

# Textbook on mastering the French scientific academic discourse skills

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## Abstract

This paper is devoted to the theoretical and methodological justification of the textbook entitled "Comment rédiger un essai en droit", which is aimed at mastering the skills of the French scientific academic discourse by law students of the senior stages of their university studies. The paper reveals the subject-functional and personal-significant potentials of the textbook, offers a detailed list of the formed discursive competence components. It is emphasized that the production of its textual embodiment is a creative process that ends with the students writing a research paper. This process is characterized by complex logical and cognitive operations, intensive search activity, which determine not only the foreign language skills formation, but also the development of the future specialists' personality. In this regard, the creation of a professional essay to be a pedagogical technology that ensures such a process implementation and the creation of a new work, at the same time. Accordingly, its stages are distinguished, as well as the skills, abilities, and strategies to be formed in correlation to each of them. The methodology of their formation includes a certain set of knowledge delivered to the students, their doing a cycle of exercises, characterized as cognitive, conditional-communicative, and purely communicative. It is also emphasized that the developed methodology effectiveness was tested as a result of its long-term application at the two universities, on the basis of ongoing monitoring, conducting inter-semester and final state exams.

*Keywords:* French academic discourse, pedagogical technology, training methodology.

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## Introduction

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Mastering the skills of the French scientific academic discourse is considered by the authors of the paper as an integral component of the overall strategic goal of foreign-language professional education for non-philological students, which, according to the dominant position, consists in the formation of intercultural foreign-language professional communicative competence (Yarotskaya, 2014; Verbitskiy, 2018).

This position is due to the global processes that characterize the modern information society — the dynamics of scientific progress, the intensive development of the intellectual labor market, its high competitiveness and, as a result, the objective need for specialists who can find the necessary scientific information in foreign languages, process it, and produce their own scientific works.

The importance of involving university students in research activities, in relation to Russian and foreign professional culture in order to educate creative, independent-minded people, is fixed by a number of current government documents (Federal Law, 2012).

In solidarity with these attitudes, the authors of the paper have been practicing such forms of research work as making a report at a scientific conference, writing an essay on a scientific topic, a final qualifying work, and their presentation. They have been collaborating with French-speaking law students specializing in the legal regulation of foreign economic activity, private international law, and European law for a number of years.

This long-term educational and practical work, as well as the actual research activity, allowed the authors to put forward a new genre of scientific academic discourse – a professional essay and to specify its type – a professional essay in the sphere of law (Khomyakova, Tunitskaya, 2020).

The specificity of the professional essay as a genre of scientific academic discourse is that it is created in the process of cognitive activity of subjects of science of a special category – non-philological students who make their first attempts in writing research papers in their native and foreign languages. It is addressed to the relevant discursive community — this very educational institution teachers, and in the case of its writing in a foreign language –the teacher of a foreign language and the group members.

It seems obvious that the degree of the problems' elaboration involved in such works, their focus and, in general, the measure of responsibility for them will be limited, in comparison with the actual scientific paper, monograph or dissertation, which addressed the entire scientific community of the country, and through their abstracts — the entire world community. At the same time, the measure of responsibility for them is very high. Thus, the professional essay occupies its initial niche in the scientific academic discourse genres hierarchy, which does not detract from its importance as the first stage that ensures the further progressive development of a creative, autonomous, critically thinking professional personality.

From the point of view of the students' performance of certain educational actions explained by specific logical and cognitive operations, the professional essay acts simultaneously as an appropriate pedagogical technology, by which we understand a joint teacher and students' project aimed at achieving a certain goal of teaching, educating and developing the personality of both subjects (Verbitskiy, 2018).

As such, the technology of a professional essay can be considered as a cross-cultural generic analog, on the one hand, in relation to the concepts of coursework and final qualification work inherent in the Russian education system, and, on the other hand, in relation to the titles - *Dissertation* and *Mémoire de recherche*, typical of the French educational culture. Accordingly, the technology of professional essays in the sphere of law is a generic analogue in relation to the two types of research works created within the framework of the French legal culture – *Dissertation juridique* and *Mémoire de recherche en droit*.

