

LEXICAL PECULIARITIES OF THE ENGLISH WRITTEN EDUCATIONAL DISCOURSE

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The article deals with lexical peculiarities of the English written educational discourse. It considers the notion 'discourse', analyses specific features of the English written educational discourse and explains the importance of the educational discourse study as one of the types of institutional discourse. The research is focused on establishing key lexical means and peculiarities of the English written educational discourse.

Key words: *discourse, English written educational discourse, lexical means, scientific text, academic writing.*

An essential trend in the development of the modern world is the enhancement of the role of education, giving it an important status and defining it as a key factor in the further society development. At the same time the number of studies of educational discourse in linguistics is increasing. Due to the leading role of education there is a need for examining the notion of 'educational discourse' and determine its characteristics in the field of linguistics. The educational discourse is a dynamic phenomenon open for changes. Most changes are inherent in lexical component of the discourse, particularly as regards the English language. The article covers the main lexical means characteristic of English educational discourse. The educational discourse has been already studied by L. O. Hluhova, N. A. Antonova, A. A. Kharkovskaya, D. A. Honcharova, L. V. Salohub in terms of its structure and typical features.

The relevance of the study is stipulated by the necessity to study the specifics of English scientific texts, their linguistic and cultural aspects since such researches can enhance the level of written academic works in Ukraine, to develop the competence of Ukrainian students and scholars in academic writing. These aspects are important today because they are a part of the process of ensuring the access of Ukrainian young scientists to the international scientific community and writing scientific papers on the international level, as well as ensuring their competitiveness in this area. The relevance is also defined by the necessity of further study of lexical peculiarities in English educational discourse since there are some gaps in this domain

The objective of the article is to define the key lexical means and analyse their peculiarities usage in the English written educational discourse.

The objective implies the following **tasks of the research**:

1. To explicate the notions 'discourse' and 'educational discourse';
2. To define lexical and structural peculiarities of the English written educational discourse;
3. To clarify the use of lexical units in the English written educational discourse.

The object of the article is the English written educational discourse while **the specific research topic** is lexical and structural peculiarities of the English written educational discourse. The **material** for the study contains English scientific papers on pedagogy.

The research methods include contextual analysis to study lexical features along with context, descriptive method to analyze and explain the main lexical means in educational discourse.

‘Discourse’ is one of the basic notions in modern linguistics and text linguistics. Discourse is a complex multidimensional phenomenon that attracts more researchers’ attention in different fields of linguistics. It is a complex communicative phenomenon with information about participants of communication, social context and knowledge about creation and comprehension of the text.

Nowadays discourse studies belong to one of the most productive linguistic research areas. In spite of the high philologists’ interest to the notion *discourse* its interpretation is till multiple-valued and in many works is determined by the research tasks [1, p. 53].

According to N. D. Arutyunova, discourse is a coherent text with extra-linguistic, pragmatical, socio-cultural, psychological and other factors, the text taken in event aspect; the speech considered as purposeful social action, as the component participating in interaction of people and the mechanism of their consciousness [2. p. 136].

V. Z. Demyankov considers discourse as an arbitrary piece of text consisting of more than one sentences or independent part of the proposal. Elements of the discourse comprise: set out the events, participants, performance information and the “non-event”; the circumstances surrounding the event; the background, explaining the events; assessment of participants in the events; information that relates to the events of discourse [3, p. 81].

Discourse is a text that consists of communicative units of language, sentences and their combinations in larger unities that are in continuous semantic relations.

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary gives the following definitions to the notion ‘discourse’: verbal interchange of ideals; formal and orderly and usually extended expression of thought on a subject; connected speech or writing; a linguistic unit (such as a conversation or a story) larger than a sentence; a mode of organizing knowledge, ideals, or experience that is rooted in language and its concrete context [4].

Discourse has linguistic and extra-linguistic parameters that work together. To extra-linguistic parameter belong participants of the communicative act that perform certain social roles and also possess a unique set of background knowledge. The linguistic parameters of the discourse are usually defined by targets and intentions, realized in the course of the communicative act.

One of the modern types of discourses is the educational discourse that has its own sets of targets. The educational discourse is one of the types of the institutional discourse whose specificity is revealed in the type of social institution that is identified in the collective consciousness by a special name, summarized in the key concept of this institution [5, p. 8].

The educational discourse as one of the types of institutional discourses is defined as the area of communication connected to a specific sphere of human activity – obtaining and transferring of scientific knowledge.

The essential factors of educational discourse formation are: 1) scientific character; 2) accuracy; 3) coherence, consistency; 4) information availability; 5) great variety; 6) language purity; 7) expressiveness [6, p. 9].

In the formation of the educational discourse the most important qualities for the author of the text/discourse are the variety and purity of language. These characteristics show the active thesaurus of the participant of communication. The purity of language enhances the quality of speech and create favorable atmosphere for communication.

The main function of the educational discourse is knowledge dissemination among people, enhancement of their educational level thus providing them with more opportunities for self-development.

