

Three R's in publishing education

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Professional paper

Abstract

Contemporary teaching should be real, rich and relevant. Changes in this direction that can be observed in higher education in Poland result from the requirements of the job market, students' expectations, the need to adapt to the goals of the Bologna Process, as well as demands by educators. Considering the declining interest in studying (which is seen especially in the humanities), universities try to present their educational offer in the most attractive way to compete successfully with other universities. All of these changes can be seen on several levels: the decisions of the government, of the universities, faculties and institutes, and in the everyday work of the teachers. The paper describes these problems in relation to publishing education. Websites of universities offering courses on publishing are analyzed and the educational offer of the LIS Institute of the University of Wrocław is presented in details. Examples of proven methods and useful educational resources and new allies are proposed.

KEYWORDS: publishing, education, universities, book market, Poland.

Introduction

In the first chapter of "The professionals' guide to publishing" (Davies & Balkwill 2011, 13) the authors try to find out: "what is it that draws so many people to the publishing industry?" The answer is not simple: it might be the special relationship between the author and the publisher or the risky nature of the business, where success depends on many factors, luck being one of them. The aim of the paper is to present some evidence that publishing programs have the power to attract students also in Poland, in spite of the difficult situation in the book market. The analysis starts with a description of the landscape of publishing education in recent years and finishes with examples coming from the educational practice. The data presented in the study is derived from websites of universities offering courses on publishing. Detailed data referring to the LIS Institute of the University of Wrocław comes from the authors' insights and analyses.

General overview

In the Polish system of science, publishing, which is called *edytorstwo* (comes from the Latin verb *edere*), is a subdiscipline of book and information science (in Polish the terms: 'bibliology' and 'informatology' are used). This discipline belongs to the humanities.

Edytorstwo is also used to mean and still means nowadays a group of activities dedicated to getting a book published. These activities are analyzed in the economical, social, cultural and technological environment, in the historic and present contexts. Such publishing is called "bibliological" in contrast to the second meaning: text linguistics or textology which is focused on preparing critical editions of literary works (Trzynadlowski 1988, 62). In the analysis presented in this paper the term 'publishing' is used in the first sense.

The first attempts to formulate a research program in the field of publishing were made in the 1970s and 1980s. As the main tasks ahead, Leon Marszałek highlighted the structured description of publishing, its systematization and typology, as well as research on publishing models in terms of the function of a book in the society (Marszałek 1986, 31-36).

The contemporary understanding of publishing comprises all issues connected with the preparation of a book. It is understood as a combination of content (an author's work) and its material form, stored on different carriers and prepared for further dissemination. In addition to the processes associated with content acquisition, development, sales and marketing, the research includes people and institutions involved in the publishing process, as well as the final publication itself. Such a multilateral field of study requires an integrated interdisciplinary approach.

The first university publishing courses were offered in the 1980s in the framework of library and information science programs and then as a specialization at a master's level. The first continuing education studies in publishing were offered in the 1990s.

In recent years a decline of interest in studying the humanities has been observed in Poland. It has also touched the Institutes of Library and Information Science (LIS) of all universities. Among main reasons that should be taken into account there are: the decrease of readership, poor salaries in libraries, and the lack of other job opportunities. Several initiatives of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education were very discouraging as well. For example between 2008 and 2012 the Ministry ran the project "The commissioned programs" (Oferta zamawiania kształcenia na kierunkach technicznych, matematycznych i przyrodniczych 2008), which provided financial support to students who chose study programs in the field of technology, math or science. They were considered as strategic for the Polish economy. It resulted in a growing interest in technical studies, which is proven by the statistics: in 2012 four of the five most popular universities were technical universities (Informatyka najszybciej rozwijającym się kierunkiem studiów 2012).

