

Textbook: Focus on Students' National Identity

Russian for Business Communication Textbooks in the University Information and Educational Environment

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the analysis of the didactic potential of multi-format textbooks on Russian for business communication (RBC) for linguo-communicative training of specialists in the areas of economics and management, receiving professional education in the universities of the Russian Federation. The study of the research source base, including theoretical and practical works, regulations and reference literature, allowed the authors to focus the methodological search on the design of an integrally whole and systemic flexible linguodidactic model of teaching RBC to Russian and foreign students regarding the full-time, distance or mixed formats of the pedagogical process and relying on printed and electronic educational tools as essential components of the university information and educational environment (real and virtual). The authors considered the subject contents of the RBC course and the ways of its presentation in various textbooks in the dialectical relationship of invariant and variable components as a condition for building a technological and adaptive educational model that ensures the interconnected formation of the entire complex of professional-communicative, sociocultural and intellectual-creative qualities of the specialist's language personality. The permanent contents and didactic variability of RBC teaching aids for various contingents and various educational conditions are presented in the article using the example of author's teaching aids created by the teachers of Bauman Moscow State Technical University (Russia, Moscow) and South-West State University (Russia, Kursk). The validity of the model realized in these manuals is confirmed by the practice of its use in the linguoeducational process at these universities.

Keywords: Business Russian; textbooks; information and educational environment.

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Introduction

Today's Russian higher education, which follows the agreed policy of the Bologna Convention (Margaryan & Kartseva, 2019), experiences an urgent need for innovative pedagogical technologies and approaches that can actualize the interaction of the main subjects of this stage of education - students and teachers - in the framework of professional-communicative, including language, training of functionally literate, competent specialists (Zabrovskaya & Rubleva, 2019), who tomorrow will determine the success of the national economy, the level of social and cultural life in the country. At the same time, an integral component of specialist's professional-communicative competence is confident general and special knowledge of languages: native and foreign, in our case, Russian as a mother tongue for Russian students and Russian as a foreign language (RFL) for the students who are citizens of foreign countries.

The language of a specialty is a verbal-sign language subsystem serving the sphere of professional communication in a specific subject area; possession of it is a prerequisite for successful activity in the relevant social sphere. In our case, the language of a specialty in the field of economics and management is modern Russian for business communication – that is a product of the multidimensional activity of the national language community. Globalization and digitalization, the expansion of international contacts, the integration of Russia into the world cultural, economic and information space, the development of information and communication technologies and network interaction, the widespread introduction of electronic communications have had a significant impact on the Russian business language: in written speech, this led to changes in the standards of official and production documents, the emergence of new types of business papers and new details; in oral speech, this led to the emergence of new forms and genres in interpersonal and public verbal contacts, carried out directly and indirectly, using the latest electronic means. That is why today the RBC as a specialty language should be taught in close connection with information and communication technologies.

A new type of business speech bearer, a subject of official business style, has also formed: the so-called communicative personality of a business person - a leader, manager, entrepreneur, whose professional image consists of standardized ways of implementing administrative and managerial functions and an equally standardized speech behavior reflecting corporate belonging to the business community. The comprehension of the new value coordinates of social and pedagogical knowledge, the new psychological and educational paradigm by a teacher of Russian studies should determine the choice of linguoeducational strategy and tactics (Bozhenkova N.A., Bozhenkova R.K. & Shulgina, 2020), ensuring that the students master the socio-ethical and speech-behavioral standards of their professional society (Butenko &

Semenova, 2019) and determine the contents of professional-communicative competence of a specialist, which should be formed as a result of his training at the university.

Another characteristic of modern language teaching at a university is its implementation in an integrative information and educational environment that unites the subjects of the pedagogical process in the linguocultural and communicative space (real and virtual) and determines the choice of the appropriate linguoeducational tactics. This environment has an undoubted impact on the formation of the language personality of a specialist (both primary and 'secondary') and therefore is considered to be an effective pedagogical tool of the university linguoeducational process, accumulating and strengthening the potential of the main didactic tools used in it - textbooks. In turn, the adaptation of the latter tools to the new conditions is reflected in their conversion into electronic format to be used in distance or blended learning modes (Nurieva, 2019).

The authors see the **relevance** of this study in taking into account all the above named factors for modernizing the contents and forms of linguo-communicative training of specialists in Russian higher education, in particular, teaching the RBC to various categories of students of economic specialties in various pedagogical conditions and using educational aids corresponding to these conditions.

