

EPIGRAPH IN THE ACADEMIC DISCOURSE

(A Case Study of the Spanish Language)

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Abstract: The article studies the expressive aspect of a scientific text and the mechanisms of its construction through the notion of interdiscourse that meets the new tendencies in the development of linguistic science.

The aim of this work is to analyze the Spanish scientific text as a result of the actualization of interdiscursive relationships and to study the specific functioning of these links within the Spanish academic sphere of communication. The choice of the research topic is determined by the switching of linguists' interest from the study of linguistic laws to the study of human communication laws. Modern linguistics as a whole is formed as an anthropological science; in other words, the study of linguistic processes proceeds in indissoluble connection with consumers of communicative activity and presupposes the consideration of the human factor, when the subject of speech and its recipient are included into the description of linguistic mechanisms.

Traditionally, the question of such text property as communicative, dialogical nature was considered in relation to fiction. However, many researchers have proved that the scientific text, including its paratext elements, is also aimed at conducting a dialogue with the reader.

The epigraph, integrated into scientific text, is clearly separated from the author's word as an explicit quotation, and, as a rule, belongs to another type of discourse, characterizes the spatiotemporal organization of Spanish scientific works, and has a strong effect of influence.

A study of interdiscursive links implementation within the Spanish academic discourse is particularly relevant in terms of contemporary general linguistic developments and in terms of Spanish linguistics itself.

The texts of Spanish scientific articles and dissertations were used as a research material. The main research methods were the discursive and communicative approaches as the leading ones in the modern linguistics.

Keywords: Academic discourse, epigraph, interdiscursiveness.

INTRODUCTION

The study problem is to consider the epigraph as a marker for the interdiscursivity of scientific text, which encodes the units of deep level and underlies the formation of the author's point of view.

The relevance of this study is determined by the common interest expressed by representatives of many scientific fields to the phenomenon of discourse, by the need to study complex cognitive operations activated by the interaction of discourses, as well as by the attention to the manner of presentation and the perception of scientific literature, taking into account the broad sociocultural context and the norms of written speech adopted in different academic communities, in this particular case – in the Spanish community.

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The proposed approach allows the consideration of links between the represented discourses at the formal, semantic, cognitive-situational, and communicative-pragmatic levels.

The subject of the study is the intertextual inclusions, such as epigraphs, which precede scientific articles and theses. The object of the study is the cognitive and communicative-pragmatic properties of the included and receiving texts.

The problem of studying such a complex and multifaceted phenomenon as discourse has been immersing linguists, literary critics, philosophers, sociologists and representatives of other related sciences for a long time. Offering different interpretations of the “discourse” concept, researchers agree that discourse, in addition to text, includes the extra linguistic factors as well, which have a significant impact on the process of communication unfolding within this context.

The problem of the relationship between different types of discourse attracted the attention of scientists in Russia and abroad. According to the researchers, combining the elements of various discourses used in a particular language leads to a change in the nature of discourse and, as a consequence, in the social and cultural world (Fairclough, 2001; Fauconnier, & Turner, 2003). The phenomenon of interdiscourse was studied by such scientists as Michel Pêcheux and Patrick Serio (Pêcheux, 1990; Serio, 2001), it was analyzed in the works by T.A. van Dijk (Van Dijk, 2015), I. Link and W. Link-Heer (Link, & Link-Heer, 1990), Phillips L., Jorgensen (Phillips, & Jorgensen, 2008).

In Russia, the problem of interdiscursivity was also discussed in numerous works (Arkhipov, 2005, 2007; Beloglazova, 2009; Burtsev, 2010; Chernyavskaya, 2007, 2009, 2016).

Within the framework of this work, the relationship between different discourses is viewed as a result of active interaction between different spheres of human activity, different areas of experience and knowledge. In turn, this interaction is due to the growth of cognitive needs of a person striving to cognize the surrounding reality in all its diversity.

We believe that the interaction between different discourses occurs as a result of including an intertextual fragment, in this particular case – an epigraph, into the receiving text.

Cognitive and communicative-pragmatic characteristics of intertextual inclusion are its discursive properties, through which this inclusion represents a certain type of discourse. The discursive properties of intertextual inclusion invariably influence the receiving discourse. The present work is devoted to studying the interaction of discourses that arises in this case.

