

# The Problem of Creating Grammatical Teaching of Text

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**Abstract**—Considered is the dictemic theory within the framework of the general teaching of grammar. The paper shows that the discovery of the dicteme as an elementary unit of text is connected with the analysis of the segmental hierarchy of language. The investigation has led to identifying an additional level of language containing immediate means of text formation. This fact has allowed the researcher to expand the classical two-part grammar (morphology – the word, syntax – the sentence) turning it into a three-part grammar; the third part being devoted to the description of text generated by functioning dictemes. The terminological name chosen for this part of grammar is "discoursology".

**Keywords**—*dicteme; text; discourse; discoursology; grammar of text; level; hierarchy; notion triad; paradigmatics; syntagmatics*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The notion of text occupies one of the uppermost positions on the assessment scale of the key linguistic categories. This dignified position is given to the notion under discussion for the simple reason that the nomination of "text" presents to us the immediate product of a purposeful action of language. This product, i.e. speech product, is made by a sequence of utterances united by the rendered topic.

## II. THE SOURCE OF THE TEACHING OF TEXT

The source of the teaching of text returns our historical and cultural memory to the time two and a half millennia ago, to the very start of the antique rhetoric.

This art in written ancient texts was reflected in accumulating the knowledge of the oratorical speech and, further on, in formulating the rules and suggestions referring to the preparation and announcement of the speaker's address to the audience, – such an address that should most effectively impress the listeners in the corresponding conditions of communication.

## III. SPEECH, TEXT, DISCOURSE AS CLOSELY CONNECTED NOTIONS

Let us compare speech, text, and discourse as different though closely related notions, the comparison being affected on the principle of the logical triad (two ideas in the numerator, one idea in the denominator). Speech is a

sequence of thoughts expressed by language. Text, as was stated above, is topically identified speech. Discourse is a text in the process of generation (Lat. *in statu nascendi*). Text and Discourse are put in the numerator. Speech is put in the denominator (general - partial /- supergeneral). This kind of logical triad can be called "Ladder". The logical ladder corresponds to the classification steps: category - kind - variety. The ladder can be directed from top to bottom or, vice versa, from bottom to top depending on the context demands.

## IV. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TWO-PART GRAMMAR

Rhetorical text, together with other texts, according to Plato (the IV c. B.C.) referred to the category of "big speeches" that were formed from "small speeches" [1]. When the II c. A.D. came, syntax was developed, and the above mentioned small speeches turned into its categorical units that, in the course of time, received the name of "sentences". Thereby these units formed the subject of describing the upper part of grammar called "syntax". As to the lower part of grammar developed in the II c. B.C., it became the grammar of the word that, in the course of time, received the name of "morphology". Thus grammar as the immediate speech-forming system of language was divided into two parts (morphology and syntax), and in this two-part presentation, gradually moving upwards through centuries and undoubtedly perfecting its structure, has come to modern times.

### A. *The Final Step in the Development of the Two-part Classical Grammar*

We should ascribe the final step in the development of the principles of the two-part grammar in modern linguistics to the grammatical theory by the outstanding Russian linguist and philosopher Alexander Smirnitsky [10], [11]. The concluding generalization is presented with special emphasis in the oppositional theory of grammatical categories developed by the scholar. This scholar with the same emphasis approved and developed the idea, first formulated by F. de Saussure, that syntax forms a sphere of purely syntagmatic relations, and its main unit, i.e. the sentence, is the uppermost and final unit that is structured grammatically. It is the expulsion of grammar from any

super-sentential I relations that allowed Alexander Smirnitsy to give the sentence the name "speech composition".

Thus, the works by Alexander Smirnitsky referred to morphology and syntax on the material of English presented the conclusion of the classical grammatical teaching that had developed since the times of antiquity.

#### *B. Introduction of Paradigmatics into Syntax*

But in the middle of the XX c. A.D. the classical grammatical teaching was quite unexpectedly frustrated by the generative grammar [13]. And this essentially algebraic grammatical theory became the source of paradigmatic syntax. And paragrammatic syntax clearly demonstrated the truth that the sentence, the same as the word, distinguishes both aspects of the structure of language – syntagmatic and paradigmatic. Paradigmatics of the sentence was presented in the transformational embodiment, and the whole language normally presented itself as a synchronic paradigmatic system at any moment of its existence. The fundamental outcome of the action of this system is text as a topically identified speech.

#### *C. The Early Attempts to Develop the Theory of Text*

Having crossed the end of traditionally interpreting syntax as a purely syntagmatic domain of grammatical relations, linguists and philosophers of the 60s – 70s of the XX c. A.D. plunged intently into analyzing the structure of text. It became quite normal to present any description of text under the name "The Grammar of Text" [7; 8]. But did it become "grammar" in the sense of the two classical parts of grammar, i.e. the grammar of the word - morphology and the grammar of the sentence - syntax? No, it did not. Why? Because it was operating by the same unit as the syntax of the sentence. In other words, it broadened in fact the traditional syntax as the functional outlet of morphology, or the categorical forms of the word.