At the same time a new type of high school graduates appeared – they were humanists interested in new technologies, which coincided with the emergence of the e-book segment in the book market. Estimations indicate that between 2010 and 2014 the revenues from the sale of e-books doubled (Virtualo przedstawia pierwszy na polskim rynku raport na temat e-booków 2014). There were also important changes in the higher education system – implementation of the requirements of the Bologna Process increased the autonomy of universities, which meant that the introduction of new programs became much easier.

Table 1. Examples of new programs offered by LIS Institutes

Program	University	Link
Informacja w instytucjach e-społeczeństwa (Information in e-society institutions)	University of Silesia Katowice	http://ibin.us.edu.pl/studia/IIE_opis.html
Informacja w przestrzeni publicznej (Information in public space)	Jan Kochanowski University, Kielce	http://www.ujk.edu.pl/whum/pl/informacja-przestrzeni-publicznej/
Elektroniczne przetwarzanie informacji (Electronic processing of information)	Jagiellonian University, Kraków	http://www.epi.uj.edu.pl/o_studiach-informacje_o_studiach.htm
Informacja w e-społeczeństwie (Information in e-society)	Maria Curie Skłodowska University Lublin	http://syjon.umcs.lublin.pl/merovingian/course/798/
Zarządzanie informacją i bibliologia (Information management and bibliology)	Nicolaus Copernicus University, Toruń	http://www.inibi.umk.pl/rekrutacja/
Publikowanie cyfrowe i sieciowe (Digital and web publishing)	University of Wrocław, Wrocław	http://www.ibi.uni.wroc.pl/index.php/pcis/studia-stacjonarne/608-i-stopnia-licencjackie

Universities welcomed this situation eagerly. Among others there were Institutes of LIS, which experienced the same problem of declining numbers of applicants. They decided to prepare the updated educational offer, mostly at the undergraduate level. The new programs focused on two main topics: information and publishing (see Table 1).

As regards publishing education, it is also offered by institutes of Polish philology, mainly at an undergraduate level. A master's program is offered only by the Polish Philology Institute of the Jagiellonian University in Kraków (see Table 2).

In continuing education there are also interesting propositions for studies and training (for example: copy editing, copyright and marketing). They are run not only by universities, but also by Biblioteka Analiz, a commercial company connected with the book market (see Table 3).

Table 2. Publishing programs offered by Institutes of Polish Philology

Program	University	Link
Edytorstwo (Publishing)	Jagiellonian University, Kraków	http://www.edytorstwo.polonistyka.uj.edu.pl/studia/dla-kandydatow-na-edytorstwo-krakow
E-edytorstwo i techniki redakcyjne (E-publishing and editing techniques)	Maria Curie Skłodowska University Lublin	http://www.umcs.pl/pl/wyszukiwarka-studiow,118,e-edytorstwo-i-techniki-redakcyjne,11450.chtm
Edytorstwo (Publishing)	John Paul II Catholic University, Lublin	http://www.kul.pl/edytorstwo-opis-kierunku,art_58215.html
Kultura i praktyka tekstu. Twórcze pisanie i edytorstwo (Text culture and practice. Creative writing and publishing)	University of Wrocław	http://www.ifp.uni.wroc.pl/strona/1,instytut,647,nowy-kierunek-kultura-i-praktyka-tekstu-tworcze-pisanie-i-edytorstwo

