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Ethical challenges of interpreter training at the University of Ljubljana. The Faculty of Arts responds to social change¹

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Modern society is changing and becoming increasingly multilingual and multicultural. There is a growing need for interpreting in different contexts and for languages that were previously rarely required in the Slovene context (e.g., Albanian, Arabic, and Persian). This paper is based on the premise that if higher interpreter education is to be performed ethically, it must respond to these changes within its capacity and educate interpreters for the languages and fields that society actually needs, thus ensuring respect of human rights in medical, asylum or judicial procedures. In the past, interpreter training at the University of Ljubljana was limited to conference interpreting. However, due to changes in practice the Faculty of Arts has responded to the emerging needs and also formed educational modules for interpreters working in court and asylum procedures, state administration and in medical settings. It continues to invest efforts to expand the range of language combinations to include languages of lesser diffusion, and to offer quality interpreter training to the interpreters of Slovenian sign language. In the academic environment, we are also constantly confronted with internal ethical dilemmas related to the assessment, enrolment, and accreditation processes. It is the latter that significantly slow down the response of the Faculty to needs in society. Despite the numerous administrative, financial and human resources challenges, we may conclude that the Faculty of

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Arts is committed to investing its maximum efforts and responding with a high level of awareness to the changing interpreting profession which has experienced, through the rapidly growing use of online interpreting platforms, the greatest leap since the introduction of simultaneous interpreting. All this can only be achieved in close cooperation with all the related stakeholders: professional associations, long-standing external trainers and state authorities.

1 Introduction

The ethicist Peter Singer (1994:4) defines ethics as a “set of rules, principles or ways of thinking that guide, or claim authority to guide, the actions of a particular group”. Most sources dealing with the problem of ethics in university education deal mainly with internal relations, such as: “plagiarism by staff and students, various forms of cheating, sexual harassment by staff and student in and out of the classroom, misuse of power, exchanging sexual activities for grades, and accepting money or gifts for grades” (Ehrlich, Cranston, Kimber, Starr, 2012: 100), or with a general professional ethics that includes the “responsibility for scholarly competence; holding students to ethical standards; evaluating students in a way that reflects their worth; treating colleagues in a fair and respectful manner; and fostering conditions of free inquiry and promoting understanding of academic freedom” (ibid. 102). All this has recently been compounded by the challenges of the so-called managerial approach to university education, which includes “the adoption of private sector practices with a strong focus on outcomes, key performance indicators, monitoring and measurement, and tighter ‘efficiency’ and accountability regimes. Performance indicators have been used to compare universities against each other” (ibid.). From the perspective of the interpreting profession, the code of ethics is mainly related to the protection of professional secrets and the ethical relationship with the client. To be more precise we can quote Nike Kocijančič Pokorn and Tamara Mikolič Južnič:

Here, we also distinguish between the terms ethics and deontology. When we use the term “ethics” on its own, it refers to relations between Self and Other (Pym, 2001:133) and depends on the individual practitioner’s integrity. In contrast, the term “deontology” refers to normative ethics that are typically expressed in codes of ethics (Lambert, 2018: 270), which define the rules and regulations that practitioners are obligated to follow (see Baixauli-Olmos 2017). (Pokorn K., Mikolič Južnič, 2020: 82).

In this paper, we aim to touch on just some of these themes, and to focus more on the broader ethical functioning of academia in a changing, post-COVID society. We will show how the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana has responded to the needs of society in the field of interpreter training in recent years, and has designed new educational modules in order to fulfil its ethical mission of providing quality interpreters who are familiar with ethical standards. This is a guarantee for respect of human rights in all interpreting situations. The Faculty encourages its young graduates to respect professional deontology and working standards to the benefit of the individual interpreting communities. It is unethical to simply continue with established study programmes while ignoring the changing needs in the interpreting profession. Interpreting in this context is seen as a human right. It could be said that the actions of the Faculty of Arts' management are moving towards a new normative ethical theory, which we call 'the ethics of care' where "teaching and research are part of academic practice based on 'truthfulness (accuracy or sincerity), respect (attentiveness or honesty) and authenticity (courage or compassion)'" (Erich, 2012: 103).

