УДК 811.1’25:004.8(045)

КОМПЬЮТЕРНО-ОПОСРЕДОВАННЫЙ ДИСКУРС КАК ТЕРМИН И РЕЧЕВАЯ ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТЬ

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Аннотация. Термин «дискурс» имеет широкий спектр пересекающихся значений. Он актуален не только в лингвистике, социологии и философии, но и в информатике, *web science*, компьютерных науках и других научных «приложениях» коммуникации. Упорядочение соответствующей терминологической системы требует создать целостную картину такого необъятного аспекта коммуникации, как речевая деятельность, который с трудом охватывается в междисциплинарном аспекте. Более того, дискурсивная парадигма постепенно приобретает новую референтную концептуализацию – информационную. В современной коммуникации искусственные языки обеспечивают особый семиотический уровень, формируя, казалось бы, самодостаточный компьютерный дискурс. Вероятно, его можно было бы даже идентифицировать как искусственноязыковой поликодовый дискурс. Однако, как правило, искусственные языки, являются плохо приспособленными к контекстуальной семантике естественного языка, не обладают полноценным набором коммуникативных средств, что подтверждается, например, практикой машинного перевода. Вместе с тем базовый семиотический уровень – двоичное кодирование – сам по себе не транслирует никакой семантики, кроме оппозиционной. Немаловажно и то, что для компьютера необходимо создавать все большее количество искусственных языков – носителей семантики естественного языка, в частности, для интерпретации двоичного кодирования. В конце концов на том или ином этапе дополнительные семиотические интерфейсы начинают искажать семантику естественных языков, которую они изначально были призваны передавать. Кроме того, существует еще одна проблема – отсутствие полной кодификации речевой практики, коммуникации любого рода. Эта значительная лингвистическая проблема служит мощным стимулом для развития «информационности» метаописаний. Информационный язык, если его изобретут, должен будет транслировать огромный объем семантики естественного языка, используя ограниченные интерпретационные возможности компьютера. Изучение речевой практики, опосредованной компьютерами, требует особого внимания к ее соответствующей терминологической и концептуальной интерпретации. С точки зрения лингвистики «компьютерно-опосредованный дискурс» – термин, который вполне подходит для метаописания особенностей коммуникации, осуществляемой в интернете и автономных компьютерных системах. Таким образом, компьютерно-опосредованный дискурс – это речевая деятельность в коммуникации, опосредованной компьютерами. Данная номинация более корректна, чем, например, словосочетания «искусственноязыковой дискурс» и «компьютерный дискурс». Как минимум ее использование соответствует междисциплинарности обозначаемого сигнификата.

Ключевые слова: компьютерно-опосредованный дискурс; междисциплинарность; термин; речевая деятельность; информация.

Образец цитирования:
Баркович АА. Компьютерно-опосредованный дискурс как термин и речевая деятельность. *Журнал Белорусского государственного университета. Филология.* 2025;3:76–82 (на англ.).
EDN: PLUIRV

For citation:
Barkovich AA. Computer-mediated discourse as a term and speech activity. *Journal of the Belarusian State University. Philology.* 2025;3:76–82.
EDN: PLUIRV

