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PHILOLOGICAL COMPETENCES OF LIBRARIANS: ARE THEY
REFLECTED IN RUSSIAN REGULATIONS?

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Abstract

The article overviews modern domestic and foreign scientific literature devoted to the content of higher library education. They reflect strengthening of librarians' positions in the process of developing professional competencies. The structure and content of philological knowledge are revealed. It has been found that the following philological components are most in demand amid public libraries activities: 1) communication science used in studying the library as a communicative social institution and the features of manifesting the library communicative function is applied in organizing the processes of external and internal communication in library institutions; 2) literary criticism used to guide the librarian in historical and modern literary processes is required for document examination and reading recommendations development; 3) folklore studies are important for orientation in the documented information array of Russian and world folklore, identification of regional folklore specifics in the implementation of local history library activities. Analysis of the section "Qualification characteristics of positions in culture, art and cinematography" of the "Unified competency catalogue of managers, specialists and employees" has led to the conclusion that the increasing integration of philology and librarianship is not properly evidenced in the regulatory basis for library positions. The article formulates philological requirements for a public library specialist, which, according to the authors' perspective, should be reflected in the professional standards of librarians and information activities being developed in Russia.

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1. Introduction

The content of higher library education is discussed in modern domestic and foreign library scientific literature (Brezhnev et al., 2015; Churasheva & Tretyakov, 2017; Matveeva, 2017; Petrova & Mamontova, 2016). The reform of higher education and the active processes of modern library transformation require a pedagogical community response aimed to regard these trends, the development of a higher professional education model which is forward-looking rather than reproducing technological knowledge developed over the past decades. The researchers focus on technological, managerial, cultural and leisure, service training and other components of library education. Foreign experience in training specialists in library and information activities, reflected in a number of publications, also indicates actual restructuring of the profession (Rector, 2016; Seppo, 2008; Storey, 2007; Williamson, 2006).

At the same time, it can be argued that the philological component of training highly qualified library personnel has not faded its importance either. In the 1960s–1980s, the period characterized by active development of higher library institution, philological knowledge was used in philological disciplines to form the theory of bibliographic information and bibliographic knowledge (mainly the bibliography of the humanities) in the structure of literary and bibliographic disciplines. Pedagogical technologies turned out to be more in demand in the post-perestroika period (amid the convergence of library and social-leisure activities). Separate philological directions and processes began to integrate into library services and accumulate around the cross-cutting direction of library practice being the promotion of books and reading. Therefore, it is undoubted that the philological domain is strengthening its position during the formation of future librarians’ professional competencies.

Table 1. Philological characteristics concerning the positions of managers and specialists employed in libraries

№	Position	Philological characteristics of job responsibilities
1	Director (General Director, Head) of the Library, Centralized Library System	No indication
2	Head of the library branch, centralized library system	No indication
3	Academic Secretary of the Library, Centralized Library System	No indication
4	Head of the department (sector) of the library, centralized library system	No indication
5	Chief custodian of funds	Examines scientific and practical (historical, cultural, printing, etc.) value of documents, collections, selects documents to create their protective or insurance copies
6	Assistant to the Director (General Director) of the Library, Centralized Library System, Museum	No indication
7	Chief librarian	No indication
8	Chief bibliographer	No indication
9	Library Researcher	No indication
10	Librarian	No indication
11	Librarian-cataloguer	No indication
12	Bibliographer	Makes recommendatory bibliography, prepares and conducts oral literature reviews
13	Library acquisition expert	Examines publications purchased by the library from various sources, as well as at the request of third-party organizations. Participates in the process of publications secondary selection with further transferring them to the

		exchange fund
14	Specialist in accounting and storage documentation	No indication
15	Library preventive conservation specialist	No indication
16	Library and exhibition specialist	In collaboration with curators of funds selects and prepares documents from the library funds for exhibiting
17	Specialist in mass conservation of library collections	No indication
18	Methodist of the centralized library system, library	No indication
19	Centralized library system editor, library editor	Prepares manuscripts for publication, carries out their editing and technical design. Edits proofreads and reads signal copies of publications. Prepares reviews and annotations for printed products. Edits bibliographic, methodological and other documents

2. Problem Statement

The structure and content of philological knowledge

Philology (from ancient Greek φιλολογία, “love for the word”) means a set of sciences (linguistics, textual study, literary study, source study, paleography, etc.) that study the culture, expressed in language and literary creativity.

Philology is understood as a practical activity (in this aspect it can be interpreted as the art of understanding what is said and written) and science (in this case, philology is defined as the organization of a certain type of scientific knowledge). According to many authors, the object of philology is the spiritual culture of society (people, ethnos). However, such a broad approach in modern science is redundant due to the genesis of a relatively young science being cultural studies. Therefore, a number of authors advocate narrowing the object down to the concept of “text” in its broadest sense: oral or written, printed or virtual. From a theoretical and practical perspective such an approach undoubtedly makes philology and library science and their practical spheres related. Specifically, library processes are cultural in nature, and a document is included in the spectrum of library science and practice subjects. The modern interpretation of the text being fixed on some material carrier of human thought; in general, a coherent and complete sequence of symbols (Sergeeva & Mitrofanova, 2013) makes the document and the text maximally close to each other. However, the study of these subjects in library science and philology is carried out by different methods and for different purposes.