Its communicative goal-setting consists in demonstrating the author's competence, in formulating his/her position on a scientific problem. It is implemented in connection with the processing of a number of sources, the selection of certain speech formations / functional-semantic types of speech (explication, definition, comparison, interpretation, and proof) and the production of a complete work that embodies scientific discourse – a scientific text as its final embodiment, on this basis and through the strategy of coherence and cohesion.

The discursive heterogeneity of the professional essay in the sphere of law is specific. It is connected with the fact that certain norms / instruments that embody legal discursive formations regulate any legal phenomenon under study. They are components of the scientific research content and their significance consists in the fact that they either embody the subject of research itself, or illustrate the elements of the legal justification to which the author appeals in his evidentiary reasoning. Accordingly, any scientific work in the sphere of law, including a professional essay, inevitably combines the speech types that characterize the scientific discourse itself, with the inclusion of various subspecies of legal discourse. Thus, law students of the specified training profile view contractual, legislative, and jurisdictional discourses when they write a professional essay.

The compositional scheme of creating a professional essay is the same as in the works of other genres of scientific academic discourse. It includes the introduction, the main part, and the conclusion.

The task is to form the skills of writing a professional essay in the sphere of law as a type of research work. Its specific properties determine the leading goal and the accompanying methodological tasks of the projected book.

### **Purpose and objectives of the study**

The goal of the future textbook is to form the skills of the French scientific academic discourse through the technology of professional essay in the sphere of law — the skills of written production of this technology and its subsequent oral presentation. In other words, on the basis of its linguo-didactic and personal development potential, the book is aimed at ensuring the consistent formation of foreign-language professional discursive competence of students of the specified target group.

The methodological objectives that specify the main goal are as follows:

1. The book introduction shall reveal the subject content of the book, as well as the importance of mastering the research activities' structure, which allows one to create works to be included in the register of those necessary for obtaining diplomas of different levels in Russian and French universities.
2. The book preface shall include recommendations and instructions for writing and presenting a professional essay in the sphere of law, which is a guide for students' action.
3. Authentic foreign-cultural text material shall be selected as the subject basis of the tasks included in the textbook, according to the following criteria:
  - conformity to the genres of the French scientific academic discourse (*Dissertation juridique, Mémoire de recherche en droit, Licence en droit, Thèse de doctorat*). Each of these texts should enrich students, revealing a foreign professional world view to them (legal);
  - matching the context of textbook users' future work. We'd like to recall that it addresses law students specializing in the sphere of legal regulation of foreign economic relations / international trade law, private international law, European law.
4. The knowledge component of the book shall be formulated so that it would include the essential properties of scientific discourse and the above-mentioned subspecies of legal discourse, the rules for their speech implementation, a certain list of socio-cultural knowledge that ensures the subsequent successful implementation of the exercise cycle.
5. A cycle of exercises shall be prepared, organized and pre-tested in a certain way. Simultaneously with the knowledge component, it should realize the main goal of the projected book, which consists in the formation of appropriate linguistic professional skills and strategies with the parallel development of students' personal qualities, such as autonomy, creative and critical thinking, readiness for dialogue in a situation of intercultural professional communication.

The authors believe that the presented broad scope of methodological tasks and a systematic approach to their implementation characterize this project as a full-fledged textbook project.

## **Literature review**

The bibliographic references in this paper are presented by works that reveal the achievements of modern scientific knowledge, which led to the above-mentioned ideology of the future textbook.

Thus, the leading paradigms that ensure the progressive development of the theory and methodology of teaching a foreign language, which we adopt, were identified in E. G. Tareva's works and are reduced to the following: communicative, competence-based, anthropocentric, axiological, cultural ones (Tareva, 2017).

It is legitimate to add to them those that are put forward by actively developing linguo-didactics for special purposes (Verbitskiy, 2018) — contextual, intersubject, intercultural ones.

When selecting the subject-functional content of the textbook, we also relied on the provisions of the contextual education theory (Verbitskiy, 2018), the professional thinking theory (Matyushkin, 2003), the argumentation theory (Alekseev, 1999), discursive analysis and cognitive linguistics.

