Discourse approach in teaching foreign language professional communication

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Abstract. This study presents the most important conceptual foundations of the organization of teaching a foreign language to university students regarding the improvement of the quality, efficacy of the content and the basic components of the system used for its implementation in order to form and develop the necessary level of competency. The purpose of the research is to develop and verify the educational system of organizing foreign language teaching for specific purposes of university students using a discourse approach that includes the use of features of professional, academic, official-business and pragmatic discourses. To achieve the aim, the following objectives were set up and solved: 1) to analyze the types of discourse and present a descriptive model of the discursive approach in teaching a foreign language to students of a technical university for specific purposes; 2) to conduct an aspect analysis of the educational discourse on a foreign language for specific purposes of students of a technical university; 3) to organize experimental work related to obtaining an evidence base regarding the effectiveness of the proposed comprehensive system of organizing foreign language teaching for special specific purposes of students of a technical university on the basis of a discourse approach. The methodology of the research covers the pedagogical foundations of the technological approach to the educational process and its organization; the concept of professional competence and intercultural communication; the provisions of discursive discourse linguistics; scientific works in the field of continuing education. The study presents didactic units for inclusion in the content of training, educational programs, teaching aids and textbooks on a foreign language for specific purposes. The results of theoretical research made it possible to develop and apply in the experimental part of the study the authors’ course, a training program and an educational and methodological manual for students.

1 Introduction

In modern society, despite all the processes of globalization and informatization, it is language that remains the most powerful means of human communication. It is quite obvious that the high level of language literacy in English and other internationally reputed languages creates viable external links between the nation and other peoples of the world.

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English is the most commonly used language in the world, whether it is the first, second or one for official communication in most human interactions and transactions. Proficiency in several foreign languages is the main prerequisite for successful communication in the tourism industry, especially taking into account the possibilities of intercultural interaction, as well as for mutual understanding between students participating in exchange programs with various universities, especially in foreign countries. Understanding performance expectations is the key to achieving satisfaction of educational needs in the tourism industry. Good oral and written communication skills are the main skills important for everyday practice and professional activity in the field of tourism at various positions and levels [1-4]. In this regard, tourism and hospitality play a significant role, and intercultural contacts contribute to the development of intercultural dialogue. It is extremely important to raise awareness of the importance of learning a foreign language, as well as to promote the development of intercultural competence in the field of tourism and the hospitality industry. It is in this regard that this study presents the most important conceptual foundations for the organization of foreign language teaching to college students and other specialists in the tourism industry regarding improving the quality, effectiveness of the content and the technology used for its implementation in order to form and develop the necessary level of professionalism.

2 Research methodology

The analysis of psychological and pedagogical literature in order to identify the conceptual and methodological foundations for determining the level of development and content of professional and educational needs of specialists in the tourism industry made it possible to compile and conduct a questionnaire to identify their foreign language educational needs [5-7]. On the other hand, taking into account the needs of employers and determining the demand for specialists in the tourism industry, the level of their professional competence, as well as their level of development of their foreign language communicative competence, a questionnaire for representatives of employment agencies was developed and presented in the study, which allows monitoring and drawing conclusions about the structure and content of foreign language training of tourism specialists.

Having considered the scientific and methodological provisions and the results of the use of the discursive approach in domestic and foreign studies on pedagogy and linguistics, as well as the use of various methods of using the discursive approach and the method of discourse analysis for designing the content of foreign language education of specialists in the tourism industry, we were able to present the author's discursive approach to teaching a foreign language to specialists in the tourism sector. The essence of this approach is to study the types of discourse used in foreign language education in the field of tourism, namely, four subspecies of tourist discourse were identified: social (pragmatic), media, scientific and professional and research [8-10]. Within the framework of the discursive approach, we also used the method of content analysis of authentic texts of the above types of discourse and, as a result of using this method, a list of enlarged didactic units was compiled, intended for inclusion in the content of foreign language training of a specialist in the field of tourism.

