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## Multidimensionality approaches to the study of political discourse

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**Abstract.** The article is devoted to the study of political discourse as a complex phenomenon through the prism of scientific views of foreign and Kazakh researchers. The need to study this issue is conditioned by the continuous development and transformation of the political system. The article identifies and comprehends the distinctive features of discourse as a term that has gone far beyond the boundaries of linguistic science, and also identifies several directions revealing its conceptual intersections with other linguistic categories. Special attention in the article is paid to the analysis of political discourse in its broad and narrow sense and the identification of its main features and functions, including the possible transformation of discursive events in the process of communicative interaction. The aspects of different interpretation and comparison of the concept of political discourse by Russian, Kazakhstani and foreign scientists are also considered. Distinctive features of modern political discourse are identified and analyzed, existing and interchangeable synonyms of this concept are noted. The conducted research allows us to consider this type of discourse as a phenomenon that plays an important role in the formation of public opinion, determination of political priorities and retention of power, as an important area for understanding linguocultural peculiarities.

**Keywords:** discourse, political linguistics, mass media, manipulateness, evaluativeness.

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**Introduction.** According to modern requirements, the study of political institutions, political processes and events in the country makes a significant contribution to the development of domestic political science. However, the studies devoted to this issue are mostly analyzed from the linguistic side. Nevertheless, there are many problems that still require a comprehensive study of political genres from a special textual and discursive point of view. Changes in society that shape the political cognitive consciousness of society constitute the concept of political discourse in communication. Consequently, the need to study this issue is characterized by the continuous development of Kazakhstan's political system in the world arena and its importance in the period of democratic transformation.

The purpose of this study is to consider the concept of political discourse as a complex multidimensional phenomenon based on the research of Western, Russian and Kazakh scientists.

Studies of political discourse do not lose their relevance, which is confirmed by the interest of linguistic scholars. At the same time, there is a need for a comprehensive study of this phenomenon by scientists engaged in political linguistics, with the involvement of materials of foreign researchers.

In the second half of the twentieth century, there was a growth in the development of new areas of linguistics, which led to the need to create terms and concepts, many of which went beyond other sciences. An illustrative example of such a process is the discourse, which is an interdisciplinary term. It is studied by scientists from the fields of linguistics, psychology, philosophy, sociology, law, political science, etc. The term *discourse* became widespread in the early 1970s, and initially, its meaning in Soviet linguistics was identical with the term *functional style* (of speech or language).

N.D. Arutyunova considers and gives the following definition of discourse as “a coherent text in conjunction with extra-linguistic – pragmatic, socio-cultural, psychological, etc. factors; a text taken in the event aspect... Discourse is a speech ‘immersed in life’” [1, p. 136-137].

At this point, there is no clear and generally accepted definition of discourse, covering all cases of its use. Each science that studies this phenomenon offers its own definitions. Despite the fact, we believe it is possible to note the main distinguishing features of discourse, such as its all-encompassing character and its ability to incorporate new emerging facts of language. As a consequence, the concept of discourse is paradigmatic and, as the researcher V.Z. Demyankov notes, “the text remained a word of everyday language, and discourse became a special term of sciences about human spirituality” [2, p. 50]. Consequently, discourse is a dialectical form of social practice, which includes communication in all forms of symbolic representation (embodied, auditory, visual, gesture and verbal). In order for discourse to be coherent and meaningful, it must be set in a social frame and its inherent worldview ontology.

In the practice of discourse comprehension, there are several main directions that reveal conceptual intersections of discourse with the following categories: language, speech, text, style, and dialogue. A special place in linguistic theory is occupied by the understanding of discourse as a verbalization of social practice and as a ritualized (regulated and standardized) use of language, objectifying a special consciousness, ideology and mentality. This interpretation is based on M. Foucault’s concept, according to which discourse is “hiddenly located in what has already been said”. This leads to the fact that discourse is a set of “statements belonging to the same formation” and defined by extra-linguistic factors – communicative situation and cultural-ideological environment as “the place of origin of concepts” since all concepts that are presented by a person are the result of discourse as a practice of conceptual-ideological imposition or “violence” that a person “performs over things” [3, p. 58].

