

Elżbieta Gajewska, Magdalena Sowa, Joanna Kic-Drgas. *Filologia wobec wyzwań komunikacji specjalistycznej. Od współpracy z biznesem po kształcenie nauczycieli*. Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM. 2020. Pp. 238

The book *Language studies and the challenges of specialized communication* is co-authored by prof. Elżbieta Gajewska of the Pedagogical University of Krakow, prof. Magdalena Sowa of Maria Skłodowska-Curie University in Lublin and doctor Joanna Kic-Drgas of Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. The book focuses on three key elements of the language learning and teaching context, namely WHO, WHAT and HOW. This is reflected in the structure of the book, where the first chapter investigates the concept of language studies and the profile of the graduates as well as their place in the wider business context (WHO). In the second chapter the authors explore a very broad and complex issue of LSP and its relationship with general language, and present a short overview of the most important theoretical approaches, which is followed by a review of how LSP is taught at Polish universities (WHAT and HOW). Finally, the third chapter covers the education of LSP teachers, both theory and practice (WHO and HOW). But there is another triad that spans the whole book: the analysis of each of the three topics named above follows a similar pattern – the authors first look at theoretical underpinnings (both in terms of academic theories and statutory documents), then analyse the current situation (mainly through a meticulous review of a number of curricula and syllabi) and finally offer options and examples which can contribute to improving the whole process.

The first chapter opens with an attempt at a definition of a graduate of language studies (or a language specialist). Starting from a simple dictionary definition and a detailed description of the profession available in relevant laws the authors show how vague and broad the meaning of the word is. What emerges from their analysis is that the competence profile of a graduate is very closely linked with a number of business areas, contrary to popular belief that language studies graduates usually take up teaching or translation jobs¹. This is followed by a description of types of university degrees in languages and a short review of how language studies have been evolving over the years, with an accompanying shift of focus: from an emphasis on culture, literature and linguistics to a more practical approach. The chapter also includes a comparison of traditional language studies and their younger “siblings” – applied linguistics degrees. The second part of the chapter focuses on collaboration between universities and business as part of the third mission of universities worldwide. The authors explore three main areas where businesses and universities can work together to ensure that graduates will be better prepared for work challenges: changes to curricula, development of new forms of education and novel interdisciplinary research. The authors highlight the benefits of the cooperation for both sides, but at the same time point out that the literature on the needs of both businesses and universities in this area is rather limited. The last part of the chapter is the most practical, providing an extensive description of successful projects implemented jointly by businesses and universities. The list is quite impressive, considering the difficulties with collecting relevant data described by the authors. Apart from the actual

¹ The data provided by the authors (p. 27) supports this: almost ¾ graduates of the Faculty of Modern Languages and Literatures at Adam Mickiewicz University find a job in business undertakings.

examples the authors also provide a short classification of such projects. To conclude, the whole chapter provides an insightful overview of the competences expected of graduates of language studies, type of university degrees where such skills can be acquired and finally how businesses and universities can work together to offer the optimum environment for honing the required skills.

Given that the majority of graduates of language studies are likely to work in contexts other than schools or translation business and for that they will need to know at least some LSPs the second chapter focuses on the place of LSP courses in curricula of languages studies (the WHAT part of the triad). Similarly as in the first chapter, the authors follow the "theory-to-practice" model: they start with a review of theories of LSP, which is followed by an analysis of how LSP is taught at a number of universities. Their discussion of the relationship between general language and LSP and their interdependence or independence is both concise and comprehensive. This is followed by a review of LSP-related linguistic and language teaching theories. This is the part of the book where the practical dimension is very clearly visible: whenever the authors discuss any theoretical approach to LSP, they also offer some insights as to how it is or could be used in practice. Interestingly, since the three authors work in different languages (French, German and English) they were able to bring out and highlight differences between LSP research in Germany, France and English-speaking countries. In their analysis they explore the roots of terminological discrepancies and how this affects academic communication. They conclude that Polish researchers working in the French, German or English contexts are highly likely to mean quite different things when using terms such as "discourse" or "genre". The analysis of the theories has another practical dimension, as it allowed the authors to identify the key concepts (terminology, text, context, discourse, etc.) to be used in the analysis of LSP teaching at universities. The concepts were later used in the analysis of LSP syllabi from a number of universities. What emerged from their review is that LSP university teachers may be quite often unaware of the challenges involved in adopting a certain approach, or placing some of the concepts at the centre of an LSP course. This part of the chapter ends with a presentation of practical implications of selecting certain concepts as a basis for LSP courses. In the second part of Chapter Two the authors investigate the variety of forms that LSP courses at Polish universities take, which is reflected in how the courses are named (on p. 76 they list 13 different names for LSP courses). This is followed by sections which look at the most popular LSPs (business, legal, tourism) and the contents of such courses. In the conclusions the authors also offer some practical advice on how to plan and carry out LSP courses at universities.

In the third chapter the authors focus on LSP teacher training. They start with a description of competences, roles and tasks of an LSP teacher. Special attention is paid to the whole process of planning an LSP course: the skills needed and the challenges involved in analysing the demand, needs, collecting source data and preparing activities. This is followed by an analysis of legal documents on the training of LSP teachers, which brings a surprising conclusion that the requirements for the training not only LSP teachers, but also non-LSP teachers are the same as for teachers of other subjects, even though the nature of work of a language teacher is quite distinct from that of a geography or maths teacher. In the last part of the chapter the authors explore a number of training options for LSP teachers at Polish universities to find out

that only seven universities (twelve degrees in total) offer courses on LSP teaching. A detailed analysis of the courses offered reveals that the knowledge, skills and competences necessary for LSP teachers are quite often taught as part of a general language teaching course, with separate courses being relatively small in number. And even if separate courses are provided, their contents may differ extensively among universities. At the end of the chapter the authors provide some explanations for the surprising lack of courses for future LSP teachers, concluding that despite enormous changes that have happened in the area of language learning and teaching over the last two decades, language teacher training seems to have undergone only minor changes. The authors offer some solutions, such as developing separate requirements for language teachers (including LSP teachers) as well as including courses on LSP teaching in curricula of language degrees, which would focus on developing a set of competences that will help future LSP teachers to plan and prepare a variety of courses.

The main value of the book lies in its extensively practical dimension. Whether the authors review documents or theoretical approaches, the analysis is always concluded with implications for the practice of language learning and teaching. The analysis of all the referenced documents is thorough. The practical dimension is also evident in the number of real-life examples of good practices that the authors identified in their analysis. In addition, a number of tables and diagrams facilitate the reading. All of the above make the book a useful source not only for academics involved in curriculum development, as the authors state at the end of the book, but also for LSP teachers or students. As the book offers a theoretical background, an extensive review of a number of documents as well as practical examples and advice, anyone interested in LSP learning and teaching, either for research or for practical applications, will find here not only ample information, but also an inspiration.

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