

International Framework, National Legal Discourse on Educational Rights and Students' Perceptions: Comparative analysis in Russia and France

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Abstract

The research aims to study the features of the French and Russian laws of education, to identify the common and distinctive factors in two types of discourse and the concept of human rights of the higher education institution students, as well as to determine the position of the student community of both countries on this issue. *The research sample* includes academic papers on the topic under study, legislative texts in the field of educational laws of Russia and France, other official data on French and Russian educational systems, and evidence of Russian and French students on their perception of rights within education field. The comparative nature and the selection of particular countries are due to practical purposes as Russian Higher Education Institutions in General and RUDN University in particular has long standing collaboration with their French partners. *The methodology* integrated inductive, comparative, and generalizing techniques, thematic analysis through manual coding, and distributional analysis with regard to text layout and key semantic concepts verbal representation. The research methodology also included a survey through respondents' written replies to questionnaire and statistical data processing techniques. *The findings* provide the evidence that there is an undoubted similarity of the educational systems of both countries, the identity of the thematic blocks on human rights recorded in the national educational laws, as well as the correlation with the text of the Declaration of Human Rights. The data also revealed some specifics with regard to both systems and legislation and differences in Russian and French students' perceptions of their rights. The research results can be used as the recommendations to advance Charters of higher educational intuitions in line with legislation and student expectations. The shaped methodology can be applied to enhance studies of discourse on/of human rights concept and its implementation.

Key words: *human rights, student rights, education, discourse, legal language.*

Introduction

The current research is relevant due to the increased interest to the comparative study of legal discourse from the point of view of linguistics, culture and law; the intention to explore the discourse general and distinctive features realized in the globalization and intercultural communication environment; few studies on the characteristics of the legal discourse in education

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law in general and in human rights setting in particular. The relevance of the linguistic analysis of the legal discourse is determined by the intensive processes of transformation of modern social institutions, on the one hand, and by the necessity to develop a methodology for studying the above mentioned processes and identifying strategies for the adaption of a person to a rapidly changing sociocultural environment.

Legal discourse is one of the most essential types of institutional discourses, as it is related to foreign and domestic state policy, as well as to social and legal norms in the state and the rights and responsibilities of its citizens. Since 1948 when the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted, the international community continues to promote the recognition and development of human rights and fundamental freedoms by extending the international rules in this setting. The right to education is an integral part of these rights, and the starting point for the realization of all other fundamental rights (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948). Among other issues the concept of the right to education has come to the focus of international community. Further international legislation and programs aimed to enhance the awareness of a human being of his/her right on education, the right to get information about the ways how to protect and promote the human rights in modern society. The UNO World Program for Human Rights Education (2004), UNO Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training (2011), Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (2010) strived to foster public awareness of the phenomenon under study.

The above international framework lays grounds for national implementation of policies to enhance youth human rights in general, and for education, in particular. However, it should be taken into account that this right is implemented in specific ways with regard to target audiences, namely students, underage schoolchildren, etc. (Banda & Mafofo, 2016).

The present research takes the university students as the target audiences who bear right to higher education across countries. This stance is taken due to current social and academic understanding of the role of higher education in the civilization development (Cvečić et al., 2019).

The examination of the practical implementation of the higher education students' human rights is considered through the analysis of higher education issues and rights in France and Russia. The selection of particular countries is due to practical purposes as Russian Higher Education Institutions in general and RUDN University in particular has long standing collaboration with their French partners.

The research goal is two-fold and aims to study French and Russian legislation on education, to identify the common and distinctive factors regarding the concept of human rights of university students, as well as to consider the perceptions of both countries' student community on this issue.

Research Questions

The above goals shape the research questions that are as follows:

1. What are major trends in Academic research regarding legislative discourse in general and that of youth rights for education in particular?
2. What are the specifics of educational systems in France and Russia in the context of legislative norms?
3. What are key features regarding legal status, topics and verbal conceptual structure of the documents under study?
4. What are French and Russian students' perceptions of their rights?