2 Conference interpreting

Conference interpreter training at the Department of Translation Studies was first offered as a graduate course, then as a post-graduate specialisation course, and now as a Master's degree in Interpreting, which is a part of the EMCI and meets the highest standards.² We run the programme with EU funding, but only every second year, because it is relatively difficult to attract enough really good candidates, and also because the interpreting market in Slovenia and at the EU institutions in Brussels is currently saturated. After the end of Slovenia's Presidency in December 2021, Slovenian will no longer be a priority language in the EU, but we hope for continued support from the institutions, as there is a long-term shortage of quality interpreters in countries where market saturation and the use of English have temporarily prevented the implementation of interpreting degree programmes.

Ethical questions arise at every turn. Running the programme every other year means that our freelance staff, accredited conference interpreters with a wealth of experience, are deprived of their teaching income every other year. In normal years, they have somehow compensated for this by translating and interpreting for various clients, but during the pandemic they were left without a

² Cf. <https://www.emcinterpreting.org/emci/core-curriculum>.

livelihood. The Faculty has tried to provide these colleagues with small projects or translations of scientific texts, but the sums involved were very low. One of the fundamental ethical problems of the whole academic sphere is the difficulty of offering permanent employment to our freelance colleagues who have spent years contributing their knowledge and honing their pedagogical skills.

The issue of ethics also concerns examinations. There is a question of principle on the issue of “whether to pass a student who is borderline” (Erich, 2012: 108). Our experience shows that candidates who are borderline in the *entrance* exams never make enough progress to pass the final exams convincingly, despite the mentoring they receive. In our experience, students who struggled to pass the *final* exams never succeeded as interpreters. A parallel could be drawn here with the study of music. A student of a musical instrument who passes his final exams by a hair’s breadth is unlikely to have a large audience as a performer later on. That is why we have become more and more rigorous over the years, something that also benefits the candidates. For us, similar principles apply as identified in Erich’s study mentioned above: “One of the academic leaders in the study said that ethical dilemmas within their organisation were ‘rare as there are strong rules in place’” (Erich, 2012: 110). At the University of Ljubljana we have clearly defined criteria, assessment forms and external members on the exam board from EU institutions or other universities. We do not find such rigour unethical, as students have the possibility to complete their studies as translators. We continue to monitor students after they have completed their studies in terms of the aforementioned concept of ‘ethics of care’.

The second question of principle is whether we are training candidates who will find jobs and who are really needed on the market. Employability is a “set of achievements – skills, understanding and personal attributes – that makes graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy” (Yorke, 2006: 8). From the accounts by former students we know that there are very few regular jobs for conference interpreters immediately after graduation. Most interpreters on the Slovenian market are self-employed or sole traders, and bear the burden of health and pension insurance payments. However, students who want to get permanent employment right after their studies get jobs in other fields, where they are usually very successful, for example in diplomacy, tourism, advertising, logistics, and management. Therefore, we still consider it ethically sustainable to continue to offer

this course every second year, even though there is currently no significant need for new conference interpreters for the so-called ‘classical’ conference languages, as students receive a broad general education with a political and economic focus, acquire public speaking skills, become familiar with the rules of protocol and business communication, and above all broaden their linguistic knowledge and develop a whole range of ‘soft skills’ which are highly valued by employers today: quick decision-making, stress-coping strategies, analytical skills, concise expression, etc. The main advantages of the new interpreters are that they are able to provide a wide range of information and communication skills. We are preparing them for a volatile labour market, where “work is now defined not by occupational titles or categories, but by skills and values” (Kumar, 2007: 15 after Straby, 2002). There are “vocational skills, which are related to a specific profession (such as a command of Computer-Assisted Translation tools for Translation Studies), and transferable skills (also called ‘graduate attributes’, ‘core’ or ‘generic skills’), which Kearns defines as preparing students for mobility between different jobs (Yorke, 2008: 201); of course some skills can be both vocational and transferable... Whatever they are called and even if inconsistencies remain, in today’s volatile job-market, adaptability is clearly crucial to survive and thrive. Many translation or interpreting graduates will not become translators/interpreters, nor even work with languages” (Cuminatto, Baines, Drugan, 2017: 124).