Purpose and objectives of the study

The **purpose** of this study is to design a flexible linguodidactic model of teaching the RBC to Russian and foreign students of a Russian university applicable to full-time and distance learning formats of the pedagogical process and relying on the corresponding traditional and electronic educational tools as components of the university's integrative information and educational environment.

The stated purpose is achieved through solving a number of sequential **tasks**: 1) review of scientific and scientific-methodological literature on the topic under research, 2) generalization of the requirements of Russian federal state standards of higher education for the professional-communicative training of specialists in the field of economics and management, as well as the requirements of the state standard for RFL (level B2) as a theoretical and methodological basis for teaching the RBC to corresponding contingents of students; 3) analysis of the dialectical connection between the contents and the forms of its presentation in the projected linguodidactic model, realized in multi-format aspect textbooks for Russian and foreign students.

Literature review

The social demand for the administrative-production sphere of activity is due to the steady interest of scientists-methodologists and practicing teachers in the contents and forms of linguo-communicative training of specialists in this area, which is reflected in a significant array of scientific, methodological and educational literature on the topic under research. Without setting a task within the framework of this article of a detailed analysis of scientific sources, we note only the most significant of them for the purposes of our study. In this regard, two works can be distinguished: the work by L.V. Farisenkova (Farisenkova, 2017), which notes the possibility of integrating methodological approaches in the development of educational materials on Russian as a native language and as a foreign one, as well as the work by O.I. Rudenko-Morgun and her co-authors (Rudenko-Morgun, Arkhangelskaya & Al-Qaysi, 2017), which comprehensively examines printed and electronic means for blended language learning. To develop these two lines, we will further undertake a brief review of the RBC textbooks published in the last 5 years for Russian and foreign students, highlighting those sources that, along with the traditional ('paper'), also have an electronic format.

So, the textbook by S.I. Samygin, A.M. Rudenko "Business communication. Culture of speech. (Bachelor's degree)" (Samygin & Rudenko, 2016) presents a detailed analysis of the structure of business communication, explicates the typological characteristics of the personality of a businessman, considers ethical standards of business communication, rules for business documentation and a number of other issues. In addition to the printed format, the textbook is available for reading in the LitRes mobile application (pda.litres.ru) and on the website of the Russian State Library.

The book by A. Miroshnichenko "Encyclopedia of Communications and Business Communication. Theory and skills: everything from semantics to journalism" (Miroshnichenko, 2020) based on the materials of the author's MBA courses and structured as a textbook, contains extensive information and practical recommendations on linguistics, culture of speech, PR and media theory, communication tools in modern business. In addition to the printed format, the book is available for reading in the LitRes mobile application and on the author's personal website.

The book by M.A. Izmailova "Business Communication: textbook" (Izmailova, 2021) highlights the issues of communicative competence of a modern specialist, means and forms of business communication (business conversation, meeting, negotiations, public speaking), notes the features of telephone communication and business correspondence. Along with the printed edition, the textbook is available in the electronic format in the Liters e-book store; it can also be downloaded from the thematic website.

The textbook by L.A. Piotrovskaya, I.N. Levina, V.A. Efremova "Business rhetoric. Culture of speech and business communication" (Piotrovskaya, Levina & Efremov, 2020) realizes the authors' correlation of modern rhetoric with the ability to speak in public, as well as with mastery of the basics of business communication. It contains theoretical material and tasks for classroom and independent work, based on modern journalistic and official business texts. In addition to the printed format, it is available for reading in the LitRes mobile application.

The textbook by S. Yu. Kabashov "Fundamentals of business (official) writing in the field of management" (Kabashov, 2019) is devoted to theoretical and practical issues of business writing, drafting and editing official documents; contains examples of linguistic expertise of business texts, work with documents in the system of traditional and electronic document management. The textbook is also available in electronic format.

The two-volume textbook by E.N. Zaretskaya "Business Communication" (Zaretskaya, 2021) was created on the basis of the author's course using classical approaches and the latest achievements in the field of communication. The presentation of the principles of business communication is based on an interdisciplinary platform of such areas of knowledge as rhetoric, logics, psychology, sociology, ethics, cybernetics, management, information theory, semiotics, poetics, neurophysiology. The textbook realizes the author's understanding of business communication as a professional speech activity and considers in a complex the issues of its organization, communication models, business ethics. The textbook is available for download on the website.

In the field of teaching the RBC to foreign students, there are still only a few such textbooks with electronic support.