The last question seems logical as the student population in every country is one of the target audiences for the national legislation in force.

Methods

The study rests on the qualitative paradigm, combines theoretical analysis of relevant academic literature, the study of legislation texts related to the topic of study, survey of two countries student community.

Research Sample

The research sample included young people studying law and medicine. Among them there were 20 respondents being trained as lawyers-to-be at the Faculty of Law of the University named after Jean Mullan in Lyon and the same number of the students of the Law Institute of the RUDN University in Moscow. Moreover, 20 respondents studying at the Medical Institute of the Russian University mentioned above and 20 students of the Medical Faculty of the University of Sofia Nice Antipolis in France were included in the experiment.

Data Collection and Procedures

The data collection and procedures integrated a number of sources and respective processing methods.

First, the he bulk of academic papers of the topic under study were aggregated in line with the research topic, the data was extracted from the Google Scholar database. The selection of papers was conducted on the following criteria: thematic relevance correlation with the key words for search, namely they were subject to theoretical analysis on grounds of inductive and comparative techniques. This analysis laid grounds for further generalization regarding the reply to the first research questions on major trends in Academic research regarding legislative discourse in general, and that of youth rights for education in particular.

Second, the specifics of educational systems in France and Russia in the context of legislative norms were analyzed and compared. The variables included such parameters as the type of the state, the legislation background, the system of governing and executive bodies, key stakeholders, level, coverage, mode of operation. The study rested on the thematic analysis of the legislative texts of France and Russia on the topic under study. The texts of the "Educational Code" (Code de l'éducation) (2019) of France and the Federal Law "On Education in the Russian Federation" (2012) were analyzed. These texts are the written samples of institutional communication on law in a specific communicative discursive situation. The thematic analysis used a number of techniques, including manual coding to specify the major themes and their verbal representation. Further this data was subject to comparative analysis and interpretation of factual and verbal data from the respective legal texts that were part of research sample.

Next, the mentioned legal texts were subject to distributional analysis that explored the textual structure layouts, major semantic concepts and their distribution, sequence, and coordination inside the texts. The distributional and conceptual analyses techniques allowed identifying the qualitative discrepancies of the legal texts under study.

Finally, the survey of the students who are mentioned in the description of the research sample and were subject to questionnaire, took place. Questioning method included the observation techniques as well, as students were offered open-ended questionnaire. This type of the respective survey tool allows for the observation of the specifics of the perception of legal categories by the learners studying law and native speakers of France and Russia were invited to take part in the survey.

The questionnaire included the following open-ended questions:

- Are the students' rights enshrined by the law complied in the University? (Yes/No, Why?)
- Do you have any information on the rights granted to you by law? (Yes/No, Please, provide comments, if any)
- Do the rights enshrined in the law correlate with the Charter of your university? (Yes/No, Please, provide comments, if any)
- Should students fight for their rights? (Yes/No, Please, specify ways and tools, if any)
- Should students have more rights? (Yes/No, Please, provide comments, if any).

Students were kindly asked to reply in writing, the texts were further subject to inductive analysis, identification and sorting of replies on grounds of comments provided.

Results and Discussion

The present section introduces the material in line with the research questions that have been specified earlier in the paper. First, the trends in Academic research regarding legislative discourse in general and that of youth rights for education in particular, are explored. Second, major specifics of educational systems in France and Russia in the context of legislative norms are investigated. Third, key features regarding legal status, topics and structure of the documents under study are revealed. Finally, French and Russian students' perceptions of their rights are considered.

Trends in Academic Research Regarding Legislative Discourse in general, and that of Youth Rights for Education in particular

Discourse studies have traditionally related to general and comparative linguistics (Gray, 2019). Currently researchers tend to enhance academic tradition to study discourse within diverse social contexts, including politics and societal needs (Chilton, 2004; *Discourse Theory in European Politics: Identity, Policy and Governance*, 2005), human safety and security issues (Atabekova, 2019), public health protection (Sims-Schouten & Riley, 2019). Other trends include discourse studies with regard to computer communication (Herring, 2019; Machin & Mayr, 2012), whistleblower informing (Stolowy et al., 2018); interpretation of religious cultures in mass media (Pasha, 2011); examination of ecological problems (Hajer & Versteeg, 2006).

