

Conference report: Academic conference “Perspektywy kształcenia nauczycieli języków specjalistycznych w Polsce” (Perspectives on educating LSP teachers in Poland), Institute of Applied Linguistics of Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, 20th October 2020

Conducted in a pleasant and stimulating atmosphere, the academic conference “Perspektywy kształcenia nauczycieli języków specjalistycznych w Polsce” (Perspectives on educating LSP teachers in Poland), organized by the Institute of Applied Linguistics of Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, was an event which allowed its participants to analyse and discuss a variety of aspects related to the process of educating LSP teachers in Poland. Held online on 20th October 2020, it attracted scholars from different Polish universities and provided them with the opportunity to exchange ideas and views on LSP education and to present their research findings, observations and practical solutions in this area.

After a very warm welcome from the conference organizers, Dr Joanna Kic-Drgas and Dr Joanna Woźniak, and the Head of the Institute, Prof. Dr Hab. Izabela Prokop, proceeded a session with presentations delivered by renowned specialists in LSP education: Magdalena Sowa, Elżbieta Gajewska, Jacek Makowski and Aleksandra Matulewska.

Prof. Magdalena Sowa from Marie Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin diagnosed the needs of Polish LSP teachers from the perspective of organization of the educational process. On the basis of data obtained by means of questionnaires completed by LSP teachers in technical and vocational schools during the past five years as well as through an analysis of the Polish educational system, the presenter illustrated the problem and eventually recognized the needs of LSP instructors.

Prof. Elżbieta Gajewska, representing the Pedagogical University of Kraków, discussed the competences of language department graduates who participated in practical LSP classes (in Polish: PNJS) and in specialist translation courses. She reflected on strong and weak points of such courses and offered some implications with regard to how and to what extent they can help foreign language users to communicate in a specialist language and to perform professional tasks in a company. She emphasized the potential inspiration that LSP education can draw from specialist translation.

Prof. Jacek Makowski, affiliated with the University of Łódź, discussed foreign and specialist languages in professional communication. He presented findings from the research “Językowy barometr Łodzi 2020” (Linguistic barometer of Lodz 2020) and on this basis evaluated employees’ language competences and employers’ expectations in regard to candidates with LSP abilities, identified the languages that are highly valued on the market and pointed to FL and LSP skills that are most frequently required in a workplace and in cooperation with local universities.

Prof. Aleksandra Matulewska from Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań reported findings and presented conclusions from her and Tomasz Janiak’s research project on teaching the language of logistics and forwarding. She described three phases of the research, out of which the first one involved an analysis of teachers’ and students’ market needs, the second one concentrated on the preparation of coursebooks for teaching the language of logistics (English, German and Russian), and the third one entailed online forwarding language courses (English, German, Polish and Russian). In her presentation she focused not only on teachers’ and students’ problems with LSP education but also on practical ways of solving them.

The session was followed by a panel discussion concerning the perspectives on educating LSP teachers in Poland and by the presentation of the TRAILS project which the conference organizers (Dr Joanna Kic-Drigas and Dr Joanna Woźniak) were engaged in and which they featured as a response to the needs of LSP instructors. The five-stage project entitled "Szkoła letnia dla nauczycieli języków specjalistycznych" (Summer school for LSP teachers) and co-financed by the EU (Erasmus+ Programme) was carried out by eight European institutions (including Adam Mickiewicz University) in the years 2018–2020 with the aim to foster high quality and innovation in LSP teaching. It resulted in a summer school training programme which was meant to help LSP instructors to develop their professional skills.

After a break, elective workshops were offered to the conference participants. Prepared by Małgorzata Niemiec-Knaś, Jakub Przybył and Katarzyna Bieniecka-Drzymała, the workshops concentrated on practical solutions to the problems identified in LSP education and provided useful guidelines in this field.

Professor Małgorzata Niemiec-Knaś, from Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa, discussed a task-based approach and introduced the idea of a dual education system based on the project "Język niemiecki w obrocie gospodarczym" (The German language in business trading). During the workshop she proposed a framework for building and performing language tasks in the professional context. In her session the participants had an opportunity to get answers to such crucial questions as: Shall we define or model the tasks? What features should language tasks illustrating professional situations show? What competences are evident in task-based learning? Completion of which tasks leads to the attainment of particular levels of competence? and Does the task constitute a whole or an element?

Dr Jakub Przybył, affiliated with Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, focused on the development of competences of LSP teachers. On the basis of selected teaching activities, he motivated the workshop's participants to take into consideration such aspects as a selection of content for the class, strategies and techniques of learning and teaching specialist vocabulary, and the use of ICT in LSP education. The session involved different forms of work (e.g. individual, in pairs, in groups, ICT teaching), which supported the argument that a FL teacher is the best expert in LSP classes who understands the specificity of a foreign language and the need of integrating the subject content and the medium of instruction.

Katarzyna Bieniecka-Drzymała (M.A.), also from Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, brought into focus the concept of coaching as understood according to the standards of the International Coach Federation and demonstrated the potential of a coaching approach in the cooperation with a student. During the workshop the presenter not only shared her experience as a translator / LSP educator and a certified coach but also formulated a number of conclusions on the basis of her PhD research (the PhD project concentrates on the potential of coaching approach in language education at the academic level). The workshop allowed the participants to learn about the technique of active listening and the scenario of a coaching conversation in education.

In the end, it has to be underlined that the conference was an insightful and engaging event which provided its participants with practical ideas and helpful guidelines that might be used in their LSP courses.

Received: 16.01.2021; **revised:** 09.03.2021

MAREK KRAWIEC

marass24@wp.pl

Wielkopolska Wyższa Szkoła Społeczno-Ekonomiczna w Środzie Wielkopolskiej

ORCID: 0000-0001-6584-1976

DOI: 10.14746/gl.2021.48.1.11