The textbook by T.E. Akishina "Russian for a business trip. A1, A2" (Akishina, 2017) aims to train foreigners in oral and written Russian-language business communication during a business visit to Russia. The contents has the form of communicative situations, presented in dialogues, exercises, texts for the development of speech skills. Typical speech patterns, samples of business documents, training exercises, tips for intercultural communication are given. The textbook is supplemented with CD records of authentic dialogues.

E.V. Kosareva's "Strategy for Success: Russian for Business Communication" (Kosareva, 2017) is a textbook for foreign students with levels B2-C1 and is aimed at developing their oral and written business language skills. The textbook realizes the principle of interactive modeling of actual situations of business

communication and consists of three lesson modules ("Job search", "You are a company employee", "Working life"). The proposed set of tasks and authentic texts, including video texts, reflects modern business reality and allows foreign students to 'experience' the situations of business communication.

The textbook by T.P. Skorikova "Meetings, Negotiations, Correspondence: Business Course in the Russian Language" (Skorikova, 2020) is intended for foreigners who know RFL at levels A1-A2, and can be used in both classroom and extracurricular forms of group and individual work. The textbook contains materials for teaching speaking and writing in situations of business negotiations and meetings. The book includes speech models, sample business documents, practice exercises, and authentic dialogues recorded on CD-ROM as a textbook supplement.

As we can see, the cited sources are supplemented with audiovisual applications, but do not have full-format electronic versions. Other modern textbooks on the RBC for foreigners also contain interesting didactic material, but for the stated reason, the article does not dwell on them.

A review of scientific, theoretical and practical sources on the research topic allowed us to come to the following conclusion: with a significant amount of work on various aspects of the RBC teaching, the tasks of integrating these aspects and designing a flexible educational model have not been the subject of linguodidactic research yet, which motivated the authors to comprehensively solve them.

Methodology

To solve these tasks, the following approaches and methods were used:

- system-functional approach: the subject contents of the RBC course and the ways of its presentation in diverse teaching aids were considered by the authors in the dialectical relationship of invariant and variable components as a condition for designing a flexible educational model for various contingents of students;
- *integrative approach*: when solving a complex of pedagogical tasks, subject-professional, linguo-communicative, sociocultural training and personal development of students in the process of their studying the RBC, the authors used the didactic potential of this discipline for the interrelated formation of the students' corresponding competencies of the language personality of a specialist;
- axiological method: the study of regulatory and didactic support for professional and communicative training of economists, experience in using traditional and distance educational technologies and means,

made it possible to assess their validity and optimize linguoeducational tactics in relation to various pedagogical conditions;

- formal modeling method: all of the above approaches and methods served as a combined scientific and methodological basis for designing a linguodidactic model of teaching the RBC to Russian and foreign students based on printed and electronic textbooks in full-time and distance formats.

Results

The basis of the subject contents of the RBC textbooks for Russian and foreign students (see Fig. 1) is an invariant set of thematic modules of the corresponding academic discipline, which provides for the assimilation of the constructive-linguistic features of the official business style of speech, training in written and oral business communication. The noted contents invariant receives variable implementation in multi-format aspect textbooks for Russian and foreign students, and it is due to a combination of objective factors.





Figure 1. Authors' printed textbooks on the Russian language for business communication for Russian (on the left) and foreign students (on the right).

First of all, it should be noted that there is a difference in the theoretical and methodological foundations of educational materials addressed to Russian or foreign students. For Russian students, the materials of curricula and teaching aids are based on the directions of the federal state educational standards for higher education (FSES HE) in specific areas of training specialists in the field of economics and management. Educational programs and textbooks for foreign students are additionally based on the requirements of the state standard for RFL (level B2) in aspects of general and special (in our case, business) communication. Depending on the education's addressees (whether they are native or non-native speakers of the Russian

language), the actual language material in the presentation of the discipline's theoretical information and the tasks also differs. And of course, there are different ways of presenting the material and performing the tasks in printed and electronic textbooks intended for full-time (face-to-face) or distance learning.

The contents invariant and didactic variability of textbooks on the RBC for different groups of students and different learning conditions are further presented on the example of authors' textbooks created by the teachers of Bauman Moscow State Technical University (BMSTU) and South-West State University (SWSU).