Within the above framework studies of legal discourse take a specific stance (Bhatia et al., 2008). The analysis in the mentioned area tends to study legal discourse together with the philosophical, cultural and social discourses (Freeman, 2011).

The consistent attention to legal discourse is explained by the fact that it affects certain really socially significant categories in the process of speech communication of various stakeholders. The present study takes into account that scholars classify legal texts in various subgroups, e.g. descriptive – prescriptive, (laws, rules, agreements); law-making (laws, charters) (Sandrini, 1999); legislative discourse. G. Cornu (2005) distinguished “the text of law” and “the legislative discourse. Moreover, scholars specifically focus discursive functions of human rights concepts (Habermas, 1996) Thus, the study of human rights in the framework of linguistic discourse analysis seems very promising.

Researchers mention that human rights discourse covers, on the one hand, international human rights acts such as Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, 1966 International Covenant and other government documents, and, on the other hand, rely on the materials from the media, films, dramas, etc. (Khor, 2013). Therefore, it is now surprising, that currently scholars view the discourse of human rights not as an entity, but a combination of three interrelated discourses, namely legal, philosophical and political ones (Evans, 2005).

The examination of publications shows that human rights discourse analysis is focused on national grounds (Barros, 2012; Sarelin, 2014; Ugor, 2019). Attention is also paid to the discourse analysis within European policies (Kirkwood, 2017) and the specific features of national legal discourses (Sobieszewska, 2014). As far as the concept of human rights is concerned the quality of higher education is also considered as a students’ right (Nicoletti, 2014). The realization of human rights and some aspects of human rights are often included in the universities’ curriculum and studied by the students (Willaime, 2007). Moreover, the issues of language rights in general, and with regard to education in particular are subject to consistent research, see the review by A. Atabekova and T. Shoustikova (2018).

However, the concept of the subject of the human rights discourse remains vague and it is assumed that the subject of the human rights discourse can be anyone who speaks about human rights (Fairclough, 2003).

The study of current trends in academic research reveals that generally speaking, human rights are mainly the subject of legal and political sciences, the importance of language studies within the mentioned domain has not been specified so far.

That is why researchers underline that the study of the above issues within the discourse on human rights is timely (Atabekova et al., 2019). Furthermore, there are few linguistic studies of higher education students' human rights in various countries.

Specifics of Educational Systems in France and Russia in the Context of Constitutional Norms

This section explores the specifics on grounds of relevant administrative- legal provisions of the relevant documents. The thematic analysis (based on manual coding) of the legislative texts revealed major themes that include the language units specifying the executive and legislative agencies, system of state educational policy development, features of educational systems and tools for their run, existence/absence of various levels of legislation. Further we provide interpretation of factual and verbal data from the respective legal texts that were part of research sample.

The comparative analysis of the education systems in Russia and France showed that they are similar in both countries. The corresponding ministries, namely, the Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research (Ministere de l'Éducation nationale, de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche) in France and the Ministry of Education and science in Russia realize the management of national higher education. The state policy in relation to both secondary school education and higher education and science is developed at the levels of ministries, the parliament and the President of France and Russia. As the Roman legal system predominates in the countries under discussion, it also contributes to the comparability of the national educational systems. The law on education regulates all legal relations in this domain, they are the “Educational Code” (Code de l'éducation) (2019) in France and the Federal Law “On Education in the Russian Federation” (2012). Both of these documents determine the main directions of state policy in education, all elements of the education system, and the mechanisms of its functioning. Thus, the educational systems in both countries are very similar according to legal norms.

