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## The relation discourse–text and textuality. Pro-pragmatic self-reference on speech

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### Abstract

The study aims to analyse the relation between discourse, text and textuality from a general referential and self-referential perspective. The term of pro-pragmatic self-reference is framed and referred to as an assumption that in natural communication the interlocutors’ intentional cognitive process is also analysed along with Text/Speech and Context. The analysis is centred around direct communication but also on the perception of written texts and works of art.

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### 1. Introduction. Assumptions

Discourse analysis in terms of communication, text and textuality is an attempt to understand the social from the perspective of primary and secondary indexes of subjective reality. We propose a real approach of the text, as a cultural event, canonized in a certain degree in terms of its understanding, continuously interpreted by uncountable individualities. The approach is made by using discourse through a social criterion as core foundation. Textuality forms the joint element that reveals the common historical place where the author’s and the socio-cultural reader’s (abstractly defined as identification, but pragmatically and really as relating) intentions meet. Textuality symbolizes a pre-pragmatic reference by means of which real texts meet their readers.

The initial arguments, the general assumption is our belief that discourse is the most important act of relating to text and textuality. Functionally, discourse (Lyotard, 2003) resides in the rhetoric of understanding, but also of

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relational interpretation without being absolutely at all times replicable in the same contextual, civilizational and cultural conditions. Discourse is a continuous comment that does not lead to answers in spite of the interlocutors' inexhaustible clauses and judgements. The rhetoric of discourse makes reference to text and textuality; to message and actual directional interpretation. And the actual carries two methodological senses from a semiologic (Saussure, 1998) point of view. It is synchronic and immutable at the level of text occurrence but also diachronic and mutable at the level of understanding its significance.

Specific assumptions are: SA 1: the study of a texts' reference is directly related to the study of textual self-reference, to the way in which speech is founded on symbolic communication; SA2: a text's self-reference can be identified best in the pre-pragmatic plan, which we define as the interlocutors' intentional process.

By means of presented judgements I came to highlight certain issues that are involved in the *social reception* of a text. No text is completely immutable, since an author suggests it to the other and no socio-cultural reception is fully mutable. The existing paradox is a result of a process of continuous formation in terms of sense and word significance (Ricoeur, 1995). The relating process is obvious: the author is not able to retain each term that occurs in the text under the form of a function, although the work s/he releases for the public is quite closed and words constantly change their meaning and significance, without becoming incomprehensible. This process is much more with textual translations. It results in the emergence of initial syntactic-semiotic corruption of terms, notions and the pre-pragmatic understanding of words is naturally multiplied by the reader's understanding. The consequences can be efficacious or not, because they form of a different reality from the one experimented by the initial text.

Simplifying, the reader of the text is not able to discover through a linear expression, the original, identical structure of the text because of speech mutability, of its constant evolution but also because of self-referential and intentional formative premises: creation maintains the relative certainty of speech understanding.

To synthesize, in order to bring the text closer to the reader, one has to discover a pre-pragmatic competence that would identify the range of intentionality used to decode both text and its further textuality.

## 2. General considerations: discourse, text, textuality

Discourse is different from communication and conversation because relating statements grasp a social updated and contextualized rhetoric which is common for the locator that relates to the interlocutors. It changes into discourse, which is after all a definition of dialogue, the moment it becomes active, when interlocutors start to interact. The discourse turns into an authentic social discourse, if the dialogue can be replied by other interlocutors too. It is predefined and predetermined by culture and civilization and the interlocutors have a negligible role. All these situations are possible due to formative elements that are contained by the common buri of speech which is the text.

What is the text? A text is a "relatively limited wholeness" (Starobinski, 1985). The conditions of understanding the text as an intensifying unit of each discourse are expressed. In this case, the text signifies a "vigorous object", becoming the referee that cannot be eluded and the something that requires a "constant return" (Starobinski, 1985). The permanent return to the text through reading and re-reading makes reference to the infinity of a text's interpretation (Peirce, 1990) on pragmatic and social level. The interpretation of a text as a mechanism of cognitive psychology, "actually means to arrange it so that its elements would find their place in a more general schema. Shortly, interpretation is the assimilation to a cognitive schema" (Miclea, 1994). By applying this criterion we understand that: works were regarded as the expression of a "literary genre" (Harvey, 2002) and had to be analysed according to a unique criterion, to a "universal code". In postmodernity works are obviously seen as a "text" and can be analysed according to a relative, intertextual criterion, which leads to their inter-association with a rhetoric and a specific idiolect. Once modernity was overcome, significant new words appeared that would try to relation the text unity also by reconceptualising the speech functions. Gerard Genette (1992) used some notions for pedagogic purposes, highlighting the important role that the social has in understanding texts through:

- Transtextuality was defined as the form of understanding a textual transcendence of a text, as a process of discovering everything that puts it in a (manifested or secret) relationship with other texts. Transtextuality reveals the subtextual functions that any text carries with itself. Transtextuality is singularized by some functional mechanisms that describe the subtextual nature: intertextuality, metatextuality and hipertextuality.

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