In one of her works, Kazakh scientist A.S. Adilova, discussing the problems of discourse and text, cites the following common features and differences:

- discourse is a set of language structures that are sorted and selected depending on the author’s intention and style peculiarities;
- discourse is a set of speech process;
- discourse lives in inseparable unity with real-time, that is, regardless of time, it can be actualized in the next discourse at any stage;
- discourse cannot be reproduced, while an artistic text is capable and prone to reproduction;
- discourse is a way of transmitting information, while the text is a keeper of information, a creator of new meaning with a multifaceted structure [4, p. 49].

Discursive events interact, and their meanings can be transformed in the process of interaction. Therefore, the meaning of a discursive event (e.g., the October Revolution or World War II) can be transformed over time or have different meanings in different countries, spatial contexts, etc. As a result, discourse “is socially constitutive as well as socially conditioned. <...> It is constitutive in the sense that it helps maintain and reproduce the social status quo as well as contribute to its transformation. Because discourse is so socially constitutive, it gives rise to important questions relating to power” [5, p. 258].

Russian researcher V.E. Chernyavskaya believes that the advantage of discourse from other units of analysis is that “it allows one to go from the text as a relatively complete, formally limited entity, built according to its intratextual laws, to other texts” [6, p. 91]. As a consequence, discourse itself understands a communicative event as an integrative set of individual utterances/texts, where its content is revealed not by one individual text, but in the complex interaction of many texts. In her opinion, “this forces a new look at the criteria of textuality and understanding of the text not as a (relatively) complete unit, but as an entity open to the metatextual space” [6, p. 92].

Following the points of view of the above-mentioned scholars on the definition of the concept of discourse, we can say that it is not only an object of analysis, but also constitutes a social worldview.

**Materials and methods of research.** The material for this article is scientific works devoted to the study of the concept of discourse and, in particular, political discourse. The methodological basis of the study is the principles of objectivity and a systematic approach to this issue, according to which it is possible to change political discourse as a multidimensional phenomenon. The work also used such scientific research methods as: comparative, descriptive and analytical. The use of the methods described above makes it possible to compare different approaches to the study of political discourse, discuss the relationship between various approaches of scientists and identify the most meaningful aspects of the study of discourse.

**Discussion.** When analyzing one of the types of discourse – political discourse, linguistic scholars consider it necessary to focus not only on linguistic means, as in this case the idea and true intention of political discourse will be excluded, but also on extra-linguistic factors.

Understanding and interpreting political discourse implies that its content will be analyzed in terms of background information, speaker's and audience's expectations, hidden motives, plots, logic, etc. In scientific works, it is often noted that the problem of understanding political discourse is one of its information values in a certain context. Political discourse is closely related to the ideology, worldview, philosophy of life, and feelings of the recipients, so political discourse should be analyzed in accordance with the above-mentioned provisions.

It is well known, that language and politics is an emotionally and ideologically laden field [7]. Therefore, for a scholar studying political texts, it is necessary to detach oneself from personal likes and dislikes, ideological assumptions, etc. in studying the use of language in a political context.

Political discourse is a complex speech formation that does not yet have full scientific reflection in linguistic literature. This fact is evidence of unstable terminological practice, but also the multifaceted nature of the study of this phenomenon.