The next question is whether our language combinations (A-SL, B-EN, C-FR/IT/DE/ES) really meet the needs of the market. We cannot answer in the affirmative here, as there is a growing demand for Slovene-Serbian or Slovene-Hungarian combinations, as well as for combinations with Asian languages. We do not officially offer these combinations yet, but we have agreed to cooperate with the University of Belgrade for the academic year 2021/22. We are also looking into other possibilities of providing interpreting education (double-subject).

The biggest shake-up in the field of conference interpreting in recent years has undoubtedly been the coronavirus pandemic, which has accelerated the use of remote simultaneous interpreting (RSI) on platforms and consolidated its position on the market, but at the same time brought with it a number of challenges and exposed the shortcomings of the EU’s attitude towards its external collaborators (cf. Brglez, Udovič, Maček, 2021). During the first wave, KUDO made the use of its online platform available free of charge to all EMCI universities for an unlimited number of hours in exchange for

feedback on possible improvements (on the use of modern technologies in interpreter education, cf. Riccardi, Čenkova, Tryuk, Maček, Pelea, 2020). We have also tested a number of other platforms, so that our programme keeps abreast of the latest developments in the profession and equips students with the skills they will need when they enter the marketplace.

The Faculty of Arts, under the leadership of Dean Roman Kuhar, has further responded to the needs of freelance interpreters by setting up a sound-proof studio with a stable internet connection (hub) to enable quality remote work for all interpreters. For a minimal cost, interpreters can thus rent a well-equipped studio, which, due to its position in the basement of the building, is not exposed to any external noise. In summary, the Faculty of Arts is working closely with the professional community of conference interpreters and the Slovene Association of Conference Interpreters³, monitoring the development of the profession and trying to mitigate the negative effects of digitisation and the pandemic. The establishment of the hub definitely goes beyond the basic scientific and pedagogical tasks of the Faculty, and actively helps the professional community.

3 Court interpretation

The field of court interpretation is relatively well regulated in Slovenia. Short preparatory seminars for the licence exams are run by the Judicial Training Centre within the Ministry of Justice, which also maintains the Directory of Court Interpreters.⁴ This register was taken over from Yugoslavia at the time of Slovenia's independence in 1991, and was updated only occasionally. Things have changed considerably with the adoption of the EU Directive 2010/64, which explicitly imposes a duty on the Member States to verify the quality of interpreters and ensure that court interpreters are properly trained.⁵ Under the Directive, the condition for interpreters to remain on the list is now that they have attended five professional development courses within five years. While the quality of some further training on the market is problematic, the best quality training is provided by individual professional associations, in particular the DPTS, which is the only Slovenian member of the international association EULITA.⁶

3 <https://zkts.si/en/>

4 <https://spvt.mp.gov.si/tolmaci.html>

5 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32010L0064>

6 <https://www.eulita.eu/en/>

Court interpreting is an extremely sensitive area, which raises a number of ethical issues to which the Faculty cannot give a direct answer: the use of a stamp for unverified translations translated by the clients themselves; the close links of some court interpreters with the embassies or regimes of certain countries; attempts to prevent successful completion of examinations in order to maintain a monopoly on certain language combinations; the disclosure of confidential information, etc. All this falls within the remit of other institutions, and the University can only endeavour to ensure that new generations of court interpreters are educated so that they have a better understanding of their role and respect the Code of Ethics. We also want to educate judges and court staff in this light. The main problem in the past was that the preparatory seminars did not include interpreting skills, so that many court interpreters – despite having the title of interpreter – were not even familiar with basic interpreting techniques (consecutive note-taking, whispered interpreting) when they first arrived in the courtroom. Many people therefore only accepted written translations and refused to accept interpreting tasks.