Interdiscursivity is a complex mental process, which consists in the interaction between discourses, and namely between the cognitive models of situations reflected in the texts, and between the communicative and pragmatic characteristics of

texts conditioned by the specifics of sociocultural situations in communication. This mental process is initiated by the article's author and is performed by the recipient.

The scientific text reflects the dialogue of different worldviews, cultural positions, scientific opinions, the dialogue of the old and the new. In the process of producing a scientific text, the interdiscursive links are updated, involving the interaction of different systems of knowledge, ideas and points of view, cultural codes, and cognitive switching from one knowledge system to another.

The author of a scientific work as a discursive linguistic personality, while creating his own text, reproduces his or other person's texts in accordance with his worldview and emotional intelligence. Texts of this kind represent an individual worldview of a creative personality.

In the framework of this study, the epigraph is considered as a fragment of another discourse that influences the perception and interpretation of the receiving discourse.

The epigraph performs dialogic and cognitive functions, providing a continuous dialogue between different authors, texts and, in general, cultures, creates communicative space of scientific text and is determined by this communicative space. It is viewed as a textological unit bearing a character of coding the text meaning, through which the epigraph influences the understanding of the following text meaning.

Determination of the "epigraph" concept has changed significantly over the past two centuries and has evolved from an elementary definition to the modern science's consideration of epigraph as a metatextual and intertextual sign.

Through epigraphs, the author opens the outer boundary of text for intertextual links, thus revealing the inner world of the work. The epigraph acts within the text, is consistent with it, is assimilated, but is not dissolved completely within the new text.

The analysis of the relations within the system of "epigraph – text under epigraph" leads to an understanding of the epigraph as the most important means of expressing the author's image. When choosing an epigraph, the author's "I" manifests itself, testifying to the author's literary tastes, associations, thesaurus, relation to the epigraph content and to its creator. The author of a scientific text, relying on the intertextual competence in the literary and artistic field, can successfully use quotations from other discourses for the purpose of pragmatics.

I.V. Arnold believes that the consciousness of an individual personality contains a thesaurus – a "specific dictionary of internalized texts", in which the individual's knowledge of various cultural phenomena is reflected. This thesaurus acts as a mediator between the work's author and the reader, implementing "the

interaction between the text having a semantic structure and the thesaurus of the reader” (Arnold, 1992, p. 61).

The epigraph reflects the literary and historical-cultural views and preferences of a scientist, is “a unit of comprehending human values through the prism of language with the help of cultural memory” (Kostomarov, 1996, p. 297).

A man draws the greater part of his knowledge about the world from texts of various types rather than from explicitly personal experience. The composition of texts that make up the cognitive base of representatives from a particular linguistic cultural community is formed by linguacultural universals – precedent texts. According to V.A. Lukin, “quoting the epigraph comes from the “cultural thesaurus” of a linguistic personality rather than from a donor text” (Lukin, 2005, p. 45).

Until recently, it was believed that the purpose of a scientific work was to present the facts and data as objectively, clearly and briefly as possible. The author of a scientific study does not express his feelings and emotions, does not deal with the embellishment of scientific work, because in the scientific exposition, the accuracy and conciseness of style are more important than its originality and imagery.

At present, there is no doubt about the presence of expressive means in texts of scientific content. Expressiveness, in the sense of the best way to implement communication taking into account the characteristics of communication in this field, is one of the essential communicative features of scientific speech. Therefore, studying the expressive aspect of the scientific style appears to be particularly relevant and timely.

The use of expressive means in scientific speech is conditioned by such its quality as dialogicality, that is, by establishing contact with the recipient of the message.

When analyzing scientific text, it is often necessary to deal with paratextual relations, when the interaction occurs between the text of the article and the epigraph.

According to I.V. Arnold, the epigraph is a quotation or a saying included between the title of the text and its beginning, which allegorically interprets the text as if on behalf of another author. Constituting signs of the epigraph are its dialogicality, intertextuality and aesthetic-ideological (ideological-thematic) functions (Arnold, 2004).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Scientific articles and theses by Spanish scientists of the period from 2005 to 2016 were used as a material for this study. The total sample size was 11,000 pages of scientific texts on various fields of knowledge (chemistry, geology and geochemistry, mathematics, physics and biology), based on which the mechanisms of relations between discourses represented by the included and receiving texts were

considered, i.e. the process of interdiscursiveness actualized by means of such a paratextual element as an epigraph.

