

Abstract

Ukraine's integration into the global economic space, the expansion of international contacts, the growth of international trade and diplomatic activity have caused the need for philologists who possess the skills of foreign communication and translation. Recently, the changes in the educational paradigm in Ukraine have emphasized the need to update the content and organizational principles of professional training of philologists following a competency-based approach. The paper aims to disclose some general characteristics of future philologists' professional training at Ukrainian universities (on the example of the degree programme on Germanic Languages and Literature (including Translation)).

The analysis of regulatory documents indicates significant changes in the list of fields in professional training of various specialists at Ukrainian universities between 2010 and 2016. According to the order of the Ministry of Education and Science No 567 as of May 25, 2016 "On the Approval of the List of Specializations for Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in Philology (032)", there are the following specializations: Ukrainian language and literature; Crimean Tatar language and literature; Slavic languages and literatures (including translation); Germanic languages and literature (including translation); Romance languages and literature (including translation); Oriental languages and literature (including translation); Finno-Ugrian languages and literatures (including translation); Classical languages and literatures (including translation); Folklore Studies; Applied Linguistics.

The 2016-2017 admission campaign shows that these are the most popular specializations: Germanic languages and literature (including translation); Romance languages and literature (including translation); Oriental languages and literature (including translation); Applied Linguistics. From 2006 to 2016, the number of graduates by these specializations increased. The total number of graduates in this field was 4 368 persons in 2006 and 5 975 persons in 2016. Thus, growth dynamics is equal to 26.9%. Over the last ten years, there has also been an increase in the number of applicants for foreign philology, especially in the fields of translation and oriental languages and literatures. Moreover, there is a clear tendency to switch to a two-stage system of professional training for transfer students. Master programmes are of particular importance now.

In Ukraine, professional training of specialists is regulated by higher education standards. In 2017, the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine proposed new draft higher education standards, including for philologists. Higher education standards include general and professional competencies determining the specifics of philologists' training and expected learning outcomes; characterizing the knowledge, understanding and abilities students are expected to acquire after successful completion of a degree programme. Competencies and expected learning outcomes are consistent with each other and meet the descriptors of the National Qualifications Framework. Universities are entitled to compile the list of courses students need to master to acquire competencies (competences) defined by the standard. The compulsory content of degree programmes (minimum 35%) includes those courses which ensure the achievement of learning outcomes defined by the standard. Universities can also indicate additional competencies and learning outcomes that correspond to the optional component of degree programmes.

Undergraduate degree programmes in Philology involve 4 years (240 ECTS). A minimum of 50% of the degree programme should be aimed at developing general and subject-specific competencies defined by the standard. Subsequently, industrial and teaching placements should cover no less than 5% of the degree programme each. In Ukraine, graduate degree programmes can last for 1.5 or 2 years (90 ECTS □ taught Master's degrees; 120 ECTS □ research Master's degrees).

The content of professional training of philologists includes compulsory and optional parts. The compulsory part should be covered at least 40% and no more than 60% of a total academic load. The teaching of humanities and basic courses aims to highlight relevant philosophical issues in various fields of scientific knowledge, thus greatly widening the professional outlook of future philologists. Professional courses provide students with the necessary knowledge of special fields and develop their translation skills. The optional part can be defined by universities for each degree programme. It contains optional courses chosen by universities (7-8 courses □ up to 20 credits), as well as optional courses chosen by students (6-7 courses □ up to 15 credits). The total volume of the optional part involves 25-35 credits according to study duration.

The analysis of degree programmes in Translation proves the need to fundamentalize linguistic training, which involves providing systematic knowledge and meta-reflections and incorporates professional orientations in the content of academic courses. The fundamentality of professional training of future translators implies the completeness and depth of cultural, literary, linguistic and translation-related knowledge, skills and abilities to comprehend linguistic, literary and translation-related concepts, taking into account the principles of dialogism, historicism, systematism and scientificity.

The main organizational forms of professional training of future philologists at universities are lectures (introductory lectures, informative lectures, summary lectures, systematic lectures, problematic lectures, review lectures); seminars (concretization and consolidation of scientific knowledge; generalization of scientific knowledge; systematization of scientific knowledge; specialized research seminars); practical classes and laboratory work; placement (industrial placement, teaching placement); summative assessment (pass-fail tests, examinations); subject-specific olympiads; group and individual consultations; final state certification (state exams, defence of theses (projects)); independent work (reports, term-papers (projects)).

In the context of European higher education standards and credit-based modular learning, theorists and practitioners especially focus on independent work, which implies reducing classroom workload. Independent work is aimed at consolidating knowledge and skills acquired during practical classes; expanding and deepening theoretical material; developing skills of independent work with literary sources, dictionaries; performing practical translation-related tasks.

The traditional interactive forms of professional training of future translators are translation-related and speech training sessions (rapid response, rapid learning), round-table discussions, translation arenas (discussing and identifying effective approaches to solving translation-related problems), debates (learning to think logically and justify one's opinions, speak concisely and clearly if the interlocutor thinks differently), practical seminars (developing practical skills in oral and written translation).

Research activities form an integral part of professional training of philologists since they teach philology students to search methods, enlarge their research experience, motivate them to be autonomous and creative, develop their intellectual skills and personal and professional self-determination. The Encyclopedia of Education defines it as “an important component of the educational process, an organic component of education, the basic element and the driving force behind its development”. At universities, research activities cover two areas: educational research and scientific research, which correlate with the relevant years of higher education study.

An important component of professional training of future philologists is the practical training, which ensures the effectiveness of the acquired translation knowledge and skills, cultivates the awareness of the need to improve professional competency, strengthen confidence in the correct choice of the profession and promotes the cultural development of future philologists.

Professional competency of future philologists (translators) during their practical activities can be developed more effectively if this process is corrected and supplemented by relevant modern teaching, methodological and information support.

Some general characteristics of future philologists’ professional training in higher education institutions in Ukraine, justified in the paper, have proved the need to update the content of such training and introduce effective organizational forms and methods of teaching and learning, which will promote the subject-subject interaction in the educational process, as well as contribute to personality development and assure the quality of education.