Since its foundation, the Department of Translation Studies has been offering modules on the translation of legal texts in cooperation with the Faculty of Law of the University of Ljubljana, but it did not participate in the training of court interpreters until 2015 – partly due to austerity measures during the economic crisis, when a temporary ban on introducing new study programmes was in place, and partly because the education of court interpreters was seen as too practical and non-academic or not theoretical enough, and it sometimes struggled with “suspicion and lack of prestige” (Driesen, Drummond, 2011: 141) due to the “absence of recognition of the profession” (ibid.). The Department of Translation Studies (Sandro Paolucci and Amalija Maček) has, however, regularly participated in projects related to the training of court interpreters, such as EULITA, TRAFUT⁷ and TraiLLD⁸.

Based on this experience, a new programme, *Continuous Education for Court and Public Service Interpreters*, was written in 2015 by Amalija Maček. The programme is inspired by Christiane Driesen’s tandem method, which was “originally developed for languages of lesser diffusion” (Driesen, 2016: 80):

Traditional interpreting training methods can therefore not be applied as they rely on trainers having command of both areas: a specific language combination as well as interpreting

7 <https://eulita.eu/wp-content/uploads/files/TRAFUT%20-%20final%20report.pdf>

8 https://www.arts.kuleuven.be/english/rg_interpreting_studies/research-projects/trailld

techniques. This is a tremendous challenge when training legal interpreters and translators for LLDs. The tandem method tackles these constraints by splitting and evaluating both competences consecutively. The method is based on two trainers working jointly. An expert in interpreting didactics who has no command of the LLD and a highly qualified expert in the LLD are needed. Similarly to a tandem ride, the first trainer (interpreter) takes the lead, structuring lessons and exercises, while the second one (language expert) has to concentrate on the language quality and rendition (Driesen, 2016: 81).

The method is based on the premise that with modern technology it must be possible to find a scholar for every single language in the world, and so the excuse of choosing language-independent training because there is no qualified interpreter trainer for a particular language combination is not valid. The training is divided into three strands: legal content, translation of legal texts and the use of modern technology, interpreting with an emphasis on consecutive and dialogue techniques. In order to ensure an objective evaluation of homework in a small country, we work with foreign evaluators. We have run the programme twice so far, the first time we had 21 participants with 11 languages, the second time 14 participants with 8 languages. Currently we have 13 participants with 9 languages. The responses of participants in the internal evaluation were very positive. The system of cooperation with foreign evaluators has room for improvement (e.g. slow administrative processing in the Faculty of Arts), and we would like to publish a monograph collecting basic professional texts as a basis for the study, but it should also be noted that the programme was only accredited in 2018. Here we see the ethical questionability of such lengthy accreditation procedures, given that all the evaluators at all stages have stressed that this is a programme that is urgently needed in Slovenia. The programme itself does not yet guarantee that candidates will actually pass the licence exam for court interpreters (although we are increasingly working together with the Centre to ensure fair assessment). Therefore, the fundamental ethical question with this programme is also whether investing in this self-funded/payable programme results in better job prospects for the participants. The problem is the high level of faculty overhead costs and the consequent high cost for participants, despite the fact that the trainers teach for a nominal fee. Faculty procedures and regulations often act as a barrier to their own efforts to bring about change and social benefits.

4 Interpretation in international protection procedures

Interpreting in asylum proceedings is not as regulated in Slovenia as court interpreting. Asylum centres and individual police stations have their own internal lists of interpreters, who do not have to pass any exams and do not have to provide any interpreting references. Ethically questionable practices often occur, both in terms of the quality of interpretation and compliance with the Code of Ethics. There are complications due to the marked social power imbalance in the process itself, and the involvement of untrained interpreters who are unaware of their dual role as interpreter and facilitator of the conversation (Wadensjö, 1998).