Textbook "Fundamentals of business communication: methodological guidelines for students' independent work in the discipline «The Russian language and Culture of speech»"

The textbook by E.A. Yakovleva "Fundamentals of business communication: methodological guidelines for students' independent work in the discipline «The Russian language and Culture of speech»" (Yakovleva, 2016) is an addition to the corresponding thematic module of the named university discipline, read to students of all directions of training in non-linguistic Russian universities.

The textbook under consideration is intended for Russian students of the 1st-4th years to assist them with their independent study of the course material. The selection of this material took into account the typical language difficulties that students of non-Humanities specialties usually face: ignorance of the content-compositional and etiquette and speech rules for drafting various kinds of documents; inability to accurately and clearly express thoughts in a written or oral business text or utterance.

The textbook aims to consistently familiarize students with the basics of the official business style of speech, develop their skills in the language production of written and oral verbal communication in the business sphere, consolidate these skills and prepare for the final test on the material of this module. The structure of the textbook, which includes four sections, is adds to the solution of these educational tasks.

The first section acquaints students with the norms of the modern Russian literary language, with the basic concepts of lexical stylistics. It also provides a classification and a brief description of the functional styles of speech. The second section characterizes the features of the official business style, examines its linguistic and structural standards, analyzes the typical language errors found in business texts. The third section discusses the requirements for the preparation of personal documents and provides samples of various genres of personal documents: statements, receipts, letters of attorney and explanatory notes. In the fourth section, a list of theoretical questions for the course is offered and the samples of practical tasks are

provided, they need to be carefully examined for the subsequent completion of the test. The textbook ends with the reference material on the most difficult topics included in the test (control work).

The author recommends to start with mastering general concepts in the first two sections of the textbook, which provide general theoretical information on the basic discipline "The Russian language and Culture of speech". Particular attention is paid to typical lexical and grammatical errors found in the language of business documents.

To check the degree of learning the material, it is proposed to briefly answer the control questions and complete the tasks from the section "Samples of practical tasks". Familiarization with the norms of literary speech intends students to consult various dictionaries and reference books (a list of recommended literature and reference material is given at the end of the textbook). The material of the third section ("Requirements for drafting personal documents of various genres") will help students to avoid typical mistakes when drafting personal documents.

The contents and educational material of the textbook in question is available not only on paper, but also in the electronic form, created back in 2010 and posted on BMSTU library's website. The electronic format of the textbook is aimed to support the full-time course or to replace it in the context of distance learning. Theoretical and practical material on the official business style of speech and the basics of document drafting is presented in the electronic form and involves the use of computer training and knowledge control tools. It provides students with an active and creative acquisition of a set of competencies in the field of culture of verbal communication, in particular communication in the business sphere.

In contrast to the linear presentation of the contents in the printed version, the material on the electronic storage medium has a more fractional and branched structure: it includes 14 functional and compositional sections, consisting of thematic modules. Each module has a theoretical core, graphical visualization of the material being studied in a tabular or schematic form, control questions with answers and exercises for self-training. At the same time, it is connected with other modules by a system of hypertext links, giving students the opportunity to selectively proceed to the required information. This provides convenient and efficient navigation through the text, connects tasks and questions with answers, which contributes to the systemic perception of the educational material.

In December 2020, the questions and the tasks of Section 4 were additionally posted on the electronic Internet resource Google Sites (see Fig. 2), which should facilitate and speed up the feedback between students and teachers while working on the course's practical activities and assessing this work.



Figure 2. A fragment of the electronic textbook with questions on the course's theory for self-control and preparation for midterm certification.

In general, we note that the electronic edition creates more comfortable conditions for students' independent work and the electronic medium makes it as easy as possible to understand and memorize the educational material.

Textbook "Russian business communication. Aspect course of the discipline «Russian as a foreign language on the material of Russian movies and television films»"

Textbook "Russian business communication. Aspect course of the discipline "Russian as a foreign language on the material of Russian movies and television films" (Romanova & Amelina, 2018) is intended for bachelors of economic specialties (level B1), but can also be used to teach students of other directions and levels of training.

The textbook meets the practice-oriented aims of modern FSES HE and has the following distinctive properties:

- priority focus on the development of speech skills and abilities of students both in oral and written forms of Russian-language business communication;
- comprehensive development of professional and communication strategies for future specialists on the basis of thematically relevant materials of various formats and genres;
- reliance on authentic material of audio and video sources and texts of business documents.