The analysis of authentic foreign language texts of various types of discourse used in the field of tourism, such as social and household (pragmatic), media, scientific and professional, research, carried out with the help of applied computer programs of statistical linguistics, allowed us to present the necessary content of didactic units in the discipline of Foreign Language (English) for the formation of professional competence of a specialist in the field of tourism, namely: History of Tourism, Hospitality, Holiday Types, Tourist Destination, Means and Types of Travel, Travel Service, Hotel and Restaurant Service,
Global Travelling, Ecotourism, Accommodations and Catering, Career in Tourism, Types of Hotels, Types of Correspondence in Tourism, Tourist Promotion, Booking, Regulation in Tourism, Business Travel, Types of Cultures.

Also, the analysis of pedagogical and linguistic research made it possible to present the principles of content selection, design the structure and content of educational literature for specialists in the tourism industry, present an approximate sequence of topics within the framework of enlarged didactic units in a foreign language, monitor the professional and educational needs of foreign language specialists in the tourism sector and their potential employers in order to make the necessary adjustments [11-13].

The theoretical and content analysis of scientific sources devoted to the problem of recurrence in education allowed us to identify the features of recurrent education in the foreign language training of specialists in the field of tourism. At the same time, it should be noted that recurrent education is one of the forms of implementation of foreign language training in the professional sphere, along with continuing education and lifelong education. The implementation of the process of continuing education requires constant maintenance of a certain level of satisfaction with the educational needs of the individual. The system of recurrent education of students develops in a different way. Recurrent education refers to the possibility of additional formal, informal or informal education in other areas of professional and scientific fields and in the leisure and household sphere. The system of recurrent education is based on the recurrent approach, the essence of which was considered in the materials of the dissertation research [14, 15].

Based on the understanding of recurrent education described above, we can identify a number of the following main characteristics of recurrent education of tourism industry specialists: active introduction and use of information distance technologies; use of a tutor guidance system; the possibility of obtaining formal education and retraining in the professional field of activity; the possibility of building an individual educational trajectory in several directions at once. The listed features of recurrent education of specialists in the tourism industry are a natural result of the need to meet constantly growing and frequently changing educational and professional needs and allow to increase the level of foreign language communicative competence in the field of tourism.

The set of directions for the development of recurrent foreign language education in the field of tourism can be represented as follows:

1. increasing the level of functional communicative and educational-professional literacy of a specialist in the tourism industry;
2. ensuring professional readiness to use communication technologies in various fields of professional activity and foreign language communication;
3. the need for retraining, mastering a new profession or advanced training;
4. the emergence of new educational, scientific, professional and other categories of interests and hobbies, including pragmatic discourse;
5. the desire to meet the changed and constantly growing requirements of employers to the level of foreign language competence of a specialist in the field of tourism;
6. the desire to build their own trajectory of personal development and professional education, in order to achieve career growth.

The listed directions of the development of recurrent education indicate that this type of education is developing within the framework of three generally accepted models of the organization of continuing education: informational, formal and informal.

Summarizing the results and determining the stages of selecting the content of foreign language education for tourism industry specialists allowed us to formulate a conceptual model for selecting the content of foreign language education for college students in the field of tourism, presented in Figure 1, reflecting in general the elements of the structural
relationship of the technological stages of the discursive technology of foreign language recurrent education of college students in the field of tourism.

As a result of the conducted research, the technological stages of designing the content of foreign language education of college students in the field of tourism were formulated. An important stage of the research is the development of recurrent discursive technology of foreign language education of students in the field of tourism. The use of this technology made it possible to present the results of experimental work and conduct a retrospective analysis of its use at each stage. As a result of the technology application, a model for selecting the content of foreign language education for college students in the field of tourism was developed and presented.

