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## **BOOK STUDIES COMMUNICATION IN SELECTED COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE LOCATION OF THE DISCIPLINE IN THE CURRENT OBLIGATORY CLASSIFICATION OF FIELDS AND SCIENTIFIC DISCIPLINES – AN OUTLINE OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM**



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tion and knowledge society. Among modern research problems, her work is dominated by the issues of educating librarians and other book employees, scientific societies and their impact on the development of research on books and libraries, relationships of book studies with other sciences, mainly with the sciences of social communication and media, as well as digital humanities and its applications in historical research. A member of scientific societies: the Commission of

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**KEYWORDS:** Book studies/science communication. Literary communication. Social communication. Media communication. Communication models.

**ABSTRACT:** **Objective** - The aim of the article is to discuss the individual components of book studies communication and show its place in contemporary communication systems and changes occurring in this area of research. **Research methods** – A method of analysis and criticism of the literature was used. **Results and conclusions** – The subject of book studies communication is not often the subject of theoretical considerations. The directions of the development of book studies communication from the mid-twentieth century, when it was based on print, to the changes brought about by the digital revolution were followed. Existing models of book science communication are discussed, links to the literary communication system and its place in the social and media communication system are shown. The communication role of book studies was highlighted through the prism of subdisciplines related to book production (editing, digital publishing), its individual and collective circulation (bookselling, librarianship), and to its use and reading behaviour (reading). **Originality and cognitive value** – The article organizes knowledge about the current development of book science communication and defines its place within various communication models. It shows the duality of the book studies field, situating this science both in the humanities and social sciences, and resulting from its historical connections with various scientific disciplines and various communication models.

## INTRODUCTION

The book studies processes are essential elements of communication. The concept of “book science communication” was introduced to Polish scientific literature by Jerzy Wojciech Zawisza, who presented its theoretical assumptions in the article “Propozycja schematu komunikacji bibliologicznej” (“Proposed - book studies communication scheme”) (Zawisza, 1980). Almost forty years have passed since then and this term has per-

manently entered the canon of concepts of modern science. During this period, various models of information and book studies communication were developed related to similar disciplines in terms of research field and subject of research. These disciplines include literary studies – and perhaps more so the history of literature – as well as sociology, psychology and pedagogy, cultural sciences, social communication sciences, and media studies. Book studies communication is based on three basic elements: the creators of books as expressions of literary work, organizers and related book circulation institutions, and book recipients and readers. They are all closely related and dependent on each other.

Over the past half-century, several different book science communication schemes have been proposed by both foreign (Escarpit, 1969; Estivals 1976) and Polish researchers (Zawisza, 1980; Migoń, 1983; Woźniak-Kasperek, Kotuła, 2014). These schemes have mainly been dominated by sociological approaches, in which the book is a permanent means of communication and through its accessibility plays a significant social and communicative role, as well as by cultural approaches, where the book, thanks to its contents, is the carrier of a text, a record of information – philosophically speaking a carrier of ideas – which by disseminating these among people has a civilizational function (Leszczak, 2015). These interdisciplinary interrelationships had an impact on the positioning of book science over the course of the half century under review through ministerial science classification systems, either in the humanities or in the social sciences. This contributed to a different methodological approach and profiling of the book studies research field towards those research areas and disciplines with which it had the closest connections. Today, this dualism has caused a divergence of positions and numerous discussions (Koredczuk, Woźniak-Kasperek, 2019) as to whether book science can be fully attributed to only one of these areas. In principle, this is impossible and even unnecessary, which is confirmed by the following theoretical reflections on research paradigms, where the diversity of research fields affects the development of book science and its multidisciplinary nature.

## COMMUNICABILITY OF BOOKS AND COMMUNICATION OF BOOK STUDIES PROCESSES

Each book that is the subject of book science research contains a literary, scientific, utilitarian, mass, or other kind of text. One should agree with the view of Radosław Cybulski that “communicativeness is a fundamental value shaped at various stages of the book’s creation and the formation of its publishing form. [...] Readers have the right to expect the necessary lucidity and clarity of expression. The reader’s reactions are included by

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the author, in a more or less conscious way, into the anticipated communication system that will arise after the publication of the work". (Cybulski, 1984, p. 22). The writing is a sign and a message, and the book being a writing document has become the object of communication between the author and the reader (Zbierski, 1978, p. 8).