The methodological basis of the study was the main provisions of the modern discourse theory developed in Russia and abroad. The following provisions proven in science served as theoretical basis:

1. In modern science, the text is viewed as a particular aspect of a broader phenomenon which is discourse, and is explored by a discipline called discursive analysis (Van Dijk, 2015; Demyankov, 2005).
2. Texts have a common property characterized by the existence of relationship between them (Bakhtin, 1979; Stepanov, 2001; Genette, 1982; Kristeva, 1967; Riffaterre, 1980).
3. The discourse formation is not homogeneous. Any discourse reveals the traces of the preceding discourse constructions, that is, the interdiscourse should be discussed (Serio, 2001; Pêcheux, 1990).
4. Intertextuality and interdiscursiveness are closely related (Serio, 2001; Chernyavskaya, 2009; Pêcheux, 1990; Luzón Marco, 1997).

In the course of the study, discursive analysis method, classification and systematization method, quantitative analysis method followed by a qualitative interpretation of the obtained data were used.

We understand the discursive analysis as an integrated field of knowledge that studies both oral and written text (Van Dijk, 1997), wherein the text is a particular aspect of a broader concept – of discourse. The concept of discourse, in addition to the text concept, includes mental processes and the sociocultural context, which allows a researcher to apply a complex approach to studying the features of text generation and perception from different spheres of communication.

Discourse should be understood as texts in indissoluble connection with the situational context, in combination with social, cultural-historical, ideological, psychological and other factors, with the system of communicative-pragmatic and cognitive purposes of the author interacting with the addressee, which determines the special ordering of linguistic units on different levels during its embodiment within the text. Discourse characterizes communicative process leading to the formation of a certain formal structure – the text.

Thus, discursive analysis assumes the consideration of text from various positions: not only from linguistic, but also from psychological, sociological (text as a product of society, a particular social group), and culturological. Therefore, not only the linguistic means used in a certain text, but also the situation of text pronunciation/writing are important for discourse. Discursive analysis includes the stage of text analysis from a formal point of view (lexical, grammatical, syntactic means), the stage of relationship between the text and its interpretation (movement

from text to discourse), and the stage of analyzing the impact on discourse of various contexts.

When studying the scientific text from the position of text formation linguistic theory, the integration of text linguistics with the stylistics of figurative means and with the functional stylistics that deals with text typology is perspective. Based on the theory of discourse, we operate with the term “text space”. The text space is defined as the set of intersecting discourses that serve as a source for text generation.

Analyzing the scientific texts, we proceed from the fact that a scientific text reflects the very principle of cognitive activity and its features, conditioned by the subject’s conscious attitude not only to the object, but also to his own creative activity. The object of cognition shall be understood as a fragment of reality transformed into scientific knowledge. Moreover, even if the author focuses on presenting the information about the object of cognition, the author’s self-disclosure invariably happens as a subject of cognition. Therefore, the subject of speech is realized in the text as a factor influencing the selection and use of linguistic units, the construction of the text and the nature of scientific speech.

The flexibility and mobility of the scientific text boundaries, the deviation of the produced text structures from the accepted standards is a necessary condition for successful communication in human society in its diverse situationally conditioned manifestations. The norm suggests variants because it is alive. “In order for something to live, you need a reserve of irregularities, options, recurrences, and deviations” (Lotman, 2005, p. 292). This is necessary consequence of the creative anthropocentric nature of communication. The phenomenon of creativity is revealed when analyzing the text activity of a specific subject of speech, in particular, in its choice of diverse models of text structures and features of their integration.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In a scientific text, the epigraph, being hardly probable, is perceived as a technique adopted from fiction and therefore has a strong effect of influence.

A feature of the spatiotemporal organization of Spanish scientific works is the presence of such extratextual space as an epigraph in the majority of them (regardless of the field of knowledge).

Using the elements of appraisal, of individual nature in the texts of scientific discourse evokes a keen interest in the reader, makes the scientific presentation more interesting. Analyzing the texts of dissertational works and scientific articles aimed at gaining attention, interest and respect for the work, convincing the reader in the research originality confirmed this idea of the functions and forms of the scientific discourse.

Javier Benayas del Alamo, a lecturer at the Department of Ecology of the Autonomous University of Madrid and coordinator of the PhD program, in his work

“Recommendations for Writing Theses”, recommends that each new chapter of thesis should start with a quotation of a well-known author, “Suele ser interesante comenzar cada capítulo con una cita de algún autor de relevancia” (Benayas del Alamo *et al.*, 2013).