The above-mentioned Continuous Education for Court and Public Service Interpreters is therefore also specifically aimed at training interpreters in asylum procedures. There is still a lack of awareness in the Faculty and society that some languages are already part of our changed reality and will remain relevant in the future, and it would thus be advisable to introduce them, such as Arabic, Farsi/Dari and Albanian as subjects of study, rather than just as occasional lectureships.

In practice, there is tension between court interpreters and *ad hoc* interpreters interpreting in asylum procedures, the former being perceived as a privileged group, since the rates for court interpreting or court translations are set by law, while interpreting in asylum procedures is subject to tendering procedures which have the lowest price as one of their main criteria. Nevertheless, we note that both groups still highly value the Faculty of Arts as an independent and recognised institution, so much so that in 2015 we managed to organise two Arabic language workshops where we were able to mediate to some extent between the two groups (cf. Zekhnini, Maček, 2016). We have also noticed how much the University of Ljubljana certificate means to the participants of the professional development workshops.

5 Community interpreting with a focus on medical interpreting

The Department of Translation Studies has been working on community interpretation projects for many years, although this field is still largely unregulated in Slovenia and many other nations. “The role of the public service interpreter is still under debate in some countries and contexts. Some say that public service interpreters (PSIs) should restrict their role to transferring

the meaning of messages, while others would have them also give advice and opinion and take on additional tasks” (Corsellis, 2008: 6).

Stakeholders and the general public must be made aware of the nature of interpreting work and of the need of professional interpreting service provision, particularly in high-risk, multilingual communicative events, such as in asylum procedures, hospitals, courts, or when dealing with the police or social services, i.e., in situations where unskilled help might result in negative life-changing or life-threatening events (Pokorn K., Mikolič Južnič, 2020:102).

It is important to distinguish between a community interpreter and an intercultural mediator, as these two require different competences and tasks but the terminology still remains fuzzy (Pokorn K., Mikolič Južnič, 2020: 86). The remuneration is relatively low, and in the past researchers have detected unethical practices – interpreting by cleaning staff in hospitals, interpreting by relatives, and – a particularly problematic situation – interpreting by the patient’s child (cf. Pokorn K., Matičič, Pokorn, 2009). The leading expert in this field is Nike Kocijančič Pokorn, with frequent contributions from Tamera Mikolič Južnič and Vojko Gorjanc (Gorjanc, 2013: 120). Nike Kocijančič Pokorn led the TRAMIG⁹ project (Training newly arrived migrants for community interpreting and intercultural mediation), which aims to train interpreters among migrants. “Training refugees to become interpreters for refugees” (Lai, Mulayim, 2010) can help “the integration process of the individual student interpreter, and it also makes an important contribution to improving communication between the refugee community and the wider community” (Lai, Mulayim 2013: 302). Nike Kocijančič Pokorn has also launched an initiative for a national vocational qualification for community interpreters in Albanian, Arabic and Persian, linked to the launch of exams on active knowledge of these languages at the Faculty of Arts. Here again, the problem arises that these languages cannot be studied in Slovenia, nor do any dictionaries or textbooks exist for them in combination with Slovene, only occasional lectureships are available, resulting in a situation where most interpreters are still immigrants with a limited knowledge of Slovene. A second generation of immigrants is slowly emerging, and it is at them that our educational programmes are primarily aimed. “The traditional routes of postgraduate conference interpreter training are rarely available for public service interpreters.