We will consistently demonstrate our commitment to the relevant guidelines by presenting the methodological justification of the textbook, as well as by presenting the discussion issues related to its content.

### **Methodology**

The proposed methodology of the course and the future textbook was determined by the postulates put forward by Russian leading scientists in the above-mentioned areas of scientific knowledge. It was also based on a comparative study of the content of textbooks on a foreign language specialty, taking into account the best pedagogical experience on the subject under consideration, the personal long-term experience of the paper authors associated with teaching law students the skills of French scientific academic discourse.

We postulate the validity of including a professional essay in the sphere of law into the pedagogical technology curriculum, starting from the second semester of the fourth year of the university study.

The fact is that by this stage, students gain significant research activity and some experience in generating productive scientific speech in their native language, which is associated with previous multiple writing of term papers, preparing reports and presenting them at scientific university conferences.

The current trend of introducing students from the first years of the university study to research activities provides theoretical study and practical mastery of such activities' structure. It is based on the skills determined by the specific characteristics inherent in all scientific academic works, regardless of the language in which they are created.

Another factor, due to which we call the 4th year a starting stage in learning French scientific academic discourse, is that by the final stage of undergraduate studies, students have developed sufficiently significant skills in foreign language textual activity. They already tried working with artistic, journalistic and political texts, developed reading strategies (introductory, search, training), which allows them to move on to working with prominent legal literature.

Using this 'fertile ground', starting from the second semester of the fourth year of the university study, we begin to work on the foreign-language academic scientific discourse and continue it throughout the next three semesters of the Master's program. Thus, we have identified the future textbook addressee: these are students of the senior courses of a non-linguistic university.

Speaking about the conditions of using the textbook, it is also important to characterize the actual stages of written production and oral presentation of the research work of the genre under consideration. We distinguish three such stages.

The first of them – search – involves the student's conscious choice of the research topic, due to his scientific aspirations, the subsequent search for the necessary literature, the hypothesis and research tasks definition. The impulse that encourages a worthy scientific work creation is the high motivation that makes the student study any legal problem further. This stage is characterized by the "extraction" of new knowledge, the "discovery" of new solutions.

Such achievements occur on the basis of conclusions of the inductive-deductive type or conclusions by analogy inherent in the creative scientific process. Accordingly, the fundamental significance of the search stage of the research activity structure is that, due to the cognitive processes that determine its implementation, the scientific works authors form creative, as well as critical professional thinking.

Another important result of the search period is the students' introduction to a new conceptual and professional world view, to a foreign professional culture — in our case, to the French legal culture, through the study of "worthy" legal literature.

The significance of the second – creative — stage of creating a professional essay consists in writing a complete research work based on the acquired relevant knowledge, skills and strategies that are systematized below.

The focus of the final stage — the presentation of the prepared research work — is, in general, developing the oral scientific speech and scientific dialogue skills (Khomyakova, Tunitskaya, 2020).

We will focus on the structure of the formed foreign-language professional discursive competence separately.

The complex ability to produce the analyzed type of research work in writing and to carry out its subsequent presentation is based on the integrative set of the following list of linguistic professional knowledge, skills and strategies:

at the stage of information search -

*to know* the legal sites that contain references to foreign scientific (works of teachings) and normative (legal instruments) information;

- *to have the skill* of "downloading", saving and archiving the extracted information;
- *to be able to find* professionally relevant information on the Internet, even in the absence of the exact address indication at the site;
- *to be able* to process materials obtained from various sources (Internet resources, "serious" legal literature), establishing the degree of its reliability, novelty, importance, using it to solve the assigned educational tasks;
- *to master strategies* for taking notes and compressing new texts in order to later rely on these materials when creating one's own work.

Let us add to the above that the ability to work with the primary source is considered by modern doctrine as the most important for a young specialist, since it promotes solving one of the basic problems of modern society, defined as "specialist and information".