In the process of studying Spanish scientific works, we were able to distinguish the following categories of epigraphs in accordance with their belonging to a particular discourse:

1. Modern Scientific Discourse

The epigraph in this case is a statement of an authoritative scientist:

“There is not one correct way to do ecology. Mathematical models, model ecosystems, field manipulation experiments and the search for large-scale patterns are all valid approaches, and all have their strengths and weaknesses” – John Lawton, *OIKOS* 75: 145-147, 1996; “It is humans that need managing, not the planet” – D.W. Orr (Barrasa García, 2007).

It should be noted that the inclusion of an epigraph in English reflects the interaction of worldviews within the universal cognitive space.

The compressibility of the epigraph determines its synthesizing function with respect to the main text. The synthesizing function of the epigraphs under consideration consists in the fact that the selected elements are the main indicators of the meanings contained in the subsequent text, about which the epigraph first informs the reader, thus influencing its interpretation. From our point of view, the epigraphs under consideration with respect to the subsequent text perform an eidological (ideological-thematic) function, since their main idea makes the recipient think about those issues that the author of the scientific work further raises.

2. Philosophical Discourse

Aphorisms, sayings of ancient thinkers are used as an epigraph, for example:

“La vida es corta, el arte largo la decisión difícil y la ocasión fugaz” – Hipócrates / “Life is short, art long, opportunity fleeting, experience treacherous, judgment difficult”; “Es agradable ser importante, pero más importante es ser agradable” – Seneca / “It is pleasant to be an important person but it is more important to be a pleasant person” (Llamas González, 2007); “Si consigo ver más lejos es porque he conseguido auparme a hombros de gigantes” – Bernard de Chartres / “We are like dwarfs on the shoulders of giants, so that we can see more than they” (Vallespín, 2008).

3. Poetic Discourse

Fragmentary quotes from poetic texts-sources are introduced into a scientific work:

“Caminante, no hay camino, se hace camino al andar” – Antonio Machado (Seoane Pinilla, 2014) /

“Wayfarer, the only way
Is your footprints and no other.
Wayfarer, there is no way.
Make your way by going farther.
By going farther, make your way”.

The quotation from the poetic work by the emperor of the Chichimeca people, integrated into the text of the thesis devoted to the method of analyzing archaeological finds in the territory of Mesoamerica with the help of an ion beam, unexpectedly violates the rigidity of the material presentation and animates the highly specialized language of scientific work:

“What shall I take with me?
Will I let nothing behind me over the earth?
How shall my heart act?
Is it that we come in vain to live,
To sprout over the earth?
Let us leave at least flowers,
Let us leave at least songs.”

— Nezahualcōyotl (1402-1472) (Calvo del Castillo, 2007).

Due to the choice of the Nezahualcōyotl anthem as an epigraph, the dialogical relationship is established between the past and the present. In accordance with the author’s intention, the past and the present enter into a dialogue through fragments of their discourses.

Due to the interaction of texts, i.e. intertextuality and wider – interdiscursivity, the reader-interpreter, while comprehending the content of the scientific text, will mentally return to the epigraph to analyze the presented results of scientific research through the prism of the eventual and sociocultural context of the utterance used as an epigraph. The stylistic coloring of emotional elements in the scientific literature is particularly contrasting on the general background of logical, objective forms of evaluation, the qualification of objects and phenomena of the material world.

By cognizing the world, a person reflects it in its mind. Language tools form this creative attitude of the author of a scientific text to the reality.

4. Religious Discourse

Here is an example of how the Biblical intertext acts within a scientific work. One of the articles published in the scientific journal on the Geography of Alicante University has a quotation-epigraph from religious discourse along with quoting a Spanish philosopher and writer Jose Ortega y Gasset:

“La verdad os hará libres” – Jesús de Galilea, según el *Evangelio de San Juan*, 8, 32 / “The truth will make you free” – Jesus of Galilee.

“Estamos entregados a nosotros mismos; nadie nos protege ni nos dirige. Si no tenemos confianza en nosotros, todo se habrá perdido” – José Ortega y Gasset / “We are surrendered to ourselves; No one protects or directs us. If we do not have confidence in us, everything will be lost” (Ayala-Carcedo, 2006).