9 <https://tramig.eu/>

Trainers are faced with the challenge of training professionals who are fit to practice, within limited resources and time. The range of languages required extends beyond those for which traditional academic courses are offered locally. Hence, it may be difficult to source suitably qualified individuals to be professionally trained” (Corsellis, 2008: 7). For community interpreters, the Continuous Education for Court and Public Service Interpreters is too demanding in terms of content and language, as well as financially expensive, so Nike Kocijančič Pokorn and colleagues, together with some partner universities abroad, are developing online learning modules. An important contribution to the ethical aspect of the profession has been the adoption of the Slovenian Standards of Practice/Code of Ethics for Community Interpreters, prepared by a joint commission chaired by Nike Kocijančič Pokorn. These standards were endorsed by four Slovenian interpreting and translation professional organisations and have brought at least some order in the market, disorganised due to social changes on the one hand and the lack of university studies or other forms of quality assurance on the other. All these efforts show that scientists are aware of their social responsibility and want to actively prevent unethical practices. Poor quality interpretation in health care can lead to severe embarrassment and even trauma, and in the most extreme cases can be life-threatening, so that in this case (as well as in judicial and asylum processes) poor quality interpretation is literally unethical.

6 Slovenian Sign Language

Interpreting for the Slovenian Sign Language is generally organised within the Slovenian Sign Language Interpreters’ Association, which organises training and examinations and also maintains a list of interpreters.¹⁰ In the past, deaf people often remained illiterate, but with better language policies, more and more deaf or hard of hearing people are opting for secondary and higher education, which creates a need for sign interpreters trained in more complex and abstract subjects. We are proud that it was in the Department of Translation Studies, under the supervision of Špela Vintar, that the first deaf PhD student, Marjetka Kulovec, obtained her doctorate in 2018.

However, it is not possible to study the Slovenian Sign Language itself at faculty level in Slovenia, which is discriminatory. With the initiative to enshrine the Slovenian Sign Language in the Constitution in 2021, we hope the situation will improve.

10 <https://www.tolmaci.si/lista-tolmacev-foto/>

On the initiative of Matjaž Juhart, Secretary General of the Slovenian Association of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing,¹¹ we began to explore the possibility of introducing education at university level several years ago. In spring 2021, we submitted an application for accreditation of a new strand in the framework of the existing Master's degree in Interpreting, which will include some hours of study in the Slovenian Sign Language itself, and in particular in Slovenian Sign Language interpreting and International Sign Language. The EU institutions, which until recently financially supported only conference interpreting studies, are opening up to other types of interpreting, so we hope to receive EU support for this course as well, despite the lengthy accreditation procedures.

7 Conclusion

“Universities are complex, pressured environments where academic leaders are faced with competing tensions and pressures when making decisions that affect diverse stakeholders such as students, colleagues, the local community, employers and corporate partners” (Ehrich, Cranson et al., 2012: 101) – and, we could also add, the wider society. In recent years, the Department of Translation Studies and the management of the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana have been closely monitoring the situation of interpreters and the needs of different target groups. The goal of the Faculty of Arts is to become a Slovenian and regional educational and scientific centre in the field of interpreting, in cooperation with professional associations, other universities in Slovenia and abroad, and EU institutions, with the aim of providing quality education for interpreters who will respect high standards of professional ethics and provide quality interpreting services in all areas where interpreting is used. In short, the most unethical aspects of interpreting are poor interpreting and the lack of adequate training (linguistic and interpreting) for specific languages, for which there is already a great need in Slovenia. Within its own administrative and financial constraints, the Faculty of Arts is trying to fill the gaps and play an active role in improving the situation of all interpreting professionals.

11 <http://zveza-gns.si/>

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Desafíos éticos de la formación de intérpretes en la Universidad de Ljubljana. La respuesta de la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras a los cambios sociales

Palabras clave: ética, cambios sociales, adaptación de programas de estudio, formación de intérpretes, interpretación a distancia