The establishment of the European Higher Educational Area requires the choice of communication language that could bring the educational institutions of different countries of Europe and the United States together. Today such language, language *lingua franca*, is English. As a result of such processes as globalization and international integration the English educational discourse can undergo certain changes, especially what concerns its vocabulary.

The educational discourse should have a clear and logical structure, cogent and well-defined argumentation, specific means of expressiveness. Correctly selected vocabulary and

appropriate structures are key features of successfully written texts of educational discourse.

English written educational texts abound with passive constructions; they are more common in such kinds of works because the whole attention is focused on specific facts and specific information on the key issue that author wants to present. For example:

1. *To determine this, a drawing assessment task (project base learning) was issued to the Technology Education pre-service teachers enrolled in the unit Computer Aided Graphics and Design [7].*

2. *Given the fact that both vocabulary measures (breadth and depth tests) were administered in English and required participants to acknowledge the target word's equivalent in English, it wouldn't be a fair measure to include learners that were not dominant English speakers [8].*

3. *This innovative program was devised to advance pedagogical competencies in mathematics education for both new and veteran teachers [9].*

4. *The study was conducted in Semester one, 2012 at a large multi-campus university in Queensland [9], sentences can begin with personal or impersonal pronouns:*

English written educational discourse is characterized by active use of the personal pronoun *we*, even though the article can be written by one author. For example:

1. *Through reflection and dialogue from the participants, we begin to understand how alternative methods to education move beyond the realm of the classroom and collectively into the hands of the teacher, young children, and college students [11].*

2. *We believe the findings are not limited to teacher education and can be generalized for consideration in other higher education contexts [10].*

The use of the personal pronoun *we* in this case is stipulated by the scientific ethics.

The necessity to use the active voice in the English language, is due to the fact that scientists and researchers by publishing any scientific work, take responsibility for its content. The passive voice shows the specific research topic, whereas the active voice brings authors, researchers, scientists to the forefront. Anyway the usage of active voice in English scientific texts of educational discourse is not common.

The scientific English language has more nouns than verbs. Nominalization is an important lexical mean of educational discourse (*distribute – distribution, expose – exposure, supervise – supervision, evaluate – evaluation, introduce – introduction, participate – participation, assess – assessment, recognize – recognition, inform – information*). Nominalization makes the text more concise, creative, interesting, conveys impersonal tone that is one of the key features of English written educational discourse. It also helps to make a text more formal. For example:

3. *Many teachers believe that participation in Drama In Education (DIE), where students are encouraged to take on roles of others, facilitates the development of their students socially, emotionally and intellectually [12].*

4. *I therefore propose a minimal set of diagnostics and mnemonics permitting faster evaluation of article use and better pattern retention [13].*

It is necessary to note the importance of using *linking words* in educational discourse. They help to connect ideas, thoughts within sentences or paragraphs. There are two types of linking words: conjunctions (*and, that, or, though, although, as...as, both...and, even though, while...*) and transition words (*as can be seen, in addition, in fact, comparatively, not to mention, to sum up, as shown above, as has been noted, first, second, third...*). It is a vital mean to make a scientific work that is full of different terms, specific notions easier to comprehend. For example:

5. *Moreover, we asked that the WebQuest should be produced so that another person could easily teach it, and in addition to this, it would be easily usable by future high school students for independent learning study [14].*

6. *In fact conjugation is a very special kind of action because G acts on itself not merely as a set but as a group [15].*

7. *Finally*, this study was interested in examining the relationship between the benefit of ICALL tools and learner awareness – a quality of language learning that has been highly valued in achieving and working towards autonomous learning [8].

Introductory phrases are used for an introduction to the topic, new paragraphs, new thoughts. They can be different: *the paper discuss...*, *the paper presents...*, *it will be shown that...*, *the chapter is devoted...*, *this sections examines...*, *the study attempts to*, *the research demonstrates*, *the purpose of this contribution is too review*, *the aim of this article is to*, *the article deals with*, etc. Such phrases are very common in English written educational discourse and are also used for setting the stage for the main part of the sentence. Using the introductory phrase the author is signaling to the reader that the central message of the sentence is yet to come. Introductory phrases prepare the reader for the next arguments, thoughts, ideas that can be crucial in the work and need to be additionally emphasized by the author. For example:

8. *This present study reports on how an Intelligent CALL tool (ICALL), Langbot, helps learners at the beginner and intermediate levels with their lexical acquisition* [7].

9. *This paper reports the findings of research conducted by three teacher educators about the effects on teaching and learning from implementing a variety of digital technologies in their undergraduate courses* [10].

10. *This article discusses the efficacy of using vodcasting as a pedagogical tool, in developing procedural knowledge and skills in computer aided design and drawing, to pre-service teachers studying via distance education, and demonstrates the capacity for vodcasts to foster autonomous student learning* [7].

Information in texts of educational discourse should be presented clearly, precisely without any redundancies. One of the ways to reduce redundancy and to increase clarity is to minimize the number of unnecessary words. For example: *on a regular basis – regularly*, *if it all possible – as possible*, *during the month of April – in April*, *has an ability to – can*, *which goes under the name – is called*, *take into consideration – consider*, *are of the same opinion – agree*, *have an effect on – affect*, *during the time that – while* etc. Short but comprehensive words and lexical units should be used in the English written educational discourse. The short variants of words have the same meaning but they make the scientific text easier to understand.