Table 3. Continuing education studies

Program	University	Link
Publikowanie cyfrowe (Digital publishing)	University of Łódź	http://www.uni.lodz.pl/studia/studium,tematyka,572
Podyplomowe Studia Edytorskie (Publishing)	Jagiellonian University, Kraków	http://www.pse.polonistyka.uj.edu.pl/
Studia Podyplomowe w Zakresie Edytorstwa (Publishing)	John Paul II Catholic University, Lublin	http://www.kul.pl/studia-podyplomowe-w-zakresie-edytorstwa,art_35073.html
Podyplomowe Studia Edytorstwa	Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań	http://poledyt.amu.edu.pl/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=47&Itemid=27
Studia Podyplomowe w Zakresie Redakcyjno-Wydawniczym (Editing and publishing)	Nicolaus Copernicus University, Toruń	http://www.fil.umk.pl/pl/kierunki_43_Studia_Podyplomowe_w_zakresie_Redakcyjno_Wydawniczym.html
Studia Podyplomowe w Zakresie Edytorstwa Komputerowego (Computer publishing)	Nicolaus Copernicus University, Toruń	http://www.inibi.umk.pl/edytorstwo/
Podyplomowe Studia Polityki Wydawniczej i Księgarstwa (Publishing policy and bookselling)	University of Warsaw	http://www.lis.uw.edu.pl/old/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=16&Itemid=33
Nowe technologie w edytorstwie (New technologies in publishing)	University of Wrocław	http://www.ibi.uni.wroc.pl/index.php/studia-podyplomowe/nowe-technologie-w-edytorstwie
Podyplomowe Studia Edytorskie	Institute of Literary Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences	http://ibl.waw.pl/pl/edukacja/-studia-podyplomowe/podyplomowe-studia-edytorskie
Trainings	Biblioteka Analiz	http://rynek-ksiazki.pl/szkolenia/

Case study: the LIS Institute of Wrocław

The LIS Institute in Wrocław has a long tradition in teaching publishing, which dates back to the 1980s, when the first courses were introduced in Poland. Nowadays it offers two programs. The old one: Library and Information Science (LIS) is taught at the undergraduate and master's level. In 2013 a new program was introduced: Digital and Web Publishing (DWP). The master's program in DWP is to be launched in October 2016 in order to coincide with the 1st level graduates completing their studies.

After being a single-program institute for a long time, it is interesting to find out whether and in what way the applicants and students of the old and new programs are different. Here are some statistics (Studenci nowo przyjęci 2014).

Since the first year the number of applicants to LIS undergraduate studies was lower than that to DWP. In the year 2014/2015, there were more than 200 candidates applying to DWP and around 50 applying to LIS (see Figure 1).

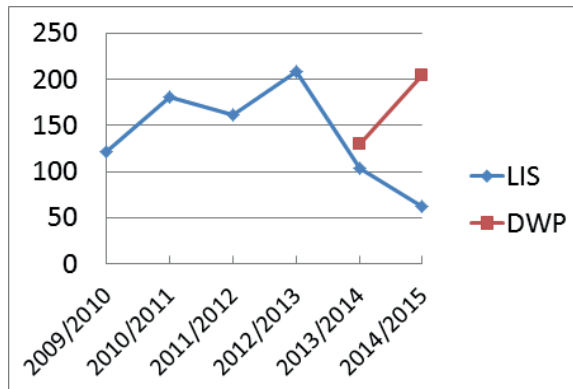


Figure 1. Applicants (full-time undergraduate studies)

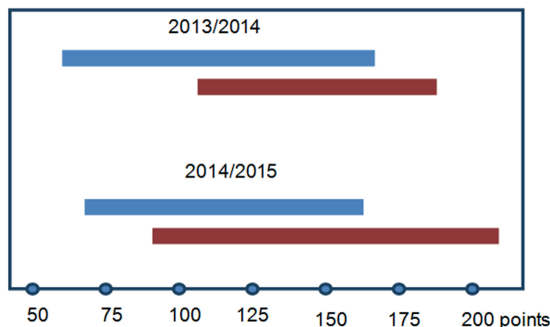


Figure 2. The range of admission points for both programs

With the new program, the share of male students in the so far feminized institute increased. The percentage of women dropped from 80-90% to 60%. But there is a more important difference. The students are not accepted on the basis of entrance exams but according to the results of the matriculation exam in secondary school. When the range of admission points for both programs is compared, the conclusion is clear: the DWP students perform better than the LIS students (see Figure 2).

At the Institute, there are 80 places to fill every year. Last year they were divided between LIS and DWP at a similar proportion. This year the Dean of the Faculty of Philology has decided to increase the number of places at DWP to 93 (see Figure3). So there are more than 120 first-year students at the institute, where so far up to 80 new entrants used to be accepted. This has caused serious problems of organizational nature.