The textbook is based on the material from Soviet and Russian movies and television series: "Everything for you", "Queen of the game", "There would have been no happiness", "Not born beautiful", "Office romance", "Office romance. Our time", "Next 2" and others. The contents of the textbook and the course realized by it consists of 8 situational-communicative topics: (1) Business communication. Features of Russian-language business interaction; (2) Speech etiquette of business communication; (3) Portrait of a businessman; (4) Business conversation. Interview. CV; (5) Business telephone conversation; (6) Business negotiations. Business letter (official); (7) Business negotiations. Receipt; (8) Business negotiations. Business letter (semi-official). For each topic, from 2 to 5 video fragments were selected from the specified movies and television series, which demonstrate the image of a Russian businessman and the verbal tools he uses to solve typical social, production and administrative tasks.

The textbook contains 2 appendices: "Audiovisual means" (it provides a general list of audiovisual sources and a list of video fragments from these sources for each course's topic) and "Video scripts" (which are also presented by topic and help to better consolidate the language and speech material, remove possible difficulties when working with a learning resource).

The study of topics involves working with the tasks and audio- video materials in three consecutive stages.

Tasks before viewing are focused on familiarization with current vocabulary and its consolidation, assimilation of theoretical material about business communication.

The types of tasks at this stage are:

- matching of a word / phrase with its definition;
- grouping of lexemes depending on the instructions;
- filling in gaps in the text with new lexemes;
- filling in tables.

Tasks while viewing are associated with extracting information from a fragment, thematic vocabulary actualization.

The types of tasks at this stage are:

- deciding whether the statement is true or false;
- answering questions;
- filling in text gaps;
- restoring the correct sequence of statements;
- deciding which character the statement belongs to;
- describing the scenes from the video;
- finding and correcting factual errors in the text of the fragment.

Tasks after viewing are aimed at mastering grammatical structures, linguoculturological information, consolidating theoretical material, producing one's own oral and written utterances.

The types of tasks at this stage are:

- transforming the sentences according to the model;
- answering questions on theory;
- replacing constructions with phraseological units;
- expressing opinion on the proposed issues;
- making up dialogues, monologues on the proposed situations;
- a case study task;
- drafting documents (statements, explanatory notes, receipts, business letters, CV, etc.).

In order to provide blended / e-learning of the Russian language in its professional aspect, the textbook in question has been integrated into the digital environment. The most convenient electronic option, which made it possible to preserve as much as possible the authors' concept of the original textbook and its tasks, to quickly post the educational materials in the Internet environment, was the free hosting resource of the Google system - Google Sites. On this resource, the site "Russian business communication" was created (https://sites.google.com/site/russianbusinesscommunication/), there each topic has its own page (see Fig. 3).

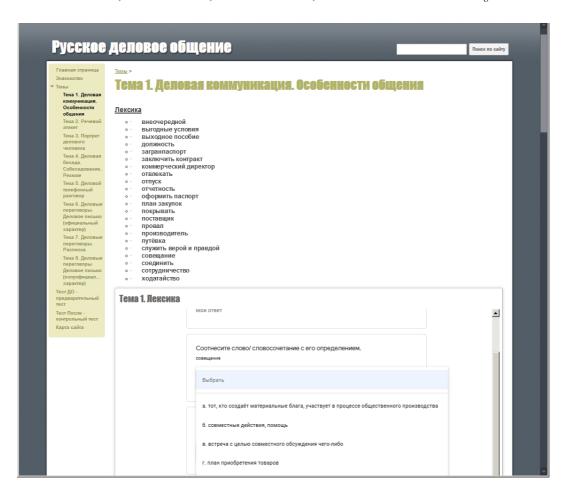


Figure 3. Page of the topic "Business Communication. Features of communication" on the Google Sites platform.

For more comfortable work with the tasks, they were presented on the site page using another service of the Google system - Google Forms, and also partially adapted to the capabilities of this tool. Thanks to the ability of Google Forms to support the following elements: 'text' (write a short phrase), paragraph (write several phrases / a paragraph), 'one from the list' (selection of one option), 'drop-down list' (selection of multiple options), 'grid' (filling the table), etc., - the tasks were presented in a test form with open or closed questions (see Fig. 4). This solution allows monitoring student's performance and also provides quick feedback (especially in the tasks with automatic checking).