At the stage of written production-

- *to know* the most important properties of scientific discourse as a whole and its individual genre varieties, the rules for their implementation in the speech product, as well as the distinctive features of such subspecies of legal discourse as contractual, normative, and jurisdictional ones;
- *to have the skill of constructing* certain grammatical forms, cliched expressions, and formulations;
- *to have the skill of making* various types of citations and bibliographic references;
- *to be able to create and include the final product of the discursive process in the outline of the text;* such semantic blocks characterize legal reasoning: explication, definition, comparison, interpretation, proof;
- *to be able to operate* with the socio-cultural knowledge inherent in the foreign professional culture (legal), in which context a new creative work is created;

- *to master the strategy of intra-linguistic paraphrasing*, which ensures the correct modification of the "foreign word" in order to include it into a new scientific text;
- *to master the strategies of cohesion and coherence*, which allow the student to implement a composite scheme of a complete product, endowed with an *argumentative basis*;  
at the presentation stage-
- *to know the rules for transcoding* written scientific discourse into oral;
- *to be able to prepare* an oral presentation based on the completed research work, limited to the agreed time limit (up to 7 minutes of speaking);
- *to master the strategies of oral scientific speech*, providing for the correspondence of the speaker's speech behavior to the recipients' social status, maintaining verbal and non-verbal contact with the audience (facial expressions, gestures), proficiency in prosodic techniques (varying timbre, intonation, tempo).

The system of practical tasks and exercises that ensure the formation of this discursive ability is seen as follows: the first section should correspond to the stage of information search, the second section – to the stage of written production, and the third – to the stage of presentation. Moreover, each section includes consistently cognitive, conditional-communicative and purely communicative exercises (tasks).

Practical tasks are preceded by a commentary designed to provide the student with the necessary knowledge in the sphere of discursive and proper linguistic characteristics of scientific academic discourse (composition, deployment logics, functional and semantic types of speech, linguistic means of argumentation and cohesion, etc.). It is equally true about techniques and rules for abstracting, annotating, quoting and making references in connection with writing a professional essay. In comparative terms, attention is drawn to the linguistic and cultural features of the French legal discourse. The requirements for the abstract and synopsis in the French and Russian traditions are also compared (Chériaa, 2018; Collinet, 2018, François, 2019; Baider et al, 2020).

At the first (search) stage, the following types of exercises are assumed:

Determine the genre of the proposed passage of written legal discourse. By what criteria (language, topic) did you determine its genre affiliation?

- You are supposed to write a paper on the following topic "*Droits d'auteur en France et en Russie, analyse comparative*". Which of the listed sources (sites) will you rely on?
- Which of the legal document articles (the French normative document is indicated) will you rely on when writing a research work on the following topic "*Droits d'auteur en France et en Russie, analyse comparative*"?

- Determine the functional and semantic type of speech, typical of this right-wing discourse passage.
- Find definitions, explications, and interpretations in the passage.
- What forms of argumentation are found in this work (explanation of the reason, reference to facts, statistics, a competent opinion)?
- Emphasize (highlight) the argumentation techniques used by the author at the language level (means of logical and emotional selection, connectors, comparisons, rhetorical questions and other rhetorical techniques). Offer an equivalent translation of the selected statements into Russian.

The following tasks are conditionally communicative:

- Determine the purpose (topic, main idea) of the proposed passage from a scientific publication, justify your position.
- By keywords, find a sentence or a sequence of sentences in which the topic (main idea, conclusion) of this scientific work is formulated.
- Make a plan of the studied scientific work or its excerpt.
- Emphasize the conclusions made by the author of the analyzed work. Which of them do you fully agree with? Which of them don't you agree with?

As a preparatory stage for the abstract activity, a number of tasks related to paraphrasing at the level of a sentence or super-phrasal unity will also be suggested, in particular:

- Find synonyms for the selected words; suggest a Russian-language translation of this term. (It is necessary to explain the specifics of this exercise, given the ambiguity of the question of synonymy in the field of scientific terminology, because, ideally, synonymy in strictly scientific terminology is minimized. However, the French scientific discourse is less strict in this area than the Russian one, and allows for occasional substitution of the term to achieve speech diversity. It is also necessary to draw the students' attention to possible differences in understanding and interpretation of certain terms in domestic law).
- Reformulate the author's idea using the paraphrasing techniques (transformation).

