Features of Professional Discourse of English Teacher

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FEATURES OF PROFESSIONAL DISCOURSE OF ENGLISH TEACHER

Abstract. In the article, English teacher is viewed as a secondary language personality, a personality reconstructed on the basis of the language means used in professional communication in relation to lingua didactics. Subjected to analysis is the discourse structure of the English Teacher’s professional communication found in the world famous tutorials The Teachers Knowledge Test Course (CUP, 2012), Teaching by Principles (Pearson/Longman, 2007) and Languages for Specific Purposes (CUP, 2010). The article presents a survey of the corresponding scholarly literature on the problems of professional communication and Languages for Specific Purposes, in general, and English for Language Pedagogy, in particular.

Keywords: English for Language Pedagogy, secondary language personality, discourse structure, special sentence patterns.

Language for Specific Purposes (LSP) is probably the most challenging branch in linguistics. LSP is, first, an approach to training in a foreign language based on the needs of personality within a certain situation and professional sphere, a tool for achieving the objectives. “The most important features of English for Specific Purposes in relation to English for General Purposes lie in the fact that the status of the English language changes from being a subject in its own right to a service industry for other specialisms” [3: 164].

The object of research is English for Language Pedagogy (ELP), a specific language system in use within its institutional context. Like other variants of professional intercourse, ELP has its own system of interrelated language means [2: 249]. In relation to the sphere of lingua didactics, a teacher is viewed as a secondary language personality. The success of foreign language acquisition and the culture standing behind it, as well as the manifestation of the features of the secondary language personality in pupils, may be provided by the disclosure of another world picture in the course of foreign languages training.

The subject of research is the discourse structure used by ELP teachers and students in the course of exchange of professional information. The tool for training
the skills and abilities, necessary for professional communication is **features of discourse** and specific sentence patterns.

The conceptual material, although challenging in content, seems easy to read due to its grammatical and discourse structure. The analysis of the empiric material has revealed certain **features of textual structure** to present arguments transparently and coherently, distributing its information content in ways, which make it seem accessible and digestible for ELP students. Here are some of them:

**Discourse structure**

- There is a balance between abstract and concrete points. General discussion alternates with accounts of experiments.

*Presentation techniques are the ways used by the teacher to focus learners’ attention on the meaning, use and sometimes form of new language when introducing them for the first time. Look at the presentation stages (the areas that are shaded) in these descriptions of the two lessons… [4:90].*

- The problems are explained as they arose over time. The reader is told how the thinking developed.

*Learners need to use language to interact. This gives them the opportunity to experiment with language and find out how successful their communication is [4: 59].*

- Most paragraphs begin with a general thematic point, and later sentences elaborate. The theme of the next paragraph then drives from the previous one’s elaboration.

*…The solution is often to use both types of activity.*

*The formal assessment activities discussed above are used to assess learners on a single occasion, like a photograph [4:147].*

- A new element at the end of one sentence is often picked up as a given element at the beginning of the next, e.g.

*Connected text is referred to as discourse. Discourse is connected by grammar and vocabulary and / or our knowledge of the world [4: 31].*

- The sentences usually have a cross-reference back to a preceding sentence or clause. This makes it clear that a given topic is still being discussed, and reduces the
scope for vagueness.

- The teacher models (gives a clear example of the target language) at two points in this teaching sequence. It is important, when we model language orally, that we say only what we want learners to repeat, as the teacher does here [4:185].

**Special sentence-patterns**

Another characteristic feature of professional written discourse style is special sentence-patterns. They are of three types: postulatory, argumentative and formulative. A hypothesis or a forecast must be based on facts already known, on facts systematized and defined. Therefore, every piece of academic writing will begin with postulatory statements, which are taken as self-evident and needing no proof.

An interactive teacher is by definition one, who is fully aware of the group dynamics of a class [1:214].

A reference to these facts is only preliminary to the exposition of the writer’s ideas and is therefore summed up in precisely formulated statements accompanied, if considered necessary, by references to sources.

As Dornyei and Murphey (2003) explained, the success of classroom learning is very much dependent on how students relate to each other, what the classroom environment is, how efficiently students cooperate and communicate with each other...[1:214].

The writer’s own ideas are also shaped in formulae, which are enunciation of an argument, the result of an investigation, etc. that is the sentence, which sums up the argument, is generally a kind of clincher sentence:

It is important to remember that effective interaction within the dynamics of a classroom is a gradual incremental process [1:214].

The described ways of presenting challenging conceptual materials correlates with the main communicative purpose of teaching discourse: to deliver certain professional information to a reader clearly and precisely, in a formal-logical way.

**References**


This work is planned as a SIG presentation