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КАМП'ЮТАРНА-АПАСРОДКАВАНЫ ДЫСКУРС ЯК ТЭРМІН І МАЎЛЕНЧАЯ ДЗЕЙНАСЦЬ

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Анатацыя. Тэрмін «дыскурс» мае шырокі спектр значэнняў, якія перасякаюцца. Ён актуальны не толькі ў лінгвістыцы, сацыялогіі і філасофіі, але і ў інфарматыцы, *web science*, камп'ютарных навуках і іншых навуковых «дадатках» камунікацыі. Упарадкаванне адпаведнай тэрміналагічнай сістэмы патрабуе стварыць цэласную карціну такога неабсяжнага аспекту камунікацыі, як маўленчая дзейнасць, што з цяжкасцю паддаецца ахопу ў міждысцыплінарным аспекце. Больш за тое, дыскурсіўная парадыгма паступова набывае новую рэферэнтную канцэптуалізацыю – інфармацыйную. У сучаснай камунікацыі асаблівы семіятычны ўзровень забяспечваюць штучныя мовы, фарміруючы, здавалася б, самадастатковы камп'ютарны дыскурс. Магчыма, яго можна было б нават ідэнтыфікаваць і вызначыць як штучнамоўны полікодавы дыскурс. Аднак, як правіла, штучныя мовы з'яўляюцца дрэнна прыстасаванымі да кантэкстуальнай семантыкі натуральнай мовы, не маюць паўнавартаснага набору камунікатыўных сродкаў, што пацвярджаецца, напрыклад, практыкай машыннага перакладу. Разам з тым базавы семіятычны ўзровень – бінарнае кадзіраванне – уласна не трансліруе ніякай семантыкі, акрамя апазіцыйнай. Немалаважна і тое, што для камп'ютара неабходна ствараць ўсё больш штучных моў – носьбітаў семантыкі натуральнай мовы, у прыватнасці, для інтэрпрэтацыі бінарнага кадзіравання. У рэшце рэшт на тым ці іншым этапе дадатковыя семіятычныя інтэрфейсы пачынаюць скажаць семантыку натуральных моў, якую яны першапачаткова былі закліканы перадаваць. Акрамя таго, існуе яшчэ адна праблема – адсутнасць поўнай кадыфікацыі маўленчай практыкі, камунікацыі любога роду. Гэта істотная лінгвістычная праблема служыць магутным стымулам для развіцця «інфармацыйнасці» метаапісанняў. Інфармацыйная мова, калі яна будзе вынайдзена, павінна будзе трансліраваць велізарны аб'ём семантыкі натуральнай мовы, выкарыстоўваючы абмежаваныя інтэрпрэтацыйныя магчымасці камп'ютара. Вывучэнне маўленчай практыкі, апасродкаванай камп'ютарамі, патрабуе асаблівай увагі да яе адпаведнай тэрміналагічнай і канцэптуальнай інтэрпрэтацыі. З пункту гледжання лінгвістыкі «камп'ютарна-апасродкаваны дыскурс» – тэрмін, які цалкам падыходзіць для метаапісання асаблівасцей камунікацыі, што ажыццяўляецца ў інтэрнэце і аўтаномных камп'ютарных сістэмах. Такім чынам, камп'ютарна-апасродкаваны дыскурс – гэта маўленчая дзейнасць у камунікацыі, апасродкаванай камп'ютарамі. Дадзеная намінацыя больш карэктная, чым, напрыклад, словазлучэнні «штучнамоўны дыскурс» і «камп'ютарны дыскурс». Як мінімум яе выкарыстанне адпавядае міждысцыплінарнасці сігніфіката, што яна абазначанае.

Ключавыя словы: камп'ютарна-апасродкаваны дыскурс; міждысцыплінарнасць; тэрмін; маўленчая дзейнасць; інфармацыя.

COMPUTER-MEDIATED DISCOURSE AS A TERM AND SPEECH ACTIVITY

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Abstract. The term «discourse» has a wide set of overlapping meanings. One way or another, discourse is relevant not only in linguistics, sociology and philosophy, but also in informatics, *web science*, computer science and other scientific «applications» of communication. The adjustment of related term system demands the creation of a holistic picture of such an intangible aspect of communication as speech activity, intangible in the interdisciplinary sense, too. Moreover, the discursive paradigm absorbs step by step new appropriate conceptualisation – the informational one. In current communication a distinctive semiotic level is provided with artificial languages, forming a seemingly self-acting computer discourse. There even could be a reason to identify and describe it as artificial polycode discourse. But, generally, artificial languages – ill-fitted for the contextual semantics of natural language – do not have a full-featured set of communicational tools, as evidenced, for example, in machine translation practice. With that, the basic semiotic level – binary coding – does not represent any meaningful semantics beside the oppositional one. A computer initially needs more and more established artificial languages as mediums of natural-language semantics for binary coding, particularly. Finally, additional semiotic interfaces begin to ignore the semantics of the natural languages in which they have initially assisted. Then, there is another problem: the lack of the complete codification of speech practice, in communication of any kind. This is a general linguistic problem, which is a strong motive for the development of the «informationality» of meta-descriptions. Informational language, if invented, needs to adopt huge amounts of natural-language semantics

via the low interpretational capacities of computer. In the meantime, the study of speech practice, mediated by computers, requires special attention to the appropriate terminological and conceptual interpretation. From the point of view of linguistics, «computer-mediated discourse» is quite correct term for characteristics of communication that occurs on the Internet and on separate computing devices. So, computer-mediated discourse is a speech activity in the communication mediated by computers. It is more precise than artificial-language discourse and computer discourse, for example. At least, it preserves the interdisciplinary nature of the denoted significate.

