



THE STUDY OF OFFICIAL DISCOURSE IN LINGUISTICS

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Abstract: This article examines the linguistic features of official discourse. It analyzes how language is used in official documents, laws, and governmental texts. The study explores the theoretical basis, structure, and functions of official discourse. The results show that official language is characterized by precise vocabulary, complex sentence structures, and directive functions. The study also notes the absence of emotional language in official texts. It emphasizes that official language helps maintain institutional power and legality. The research contributes to modern discourse studies. The article helps explain official discourse as a separate linguistic phenomenon.

Key words: discourse studies, official discourse, institutional communication, critical discourse analysis, linguistics, power

ИЗУЧЕНИЕ ОФИЦИАЛЬНОГО ДИСКУРСА В ЛИНГВИСТИКЕ

Аннотация: В статье изучаются лингвистические особенности официального дискурса. Анализируется использование языка в официальных документах, законах и государственных текстах. Рассматриваются теоретические основы, структура и функции официального дискурса. Результаты показывают, что официальный язык отличается точной лексикой, сложными синтаксическими конструкциями и директивным характером. Также отмечается отсутствие эмоциональной лексики в официальных текстах. Подчеркивается, что официальный язык помогает укреплять власть и законность. Исследование вносит вклад в развитие теории дискурса. Работа помогает лучше понять официальный дискурс как отдельное языковое явление.

Ключевые слова: исследования дискурса, официальный дискурс, институциональная коммуникация, критический дискурс-анализ, лингвистика, власть.

RASMIY DISKURSNI LINGVISTIK TADQIQI



Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada rasmiy diskursning lingvistik xususiyatlari o'rganiladi. Tadqiqot rasmiy hujjatlar, qonunlar va davlat matnlarida til qanday ishlatilishini tahlil qiladi. Maqolada rasmiy diskursning nazariy asoslari, tuzilishi va vazifalari ko'rib chiqiladi. Natijalar rasmiy til aniq so'zlar, murakkab gaplar va buyruq beruvchi uslub bilan ajralib turishini ko'rsatadi. Shuningdek, rasmiy matnlarda hissiy so'zlar kam ishlatilishi aniqlangan. Tadqiqot rasmiy til hokimiyat va qonuniylikni mustahkamlashga xizmat qilishini ta'kidlaydi. Maqola diskurs tadqiqotlariga ilmiy hissa qo'shadi. Ushbu ish rasmiy diskursni alohida lingvistik hodisa sifatida tushunishga yordam beradi.

Kalit so'zlar: diskurs tadqiqotlari, rasmiy diskurs, institutlararo muloqot, tanqidiy diskurs tahlili, lingvistika, hokimiyat.

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, linguistics has shifted its focus from the study of isolated grammatical structures to the analysis of language in context. This shift has led to the emergence of discourse analysis as a major interdisciplinary field that examines how language functions within social, cultural, and institutional frameworks. Discourse is understood not merely as spoken or written text, but as a form of social action shaped by context, ideology, and power relations.

In modern linguistics, the focus has shifted from isolated grammatical structures to discourse analysis—the study of language within social and institutional frameworks. Official discourse is a vital domain of this field, acting as a regulatory tool in legal and governmental systems. Unlike informal speech, it relies on rigid conventions and high formality to establish norms and legitimize institutional decisions. This study aims to identify the defining linguistic features of official discourse and explore its pragmatic and ideological roles in social order.

Official discourse constitutes a particularly important domain of discourse studies due to its institutional authority and regulatory function. It is widely used in legal systems, governmental administration, and public institutions to establish norms, regulate behavior, and legitimize decisions. Unlike informal or everyday discourse, official discourse is characterized by rigid conventions, standardized forms, and a high degree of formality.

The relevance of studying official discourse lies in its societal impact. Through official texts, institutions exercise control, define rights and obligations, and shape public consciousness. Therefore, linguistic analysis of official discourse provides valuable insights into how language contributes to social order and institutional power.

The primary objective of this article is to examine official discourse as a distinct type of discourse in linguistics. The study aims to identify its defining linguistic features, explore its pragmatic and ideological functions, and demonstrate its role in institutional communication.

Literature Review. The concept of discourse has become one of the most extensively studied phenomena in modern linguistics, particularly since the late twentieth century. Initially, linguistic research focused on structural aspects of language, such as phonology, morphology, and syntax. However, this formalist approach was gradually challenged by



scholars who emphasized the importance of context, function, and social meaning. As a result, discourse analysis emerged as a key field concerned with language use in real communicative situations.