Philology is an integrative scientific knowledge including various sciences and their complexes. This is how classical philology studies the literary heritage of Greece and Rome. Communication study focuses on the problems of information exchange. General linguistics explores linguistic patterns. Applied linguistics analyzes contemporary language problems. Literary criticism aims to analyze and study works of art, reveals the links between the literary heritage of different countries and peoples, and highlights the creative techniques of a particular author. Textual criticism studies the texts of the pieces of works, restores and interprets ancient manuscripts. Folklore studies evolution of the artistic system from a national perspective and develops at the intersections of literary criticism, music and ethnolinguistics. Translation of foreign fiction enables the Russian reader to enjoy it.

It is important to bear in mind that there are areas of practical activity and corresponding educational programs in secondary and higher professional educational institutions for each cycle listed. Let us highlight those philological components that are most in demand in public library activities:

1) communication science used in studying the library as a communicative social institution and the features of manifesting the library communicative function is applied in organizing the processes of external and internal communication in library institutions;

2) literary criticism used to guide the librarian in historical and modern literary processes is required for document examination and reading recommendations development;

3) folklore studies are important for orientation in the documented information array of Russian and world folklore, identification of regional folklore specifics in the implementation of local history library activities.

There are a number of libraries, majorly the specialized ones, having closer ties with philology: these are libraries on the basis of research institutes on philology, industry information centers in philology domain, libraries of universities that organize specialized philological training, libraries (and individual structural units) of foreign literature, etc. They impose deeper requirements for the philological competence of librarians, and most commonly specialists of such libraries have a basic branch philological education.

3. Research Questions

Philological requirements for a public library specialist.

Many studies covering the requirements for librarians stress the demand for a broad outlook and a high level of general culture (Altukhova, 2017; Hotter, 2010; Lopatina, 2016). To meet these requirements, general education including philological one is rather important. However, in order to understand the role of the philological component in librarian's professionalism, it is important to identify special requirements related to the performance of direct job duties.

The field of work organization including library work has regulatory documents that determine the requirements for the qualifications of specialists in different positions. The section "Qualification characteristics of positions in culture, art and cinematography" of the "Unified competency catalogue of managers, specialists and employees" defines the following qualification requirements for managers and specialists: qualification characteristics contain job responsibilities, a list of necessary knowledge for their implementation and qualification requirements for three categories of employees: managers, specialists and other employees (technical executors) in accordance with the accepted classification. Let us analyze the composition of the philological characteristics of different positions in the library.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to research the description of the philological competencies of librarians in the regulatory documents of this area. The methods of comparative analysis and synthesis of documentation related to the field of higher library and information education in Russia as well as systematization and classification were used in the course of the study based on the cultural approach

(Benin et al., 2016) being a unified methodological foundation in studying the book and the institutions ensuring its functioning.

5. Research Methods

Having analyzed the “Qualification characteristics of positions in culture, art and cinematography”, it can be argued that this document uses a purely technological approach. Moreover, when describing labor functions (job duties) the focus is put on library processes. In the description of competencies (must know), knowledge for the technological processes listed in job responsibilities is disclosed. Therefore, general cultural knowledge (including philological knowledge) does not fall into the cognitive characteristics of the position, and only in a few positions the documentary array and flow is mentioned, specifically, these are the following positions: chief custodian of funds, bibliographer, expert in library collection, and specialist in library and exhibition work. The case concerning the characteristics of the examination itself is still up and requires the following to be regarded: what its nature is, by what methods it is carried out and what knowledge it requires from the subject. There is an outdated approach to characterizing positions, assigning library and bibliographic works to them, and characterizing the knowledge of specialists. The segments of philological knowledge that we identified (communication studies, literary studies and folklore studies) were not reflected in the qualification characteristics of the positions in libraries.

An exception is the position “editor of the Central Library System, a library” containing a comprehensive philological description from the perspective of job duties and the work specificity. Guided by this document, the heads of libraries will employ a specialist with a specialized philological education in this position.

6. Findings

Let us present our vision of the areas of library activity that require philological training:

- acquisition of the fund – examination of the documentary array and flow from substantive and formal positions;
- systematization of the fund (information) – semantic understanding of documents content, knowledge of artificial information retrieval languages, ability to correlate the information retrieval language and documents content adequately to the development of science and practice;
- bibliographic work – semantic evaluation of documents, knowledge in the field of the documentary array and flow, writing bibliographic and factual texts (including network);
- local history activity – semantic assessment of local history documents, knowledge of the documentary array and flow of local history, writing bibliographic and factual texts (including network);
- library services – examination of literary and industry texts in the context of literary criticism and other industries development aimed to develop high-quality recommendations for readers; writing factual texts (including network ones).

7. Conclusion

In 2020–2021, professional standards for library specialists have been developed in the Russian Federation, which will actually replace the “Qualification characteristics of positions in culture, art and cinematography”. The working group decided to initially develop four standards for the main groups of library professionals. We hope that the above-mentioned processes with a philological bias will be reflected in the types of professional activities of employees of the relevant positions, and philological competencies will be more clearly presented in future regulatory documents.

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