In order to develop the principles of selecting the content of foreign language communicative competence of specialists in the tourism industry, the study examined aspects of foreign language competence and the necessary content of enlarged didactic units in a foreign language for the development of the level of professional competence of a specialist in the tourism sector. The formulated principles allowed us to present a descriptive model of the system of professional communicative competence in the field of a foreign language of tourism specialists, in which we include discursive, strategic and socio-cultural competencies related to the scientific and professional cognitive needs of a specialist in the tourism industry. The aspect analysis of the educational discourse on a foreign language of specialists in the tourism industry allowed to create a descriptive model of professional competence in the field of a foreign language of specialists in the tourism sector (Figure 1).

Fig 1. Descriptive model of professional competence in the field of a foreign language of specialists.

During the experimental implementation of discursive technology in the system of organization of foreign-language recurrent education in the tourism industry within the framework of secondary vocational education, the principles of selection of professional
text content and technological stages of the developed discursive technology of foreign-language recurrent education of college students in the field of tourism were listed and described, as well as the results of its approbation.

The experimental part of the study involved 286 college students studying in the specialty Tourism. To obtain comparative data of the ascertaining and formative types of experiment, data obtained from questionnaires, testing, surveys, included and indirect observation, analysis of the formation of foreign-language communicative competence, the results of a survey of representatives of direct employers of the tourism industry and monitoring of student employment related to the results of the use of foreign-language educational content created using the author's discursive technology were used.

The features of the developed technology regarding the possibility of recurrent access to foreign language education in accordance with the actualization of educational and professional needs make it possible to use it both in the process of teaching students and as a conceptual basis for the organization of foreign language training of specialists in the tourism industry at advanced training and professional retraining courses, as well as in the areas of non-formal and informal education. The technological stages that make it possible to implement recurrent foreign language education of specialists in the tourism industry are presented in the study in the following form:

1. Determination of foreign language educational needs of students in the tourism sector (diagnostic stage).
2. Designing the content and organization of foreign language education of students using authentic texts of various types of discourse (experimental and procedural stage).
3. Analysis of the results of the use of recurrent discursive technology of foreign language education of students (the stage of retrospective analysis and correction of the content and organization of foreign language teaching).

At the first stage, diagnostic work is carried out to identify foreign language educational needs and the level of development of linguistic and intercultural competencies of students. Diagnostics is carried out on the basis of testing and questionnaires of students, which relate to the motivational and cognitive aspects of the learning process.

At the second experimental and procedural stage, the design of the content of foreign language education and its organization is carried out in order to meet the needs of students identified at the diagnostic stage. The content development is based on the use of authentic texts of certain types of discourses in the field of tourism, namely: social (pragmatic), media, scientific, professional and professional-business discourses. Then, with the help of statistical analysis computer programs, the frequency of the use of lexical units and grammatical forms corresponding to them in the texts of various discourses is determined in order to include them in educational and didactic materials for foreign language teaching of students in the field of tourism. At the second stage, the content of foreign language education is also selected based on content analysis. In this regard, we formulated the principles of selection of foreign-language educational content, according to which the selected didactic units were included in educational materials for students. When compiling textbooks, textbooks and didactic materials for them, the principles of frequency, taking into account the educational needs of students, authenticity, and attribution to a certain type of discourse were used. Topics such as "Tourism and Hospitality", "Ecotourism", "Cultures and Behavior", "Tourism Industry", "Careers in Tourism Industry" and others were selected for inclusion in the work program of the discipline "Foreign Language".

At the third stage, a retrospective analysis of the results of the use of recurrent discursive technology of foreign language education and monitoring of student satisfaction was carried out on the basis of testing the level of development of communicative foreign language skills and questioning the level of development of intercultural competence. The analysis of the questionnaires showed significant positive dynamics in terms of motivation.
for learning a foreign language, increased interest in the recurrent study of a foreign language, as well as the need and relevance for college students to include authentic text materials based on the application of a discursive approach to their selection.

3 Results and discussion

To obtain comparative data of the ascertaining and forming experiments, final sections were conducted in the form of questionnaires, testing, survey, observation, analysis of speech activity products and academic performance. Also, to check the effectiveness of training with the use of discursive technology, surveys of employers and data on the employment of graduates were conducted. The internal indicator of obtaining experimental data was the comparative results and the positive dynamics of academic performance. The experimental study also noted an increase in the level of satisfaction with foreign-language educational content developed and using discursive technology and a discursive approach, which constituted the content of the experiment.