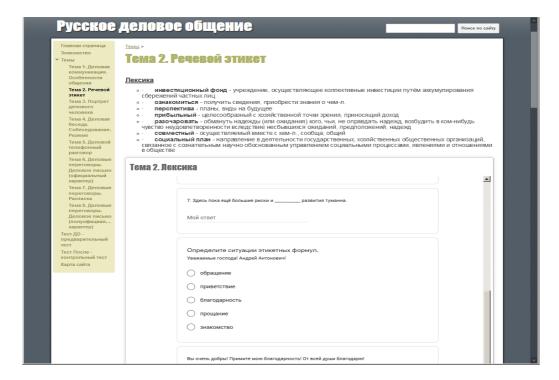


Figure 4. A fragment of the tasks in the topic "Speech etiquette" presented on the site page using Google Forms.

The audio-video material on the site was posted through the video hosting YouTube, videos from which can be easily inserted directly into the page or integrated into a form created using Google Forms (see Fig. 5). If necessary, the media resources can also be attached at the bottom of the page (if their size does not exceed 20 MB).

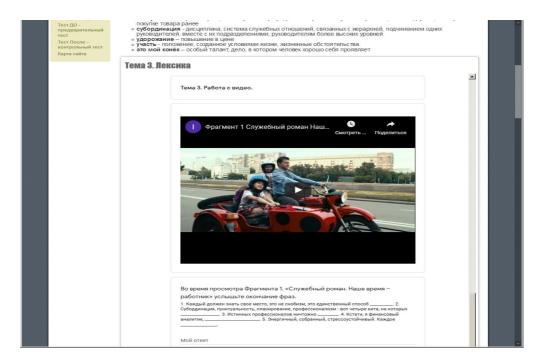


Figure 5. A video fragment of the topic "Portrait of a Businessman", posted on the site using Google Forms via YouTube.

Of course, working with the communicative tasks of the post-viewing stage, which in traditional teaching takes place in the classroom in direct contact with the teacher and other students, in a fully e-learning environment requires the involvement of additional information and communication technologies and resources. For example, a video with the student's answer can be recorded in advance and sent to the teacher by email or via WhatsApp; contact work can be organized on the Zoom platform.

It is worthy of note that in order to create a controlled environment necessary for a teacher, he can restrict access to the site, making it possible to work with the topics only to those people who have a link to the resource. At the same time, registration in the Google system is not mandatory for the students if they are not required to post comments / do the tasks on the website page or if this condition is not specifically set in the Google Forms (see Fig. 6).



Figure 6. Option "Comment" on the site page.

Discussions

The presented printed and electronic textbooks on the RBC for Russian and foreign students cover the subject contents of one special field of activity and use for it the same, inherent in this field, language of the specialty. In this regard, depending on the addressee ('native speaker' / 'not native speaker'), the language means for the presentation of special knowledge and the nature of the didactic material (the ratio of national / sociocultural and other components) naturally vary in the textbooks.

The electronic educational tools, as practice shows, for the most part duplicate the contents of their 'paper' originals, simply transferring them to electronic media; this electronic version differs from the printed edition, in fact, only in the apparatus of hypertext links. Electronic standalone sources are much less represented in the methodological literature, the functionality of which provides for the use of Internet resources and interactive forms of organizing classes.

Meanwhile, it is the 'self-sufficient' and technological electronic textbooks that the authors consider optimal for both full-time and distance learning: in the first case, they are, as a rule, auxiliary and supplement the main printed edition with the materials for independent work; in the second case, they become the main educational tool for obtaining theoretical knowledge, practicing practical skills and monitoring educational achievements, and by switching attention from one type of activity to another, students' systemic assimilation of the aspect of linguo-communicative training significant for them is achieved.

Conclusion

As a result of the analysis of modern theoretical-practical and normative-reference sources on the research topic, the scientific and methodological foundations for the design of a flexible linguodidactic model of teaching the RBC to students of different nationalities at a Russian university were systematized in relation

to full-time and distance educational formats. The specified model was implemented in printed and electronic textbooks created by the teachers of BMSTU and SWSU on the basis of functional-system and integrative approaches, which provided a dialectical combination of the subject contents invariant with the variability of methodological solutions. The validity of this model is confirmed by the practice of its successful use in the linguoeducational process of these universities.

The presented printed and electronic textbooks contribute to the actualization of the professional-communicative competence of students, stimulate their interest in obtaining additional knowledge and skills in a special subject area, as well as (for foreigners) knowledge about the language and culture of another country. Thus, both those and other educational tools act as effective components of the information and educational environment of the university, carriers of subject-professional, linguistic and socio-cultural meanings that form the language personality of the future specialist. At the same time, electronic textbooks are additionally assessed as undoubtedly promising educational tools that can respond to the challenges of 'digital education'.

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