Keywords: computer-mediated discourse; interdisciplinarity; term; speech activity; information.

Introduction

On the one hand, computer-mediated discourse is characterised by the high precision and statistical accuracy of inherent linguistic methodology. And at the first glance computer-mediated speech is more transparent and structured for scientific exploration than traditional speech. The interdisciplinary and linguoinformational integrity of this new kind of communication contributes to the creation of meta-descriptions, which could hardly be realised within traditional paradigmatics. Moreover, relevant metadiscorse is more sophisticated and hyper-scaled and considers a wide range of intra- and extralinguistic dimensions [1]. On the other hand, there is a need for a clear terminological definiteness of the relevant problem domain and its transparency in the context of already established views on speech activity.

Materials and methods

From the cognitive aspect, computer-mediated discourse as an object is a communication phenomenon with an active character, human subjectivity and computer mediation of interaction. The functional dependence of contemporary speech activity on computers has led to many attempts to outline computer-dependent discourse. Of course, this discourse relies on the computerised communicational environment. Thus, the imagery of the related environment is many-sided: Internet discourse, electronic discourse, network discourse, virtual discourse, and so on are identified as well as computer discourse [2–4]. In the meantime, up to now there has been no certainty about the indicative properties of computer-conditioned discourse. No doubt, computer attribution is the most recognisable among them. However, how, after all, can the use of discourse's current format be justified in the denotative-significative aspect?

The disambiguation of the theoretical meta-description of computer-mediated discourse is not caused by a vacuum of knowledge but rather by its phenomenological indeterminacy. With that, the study of computer-mediated discourse just like the study of any new phenomenon is technologically dependent and methodologically sensitive. Related speech activity proves that there are many systematically unsolved issues. When a scientific object is under-explored systematically, it clearly means there is a methodological lack. At the same time, while there is often no reason to improve existing landmarks, there is a good reason to enforce new disciplinarity. It looks as if computer-mediated discourse, as a new problem domain, can inspire radically changing a character of existing research instrumentality [5]. Thus, computer-mediated discourse is too innovative to suit traditional linguistics and, simultaneously, too language- and speech-conditioned to seek something outside linguistics. With that, computer-mediated discourse is mediated by a technical instrumentality that is principally different from traditional linguistic paradigms – the computer. Such methodological preconditions mean the synthesis of a new interdisciplinary apparatus. Probably, all new knowledge is, at least initially, interdisciplinary. Interdisciplinarity means combining the tools of different origins in a single research field to work as a single functional model. The common areas of interdisciplinarity are sometimes formed by components that do not exist in a «pure» form: one discipline modifies another in accordance with the prospects of interaction [6]. Here they coexist syncretically, creating a new quality of linguistic methodology.

Results and discussion

Consideration of the significative nature of computer contributes to rethinking the broad referential significance. A discursive interpretation of the use and semantisation of computer in different languages is quite useful in this regard. It begins from a lexicographical representation of the lexeme *computer* on its own, its emergence and integration into language. Thus, today's definition is quite simple:

«1. An electronic device for storing and processing data, typically in binary form, according to instructions given to it in a variable program.

1.1. A person who makes calculations, especially with a calculating machine»[1].

[1]English dictionary // Oxford dictionaries : website. URL: http://www.en.oxforddictionaries.com (date of access: 10.09.2025).

In the English dictionary there are many monepic derivates of the word *computer*: computeracy, computerate, computerdom, computerese, computeresque, computerist, computeritis, computerizable, computerization, computerize, computerland, computerless, computernik, computerology, etc.[2] In addition, there are dozens of more complicated derivates as well: computer age, computer-aided, computer art, computer conferencing, computer crime, computer criminal, computer dating, etc.[3] In contrast, lexeme *computer* is presented considerably poorly in Russian dictionaries, which contradicts its wide speech relevance. With that, in T. F. Efremova's «The new dictionary of the Russian language. Explanatory and derivational», in Russian computer (*компьютер м. электронная вычислительная машина (ЭВМ)*) is not only a kind of generated concept image presented – relevant for usualect (usualect is a commonly used variant of language, a meta-structural base for the development of language variability) – but also three of its derivates: computerisation (*компьютеризация*), computerised (*компьютеризованный*), computer (as attributive) (*компьютерный*)[4].