One of the earliest and most influential theoretical contributions to discourse studies was made by Michel Foucault. Foucault conceptualized discourse not merely as language in use, but as a system of statements that systematically form the objects of which they speak. He argued that discourse is deeply intertwined with power and knowledge, suggesting that institutional discourses define what is considered legitimate knowledge within a society. From this perspective, official discourse functions as a regulatory mechanism that shapes social reality by legitimizing norms, laws, and institutional practices. Foucault's ideas are particularly relevant for the study of official discourse, as they highlight how language operates as an instrument of control and governance.

The theoretical foundation of discourse studies was shaped by Michel Foucault, who viewed discourse as a system of power and knowledge. Building on this, Norman Fairclough developed Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), highlighting how official texts "naturalize" power through impersonal language (passive voice and nominalization).

Teun van Dijk introduced a socio-cognitive perspective, showing how institutions control public perception by framing issues through official channels. Furthermore, M.A.K. Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) provides a lens to view official language through three metafunctions: ideational (defining actions), interpersonal (establishing authority), and textual (ensuring coherence). Existing research emphasizes that while digitalization has simplified some forms, the core attributes—authority and precision—remain unchanged.

Research methodology.

Research paradigm and approach

The present study is grounded in the qualitative research paradigm, which is particularly suitable for investigating language as a social and institutional phenomenon. Qualitative research emphasizes interpretation, contextualization, and meaning-making, allowing researchers to explore how linguistic forms function within specific communicative and social environments. Since official discourse is shaped by institutional norms, power relations, and ideological frameworks, a qualitative approach provides the most appropriate methodological foundation.

The study adopts a discourse-analytical approach, combining traditional discourse analysis with Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). This integrated approach enables the examination of both the formal linguistic characteristics of official discourse and the underlying social and ideological meanings encoded in institutional texts.

Research design

The research design is descriptive, interpretive, and analytical. It seeks to identify recurring linguistic patterns in official discourse and interpret their communicative and institutional functions. Rather than testing hypotheses, the study aims to provide a systematic description and explanation of how official discourse operates at different linguistic levels.

The research design is structured around three main analytical dimensions:



1. Linguistic structure (lexical and syntactic features),
2. Pragmatic function (communicative intentions and speech acts),
3. Ideological function (power, authority, and legitimacy).

This multi-dimensional design ensures a comprehensive analysis of official discourse as both a linguistic and social construct.

Data sources and corpus description

The data for this study consist of written official texts produced by institutional authorities.

The corpus includes:

- national laws and legal codes,
- governmental decrees and regulations,
- official administrative instructions and announcements.

These text types were selected because they represent core genres of official discourse and exhibit a high degree of standardization and institutional authority.

The corpus was compiled based on the following selection criteria:

“Institutional authorship”: texts produced by legally recognized authorities;

“Functional relevance”: texts with regulatory, directive, or declarative functions;

“Linguistic stability”: texts that follow conventionalized official language norms.

The use of authentic texts ensures the ecological validity of the analysis and allows for the identification of naturally occurring discourse patterns.

Data collection procedures

Data collection involved the systematic selection of official documents from publicly available institutional sources. Only finalized and legally valid documents were included in the corpus to avoid inconsistencies associated with draft or informal versions.

The texts were compiled into a structured corpus and organized according to genre and institutional function. This organization facilitated comparative analysis across different types of official discourse while maintaining analytical consistency.

The study employs a qualitative paradigm using a descriptive and analytical research design.

Corpus: National laws, governmental decrees, and administrative instructions.

Analytical Dimensions:

1. Linguistic level: Lexical and syntactic patterns.
2. Pragmatic level: Speech acts and communicative intent.
3. Critical level: Ideological structures and power dynamics.

These syntactic features were analyzed in terms of their role in depersonalization, regulation, and the expression of obligation and permission.

Analysis and Results

Lexical and syntactic features

Official discourse prioritizes precision and depersonalization.

- Nominalization: Terms like "implementation" or "authorization" shift focus from human actors to abstract processes.



- **Neutrality:** A complete absence of emotional or evaluative language reinforces the image of "objective" institutional truth.

- **Complexity:** Syntactically, the use of long subordinate clauses and passive voice (e.g., "It is hereby enacted") serves to obscure individual agency, making the law appear as an inevitable, self-existing force.

Pragmatic and discourse functions

Pragmatically, this discourse is unidirectional and directive. It does not seek dialogue; it issues commands.

- **Speech Acts:** Predominantly declarations and regulations.

- **Intertextuality:** Documents frequently cite previous laws, creating a "web of authority" that makes the current text seem legally unassailable.