Political discourse is the central object of research on the new trend of political linguistics. There are dozens of its definitions, but the authors of these definitions, along with foreign (T.A. van Dyck, R. Vodak, M. Foucault, E. Benveniste and etc.), Russian and Kazakh (A.N. Baranov, V.Z. Demyankov, E.G. Kazakevich, A.P. Chudinov, N.D. Arutyunova, E.I. Sheigal, B.A. Akhatova, M. K. Bisimalieva, K.K. Kenzhekanova, Zh. K. Bisimalieva, J.K. Ibrayeva, A.N. Momynova, and many others) scientists, when studying political discourse, focus on the forms of public communication of professional politicians, which have the purpose of gaining and retaining power. Thus, T.A. van Dijk in his book "The Power of Discourse" asks whether the media can be referred to the representatives of power and whether the results of the activities of journalists, reporters and other representatives of this media group can be referred to political discourse. In the author's opinion, the media only contribute to the dissemination of political discourse, and facilitate access to it for the citizens of the world, but they themselves cannot be considered subjects of this discourse [8].

Thus, A.N. Baranov defines political discourse as "a set of all speech acts used in political discussions, as well as the rules of public policy, dedicated by tradition and tested by experience..." [9, p. 6]. This concept of discourse is narrowly focused in meaning and with this approach to discourse, it is necessary to analyze institutional forms of communication.

Unlike the above-mentioned linguists who support a narrow approach to understanding political discourse, the following scientists E.I. Sheigal, A.G. Altunyan, A.P. Chudinov, and others are supporters of a broad understanding of political discourse, including all forms of linguistic activity in which something connects it with the world of politics (whether it is the subject, addressee or the content of the discourse sample) [10]. For instance, according to A.P. Chudinov, political discourse is a form of realization of political communication [11].

In this regard, J.K. Ibrayeva notes that "the basis of the study of political communication in terms of discursive orientation is the consideration of political texts in discourse, i.e., special attention is paid to the condition of origin and the function of realization of the relevant texts, as well as its relationship with other texts, the features of national culture, language situation in the country and the world" [12, p. 32]. Consequently, when analyzing this type of discourse realized

in political communication, along with various extra-linguistic factors, language features and national values should be constantly taken into account. In this regard, Y.D. Kulichenko believes that political discourse as a “coherent text” is relevant not only to “political processes taking place in society, to the events and reality that surround us” [13, p. 12].

Some modern scientists consider political discourse as a verbalized set of political actions (relationships of representatives of a certain social group) and note that it acts as “political activity created by political means” [14, p. 28].

Political discourse is characterized by a certain intention, status-role specificity of communicators, and changeability. The content of political discourse should consist of components existing in the minds of the speaker and the listener (writer and reader), influencing the perception of the word. These components include the content of the text, Other texts considered by the author and addressee, the author’s political views and tasks when composing the text, the author’s thoughts about the addressee, and the political situation when composing this text [14, p. 41].

At the same time, it is necessary to emphasize the main features of political discourse:

– **the discourse is inherent in its evaluative and aggressive properties.** The aggressiveness of political discourse is manifested in debates, that is, it is characterized by the ability to theatrically express political action, reflected in the use of words. The transmission of political discourse in debates is a peculiar form of theatricalized aggression [15]. Its purpose is to form a negative opinion about political opponents, to impose completely different evaluative values in the reader’s mind, to agitate in support of one’s side.

The evaluative property of political discourse can be expressed in the form of action of direct or implicit statement in the form of a question, an appeal to a certain decision, as well as an appeal for help.

Researcher A.B. Momynova notes that “evaluativeness is not only a social category, but also a number of mental phenomena that arise together with human consciousness. According to the scientist, evaluativeness is a process constantly running in human consciousness without stopping, and it is an intellectual-psychic act realized by human thinking” [16, p. 63]. Consequently, evaluation is in close connection with human consciousness, its thinking and system thinking.

The scientist also notes that evaluativeness as a category can fulfill three different functions:

a) cognitive function, realized through cognition of the evaluated subject, process and phenomenon;

b) the ability to evaluate from its side (realized due to the presence of the evaluator’s practical orientation in evaluating the subject, phenomenon, and person and his actions);

c) emotional-qualifying function, which is associated with pragmatic activity [16, p. 66-67].