The exercises in this section relate to:

- 1) Modifications of the word order in a simple sentence (the main sentence members inversion): replacing the active form with the passive form and vice versa, using supporting verbs *avoir*, *recevoir*, as well as verbs *voir*, *connaître*; constructions *laisser+ infinitif*, *faire + infinitif*; introduction of the formal subject *on*, *il*, *cela* and the paired verbs alternation — conversives (*acheter/vendre*; *rendre/recevoir*). For example:

- *Il peut être exonéré de sa responsabilité → Il peut se faire exonérer de sa responsabilité → On peut l'exonérer de sa responsabilité*

- *X a rendu visite à Y, son associé → Y a reçu la visite de X, son associé.*

1) The use of antonymic vocabulary:

*Il n'est pas permis que cette clause se transforme en condition potestative → Il est interdit que cette clause se transforme en condition potestative*

2) The use of participial and adverbial phrases, nominative sentences, often with isolation (poly-predication):

- *Il peut être exonéré de sa responsabilité s'il évoque la force major → Il peut être exonéré de sa responsabilité en évoquant la force major.*

- *Les parties peuvent parvenir à un accord sans intervention du juge → Les parties peuvent parvenir à un accord sans que le juge intervienne.*

3) The actual division of the sentence: *C'est en évoquant la force major qu'il peut se faire exonérer de sa responsabilité.*

Grammatical transformations also include a change in the sentence members' composition while maintaining the main perspective from the name of the actor to the predicate: *Obligation de loyauté → obligation de négocier loyalement.* (It should be noted that the reformulation task for abstract purposes is to simplify the statement and to compress it, but not to complicate it).

As well as modal transformations: *Il est exonéré de toute responsabilité → Il peut être exonéré de toute responsabilité.*

The teacher can expand the didactic task and ask the students to perform inter-language paraphrasing, that is, to find the functional equivalent of this syntactic construction in Russian.

As a communicative task in the first section, it is proposed to perform abstracting (*résumé*), abstracting with annotation elements (*compte-rendu*) of a detailed passage of a scientific publication or several passages combined thematically (*synthèse*).

The commentary to the section of written production introduces students to the composition of a professional essay, including clichéd formulas, the requirements for its logical structure and design, and the criteria for evaluating this scientific work.

The task to analyze an authentic essay or its passage using the proposed criteria is also informative at this stage.

The following tasks are conditionally communicative:

- Make a plan of the suggested scientific work.
- Insert the missing connectors into the text of the authentic essay.
- Insert the missing clichés into the text of the authentic essay.
- Use connectors to express your thoughts (several options are possible):

*La volonté d'harmoniser les législations des Etats d'Europe s'est développée ... du rapprochement économique; cette aspiration est plus acceptable que l'unification .... elle est plus modeste.*

- Emphasize the main idea of the written statement, using the means of logical selection.
- Write (formulate verbally) the definition of the term "libre échange".
- Give a legal interpretation of the legal norm.
- Explain the following statements (explication):

*La libre circulation des produits existe bien en théorie, en revanche, selon la qualité des opérateurs, ce n'est pas toujours une réalité pratique.*

- Explain your agreement (disagreement) with the following statement, use connectors, logical allocation tools, and modal transformations:

*Les modalités du rapprochement des pays de l'Union européenne sont multiples. Toutefois une harmonisation souple est souvent privilégiée.*

A communicative task at this stage can be the writing of the essay itself or of its sections with the possible work result discussion with the teacher both individually and during the lesson.

The exercises at the presentation stage are preceded by a comment on the rules for transcoding written scientific discourse into oral (formal simplification while maintaining the coherence and coherence means), taking into account the social status of the audience, connecting the techniques of verbal and nonverbal contact with it, correct intonation and maintaining a rational pace of speech, extensive use of logical and emotional means.

The cognitive exercise is a comparative analysis of the linguistic and compositional structure of the essay and its presentation, carried out by the informant. Such a presentation can be presented to the student both in written form (transcription) and in oral form (audio or video recording). In the latter case, students can also note intonation and nonverbal contact means and evaluate the informant's speech rate.