In the meantime, in English the lexeme *computer*, as an agent noun, appeared as long ago as 1640. The meaning 'a calculating machine' (of any type) is known from 1897. The computer was considered a Turing machine from 1937. From 1945 we know the modern understanding, a 'programmable digital electronic computer'[5]. In any case, the meaning 'computing machine', which is by far the most popular, could not have appeared before 1946 as only in 1946 the first materialised «computer» ENIAC (electronic numerical integrator and computer) was presented. The derivational activity of computer in English was fixed in the beginning of the 1960s: computerese, computerise, computerisation, computerate, etc. The nomination *computer literacy* was recorded in 1970, after which many other collocations were formed. Initially, such usage was generally identified as slang, and only later these units found a place in dictionaries. Obviously, the notion *electronic device* came into many other languages where, obviosly, it was naturalised not earlier than in the middle of the 20th century.

But, for instance, in Russian computer expansion took place sufficiently later – in the 1990s. The phrase *electronic-counting machine* (*электронно-вычислительная машина*) and the corresponding acronym (ЭВМ) were popular before – almost exclusively. In Russian the attributive *electronic-counting* (*электронно-вычислительный*) was and still is a common analogue of *computer* (*компьютерный*), combined with variety of units such as *device*, *machinery*, *equipment*, *tool*, *facility*, *network*, and others. But it is characteristic according to Russian national corpus that 117 results out of 175 for the word *electronic-counting* (*электронно-вычислительный*) from referential concordance rely mainly on the word *machine* (*машина*), which is engaged in the connotation *electronic-counting machine*[6]. At the same time, the word *computer* (*компьютер*) and its attributive forms (*компьютерный* (*-ая*, *-ое*)) will soon undoubtedly have priority in Russian as in the majority of other languages.

As a matter of fact, the exponent *computer* is not a genuine anglicism entrenched in the English language as a preformed unit like many other gallicisms. It looks like this lexeme acquired qualities of potentialism, occasionalism, and neologism in the French language, a loan word of English origin, in turn, for hundreds of other languages (after 1946). However, it is obviously that in English that the word *computer* gained the meaning 'machine that can be programmed to manipulate symbols'[7].

In the current circumstances of language functioning, the development stages (or phases) of language innovations are quite visible. For example, due to the capacities of computer-mediated communication, the creation and development of the lexeme *computer* are statistically provided and very transparent: it can be tracked from the Latin texts, which are entirely translated into electronic format – to the modern corpus collections. In Latin the stem *computar-*, which provides the verbal semantics *computare* (to count, to sum up, to calculate), appeared as a product of the derivational fusion of the Latin *com-* (together) and *putare* (treat), particularly. With that, the derivate *computare* became a popular unit in speech practice, which fully complies with the word-formation and inflection conditions of Latin. It looks as follows in Latin: *Porrige tu Aemiliano tabulas istas: linum consideret, signa quae impressa sunt recognoscat, consules legat, annos computet, quos sexaginta mulieri adsignabat… Iube, Maxime, consules computari: nisi fallor, inuenies nunc Pudentillae haud multo amplius quadragensimum annum aetatis ire*[8].

In Russian this text looks like following: *Дай-ка, письмоводитель, Эмилиану эти самые записи: пусть пощупает лен, пусть проверит сохранность печатей, пусть прочитает имена консулов и пусть попробует*

[2]English dictionary // Oxford dictionaries : website. URL: http://www.en.oxforddictionaries.com (date of access: 10.09.2025).
[3]Ibid.
[4]*Efremova T. F.* The new dictionary of the Russian language. Explanatory and derivational. Mosc. : Russkii yazyk, 2000. 2 vol. (in Russ.).
[5]Online etimology dictionary. URL: http://www.etymonline.com (date of access: 10.09.2025).
[6]Russian national corpus [Electronic resourse]. URL: http://www.ruscorpora.ru (date of access: 10.09.2025) (in Russ.).
[7]Free online dictionary computing. URL: http://www.foldoc.org (date of access: 10.09.2025).
[8]*Apoleius*. Antology // The Latin library : website. URL: https://www.thelatinlibrary.com/apuleius/apuleius.apol.shtml (date of access: 10.09.2025).

