Subject matter: «Semantic and pragmatic features of English epistemic adverbs and their functioning»
Author: Vesnina Y.
Scientific supervisor: Zaytseva O.L., Naymushin B.A.
Information about the sponsor organization: Pyatigorsk State Linguistic University; 9 Kalinin St., Pyatigorsk, Stavropol Krai.
Research relevance: epistemic adverbs present the most interesting group of words expressing modality in English and functioning as propositional pragmatic elements in speech.
Purpose: to describe the significant features of epistemic adverbs and analyze the interdependence of their functioning and semantic structure.
Tasks: to list the main characteristic features of studied group of words; to define their pragmatic functions in textual continuum; to state their speech properties as modal markers.
Theoretical and practical significance: is in cognitive-pragmatic approach towards the study of lexical items carrying modality in English; as well as in practical importance for teaching communication skills in ESL class.
Results of the research: the epistemic adverbs form a special group of words in English; their main function is to convey the speaker’s attitude towards the information he is giving to his listeners. The adverbs are classified in accordance with the type of modal-pragmatic meaning they carry in their semantic structure into factive and non-factive. Factive adverbs (certainly, assuredly, of course, indeed, really, surely, evidently, obviously, apparently, perceivably) coincide with the verb to know and non-factive (perhaps, probably, presumably, supposedly, seemingly, naturally, evidently, apparently obviously, probably, maybe, possibly) – with the verb to think on the scale “certainty-uncertainty-doubt”. The type of the pragmatic meaning highly depends on the position of an adverb in a sentence and its combinability with other words.