In this case, the parallel inclusion of quotations from religious and philosophical discourses is completely justified, since in the reader’s proposed scientific article, the author tries to find out whether there is a contradiction between religion and science in views on the Great Flood. The Bible is a whole world of ideas and images, an entire organism that absorbed many traditions. Its criticism or acceptance means scientific research. To solve this problem, a comparative analytical method is used. It consists in the analysis and comparison of biblical texts with modern scientific data. Using a quote from philosophical discourse, the researcher emphasizes its desire for rational perception of reality. The meanings contained in the text of the epigraph agree or contradict with the meanings of the following text, which is a special technique used by the author of the article, who thus affects the reader’s consciousness, opposing, in the framework of interacting texts, the opinions and events expressed and occurred at different times, but entering into dialogical relations.

Thus, the relationship between the text and its epigraph can also be viewed from the standpoint of hermeneutics. The hermeneutics of an epigraph means two aspects of its interpretation. It must be understood as a quotation, as part of a precedent text, i.e. be interpreted as a hermeneutic object. Secondly, it itself interprets the text that it precedes, i.e. is the subject of interpretation.

In the works of Spanish scientists, a creative approach to the description of research, vivid expression of the author’s style, emotionality and imagery of the presentation, the use of humor and irony elements are distinguished.

5. Colloquial and Everyday Discourse

We consider it possible to single out yet another small category of epigraphs relating to colloquial and everyday discourse. The thesis study on biology devoted to the forecasting of the flightless birds’ habitat, revealed the following inserts from the above discourse:

“Facts are facts, but perception is reality: – Conventional political wisdom”;

“¡.Mírale!, y por eso le pagan... – Alejandro (primavera de 1998), un amigo almeriense cuyas palabras son el eco de la sociedad en la que vivimos; un eco que yo no puedo – ni creo que deba–quitarme de la cabeza” / “Look at him!, and that’s why they pay him” (Seoane Pinilla, 2014).

Further, let us cite as an example the epigraph to the thesis on physics, which is a well-known ironic utterance of the American physicist, Nobel Prize winner Richard Feynman:

“Physics is like sex: sure, it may give some practical results, but that’s not why we do it” – Richard P. Feynman (Jiménez Villacorta, 2007).

Thus, the scientific discourse explicates personal coordinates of the author’s speech subject, who leads a dialogue with an intended addressee. The author’s interpretation activity is reflected within the structures of someone else’s speech. This activity is aimed at reproducing the author’s appraisal positions.

Epigraph gravitates to the status of a mini-text, a “text within a text.” It functions as a separate structural unit, an independent statement and, being withdrawn from its former context, is graphically highlighted in the text of a scientific work. In some cases, the separation of the epigraph from the author’s text is underlined by printing means, for example, in a different font. The epigraph is a complete fragment of the text, which has a definite meaning.

One of the theses on ecology (Barrasa García, 2007) features the highlighting of epigraph in handwriting. The epigraph preceded the third chapter of the thesis devoted to the landscape of Havana (Cuba). A handwritten fragment of the text indicates an invisible presence of the author of another – artistic – work in the text of the scientific work:

Habanaguana tenía la piel almibarada, pero cuando sentía temor por un raro animal, algo que ocurría muy poco, su piel cambiaba de color, se volvía verdosa y tirante / “Habanaguana had honey-colored skin, but when was afraid of a rare animal, something that happened very seldom, its skin changed color, turned greenish and tight.”

In this example, the epigraph carries meaningful and factual information; sets the topic, which is picked up and developed by the text following it on the origin of the Havana city name.

In the analyzed texts of 50 theses, 35% of scientific works featured epigraphs, the main part of which fell on theses defended in such fields of knowledge as ecology, physics and biology. None of the theses on mathematics had an epigraph (Diagram 1). In 50 scientific articles, epigraphs are practically absent, only two epigraphs have been revealed from the total volume of the material.