Conditionally-communicative tasks are:

- Make a presentation plan.
- Illustrate each point of the plan with theses based on the written essay.
- Paraphrase the written statement in order to simplify it (make it easy to listen).
- Link the sequence of theses by means of cohesion.

As a communicative task at this stage, the very voicing of the presentation or its sections is performed, with the possible discussion of the work result with the teacher both individually and during the lesson. In both cases, it is productive to organize subsequent interactive communication with the audience in the form of answers to questions and discussions on the presentation material.

Many years of experience in applying the above cycle of exercises and the methodology of the course on mastering the French scientific academic discourse skills in general allowed us to make certain adjustments to it. They consisted in improving the recommendations for writing a professional essay offered to students at the initial stage of this course, in expanding the research component concerning the French scientific academic discourse specifics, in selecting the most effective conditional and communicative tasks.

Such consistent research, educational and practical work resulted in a positive dynamics of the students' skills indicators, which we disclose in the next section of the paper.

## **Results**

Our current control, inter-semester and final state examinations evidence in favor of the methodology we developed for teaching how to write professional essays as a genre of French scientific academic discourse.

More specifically, professional essays written by law students (*dissertations juridiques* – at the stage of Bachelor's training and *mémoires de gesche en droit* – at the Master's degree level) were analyzed and showed the relevance of the information independently obtained by students from foreign sources, the thematic relevance of the terminology used, a sufficient variety of grammatical constructions, the logical construction of scientific discourse, manifested in the argumentative expansion of the essay text, its structural sequence and thematic integrity.

The indicators of the final oral presentation of a professional essay as a form of examination control also increase due to the improvement of oral summarizing skills, prosodic skills, and dialogic communication skills.

Such positive dynamics determines the evolution in the interaction of two educational process subjects —

the teacher and the student, in which the strict guardianship of the former is consistently removed due to the latter's increased maturity of skills, independence, reflection. It is assumed that the final professional essay (usually the *mémoire de recherche*, the content of which is submitted to the state exam, must be fully prepared by the student him/herself.

All these factors contribute to qualitative changes in the student's personality: increasing professional motivation, forming professional consciousness and creative professional thinking, that is, becoming a student as a professional person.

The results of our observations, research and achievements are reflected in a number of scientific reports presented at inter-university and international conferences, as well as in relevant publications (Khomyakova, 2016).

Separately, we will highlight our position on some controversial scientific issues that affect the content and functional orientation of the future textbook. To these we will refer those paradigmatic dominants that we have designated as its methodological contour.

## **Discussions**

1. First of all, we will focus on the specifics of the planned Introduction to the textbook, which, according to the authors' intention, will be a guide for students to write a professional essay in the sphere of law. We consider such a direct appeal to the training book users justified, since it involves them in cooperation with the teacher, promotes the manifestation of independence, and at the same time responsibility for the success of the planned training activities. These factors convince us that the designed textbook meets the anthropocentric paradigm essence in modern foreign language education.

2. Next, we will explain our position on another important postulate of the course we developed on mastering foreign-language scientific academic discourse, which was designated under the heading "Methodological justification". It consists in taking into account previously acquired professional knowledge and relying on previously formed skills within the framework of specialized disciplines that characterize research activities.

Developing this idea, we emphasize that the mechanisms laid down should be used throughout the entire period of the course being implemented, ensuring a conscious transfer of the acquired knowledge, skills and abilities to the context of a foreign language specialty.

This position is directly reflected in the textbook methodology, where students are introduced to the genre conventions and its implementation means. Cognitive exercises are based on the comparative characteristics of two contacting linguistic cultures – Russian and French. It promotes developing important cross-cultural skills: to identify and interpret the factors of a different educational and professional linguistic culture in comparison

with the domestic one, to objectively evaluate them both. Comprehending a different professional world view through the medium of a foreign language culture, students rethink the features of their own and come to understand the value, equal status of both linguistic cultures and professional (legal) cultures.