- **Standardization:** Fixed templates and formulaic expressions (clichés) ensure institutional efficiency and reduce the risk of "misinterpretation."

Feature	Linguistic Realization	Institutional Function
Lexis	Technical terms, Nominalization	Precision & Objectivity
Syntax	Passive voice, Complex clauses	Depersonalization
Pragmatics	Directives, Lack of pronouns	Authority & Distance
Discourse	Intertextuality, Templates	Legitimacy & Stability

Ideological Dimension

Through Critical Discourse Analysis, it is evident that official language is not neutral. By using abstract and formal structures, institutions conceal power relations. Decisions are presented not as choices made by individuals, but as procedural necessities. This "naturalization" of power limits public critique and reinforces the status quo.

Pragmatic analysis focused on communicative intentions and speech acts. Official texts were examined for directive, declarative, and regulatory speech acts. This stage analyzed how language is used to impose rules, authorize actions, and define institutional responsibilities.

Discourse-level analysis investigated coherence, intertextuality, and genre conventions. Particular attention was paid to how official texts reference previous documents and established legal norms.

Critical discourse analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis was applied to interpret the ideological dimensions of official discourse. This stage examined how linguistic choices contribute to the construction of authority and legitimacy. Features such as impersonality, objectivity, and standardization were analyzed as discursive strategies that conceal power relations and present institutional decisions as neutral and inevitable.

The CDA framework also allowed for the examination of exclusion and inclusion strategies, such as how responsibility is obscured through passive voice or abstract formulations.

This section presents the results of the qualitative discourse analysis conducted on the selected corpus of official texts. The analysis focuses on identifying recurrent linguistic patterns and interpreting their communicative, pragmatic, and ideological



functions. The findings are organized according to key linguistic levels: lexical, syntactic, pragmatic, and discourse-ideological dimensions.

Lexical Analysis: Formality and precision

The analysis reveals that official discourse is characterized by a high degree of lexical formality and precision. Specialized terminology and institutional vocabulary dominate the texts, particularly in legal and administrative documents. Words and expressions are carefully selected to avoid ambiguity and ensure consistency of interpretation.

Abstract nouns and nominalizations (e.g., *implementation, regulation, authorization, obligation*) occur frequently. These lexical forms contribute to depersonalization by shifting focus from human agents to processes and actions. As a result, responsibility is often obscured, and institutional authority is foregrounded.

Another significant lexical feature is the absence of emotionally evaluative language. The texts avoid expressive adjectives and subjective markers, reinforcing an objective and neutral tone. This lexical neutrality functions as a strategy to legitimize institutional decisions and present them as rational and unavoidable.

Result: Lexical choices in official discourse serve the dual function of ensuring legal precision and reinforcing institutional authority through impersonality and objectivity.

Syntactic analysis: Complexity and depersonalization

Syntactic analysis shows that official discourse relies heavily on complex sentence structures. Long sentences with multiple subordinate clauses are common, particularly in legal texts. These structures allow for detailed regulation and precise specification of conditions, exceptions, and obligations.

Passive constructions are one of the most prominent syntactic features identified in the corpus. The frequent use of passive voice minimizes the presence of explicit agents, thereby depersonalizing actions and emphasizing institutional procedures rather than individual responsibility.

Result. Syntactic complexity and passive constructions function as mechanisms of depersonalization and control, enabling institutions to regulate behavior while maintaining an appearance of objectivity.

Discussion of results

The results of the analysis confirm and extend previous findings in discourse studies. Consistent with Fairclough's and van Dijk's theories, the study demonstrates that official discourse is not merely a neutral means of communication but a socially motivated linguistic practice.

By integrating structural, pragmatic, and ideological analysis, the study provides a comprehensive account of how official discourse operates within institutional contexts. The findings highlight the importance of linguistic analysis in understanding the role of language in governance and social regulation.

Conclusion. This study has examined official discourse as a distinct linguistic phenomenon within institutional communication. Through a detailed analysis of legal, governmental, and administrative texts, several key features of official discourse have been identified and interpreted across lexical, syntactic, pragmatic, discourse, and ideological levels.



In conclusion, the study provides a comprehensive framework for understanding official discourse as a structured, socially embedded, and ideologically charged form of communication. By highlighting its linguistic features and functional purposes, this research contributes to the broader field of discourse studies and underscores the importance of language in institutional governance.

The study confirms that official discourse is a specialized linguistic system designed to exercise control and maintain social order. Its primary characteristics—formality, impersonality, and intertextuality—work together to create a sense of legal inevitability. While the medium of communication may evolve with technology, the underlying linguistic strategies for maintaining institutional authority remain constant.

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