La sociedad moderna está cambiando y se está volviendo cada vez más multilingüe y multicultural. Hay una creciente necesidad de interpretación en contextos diversos y de idiomas que anteriormente se demandaban muy poco en Eslovenia (p. ej., el albanés, el árabe o el persa). Este artículo se basa en la premisa de que la educación superior se lleva a cabo de manera ética solo si responde a estos cambios formando, en la medida de lo posible, a los intérpretes en aquellos idiomas y ámbitos que la sociedad realmente necesita, asegurando el respeto a los Derechos Humanos en los procedimientos médico-sanitarios, las peticiones de asilo o los procesos judiciales. En el pasado, la formación de intérpretes en la Universidad de Ljubljana se limitaba a la interpretación de conferencias. Sin embargo, la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras ha ido respondiendo a las nuevas necesidades con la organización de módulos educativos también para intérpretes que trabajan en procesos judiciales y en solicitudes de asilo, en la administración estatal y en la sanidad. Sigue haciendo esfuerzos para ampliar la gama de combinaciones de idiomas e incluir aquellos de menor difusión y ofrecer además una formación de calidad a los intérpretes de la lengua eslovena de signos. En el entorno académico constantemente nos enfrentamos también a dilemas éticos internos relacionados con métodos de evaluación, condiciones de inscripción y procesos de acreditación. Sin embargo, estos ralentizan notablemente la respuesta de la Facultad a las necesidades de la sociedad. A pesar de los numerosos desafíos administrativos, financieros y de recursos humanos, podríamos concluir que la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras se compromete a realizar su mayor esfuerzo y responder con un alto nivel de conciencia a las exigencias de la cambiante profesión de la interpretación, que –debido al uso cada vez más frecuente de plataformas de interpretación– ha

experimentado el mayor salto desde la introducción de la interpretación simultánea. Todo esto solo puede lograrse en estrecha cooperación con todas las partes implicadas: asociaciones profesionales, formadores externos permanentes y autoridades estatales.

Etični izzivi izobraževanja tolmačev na Univerzi v Ljubljani. Odzivi Filozofske Fakultete na družbene spremembe

Ključne besede: etika, družbene spremembe, prilagajanje študijskih programov, izobraževanje tolmačev, tolmačenje na daljavo

Sodobna družba se spreminja ter postaja vse bolj večjezična in večkulturna. Vse več je potrebe po tolmačenju v različnih kontekstih ter iz jezikov, ki so bili v Sloveniji nekdanje le redko zastopani (albanski, arabski in perzijski jezik). Prispevek temelji na predpostavki, da lahko visoko šolstvo deluje etično le, če se po svojih zmožnostih odziva na te spremembe ter izobražuje tudi tolmače za jezike in področja, ki jih družba potrebuje, s čimer zagotavlja spoštovanje človekovih pravic v zdravstvu, sodstvu in postopkih za pridobitev mednarodne zaščite. V preteklosti je bilo izobraževanje tolmačev na Univerzi v Ljubljani osredotočeno na konferenčno tolmačenje, v luči sprememb pa se je Filozofska fakulteta odzvala na nove potrebe in pripravila izobraževalne module tudi za tolmače v sodnih in azilnih postopkih, v državnih organih ter v zdravstvu. Prizadeva si, da bi nabor jezikov razširila na doslej v Sloveniji manj razširjene jezike ter omogočila kakovostno izobraževanje tudi tolmačem za slovenski znakovni jezik. V akademskem okolju se vseskozi srečujemo tudi z etičnimi vprašanji, povezanimi z ocenjevanjem, vpisnimi pogoji in postopki akreditiranja novih programov. Vendar pa predvsem ti dolgotrajni administrativni postopki pogosto otežujejo hiter odziv na potrebe v družbi. Lahko sklenemo, da se Filozofska fakulteta kljub administrativnim, finančnim in kadrovskim izzivom po najboljših močeh in z visoko stopnjo osveščenosti odziva na spremembe v tolmaškem poklicu, ki je s prehodom na spletne platforme doživel največji preskok od uvedbe simultanega tolmačenja. Vse to pa je mogoče le v tesnem sodelovanju z vsemi deležniki: s stanovskimi združenji, dolgoletnimi zunanji sodelavci in državnimi organi.

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