



# ABOUT GENRE TYPOLOGY: FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

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## ABSTRACT

*The article highlights the issues of modern genre theory: analyzes various approaches to the definition of the concept of "genre", examines the relationship between concepts "genre" - "text" - "discourse", proposes a multidimensional classification of genres, outlines the ways of applying the theory of genre.*

**KEYWORDS:** *genre, linguistic factor, extralinguistic factor, literary text, situational context, sociolinguistic aspect.*

## DISCUSSION

In modern linguistics, there is no unity of views on the nature and character of the concept of "genre". One of the main reasons for such disagreements is the different approach of researchers to the question of how linguistic and extralinguistic factors correlate in the structure of a genre, how extralinguistic factors are refracted in a language, what is the nature of this process.

In different points of view on the genre, two general approaches can be provisionally distinguished: classical (traditional, philological) and modern (non-traditional, sociolinguistic) [10, 26-29]. Each of these approaches offers its own model of the genre, within which there is a certain variability.

In the classical sense, the genre is considered as a type of literary text, defined by regularly recurring formal and semantic characteristics, having a rigid, unchangeable structure, classified in clear, mutually exclusive categories [2].

In contrast to the classical approach, the modern approach to the analysis of the genre is not limited to literary texts and extends this concept to nonliterary (scientific, educational, everyday, etc.) works. Moreover, recognizing the importance of studying regularly repeating similar formal and semantic characteristics of texts belonging to the same genre, representatives of the modern sociolinguistic approach regard these characteristics as a superficial structure, as a means of expressing another, deep similarity, similarity in social actions undertaken [5, 67-78]. Genres are treated not just as types of texts, but as typical rhetorical ways of expressing repetitive social situations.

Among the followers of the sociolinguistic

approach, there is a certain variability in points of view on the ratio of linguistic and extralinguistic factors in the formation of the category of the genre.

The analysis of various interpretations of the genre within the framework of this approach made it possible to identify at least three areas of research represented by a number of linguistic traditions: functional (stylistic), sociocognitive (rhetorical) and linguodidactic (ESP, Australian system-functional linguistics).

The functional direction is presented in the works of Russian linguists who study the genres of the functional style of scientific prose. In the interpretation of representatives of this direction, a genre is a kind of functional style. Genre as a kind of functional style is determined by three factors: 1) compositional structure; 2) the nature of the information it contains; 3) the emotional coloring of this information [9].

Each genre of the functional style of scientific prose has its own model of construction or compositional structure as a set of methods for organizing scientific information, due to the specifics of the purpose of various genres in the process of communication.

The functional interpretation of the genre, although we have referred to the modern (sociolinguistic) approach, rather occupies an intermediate position between the classical (philological) and modern (sociolinguistic) interpretations. It differs from the first in that it explores non-fiction texts, and from the second in that it only postulates the specifics of the purpose of various genres in the process of communication, but does not investigate its character.

In the works of representatives of the sociocognitive direction, the main attention is



focused on the situational context in which genres exist, and not on their form and content. Particular importance is attached to social goals or actions that genres perform in given situations.

Some authors of this direction completely refuse the genre in linguistic characteristics, making a strict division between the genre and the type of text. Genre, in their opinion, characterizes the text only on the basis of external criteria, namely the purpose of communication, while the type of text unites texts that are similar in linguistic form regardless of the purpose of communication, that is, genre [1, 68].

Thus, supporters of the sociocognitive direction give priority to the study of extralinguistic, extratextual factors in the structure of the genre, the social situational context in which genres exist, while linguistic factors, as a rule, remain aloof from the analysis.

In the works of researchers of the third, linguo-didactic direction, a different approach to understanding the genre and its study is presented. The genre is seen as a tool for the analysis and teaching of oral and written varieties of the language for educational and professional purposes.

Research in this direction is represented by two scientific traditions: the ESP (English for Specific Purposes) school and the Australian system-functional linguistics, which, despite the common ground, have certain differences. First of all, it is the fact that researchers of the ESP genre, as a rule, are used in teaching English for foreigners for special purposes, while in the Australian tradition - for teaching native speakers at school on texts of a non-professional orientation.

According to ESP scientists, a genre is an oral or written type of text, determined by its formal properties, as well as communicative goals in a social context [4, 693-722].

Genres are defined as classes of communicative events, the participants of which have a common set of communicative goals, while these classes of communicative events are characterized by a common structure, style, content and intended audience.

As follows from the above definitions, supporters of the linguodidactic approach are trying to combine socio-cultural, linguistic and cognitive aspects in the concept of "genre".

However, in their studies scientists of this tradition focus on the formal characteristics of the genre to the detriment of the special functions of texts and the social context. In this case, we can talk about a certain similarity between ESP research and the functional direction.

The Australian interpretation of the genre was developed within the framework of a fundamental theory of language known as system-functional linguistics.

System-functional linguistics is concerned with the study of the relationship between language

and its functions in a social context. A genre in systemic-functional linguistics is defined as a purposeful social process, a structural form used by a given culture in certain contexts to achieve various goals?

As noted above, unlike ESP studies, Australian scientists work focuses mainly on primary and secondary school genres, that is, non-professional texts. At the same time, Australian researchers, like the researchers of the genre in ESP, pay great attention to the linguistic characteristics of genres.

The analysis of various scientific traditions, directions and approaches to the study of the genre allows us to conclude that the genre is an interdisciplinary category studied by philology, sociology, cognitology, psychology, linguistics and other sciences.

The modern linguistic understanding of the genre is associated with sociolinguistic studies, therefore the genre is considered by us as an object of sociolinguistic analysis. The genre is an independent level of analysis, not given to us in direct observation, but manifested in the typical, regularly recurring properties of texts and social contexts. The units of this level in our understanding are the aggregates of texts in social contexts.

A genre is a connotative semiotic system that has its own tone of content and expression. The content plan, or the deep structure of the genre, is represented by extralinguistic factors, such as similar social actions in regularly repeated social contexts, including communicative situations, participants and their roles, goals and types of activities, thematic content. The plane of expression, or surface structure, is made up of similar linguistic means: texts and their constituent units, lexical, grammatical, stylistic, compositional, etc. With the help of linguistic means, the genre structures social actions in time and space.

At the level of linguistic means, a genre is an aggregate of types of texts that have similar, regularly recurring formal and semantic characteristics. At the level of extralinguistic factors, genre is a set of types of social actions in similar, regularly repeated social contexts [6, 1-40; 9; 11].

In general, a genre can be characterized as a collection of texts that have similar, regularly recurring formal and semantic characteristics and reflect similar social actions in regularly recurring social contexts. Such a definition, in our opinion, to a certain extent balances the linguistic and extralinguistic factors in the structure of the genre and allows one to study the superficial and deep structure of the genre in their inextricable connection, explaining one through the other.

Understanding the genre as a type of texts in similar social contexts allows us to define it through the category of discourse [3; 7; 8].



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