The distinction is explained by the different forms of the state system. Russia is a federal state, and France is a unitary state. Therefore, there is a level of regional legislation in the Russian Federation and there is no such form of government in France. However, in this case, these differences

practically do not affect the functioning of educational systems. The human rights including the right on education in the states are guaranteed by the Constitution.

The French Constitution states: “The nation guarantees equal access for children and adults to education, professional training and culture. The duty of the state is to provide free public and secular education at all levels” (Constitution, 1958). However, it should be noted that the right to education is not enshrined in the text of the Constitution of France.

In the Constitution of the Russian Federation (1993), the right to education is declared by art. 47 which states "every citizen of our country has the right to education".

It should be noted that no matter how detailed the norms enshrining the right to education are spelled out in the constitution, it is impossible to implement them in the 21st century which is characterized by its high social standards, the rapid development of scientific and technological progress, academic contacts and humanitarian ties. The effective practical implementation of the Constitutional norms greatly depends on the developed national legislation on education. The constitutional norms on education form the basis of educational legislation in Russia (Federal Law on Education, 2012) and France (a Codified act - Code on education, 2019). Here the right to education is enshrined and the guarantees of its implementation are established.

In France, the main idea implemented by the education system is stated in Article L-111-1 of the Code (2019): “Education is the first national priority”. The public education service is conceived and organized for the learners and students; it promotes equal opportunities. In addition to the transfer of knowledge, the Nation defines its primary task as the awareness of the Republic values by the students”. And further: “The right to education is guaranteed to everyone in order to develop his/her personality, increase the level of primary and continuous training, and get involved in social and professional life, realize the civil mission <...>. The development of common culture and recognized qualifications is ensured to all young people, whatever their social, cultural and geographical origin is” (Code de l'éducation, 2019).

Article 3 of the Federal Law "On Education in the Russian Federation" (2012) also enshrines the basic principles of the state policy and legal regulation of the relations in education: (1) the recognition of the priority of education; (2) the provision of the right of everyone to education, non-discrimination in education; (3) the humanistic nature of education, the priority of human life and health, individual rights and freedoms, the free development of personality, mutual respect, citizenship, patriotism, responsibility, legal culture, respect for nature and the environment,

rational use of natural resources". It is evident that the "priority of education" is of primary importance in both nations.

Special guarantees on the right of education are provided to children and youngsters with physical and mental disabilities. In France children and youngsters with physical and mental disabilities get compulsory education in accordance with article L.112-1. The Federal Law of Russia (2012) specifies the rights of students with disabilities in Article 79. Moreover, the importance of continuing education is focused on. "Continuing education is a national duty. It aims to provide a person with training and development throughout all periods of his life, to enable him to get knowledge and intellectual and labor skills that will assist him/her to improve cultural, economic and social plans" (Article L.122-5). The fundamental principles, in accordance with which the right on education is granted, are enshrined. They are compulsory school education, free public-school education, the secular nature and freedom of public education.

The Federal Law on Education (2012) also states that "The right on education in Russia is guaranteed to everyone regardless of gender, race, nationality, language, origin, property, social and official status, place of residence, religion, beliefs, membership in public associations, and other provisions".

The above analysis leads to the statement that the basic rights enshrined in the Federal Law (2012) and the Code (2019) can be considered as identical, except the equal opportunities to get education regardless of gender. This right is not mentioned in the French Code.

Key Features Regarding Legal Status, Topics and Verbal Conceptual Structure of the Documents under Study

The consideration of the legal status of two documents seems to be meaningful. In France, it is a code; in Russia, it is a federal law. From the point of view of universal legal criteria, the law differs from the Code; it is a legal act regulating a rather narrow range of legal relations. The code accumulates provisions in which the jurisdiction can be very broad. That is, the code is a set of laws that relate to a single branch of law, however, in the legal system of the Russian Federation, the code is a kind of federal law, so we can conclude that the choice of the first or second concept is more likely based on tradition than on the meaning of the word in legal sense. The French Code (2019) is a unique experience in the codification of the educational sphere that does not exist in any other country. The French Code of Education (2019) replaced the numerous regulations that

complicated educational legislation until the beginning of the 21st century and was adopted in 2000. Before 2000 the legislation in the field of education included more than 100 laws, many of which were adopted in the 19th century.

