalizing stative, abstract entity), and the principle of semantic progression. The interpretation of tense is demonstrated by three main patterns, namely continuity, anaphora, and deixis [7].

*Table 2. Modes of written discourse by Carlota S. Smith.*

	Type of situation	Text advancement & tense interpretation
Narrative	Events and states, temporally related to each other	Located in time; dynamic events advance in narrative time; tense conveys continuity and limited anaphora
Report	Events and states, temporally related to speech time	Dynamically located in time; time progresses forward and backward from the speech time; tense is deictic.
Description	States and ongoing events, temporally related to each other	Statically located in time; text progresses in spacial terms through the scene described; tense is anaphoric to an established time.
Informative	Mostly generalizing statives	Atemporal; text progresses by a principle of metaphorical motion; tense is deictic.
Commentary/ Argument	Abstract entities and generalizing statives	Atemporal; text progresses by a principle of metaphorical motion; tense is deictic.

**Conclusions.** The investigation of linguistic terms applied in foreign studies of text and discourse is extremely beneficial for promoting the research of modern languages. In particular, it is important to see the difference between genres, registers, text types and modes of discourse, so that to use them adequately and thus avoid ambiguity and overlapping. Numerous genres, having evolved historically, are realized in completed texts, specifying conditions for discourse structuring, and reflecting socio-cultural categories and processes. They are placed at a higher level than registers, which relate to the context of situation rather than to the context of culture, and are considered as functional language variations. Text types, viewed as the conventional patterns occurring in particular genres, emerge from statistical analysis, and are usually functionally labeled (e.g. the letter and its many subclasses). The text type is designed to characterize the main structure of a particular text, revealing its dominant properties. In a word, the definition of text types is based on text-internal data, whereas definitions of genres are also formed on the basis of systematic non-linguistic criteria, like external format and situations of use. The notion of mode of discourse, in its turn, accounts for the variety of discourse strategies that one can find in texts. In practice, modes of discourse represent certain linguistic characteristics of the text passage, depending upon pragmatic concerns.

Thus, modes of discourse are context-sensitive strategies of text organization, they tend to interact and contribute to proceeding coherently in discourse. The study of interrelation of modes of discourse, text types and genres within a certain discourse is a promising area for further research of language communication.

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#### **Т. Б. Маслова. Проблема категоризації композиційно-мовленнєвих (дискурсивних) форм.**

З огляду на тенденцію розглядати дискурсивні явища з точки зору прагматичних, а не лише лінгвістичних, особливостей, «композиційно-мовленнєва (дискурсивна) форма» є важливим поняттям у вивченні організації монологічного письмового дискурсу. Проте розуміння «дискурсивної форми» може бути ускладнене через існування декілька інших споріднених наукових термінів на позначення різних форм мовлення. Відповідно, дана стаття має на меті, перш за все, з'ясувати чим відрізняються терміни «дискурс» і «текст», «стиль» і «жанр», з метою встановити відмінності між підходами до вивчення текстів різних типів. У статті також досліджуються класифікації типів текстів, розроблені протягом багатьох років низкою зарубіжних авторів. Зокрема, зазначаються основні принципи класифікації, такі як кореляція з когнітивними стратегіями, мовленнєвими актами, лінгвістичними особливостями тощо. Нарешті, обґрунтовано, що поняття «дискурсивна форма», яке іноді використовується як синонім терміну «тип тексту», насправді стосується прагматичних властивостей тексту і визначається комунікативно-риторичними стратегіями, що обираються для досягнення певних комунікативних цілей. Отже, категоризація «дискурсивних форм» конкретних типів дискурсу є актуальним завданням подальших лінгвістичних розвідок.

**Ключові слова:** текст, дискурс, стиль, жанр, тип тексту, композиційно-мовленнєва форма

#### **Т. Б. Маслова. Проблема категоризации композиционно-речевых (дискурсивных) форм.**

Учитывая тенденцию рассматривать дискурсивные явления с точки зрения прагматических, а не только лингвистических, особенностей, композиционно-речевая (дискурсивная) форма является важным понятием в изучении организации монологической письменного дискурса. Однако понимание «дискурсивной формы» может быть затруднено из-за существования некоторых других похожих научных терминов для обозначения различных форм речи. Соответственно, цель данной статьи – выяснить чем отличаются термины «дискурс» и «текст», «стиль» и «жанр», и установить различия между подходами к изучению текстов разных типов. В статье также исследуются классификации типов текстов, разработанные в течение многих лет рядом зарубежных авторов. В частности, указываются основные принципы классификации, такие как корреляция с когнитивными стратегиями, речевыми актами, лингвистическими особенностями и т.д. В выводах обосновано, что понятие «дискурсивная форма», которое иногда используется как синоним термина «тип текста», на самом деле связано с прагматическими свойствами текста и определяется коммуникативно-риторическими стратегиями, которые используются для достижения определенных коммуникативных целей. Таким образом, категоризация «дискурсивных форм» конкретных типов дискурса является актуальным заданием будущих лингвистических исследований.

**Ключевые слова:** текст, дискурс, стиль, жанр, тип текста, композиционно-речевая форма