Thus, it is legitimate to believe that the chosen methodology of familiarization with new knowledge, as well as pre-speech preparation of certain language material, is quite justified. Let us add to this that it illustrates the created textbook ideology correspondence to the inter-subject and cross-cultural dominants of linguo-didactics for special purposes.

3. Being proponents of the contextual education theory, the authors consistently reflected its imperatives in the textbook content. The most important of them — the correspondence of educational activity contexts to the students' future work contexts — found its implementation in the selection of text material for exercises and in their functional focus.

Thus, all the developed exercises are based on samples of authentic French creative works (*dissertations juridiques, mémoires de licence, thèses de doctorat*), as well as fragments of legislative and jurisdictional acts corresponding to the specialization in international law of the specified contingent of students — recipients of the textbook.

By their functional nature, the exercises are associated with the implementation of cognitive, problem-finding and project-based training activities that ensure the development of not only foreign language skills, but also the actual professional qualities of future international lawyers: logical, critical and creative thinking, professional motivation, and readiness for a constructive dialogue with foreign partners.

Accordingly, it is fair to conclude that taking into account these criteria while writing the textbook indicates our commitment to the basic principles of the contextual education theory and, at the same time, to the cultural paradigm inherent in the theory of teaching foreign languages in general.

4. It is also important to explain the authors' vision of the essence and structure of discursive competence. The main goal of the textbook is its formation on the basis of the technology of a professional essay in the sphere of law.

We understand it as the ability to recognize and produce certain discursive formations in order to fulfill the set communicative task in accordance with the intercultural professional communication situation.

An exhaustive selection of the components of the formed foreign-language discursive competence seems to us legitimate, since it allows us to prove the functional potential of the textbook, its correlation with the competence paradigm of the system of foreign - language education — in which we join the opinion of other authors on this issue (Tareva, 2007; Pavlova, 2011; Voskresenskaya, 2019).

Typical of the developed methodology is the fact that the pedagogical technology of a professional essay in the field of law is a means of forming professional discursive competence and at the same time a control - evaluative tool for the formation of appropriate linguistic and professional skills. The criteria for such an

assessment were developed earlier by N. P. Khomyakova and presented in her previous works (Khomyakova, 2013).

5. In addition to the specifics of the cognitive processes that are associated with writing a research work of the professional essay genre, we note that the creation of creative works that meet the cognitive needs and scientific aspirations of students- authors is associated with a beneficial effect on their emotional sphere. They experience the sense of satisfaction from a successfully completed creative task, from the recognition of their "professionalism" by the group and the teacher.

All these factors indicate an axiological dominant in the educational process we organized, which is directly reflected in the textbook, and which is integral to the modern educational system.

## **Conclusion**

The paper substantiates the theoretical and methodological basis of the textbook designed by the authors, which aims to form the professional discursive competence of law students based on the technology of professional essays in the sphere of law.

The authors developed the ideology of the future textbook, appealing to the paradigmatic dominants of the theory of teaching foreign languages and developing linguo-didactics for special purposes, relying on the provisions of pedagogical, psychological and linguistic sciences, represented by the contextual education theory, the professional thinking theory, the argumentation theory, cognitive linguistics, and discursive analysis.

The paper reveals the subject-functional and personal-significant potentials of the textbook.

The first of them is due to a detailed list of skills that are part of the formed discursive competence, foreign-cultural professionally significant texts, a voluminous knowledge component, a cycle of exercises that consistently form the ability to do communicative-thinking and creative tasks.

Accordingly, his personal and significant potential lies in the simultaneous development of a young specialist's actual professional qualities, such as creative and critical thinking, the desire for constant self-improvement through familiarization with world knowledge, readiness for constructive intercultural communication, as well as moral ones — autonomy, reflection and responsibility.

Thus, the validity of research activity structure formation and improvement through the foreign language course of the specialty, as a self-valuable component of the overall strategic goal of the foreign language professional education of non-philologists, has been justified. Moreover, the corresponding textbook, which meets the imperatives of modern scientific knowledge, acts as an instrument of this process of the

primary importance, ensuring its effectiveness.

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