The current Code of Education (2019) consists of legislative and regulatory parts. The legislative part of the French Code includes nine books, grouped in four parts. The first part (books I and II) observes general and unified principles and management of education, the second part (books III to IV) is devoted to school education. The third part (books VI to VIII) contains provisions related to higher education. Book IX that makes part 4 includes the legal norms of personnel matters. The provisions of the code are divided into 974 articles that have continuous numbering. The regulatory part correlates with the legislative one has 9 books and 974 articles. The books are divided into sections, then into chapters, sectors and paragraphs.

The Russian Federal Law on Education (2012) 273-FL is applied from September 1, 2013. In post-Soviet Russia, there were several laws regarding education that ceased to match the current realities due to the social and political changes occurring in the country. The Russian Federation Law of July 10, 1992 N 3266-1 “On Education” and the Federal Law of August 22, 1996 N 125-FL “On Higher and Postgraduate Professional Education” were abolished after the introduction of the new law.

The current Law on Education (2012) has 15 chapters and 111 articles. Article 69 considers the issues of higher education, whereas 3 books and 243 articles of the French Code are devoted to this topic. Thus, the French document is much more extensive and detailed as far as the higher education is concerned, and the structure of the discourse is much more complex. Nevertheless, in the course of the analysis, ten general semantic concepts (blocks) were identified according to which the components of the texts can be distributed: (1) goals / objectives / principles, (2) education system, (3) subjects in education, (4) educational organization, (5) the content of education, (6) teaching staff (7) management in education, (8) state regulation, (9) financing of education, (10) international activities. Evidently, that over time, there is a tendency to detail and increase the total length of the laws. The similarity of the thematic structure of the laws we have analyzed may indicate global unification in the legal register of educational policy discourse. Moreover, it should be noted the high degree of correlation of the educational legislation update cycles. The Legifrance site (the state service for disseminating legislative norms) reports that the code is presented in its latest modification of 08/23/2019 and the next version of 1.09.2019 is

announced at the following
website:<https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichCode.do?cidTexte=LEGITEXT000006071191>

The electronic version of the Federal Law also states that this variant of the Law was prepared on the basis of the changes introduced by the Federal Law of July 26, 2019 N 232-FZ and all changes are presented in detail at the website:http://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_146342/1031986f0041b1fc6430def574ab736debe6e9f8/#dst100051.

The structure of the texts of both documents is conventional; segmentation of the text has a wide practical development and is related to the internal structure of the text. The main function of the external segments of the text of the law is its graphic indication and delimitation of legal norms in the structure of the text in accordance with the thematic focus. The segmentation of the legislative text solves an important pragmatic task, namely, the coordination of the addressee in the text continuum and systematization of legislative practice by associating propositions that make up legal norms with a value defined for them precisely. These values are presented by the numbers of the corresponding structural units of the text. The legal text segmentation helps to realize the compensation of the proposition-binding means that are insufficient in many other genres. The legal text cohesion of a special coloring is also preserved herein the conditions of legal standard practice. In our opinion the thematic development of the discourse is carried out according to the following model: the text and the main descriptive text sequence are formed around the same topic (education) that is related to all its segments. In addition, small associated text sequences (the organization of educational institutions, the role of parents, etc.) are added to it with other topics arising from the main one and connected with it inseparably. The criterion for determining the boundaries in the legal text is a thematic unity; the description is built around a specific topic that forms the core of the text sequence. The boundaries of individual sequences are determined by the change of the topics.