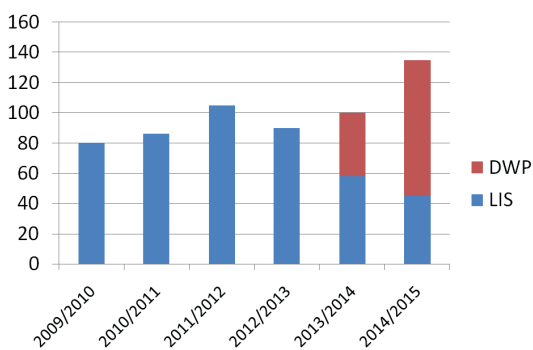


Figure 3. Students (full-time undergraduate studies)

As it turns out, the DWP program has attracted part-time students as well. Twenty-eight applicants were accepted in 2014, which is quite a lot compared with previous years (see Figure 4).

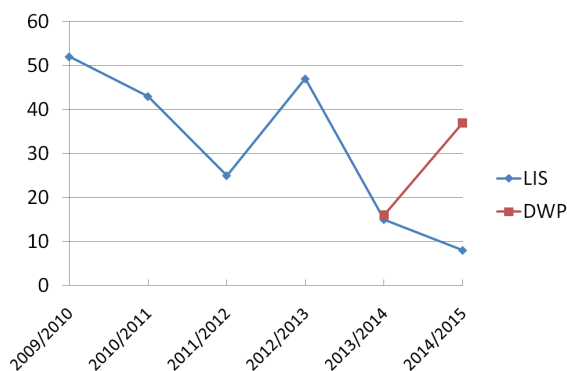


Figure 4. Applicants (part-time undergraduate studies)

The situation with regard to LIS master's degree studies is not so good. The number of applicants has been dropping systematically (see Figure 5). The trend may reverse when the DWP program is launched.

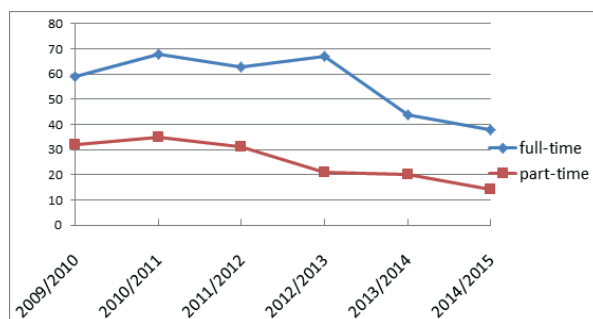


Figure 5. Applicants (master's degree studies)

The current situation in the Polish book market

Before characterizing the profile of a DWP graduate, let us take a look at the situation in the Polish book market. It should be analyzed carefully in order to make the education real, which means well-adapted to current job opportunities. Presented data comes from the last edition of the report "Book market in Poland 2014" and refers to the year 2013 (Gołębiowski et al. 2014). It is important to note that in 2013 the trend observed in the previous years continued.

The number of published titles was growing steadily (in 2013 by 10%) and reached 29,710. More than half of them were first editions (increase by 16%). This resulted in the decline of the average print run (3,783 copies, decrease by 5%), which affected the profitability (4-5%, a few years earlier it was 7-8%). We have also observed a fall in the value of a book – prices quickly dropped after release day. The value of the e-book market has increased dynamically (now it is worth 2-3% of the whole book market), but we still experience a lack of efficient distribution models.

It is also worth noting that mainstream publishers were being exposed to an increased number of competitors. The number of so-called "publishing entities" was growing at a pace of 2,000 new ones per year (2012 – 2,176, 2013 – 2,199). These statistics are based on new ISBN numbers given by the National Library (Gołębiowski et al. 2014, 77). It is hard to say how many titles these new entrants have published, maybe just one. It is estimated that 800 companies publish more than one book a year, while more than 38 thousand publishing entities are registered.