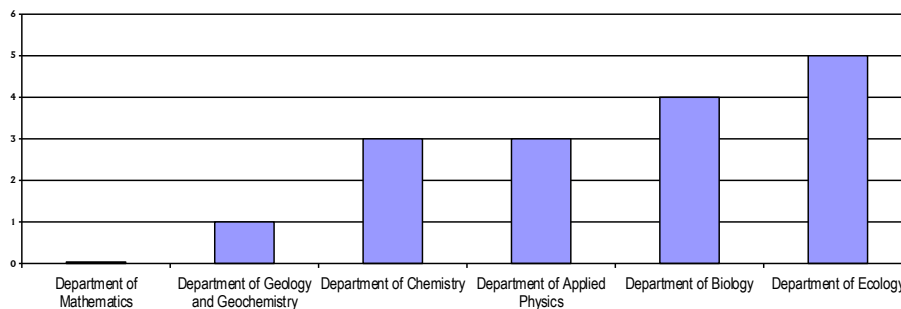


Diagram 1: Frequency of epigraph inclusion into the theses

CONCLUSION

Texts, being an open system, exist in the general cognitive space. The phenomenon of text openness is traditionally considered in connection with the categories of intertextuality and interdiscursivity. In the literary space of a scientific text's author, many voices are heard that contribute to the creation of text polyphonism. There is a clear desire of the author to preserve the codes of the previous, valuable for him, literature.

Thus, we can talk about the existence in the scientific texts of various forms and origins of intertextual links and consider the text as a focus of intertextuality. Intertext is a reflection of the author's worldview orientations, interpretation of all associative references hidden and explicitly contained in the text. This concept is based on the idea of dialogic texts, which testify that the text exists in the general cognitive space.

The essence of intertextuality is that new acts of creativity are performed in language, material, and background and with regard to the values of the tradition, from which they arise and which should be updated by them. The creative talent of the researcher forms a dialogue and involves the text addressee into it.

The epigraph performs two main functions: the informative and the form-determining ones. The epigraph often combines different types of information: about the world, about the creative subject, about the work. Understanding and interpreting the meaning of epigraph is possible after reading the entire text. However, it can happen that the text will be understood only after revealing the meaning of the epigraph. Optionality of the epigraph makes it being of particular importance.

Despite the fact that the epigraph is a rather rare paratext element in the scientific discourse, since it is traditionally considered to be an affiliation of the style of fiction, nevertheless, many Spanish scholars use not only an epigraph to the whole work, but epigraphs to each chapter, which, of course, attracts the attention of the reader and facilitates the text perception.

The epigraph from fiction enriches the scientific text with imagery and grace. A playful epigraph adjusts the reader to a positive response and provides for the ease of perception. An epigraph from works on exact sciences makes the reader think and expand the scope of its interests.

The epigraph is one of the manifestations of interdiscursivity, which includes the reader into the macrocontext of human achievements in the field of science and literature. The correct understanding of the epigraph, and hence the message of the text author, depends on the background knowledge of the reader, to which the author calls using the epigraph. The author can use a simple, plural, indirect epigraph. The epigraph can contain stylistic means, include the author's or anonymous aphorisms. The sources of the epigraph in the scientific text are classical literature, modern literature, philosophical works, and scientific works from other fields of knowledge.

Therefore, the epigraph is a quote from a source text, the choice of which involves its inclusion into the system of another text, so the epigraph, while remaining independent, at the same time becomes part of the "foreign" text and interacts with each of its components. The epigraph was originally labeled as "the personal – someone else's" word. On the one hand, it is integrated into the author's text, and, on the other hand, it is clearly separated from the author's word as an outspokenly alien element, as an explicit quotation that retains an obvious link with its source.

The epigraph highlights the most important elements of content and informs the reader about the author's attitude to the problem; attracts the attention of the reader in order to evoke his interest in the work done; provides a continuous dialogue of various authors, texts and, in general, cultures; creates communicative space of scientific text, and is defined by this communicative space. It is considered as a textological unit, which has the character of encoding meaning in the text, which allows us to discover the mechanism, by which the epigraph influences the understanding of the meaning of the text following it.

An epigraph is a complete fragment of a text that has a complete meaning and functions as an independent utterance. Its main function is dialogizing. An epigraph is one of the ways to introduce a different, non-authoritative point of view into the text. The autonomy of the epigraph is supported by its position (it precedes the text) and graphic design.

In the works by representatives of the Spanish scientific community, the use of the epigraph is one of the main features of an elitist speech culture, i.e. the indicator of a high level of speech, the art of language proficiency. The authors of scientific texts demonstrate high-frequency appeal to the concepts of precedent texts with typological distribution, such as the case-law names associated with historical persons and the contemporary author's environment, contextually related to literary

works or authors of fiction texts, catchphrases, intertextual systems of biblical origin, intertextual systems of friendly communication, precedent expressions with preservation of foreign language spelling, in this particular case – of the English language.

The introduction of the epigraph into the scientific text speaks of the interaction between various discourses as a system of cognitive strategies for specific communication purposes.

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