

Philology and the Challenges of Specialist Communication: from Cooperation with Business to Teacher Training

Philology study programmes at Polish universities are subject to constant evolution in order to adapt to the expectations of the changing labour market and boost graduates' employability. At times, changes in the profile of education for philologists are extremely significant.

This publication analyses three areas in which it is particularly visible how philology studies open up possibilities for their graduates' professional careers in a company, which is understood here in broad terms: these areas are cooperation between the university and the business environment, preparing students to communicate in a foreign language in specialist contexts, and training teachers of specialist languages who can respond to the expectations of specific audiences. The study programmes of six popular philologies at 22 Polish universities were analysed, i.e. English, German, Romance languages, Hispanism, Italian and Russian studies.

The knowledge and skills required for working in an enterprise are mastered by philologists through activities conducted as part of what is termed the university's 'third mission', where the university may invite entities from the socio-economic environment to cooperate. Implementing attractive partnerships with enterprises might seem very difficult in the case of philology faculties, yet the examples collected here prove that this is possible and may bring tangible benefits for all participants: students gaining formative experience, enterprises gaining competent employees, and universities that may enrich the educational offering of their philology faculties.

An analysis of educational programmes shows that language teaching for professional purposes is included in philology degree courses, sometimes to a very great extent. Some specialisations even prepare students for specific professions (e.g. customs officer). Usually, however, students of philology are offered an introduction to the languages of particular fields or sectors (economics, law, tourism). The programmes analysed differ in terms of the number of the hours and the diversity of the specific specialist languages offered: in this sense, the offer of particular universities is highly heterogeneous.

The final aspect discussed in the publication is preparing philology students to teach specialised languages. An analysis of university programmes shows that it is extremely rare for this element to be included in the education of future foreign language teachers, and more often than not, a philologist who would like to work with non-standard groups of learners (employees using a foreign language for professional purposes) has to prepare for this on their own.

The authors have sought to describe the forms and methods of university education on neophilology degree courses through the prism of the main assumptions of specialist glottodidactics. Therefore, this monograph is, on the one hand, a record of the real state

of affairs, which can be observed in terms of the curricula offered on neophilology degree courses in Poland. On the other, it is also an illustration of how and to what extent the theoretical and methodological assumptions of specialist glottodidactics impact on the shape of each training programme preparing for the profession.

The rich research material forming the basis of this study makes it possible to discern the changes that have affected the education of philologists in Poland, and to show the place specialist language teaching has in current neophilology education. The results of the analysis indicate the directions for developing the teaching on offer, and may also act as an inspiration for potential modifications.

Translated by Rob Pagett