вычислить, как же это у него вышло, что Пудентилле шестьдесят лет… Вот теперь вели, Максим, пересчитать консулов, и ты обнаружишь, если я не ошибаюсь, что Пудентилле сейчас чуть больше сорока[9].

The semantics of the Latin forms *computet* and *computari* are very close to the English equivalents *count up* and *to order the number* as well as the Russian analogues *вычислить* and *пересчитать*.

In the Perseus digital library, the verb paradigm *computare* is represented by 24 forms[10]. There is a strong reason to believe that such usage of lemmata as *computare* was presented in Latin in its entirety.

Thus, the significance of the word *computer* in discourse was and is quite transparent, but its stereotype of attribution in the modern language is ambiguous: its denotative opportunities expand literally every day. With that, even engineers are scarcely able to explain where the computer specificity of reality begins and how far it extends: computer technology is thoroughly ingrained in everyday life.

In the metalinguistic aspect it is necessary to note a couple of important points here.

Firstly, if discourse is a speech activity, is it possible to recognise the computer as a subject of communication with its own identity and consciousness? Consequently, is it possible to call this discourse computer discourse? As artificial intelligence modern computer conceptualisation is not yet established, despite numerous references to it in the scientific and non-scientific debates (and it is unclear whether it will ever be created). Therefore, it is too early to talk about computer subjectivity in communication. Thus, computer discourse is a kind of admissible and beautiful metaphor but only in human communication. From this point of view, computer discourse is a human speech activity in computer format, where it is generated as artificial-language practice and only where it is localised. So, it is obvious that in the context of computer-mediated communication functionality, the word *computer* can be recognised neither as a ‘person of communication’ nor as an ‘agent of discourse’.

At the same time, the interpretation of computer-mediated discourse as equiform is too simplistic. Naturally, any discourse is perceived as well as produced by the human sensory organs. However, there are enough «sensitive» dissimilarities between computer «digital» and computerised «analogue» kinds of communication with computer «participation». The fundamental difference between such digital and analogue types of content transmission is the way of content pre-producing and post-perceiving: analogue communication interaction is parallelly provided with human senses and the human mind; digital communicational interaction is predominantly provided with the human mind. Therefore, analogue transmitting uses open channels of direct (intuitive) human mentality and – even if mediated by computer – operates signals of a wide spectrum. Digital transmitting uses channels of indirect (algorithmic) human mentality and operates signals of a narrow spectrum. Finally, the human mental interface operates digital datum worse than analogue – and much worse than biological signals, perceived in the same way as they were produced. Without computer «participation», in the biological type of content transmission, the human senses and the human mind work together like Swiss watches. In computer-mediated communication we are trying to duplicate the biological mechanism but with no luck yet. If the communication reality remains the same, our descendants will succeed where we have failed with digital communication. With that, of course, the mechanical (computer) adjustment of our abilities is more desirable so, one way or another, the subjects of discourse are still humans and this discourse is just computer-mediated.

Secondly, if the computer is not the subject of communication but just a tool, is it possible to call the discourse an activity for creating programme texts a single relevancy for today’s «computer» type of communicational productivity? There are no contradictions: the computer, once it is turned on, is able to generate and receive texts (created by humans). But in such a case, of course, only the texts of the programme («instruction tables») could be considered computer discourse.

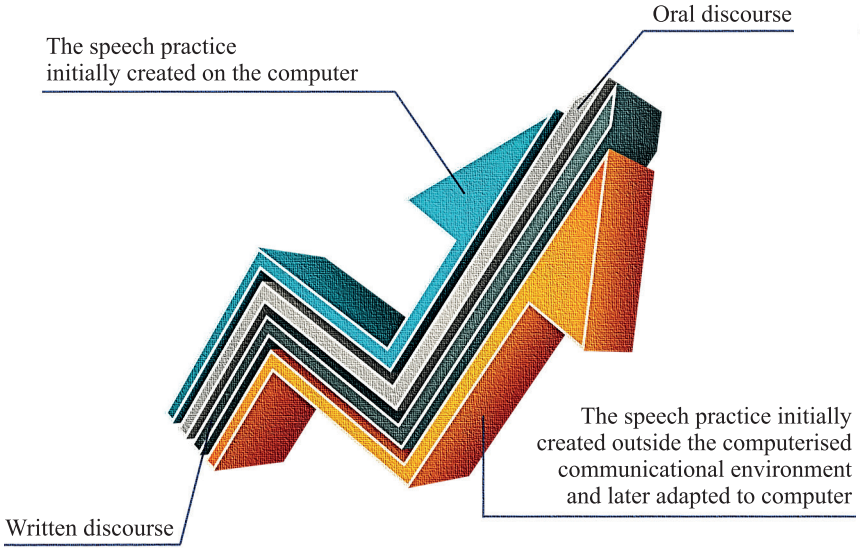
Famous British mathematician A. M. Turing wrote that «…constructing instruction tables is usually described as “programming”. To “program a machine to carry out the operation A” means to put the appropriate instruction table into the machine so that it will do A» [7, p. 34].