Regarding the recipients of the discourse, if the students of higher educational institutions are focused on, the Code (2019) and the Federal Law (2012) apply different terminology. The legal regulation of the university activity presupposes the proper legal consolidation of the status of the main participant in the educational process (a student), and it is not a spontaneous abstract construction, but a derivative of the nature and content of educational relations, of the state's position in the regulation of higher education. Since the student's legal status is the core of the

regulatory realization of the basic principles of the relationship between the individual and the state. Mainly, it is a system of standards, patterns of behavior that are encouraged and protected by the state from violations and, as a rule, approved by society. The democratization of all areas of public life including education should be reflected in the student status.

French and Russian Students' Perceptions of their Rights

In course of the research, an experiment was held. Earlier we considered common and specific features of Russian and French legislation on education, its verbal textual representation in the respective laws. In case of our research student population is one of target audiences of the above legal discourse samples. Therefore it seems relevant to consider students' awareness of their rights and their possible intentions to modify laws that grant the students' rights. The experiment participants included 40 lawyers-to-be, the equal number of students from France and Russia. The young people were of 20 to 24 years old both male and female. They studied at Faculty of Law, Jean Mulan Lyon University and the Law Institute of RUDN University (Moscow). The same number of the respondents studied medicine at Medical Faculty of the University of Sofia Antipolis of Nice and Institute of Medicine of RUDN University. They were also of both sex and of the same age group. The students were asked to respond to a few questions one of which was open ended.

The positive replies of the respondents were included into Table 1.

Table 1

The output of the students' survey

Question	Faculty of Law Jean Mulan Lyon University Lyon	Medical Faculty of the University of Sofia Antipolis Nice	Law Institute RUDN University Moscow	Institute of Medicine RUDN University Moscow
Are the students' rights enshrined by the law complied in the University?	20	20	20	20
Do you have any information on the rights granted to you by law?	10	2	20	5
Do the rights enshrined in the law correlate with the Charter of your university?	10	2	20	10
Should students fight for their rights?	20	12	0	5

Should students have more rights?	20	5	20	8
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The questionnaire reveals that there are 6 points on which the opinions of French and Russian students coincide. The respondents from both countries and from both specialties believe that, first, students' rights enshrined by the law complied in the University, and second, that students should have more rights. The survey showed that all students believe that their rights are fully respected. However, French students presented the low degree of awareness of their rights. Russian students have no or little intention (mentioned by 11% of Russian respondents) regarding the struggle for their rights.

The students studying law have more initiatives on the extension of their rights. Among them are the following:

- First, the right of equal access to education should become less declarative and more evident. The wording of the corresponding articles should be expanded and clarified (mentioned by 98% of respondents).
- French and Russian students were totally unanimous (100% of the respondents) when they noted that nowadays the problem of inequality of educational opportunities is very acute. There is a group of educational institutions of "exclusive nature" that oppose to the other institutions. The students insisted on the "selective" admission of the elite young people to these institutions and the young people from the families with a lower social economic status are forced to get in the marginal groups.
- The students from both countries (95% of the respondents) believe that inequality of the educational system constantly increases from the first years of professional training at higher education institutions to the start of their career in the labor market. The social economic situation, gender, immigration status, and even the place (either a big city or a rural area) where the primary school is located, affect the quality of education.
- Moreover, female respondents in France and Russia (mentioned by all female respondents) were sure that during learning years women have better academic results as they are brighter than men, but then the female employees are usually less successful in the labor market.
- Second, the rights of students with disabilities should be specified in details, as in some universities the right to a barrier-free environment is also mostly declarative and in real life their rights are not sufficiently respected

- Some students (68% of the respondents) focused on the right on a professional internship that should be more pragmatic, close to practical professional activity and should include students in the professional environment in the labor market. The Russian students (mentioned by 78% of the Russian respondents) also noted that they have no right to choose the site of an internship, that the internship is often meaningless and far from real life.

- Finally, the right on strike is considered as extremely essential by French students (mentioned by 86% of the French respondents).

Thus, it can be noted that the views of French and Russian students on their own rights coincide. The above data confirms previous academic statements on the need for comprehensive management in societal and humanitarian contexts with regard to human rights awareness (see the earlier review of the research member's team in Atabekova et al., 2018).