One of the problems in the use of political terminology is the difficulty of selecting linguistic means that will position the politician without carrying any evaluative connotations.

– **The effectiveness of political discourse is reflected in its purpose.** The purpose of political discourse is not description, but persuasion, which generates the addressee’s intentions, prompts action, and gives grounds for belief. Turning the addressee’s statements to effective effect, it is necessary to be able to compose the statement correctly, placing it in the appropriate place in the discourse. At the same time, it should be noted that effective propaganda is carried out by the speaker orator only when there is a feeling of acceptance of one’s thought with intention, interest, satisfaction, and confidence on the part of the addressee.

– **The ability to defend one’s point of view in political discourse, in which situation argumentation plays a key role.** Political discourse must be shaped according to certain political requirements in order to be effective. This discourse is aimed at eliminating the “military power” of the opponent, as on the battlefield, i.e. discrediting weapons (arguments and thoughts) and personnel (opponent’s personality) [2, p. 35-43].

In the modern world, political discourse is a tool in the struggle for power. In political communication it is possible to come to a compromise without any physical force, resorting to the logic of agitation. However, in political discourse, there is also an opposing point of view



(oppositional), the existence of opponents in the political arena itself reflects the contradiction in society and is based on it.

The presence of addressee (electorate) and its attitude to public life determines the specificity of political communication. According to scientist A.V. Zakharov, "people independently choose the form and level of participation in public life. They will easily alternate between watching parliamentary debates, television series, then contests and quizzes. So people don't take politics and its characters too seriously. For them, politics is just one form of social game, which is in the succession of entertainment, such as soccer or lottery, available to the masses" [17, p. 32].

Therefore, the mass media as a medium of political communication is a transmitting messenger to the population, which is an observer of important political events.

The language of politics is an integral part of political discourse. It is characterized by ambiguity, which can be expressed in the use of words with abstract meanings and multiple meanings. This manifests itself in the fact that politicians often have to speak veiledly about unpleasant things that cast a shadow on them. This can also include the anonymity of some statements in order to hide the person responsible for a certain decision, as well as the use of vagueness by speakers in order not to show their ignorance of certain issues. Such vagueness in speech, in addition, helps to avoid possible conflicts. In such a situation, if the speaker does not specify his message, but speaks evasively, he will not have to answer for his words, or it will be much easier to repel attacks of rivals and ill-wishers. Any political speech of statesmen is adapted to external conditions.

In full agreement with the researchers' view of political discourse, the interpretation of political discourse should not be limited to linguistic features only, otherwise, the meaning and sense of political discourse will not be revealed, which is what the scholars should pay attention to. Therefore, it should always be kept in mind that "understanding political discourse means knowing the same background, expectations of the author and the audience, indirect motivation, plot schemes and logical turns that took place in a certain period" [2, p. 43].

It should be noted that in most works of scientists the concepts of *political language*, *political communication* and *political discourse* act as synonyms in the text and can be replaced by each other. In her works, the researcher E.I. Sheigal rightly notes that the above-mentioned concepts can indeed be used as non-strict synonyms, while the term political language is "a structured set of signs that form the semiotic space of political discourse" [18, p. 22].

**Conclusion.** Thus, political discourse is a special, diverse phenomenon that we encounter every day, but the main problem is that there is a need for scientific substantiation of this phenomenon, since there is still no consistency in the understanding of political discourse by various sciences.

It is also necessary to develop qualitative methods for studying political discourse. This phenomenon should be studied taking into account the variety of methodological tools of interdisciplinary fields.

We can conclude that political discourse as a complex and multidimensional phenomenon plays an important role in shaping public opinion, determining political priorities and legitimizing power. The study of this type of discourse allows us to understand more deeply the mechanisms of formation of political beliefs and manipulation. Modern scientists-linguists studying political discourse pay attention to the special role in analyzing its trends and consequences. In this regard, scientific studies of political discourse are becoming more and more relevant and significant for transparency, responsibility and involvement in modern political processes.