In the meantime, what kind of material the texts created by people for the «Chinese room» [8] and encoded via the statistical model consist of? It is a particular sort of language – artificial. With that, the semiotic identity of human texts in computer-mediated communication is complicated: they are additionally mediated. Basic semiotic systems in computer-mediated communication are not natural but artificial languages (their binary code is fundamental). In the computer-mediated format, messages, created in the natural-language continuum, are being transmitted by means of formal languages. As a result, the computer (algorithmic) «mentality» is inconsistent with the human (heuristic, intuitive) mentality. This is the principal basis of the imperfection of computer technology in communication.

[9] *Apoleius.* Apology, or On magic // Open text : website. URL: https://opentextnn.ru/man/apulej-lucij-apologija-ili-o-magii/ (date of access: 10.09.2025) (in Russ.).

[10] Perseus digital library. URL: http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/search (date of access: 10.09.2025).

Computer-mediated discourse is made up of computer instrumentality discourse of various types. An essential feature of computer-mediated discourse is the combination of both written and oral discourses therein. Simultaneously, it consists of both speech practice initially created on the computer and speech practice initially created outside the computerised communicational environment and later adapted to the computer (including speech practice created in the pre-computer era) as it can be seen on the figure.



Computer-mediated discourse infrastructure
Source: [9]

Related practice is characterised by the mismatch of computer-mediated communication speech and classical metalinguistic canons even if a high level of speech compliance with the norms is achieved. This is often not just obvious but crucial. Discourse in traditional communication is comprised of multilevel semantics and contextual super-constructs, e. g. informational or cultural dominants [10, p. 80]. Such capacities in computer-mediated communication are limited by the discrete character of encoding and the interpretation of the data involved, which are computer lexicographical based. Moreover, the interpretation of data is based on the formal (artificial language) modeling of natural-language communication. Such development of models has significant limitations. For example, in optical character recognition, the computer programme simply ignores the unknown or, at best, insufficiently clear graphics. Therefore, related content should be carefully interpreted by human experts for further informational generalisation, for instance.

Conclusions

Computer discourse is a nomination, which is not a term yet. Nevertheless, computer discourse has become a well-known symbol entrenched in speech practice. With that, it is confidently identified by experts as a stripped-down form of computer-mediated discourse. Computer-mediated discourse, with its phenomenological-methodological preciseness and attributive correctness, is especially relevant in this context. With that, the scientific support of computer-mediated communication requires accurate related meta-descriptions. It attracts great interest in the field of language functioning not only from humanities but also from technicians. Discourse in the computerised environment is computer-dependent and computer-conditioned, but it is human-driven. Therefore, computer-mediated discourse is a more scientifically correct term to describe the phenomenological entity of speech activity based on the web and computing devices.

Even though the communication features of the pre-computer era have long been the subject of scientific study, the «computer» aspect of modern discourse – in spite of a rather long, by today's standards, history of self-positioning in science – remains considerably under-investigated and non-integrated in the theoretical paradigm of linguistics. The cohesion specifics of the intra-, extra-, para- and meta-linguistic identities of computer-mediated communication create a unique discoursive quality of communication composed of an innovative objective side of contemporary linguistics and has a significant impact on the state of the entire science.

With that, the computer mediation of communication does not contradict the existing views on discourse and its types but is a considerably new and very significant dimension of discourse. Apparently, it is closely tied with written and oral discourse. The technical mediation of discourse can also be considered in context of its comparison, for example, with non-computer television or radio mediation. However, dynamic expansion of the computerised format, which actively mediates television and radio and changes the quality of traditional oral and written discourse, is a domineering trend in the development of today's speech activity.

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Received by editorial board 06.10.2025.