11. *The word-of-the-day would pop-up spontaneously while the participant used the tool* [8].

12. *Specifically, technology used to support university courses can directly affect student satisfaction and success through promoting ease of interaction and understanding of course materials, increase facilitation between students and faculty* [10].

13. *Consider skill acquisition theory (SAT), which seeks to describe the acquisition of any skill, such as learning to play a sport, drive a car, or play a musical instrument* [13].

Moreover the English written educational discourse is characterized by formal language, using neutral or formal vocabulary instead of spoken language. For example: *to talk about – to discuss*, *to get – to obtain or to acquire*, *to try – to attempt*, *to have a look at – to examine*, *to found out – to discovered*, *to boost – to promote*, *to add – to include*, *to point out – to emphasize* etc.

14. *However, when attempting to employ articles accurately, it seems a virtual impossibility to give conscious consideration to all the many factors involved in the system as a whole* [13].

15. *Firstly, researchers often discuss the importance of including the study of contemporary artists who are dealing with human rights issues* [14].

16. *Desired educational outcomes include the development of both explicit and tacit knowledge of what may be considered “best practice” in design and the manipulation of materials for production purposes* [7].

In the informal English language verb contractions or short forms of the verb are often used. In scientific texts verb contractions are used rarely. It concerns:

- contractions with the verb *be* (*I'm – I am, you're – you are, we're – we are, where's – where is, how's – how is, why's – why is, isn't – is not, aren't – are not, weren't – were not etc.*);
- contractions with the verb *have* (*I've – I have, she'd – she had, haven't – have not, hadn't – had not, where's – where has, why's – why has, the story's begun – the story has begun etc.*);
- contractions with the verb *do* (*don't – do not, didn't – did not, doesn't – does not etc.*);
- contractions of *other models* (*can't – cannot, couldn't – could not, mayn't – may not, mightn't – might not, mustn't – must not, needn't – need not, won't – will not, wouldn't – would not, etc.*).

Full forms of the verbs make the English written educational discourse more formal, help to avoid ambiguity, present to the reader the smallest but significant elements of the text. These small parts can really make the difference. For example:

17. *The correlational data ultimately conclude, however, that the number of messages does not indicate a higher depth score (unlike the significant correlation for breadth)* [8].

18. *However, our results indicate that in reality both the teaching and learning involved in utilising new technologies is not static and instead may shift between processes and stages in a dynamic way depending on the experience, motivation and disposition of the teacher and the learner* [10].

19. *To illustrate use of the diagnostics, consider the clause 'He found fish', in which the article has not yet been specified* [11].

20. *Though the task given to the students was considerably basic in comparison to the civic centre, one cannot discount the additional self-education that may have resulted from interested students looking to develop their skills further* [7].

Conclusions. The educational discourse is one of the types of institutional discourse and it is defined as an area of communication and has highly important function – transferring of scientific knowledge. Having researched the lexical and structural peculiarities of the English written educational discourse, we differentiate its following features: vast variety of passive constructions and fewer number of active constructions, active use of the personal pronoun *we*, nominalization, usage of linking words and introductory phrases, reduction of unnecessary words, formal words and verb contractions. Practical value of the research lies in the detailed outline of main lexical features of the English written educational discourse that makes it easier for researchers to write academic and scientific works. The prospect of the research is in the comprehensive multicultural comparative analysis of English educational discourse considering both its oral representation and written form.

ЛЕКСИЧНІ ОСОБЛИВОСТІ АНГЛОМОВНОГО ПИСЬМОВОГО ОСВІТНЬОГО ДИСКУРСУ

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У статті розглянуто лексичні особливості англомовного письмового освітнього дискурсу. Розглядається поняття дискурсу, аналізуються особливі характеристики англомовного письмового освітнього дискурсу, обґрунтовується важливість дослідження освітнього дискурсу як одного з типів інституційного. Дослідження зосереджено на виявленні ключових лексичних засобів та особливостей англомовного письмового освітнього дискурсу.

Ключові слова: дискурс, англомовний письмовий освітній дискурс, лексичні засоби, науковий текст, академічне письмо.

ЛЕКСИЧЕСКИЕ ОСОБЕННОСТИ АНГЛОЯЗЫЧНОГО ПИСЬМЕННОГО ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНОГО ДИСКУРСА

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В статье рассматриваются лексические особенности англоязычного письменного образовательного дискурса. Рассматривается понятие дискурса, анализируются особые характеристики англоязычного письменного образовательного дискурса, объясняется важность образовательного дискурса как одного из типов институционального. Исследование сосредоточено на выявлении ключевых лексических средств и особенностей англоязычного письменного образовательного дискурса.

Ключевые слова: дискурс, англоязычный письменный образовательный дискурс, лексические средства, научный текст, академическое письмо.

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