The situation in the educational segment is even more important since until recently it has been the driving force for the entire book market. In many countries the Amazon is considered as the main source of problems. In Poland the publishers blame the Ministry of Education which decided to replace the

commercial publishers, prepare textbooks and deliver them to primary and high schools for free. The program started in September 2014: all first-graders did not have to buy school books by themselves. Additionally, in a year students can expect digital textbooks which have been already partly available on the dedicated website (<http://www.epodreczniki.pl>). As a result of these decisions it has been estimated that 300-500 million zloty (around 100 million euro) will disappear from the book market. The educational segment loss will reach 60% and the jobs of many employees will be threatened. A third of all jobs in the book market belongs to the educational segment. It should be expected that for the same reason many bookstores, especially in smaller villages, will go bankrupt, since 80% of local bookstores' revenues come from textbooks.

This is the job market awaiting the graduates of publishing programs.

They cannot be promised that they will be hired by traditional publishing houses. To expand their employment opportunities we describe them as information specialists with a competence in publishing. Such graduates are aware of the contemporary book market issues; they understand the phenomena and processes that occur there; they are able to explain causes and effects of changes, also in the historic context; know how to use new technologies in the preparation and distribution of printed and digital publications; know current copyright regulations and – above all – know adequate sources of information.

Where can such specialists apply for a job? Luckily the world does not end with mainstream publishers. Moreover, it shows its richness and variety beyond them. After lowering the publishing barrier new jobs appeared. Some of them can be found in companies that produce e-publications. Besides, digital libraries and repositories have been created and a number of digitization projects have been launched.

We can also observe the dynamic development of community archives. Between 2011 and 2013 in the framework of the Libraries Development Program (Program Rozwoju Bibliotek) the project Digital Archive of Local Tradition (Cyfrowe Archiwum Tradycji Lokalnej) was implemented. A net of 113 archives was created (http://archiwa.org/index_catl.php). The project encourages different environments to preserve and spread local history and tradition, providing useful tools for developing and digitizing collections.

One more example related to libraries. In October 2012 the European Union adopted the Directive on Orphan Works (http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/copyright/orphan_works/index_en.htm). It will help cultural institutions to digitize books, films and music whose authors are unknown, making them available online. There is a demand for new specialists who are ready to help.

Finally we have to mention the growing part of books that are not produced by traditional publishers. According to some bold estimations, in the next few years a vast majority of publications will be self-published by authors themselves (Nougat 2014). Even though the prediction is far-fetched, we can expect employment opportunities for freelancers to increase.

Educational projects

Such a difficult yet interesting landscape creates great opportunities for teaching. The publishing world is open, the amount of resources increases, new channels for reaching readers have appeared and new tools have become easily accessible. Because of the cost and time, and also because of the lack of competence, the professional editorial work is very often neglected. We can exploit this situation in education.

One of the projects where students were involved was the cooperation with the website Sybiracy.pl (www.sybiracy.pl). The service was created to collect and share memories and souvenirs (letters, memoirs and photos) that were sent over from people exiled to Siberia during the Second World War and shortly after. In most cases a simple conversion of a file was not enough. The content needed editing and structuring to be presented in mobile formats. The engagement of the students simply exceeded expectations.

Another group took part in the digitization of "Odra" – a well-established monthly art and culture magazine, whose history dates back to the 1960s. Each student got one volume of the magazine in two files: PDF as the result of scanning, and EPUB as the result of the OCR process. The goal was to correct mistakes in the EPUB file and prepare an interactive table of content. The classes were finished with around 80 ready to share volumes of the magazine.

The next task for students was publishing e-books on an internet platform. The information concerning the project was spread by private channels and after a few weeks we were flooded with tens of author propositions. Three titles have been chosen and we still have promising texts for the next few years.

Aside from the classes, students try to get in contact with employers. They are encouraged to enrich learning with practical activities, also as volunteers. We have established regular contacts with some companies that need assistants in certain periods of the year: to create texts, moderate websites or work with multimedia editors. This resulted in further cooperation with companies, for example: consulting new programs or even teaching some courses.