The obtained results of the ascertaining experiment regarding students' satisfaction with traditional foreign-language educational content turned out to be low, which justified the need to introduce discursive technology into the practice of foreign-language teaching of students, since a comparative analysis of the results of students showed the initial lack of consideration of the types of discourse significant for the tourism industry in the content of foreign-language teaching of students.

Based on the analysis of the data obtained, we have made the following conclusions: 1) at this stage, in both groups, the majority of students are focused on pragmatic and everyday discourse in foreign language teaching; 2) for both groups, mastering professional and scientific-professional types of discourse is a significant characteristic of foreign language teaching; 3) students lack an understanding of the role of media discourse in foreign language teaching.

Further, taking into account the available data on the initial content of a foreign language educational need, we moved on to a formative experiment consisting in the implementation of discursive technology in the practice of selecting the content of didactic manuals using the discursive technology developed by us and checking its effectiveness based on the assessment by students and potential employers of the developed work program in a foreign language and a textbook.

To determine personal satisfaction with educational content, we used the methodology "Value orientations" by M. Rokich. It is interesting to note that the number of students who put cognition, development, education, diligence, responsibility in the first place in the hierarchy of educational values when using discursive technology was more than 80%.

We asked students to evaluate some aspects of foreign language educational content in scores from 1 to 5. As a result of the analysis of the data obtained, we obtained the following results characterizing the improvement of the attitude of students to foreign-language educational content.

At the final stage of the experimental work, students were asked to evaluate the educational content developed by us according to a five-point system. As a result of the survey, data were obtained on the attitude of students of the control and experimental groups to foreign-language educational content.

As a result of the study, the main aspects, didactic components and the necessary content of enlarged didactic units for the formation of professional foreign-language competence of a specialist in the field of tourism were identified, and a descriptive model of the system of professional competence in the field of a foreign language of specialists in the field of tourism was presented.
4 Conclusion

As part of the study, we examined the technology of teaching foreign language communication in tourism education based on a discursive approach, which is of particular importance for the development of foreign language communicative competence of students. Professional tourism education is a complex system, the main elements of which are: students; educational and scientific organizations and their associations, tourism and education management bodies; tourism industry enterprises; educational programs; federal state educational standards and requirements; professional standards and the system of professional certification of specialists, as well as the content side of the educational process. It is important to note that the system of organization of foreign-language recurrent education in the field of tourism industry is a process of formation of culture and communication in the minds of each participant in this process.

Recurrent foreign language education, organized according to the characteristics just described, motivates students to continuous education, self-education and self-development, since a foreign language has penetrated into all spheres of our life, it forms a culture of working with authentic textual sources of professional information. Recurrent foreign language education in the system of continuing education contributes to building a personality-oriented learning trajectory.

The experimental work was attended by 480 students who were offered foreign language content created on the basis of the authors’ discourse technology. The developed training program on a foreign language and an educational and methodological manual were used in the educational process of the university the past three years. Based on the conceptual findings, the study of a foreign language for special purposes has five linguistic and didactic aspects:

─ the aspect of intercultural interaction,
─ the communicative aspect,
─ the pragmatic aspect,
─ the professional aspect and the academic aspect.

We assume that these aspects can be used as linguistic methodological principles of teaching a foreign language for specific purposes.

The used provisions of the discourse approach to the organization of the teaching content allowed us to conclude that it is expedient to use the principles of drawing up textbooks developed in the study on the basis of selection and systematization of the content of foreign language teaching for specific purposes of students of a technical university using a discourse approach proposed in the study.

In conclusion, the types of discourse and the descriptive model of the discourse approach in teaching a foreign language were analyzed and presented, as well as an aspect analysis of the educational discourse on a foreign language for specific purposes was carried out, and the main aspects of its competence and professional content were listed.

References

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