#### *D. The Problem of Search for the Proper Unit of Text*

In consequence, the problem is aroused to seek such an element of text (as topically identified speech) that would make the immediate base of its formation, and that would be a functional stone in its foundation. This kind of fundamental stone should be turning the description of text into the next part of grammar, i.e. the third part, normally associated with the first two parts, i.e. with its morphology (word) and syntax (sentence). In order to find, or rather to discover, this basic unit of text we should refer to the theory of segmental (formed by phonemic segments) levels of language.

#### *E. The Theory of Segmental Levels Developed by Descriptive Linguistics*

The notion of level of language was advanced by Descriptive Linguistics in the course of analyzing Indian languages whose structure was totally unknown to the scholars-describers. The scholars decided to perform their analysis by means of informant tests. In this way phonemes and morphemes were distinguished, and the lists of these units were presented in the form of the hierarchy falling into

two levels, respectively the higher and the lower. The higher level, morphemic, was formed by the units of the lower level, phonemic. Hence, the "reversing rule" of generating the said hierarchy should be formulated this way: one or several units of the lower level form one unit of the higher level. Or, moving from top to bottom, one unit of the higher level can be analyzed into one or several units of the lower level. Further on a third level was added to the demonstrated two receiving the name "the level of constructions". However this, third level remained identified not rigorously enough and, which is far more important, it falls out of the reversing rule.

#### *F. The Further Development of the Theory of the Levels of Language*

The duly formulated theory of the segmental levels of language was actively developed which resulted in the identification of the five generally recognized levels [13]: phonemic level, morphemic level, lexemic level, phrasemic level, sentential level. These levels (rather, the notions of these levels) had been derived from the idea of the unit of language that had been convincingly explained, without any special reference to the idea of level as such, in the corresponding theory by Alexander Smirnitsky. The interpretation comment on the cited hierarchy is as follows.

The first three levels of the hierarchy correspond strictly to the rule that can be made into a reversing law of the structure of language segmental levels: one or several units of each level (or: of any lower level) form one unit of the immediate higher level. Consequently, one or several phonemes build up one morpheme; one or several morphemes build up one word (lexeme).

But this law is broken by the fourth identified level, namely by the phrasemic level (the level of word-groups). Indeed, the phraseme is not one word, but a combination of words. It means that the level of phrasemes has been identified incorrectly. Hence, our decision: the phrasemic level should be lowered into the sublevel of the lexemic level which finds the functional approval, and another level-forming unit should be sought instead. Considering that beginning with this level the units of language present not concrete, material items, but rather model types, we conclude that the fourth level is to be understood as formed by the syntactic parts of the sentence - "denotemes". Their function is nominative, but, unlike the function of lexemes, this nomination is contextually, or situationally, determined. It is these units that are quite adequately answering the law "one or several units of any lower level..."

#### *G. The Discovery of the Dicteme as the Genuine Unit of Text*

Rising farther up the scheme of the hierarchy we are facing the last, fifth segmental level of language, the level of sentence. And we ask ourselves: what is to be done with the integral text? Shall we deploy it from the sentence or not? And we find ourselves before the notion of supersentential unity, advanced by L.A. Bulakhovsky (his original term "superphrasal unity") [6] and N.S. Pospelov (his original

term "complex syntactic whole") [9] in the Russian (Soviet) linguistics. This language object was identified as an element of text. But no! It cannot be taken in the said capacity. For, like the rejected and replaced unit of the fourth level, it does not answer the reversing law "one or several units of any lower level..." Moreover, being determined as formed by minimum two sentences, it is identified without a reference to any idea of levels... And at this crossroads a unit is born that is called in English "utterance" and to which the emic status is conferred by the nomination "DICTEME" (of Latin *dico-dixi-dictum-dicere*)... Eureka! The notion for the grammar of text is found. The formation of the hierarchy of levels has been concluded [4]. And text itself receives a powerful means for further research and interpretation of its position in the developing theory of grammar.

#### *H. The Theory of the Segmental Hierarchy of Language Completed*

We can now show the whole corrected and supplemented hierarchy of segmental levels of language crowned by the dicteme.

The scheme of the hierarchy is as follows. The first level is phonemic. The function: morpheme-forming. The second level is morphemic. The function: signifying. The third level is lexemic. The function: nominative. The fourth level is denotemic. The function: context-nominative. The fifth level is proposemic (sentential). The function: situation-nominative and predicative. The sixth level is dictemic. The function: topic-setting and style-forming [3]. The hierarchy of segmental levels has become six-componential. The seventh level can be added in the capacity of developed text. But its place will be transgressing the borders of the hierarchy sphere since the level in question disengages itself from the reversing law "one or several units of any lower level..." having been turned into an actual text-discourse realizing people's speech communication. The type of developed text can by terminological analogy be called "the discoursemic level", keeping in mind that its speech-building apparatus, when discovered, was called in English "utterance" (the translation equivalent of the Russian), and in terminological Latin "dicteme".

#### V. CONCLUSION

As is evident, it is the dicteme forming the sixth segmental level that becomes the foundation stone which turns the grammar of text into the third part of grammar of language. Grammar receives a new part, and in the natural sequence of the main divisions of the discipline we distinguish the first part — the grammar of the word or morphology; the second part - the grammar of the sentence or syntax; the third part — the grammar of the dicteme or discoursology. I prefer to speak about discoursology but not about textology in order to accentuate the dynamics of speech generation in the course both of forming ideas and exchanging ideas in the life and activity of the human being.

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