All the mentioned publications: online short-form writing, digitized magazines or e-books we should probably call "lower-priced content" (Philips 2014, 123). Yet none of them belong to the category of books in its traditional meaning. For some readers it might be just a technical or "semantic distinction" (Philips 2014, 119) but for others – the difference is huge: only books signify quality.

It may be that we still deal with a similar distinction in relation to publishing. Digital publishing is lower-priced publishing. It still aspires to achieve the prestige of the "dead-tree publishing".

The students who enter the digital market can offer complementary knowledge and skills. They are usually used as editorial advisors, especially – punctuation experts, but they also possess a feature that is becoming increasingly rare. Since

they participate in courses in book history, typography, readership and many others they surely have a “mental map of a physical book” (Philips 2014, 121).

That is why the students should be considered as missionaries sent to the new world with a mission to join the old and the new one. Publishing and e-publishing are more than a product and profit, and both - or rather their readers - deserve quality.

At the end of each semester the classes were evaluated using questionnaires. In all groups those tasks most closely related to professional activities get the highest ranks. Besides answering the questions students had an opportunity to express additional remarks. Here are some examples of opinions of the group that was involved in the preparation of e-books: “work which is not in vain and will be used by someone”, “we touched lightly our future job, in practice, not only in theory”, “our work did help in preparing the texts, being not just a task forgotten after a while”, “this kind of task requires different attitude, because the work is real. It is not enough to memorize something and pass the test, you have to be involved”.

After the task of digitizing the “Odra” magazine further proof of the students’ interest appeared. They sent an e-mail where they express a very pragmatic approach – acquired skills were considered as very important in their future career: “Dear Dr Stefanowicz, I am writing to you on the “Odra” magazine. Together with my friends we got the idea to continue our work on preparing the next volumes. We are ready to do it for free. We would only be pleased to get a document confirming our work. It is an experience for us, and an important item on our CVs, as well, which will make them more attractive after graduation”.

Conclusion

As shown in the paper, nowadays - easier than ever before - you can make publishing education real - as close as possible to the world outside the classroom; rich - embedded in a complex, meaningful context; and relevant - interesting and important for the learners themselves. Long ago, in times of illiteracy, 3 R's referred to basic skills: reading, writing and arithmetic. If we transferred them to the publishing education, the basic skills, important to the publisher regardless of the times and a carrier that the text is written on, would be: market awareness, language competence and management skills. We should not forget it today, even though teaching them may be harder and less attractive.

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Sažetak

Tri „R” u obrazovanju nakladnika

Suvremena nastava treba biti stvarna, bogata i relevantna (*real, rich, relevant*). Promjene u tom smjeru razvidne su u poljskom visokoškolskom obrazovanju, a potaknute su zahtjevima tržišta rada, studentskim očekivanjima, potrebama za usvajanjem ciljeva bolonjskog procesa, te zahtjevima samog nastavnog osoblja. Uzimajući u obzir pad interesa za studiranje (koji je posebno vidljiv u području humanističkih znanosti), sveučilišta nastoje predstaviti svoju obrazovnu ponudu na najatraktivniji način kako bi se uspješnije natjecala s drugim sveučilištima, posebice onima iz područja tehničkih znanosti. Promjene se očituju na nekoliko razina: kroz odluke vlade, sveučilišta, fakulteta i instituta, i u svakodnevnom radu nastavnika. U radu se opisuju navedeni problemi u odnosu na obrazovanje u nakladništvu. Analizirane su mrežne stranice sveučilišta koja nude programe nakladništva te je detaljno predstavljena obrazovna ponuda LIS instituta Sveučilišta Wrocław. Posebna je pozornost pridana nastavnim metodama i obrazovnim izvorima.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI: nakladništvo, obrazovanje, sveučilišta, tržište knjige, Poljska.