As it can be seen from the results, the study of this discourse is an important area for understanding political dynamics and linguocultural features. It helps to shape more informed and conscious public decisions and contributes to the development of democracy and open society. A detailed comprehensive approach and analysis of political discourse space can cope with the challenges of artificial manipulation and will contribute to the formation of a healthy and constructive political dialog.

Generalizing and synthesizing all approaches to the definition of the concept of political discourse, it is necessary to note their merits, and non-contradiction with each other, which allow us to consider this discourse as a multidimensional holistic phenomenon in modern linguistic science.

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### **Тіл біліміндегі саяси дискурс ұғымының көпқырлылығы**

**Аңдатпа.** Мақала саяси дискурсты күрделі құбылыс ретінде шетелдік және қазақстандық зерттеушілердің ғылыми көзқарастары призмасы арқылы зерттеуге арналған. Бұл мәселені зерттеу қажеттілігі саяси жүйенің үздіксіз дамуы мен өзгеруіне байланысты. Мақалада дискурстың лингвистикалық ғылымның шегінен әлдеқашан асып кеткен термин ретіндегі айрықша белгілері айқындалып, ұғынылады, сонымен қатар оның басқа тілдік категориялармен концептуалды қиылысуын ашатын бірнеше салалар айқындалады. Мақалада саяси дискурсты оның кең және тар мағынасында талдауға және негізгі белгілері мен функцияларын анықтауға, оның ішінде коммуникативті өзара әрекеттесу процесінде дискурсивті оқиғалардың ықтимал түрленуіне ерекше назар аударылады. Сондай-ақ саяси дискурс ұғымын ресейлік, қазақстандық және шетелдік ғалымдардың әртүрлі түсіндіру және салыстыру аспектілері қарастырылған. Қазіргі саяси дискурстың айрықша белгілері анықталып, талданады, бұл ұғымның бар және бір-бірін алмастыратын синонимдері атап өтілді. Жүргізілген зерттеулер дискурстың бұл түрін қоғамдық пікірді қалыптастыруда, саяси басымдықтарды анықтауда және билікті сақтауда маңызды рөл атқаратын құбылыс, тілдік және мәдени сипаттарды түсінудің маңызды саласы ретінде қарастыруға мүмкіндік береді.

**Түйін сөздер:** дискурс, саяси лингвистика, бұқаралық ақпарат құралдары, манипуляция, бағалау.

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### **Многоаспектность понятия *политический дискурс* в лингвистике**

**Аннотация.** Статья посвящена изучению политического дискурса как комплексного феномена через призму научных взглядов зарубежных и казахстанских исследователей. Необходимость исследования данного вопроса обусловлена непрерывным развитием и преобразованием политической системы, и большое количество научных трудов, посвященных этой теме, подтверждает ее актуальность. В статье выявлены и осмыслены отличительные признаки дискурса как термина, вышедшего далеко за пределы лингвистической науки, а также определено несколько направлений, обнаруживающих концептуальные пересечения его с другими языковыми категориями. Особое внимание в статье уделено анализу политического дискурса в широком и узком его понимании и выявлению основных особенностей и функций, включая возможную трансформацию дискурсивных событий в процессе коммуникативного взаимодействия. Также рассмотрены аспекты разной интерпретации и сопоставления понятия *политический дискурс* российскими, казахстанскими и зарубежными учеными. Выявлены и проанализированы отличительные черты современного политического дискурса, отмечены существующие и взаимозаменяемые синонимы данного понятия. Проведенное исследование позволяет рассматривать данный тип дискурса как явление, играющее важную роль в формировании общественного мнения, определении политических приоритетов и удержания власти, как важную область для понимания лингвокультурных особенностей.

**Ключевые слова:** дискурс, политическая лингвистика, средства массовой информации, манипулятивность, оценочность.

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