Further, the students' replies lead to the statement that law-makers, executive authorities, and educators should balance the legislation and current practices, tailor them to the needs of the target audiences, namely student community. The comparison of the comparative legal texts data and students' voices reveal some gaps that exist between vision and current realities. In this way the present research stresses the need confirms earlier opinions that study of youth voices and their perceptions helps to specify strategies and tactics (Atabekova et al., 2016; Lotto, 2018).

The present data also highlights gender- and country- sensitive issues with regard to the situation in educational legislation, rights, and realities of the hereof as perceived by target audiences. The need to take into account the above aspects within international globalization has been repeatedly mentioned in earlier research (Gaspar et al., 2018). The present study adds news materials and data confirming that youth views on current situation with their rights should be subject to analysis under criteria of gender- and nation specific parameters. The language tools for youth expression should be subject for particular study that is supposed to consider how the international and national legislation is interpreted by its target audiences as scholars underline the increasing youth activism with regard to their rights (Jenkinset al., 2016).

The research results provide grounds for educational dimensions of the obtained data use. The data on both the discourse analysis and study of students' opinions can be of practical value for training educators and professors who engaged in education policy making and its realization. Scholars underline that professionals are expected to match theory, practice and social expectations (Preece,

2018). The present research data enhances this statement with concrete data that highlights the importance of paying attention to students' voices while drafting legislation that concerns them.

Conclusion

The research findings confirm that current trends in academic research cover human rights are mainly the subject of legal and political sciences, the importance of language studies within the mentioned domain has not been specified so far. The analysis also reveals that discourse on youth rights and their perceptions of these rights have not become subject for research so far.

The comparative study of educational systems in France and Russia in the context of legislative norms showed the similarity in the main characteristics of the higher education systems of Russia and France, as well as the progressive and civilized nature of the democracies of the two countries explain their adherence to the principles of the Declaration of Human Rights in the field of enshrining these rights in relevant legislative acts.

The research provided the description of key features regarding legal status, topics and structure of the documents under study. The analytical results have been specified in the respective section. In this regard, we note the thematic proximity of the main structural units of acts (with significantly greater structural complexity and branching of the Code (2019)). In addition, we can concentrate on such aspects as the almost complete semantic identity of the main thematic blocks of students' rights from the point of view of human rights set by the legislative acts. However, a clearer, complete and detailed classification of the students' rights is manifested in the Federal Law and their softer, "cautious" variant is displayed in the Code (2019).

Both countries' legislative documents are aimed at improving the access of all citizens to higher education; solving the basic problems of students, enhancing the quality of the students' professional training in order to provide them with competitive knowledge and competencies that satisfy modern requirements of the labor market, motivate them to settle the modern social problems.

The implementation of the Federal Law of the Russian Federation on Education (2012) and the Code of Education of France (2019) are an important step towards the democratization of society and can be considered as the most important mechanism of humanity and social justice in the area of getting knowledge.

Both legislative acts are the examples of discourse activity and are distinguished by a pragmatic focus on the. The pragmatic qualities of discourse analysis determine its general purpose setting, in accordance with which it reflects the "area due". The target pragmatic attitude defines the main functional communicative type of speech used in the French and Russian legislative texts - this is an advanced description of the state of things, obliging the addressee to follow the addressee's intent expressed in the text. Obligations and permissions shape the basic opposition to the structure of the legislative text. The external segmentation of both texts is closely related to their thematic development.

The research also revealed French and Russian students' perceptions of their rights. An experimental survey of 4 groups of students showed a significant similarity of legal problems in educational environment of both countries. The homogeneity of their perception with varying degrees of activity as far as the ways to solve them are concerned is quite evident.

Taken together the findings of the study can serve as recommendations to modify the charters of educational institutions and to compile the curricula of studying human rights, as well as special courses on the issues of discourse analysis.

Acknowledgements

The publication has been prepared with support of the RUDN University program under 5-100 Russian Academic Excellence Project, research project number 090512 -1- 274.

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