The same happens in the case of book studies processes related to the creation, circulation and reading of books. The first stage of introducing the text to the reading circulation begins with the book's editorial and publishing implementation. It is preceded by the author who created the literary work, but book science deals with him marginally, using research findings on the history of literature. Only the book itself, which is a material tool for the consolidation and transmission of content, both manuscript and printed, and today particularly high-volume or digitally recorded, becomes the subject of reflection in the field of this science. However, the final form of the book is most often the work of several co-creators, and they can even be called co-authors, because their work constitutes the whole book in its content and editorial aspects. These people are generally not mentioned, except in the case of a bibliographic description, but not fully. One of these is the publisher, thanks to whom the book acquires a material dimension, such as: format, volume, selection of iconographic material, choice of typeface, etc. The next most often is the illustrator, who complements the content from the graphic side, and whose artistic and aesthetic vision, accepted by the author of the text, is to a large extent "imposed" on the recipient. A translator should also be mentioned, in the case of a language translation, or a proof reader tending to its linguistic and stylistic correctness. Thus editing focuses mainly on enriching the communicativeness of the text in the publishing process, through substantive and linguistic editing, or encapsulating the text with additional elements that will improve its readability (tables, charts, illustrations, etc.). The order of the text's organization determines its communicativeness. The correct typographic shape of the book affects its reading perception, which is why the development of appropriate models of the book means that its structure and function are used to optimally communicate the content of the book (Zbierski, 1976, p. 18). Over the centuries, the appropriate infrastructure for the distribution and storage of texts has evolved, i.e. the book market, libraries, or archives, and these institutions play the role of an intermediary between the author of the message and its recipient.

However, all of the above is more concerned with a printed book. The case looks a bit different in the case of an electronic book, now more aptly referred to as digital or network. An electronic publication is a set of documents equipped with their own navigation and search system provided in the form of a file to be read in an appropriate browser or external reading device (Górska, 2005, p. 51). In this case, its communicativeness will be

determined by the very form of its transcript (Estivals, 1976), including hypertext or multimedia capabilities offered by digital publishing other than traditional editorial elements (Lobin, 2017, pp. 132-144). Digitalization leads to the fact that books lose their material form, remaining only in the form of a record-message. The appearance of the digital publication depends on the format in which it was saved and the electronic reader (software or hardware) with which it is made available (Sopyło, 2008, p. 11). Dissemination and reading of a record, i.e. network of book studies communication, is possible mainly by using the Internet, regarded as a multimedia device, with full awareness that it can be used for purposes other than reading (Woźniak-Kasperek, Kotuła, 2014, p. 9). Digital text transmission can be more communicative than its printed and published traditional version, mainly due to the possibility of reaching an unlimited number of users, and thus also readers, but also by receiving information and the navigation system through several sensory channels simultaneously, broadening the horizons of data and information and facilitating the reception of message-transmission. On the other hand, the electronic book as a new medium of social communication has also changed the role of the author and reader. In the case of one of the forms of the hypertext book or the so-called "living book" a changing of places occurs: the recipient gives the message its final shape, thus becoming its co-author (Sopyło, 2008, pp. 71-72).

Today, it can be seen that the book, both printed and digital, and the processes in which these two forms participate are a basic component of book science communication, and closely related initially to literary communication, more broadly to cultural, then to social communication as a result of sociological and functional artefacts and media communication.

## BOOK STUDIES COMMUNICATION AND LITERARY COMMUNICATION. BOOK CULTURE

Book studies communication was from the beginning closely connected with literary communication. It resulted from the historical conditions of both literary and book science and their common roots within *historia litteraria*, recognized as historical science of a historiographical nature, encompassing all literature (Żbikowska-Migoń, 1989, pp. 34-35). This broad discipline analysed both the author and the content of a work, mainly literary, in the latter case dealing with content in a specific form: in a specific copy, edition, series, publishing repertoire or book collection, that is, also concerning content, but as books in a broader sense (Migoń, 1976, p. 52). These mutual conditions have resulted in the fact that, both in the past and now, there is a large influence of literary sciences on research in the

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field of books, and vice versa, which from the beginning has guided them towards the humanities. Reaching even deeper in time, through the prism of the book's history, it should be emphasized that it was the printers who were the first to create the grammatical foundations of national languages in the Renaissance, developing and publishing the first non-Latin prints. Over the next centuries, the bibliographic and scientific approach to book science dominated, and this further deepened its relationship with the humanities.

In turn, the communication perspective in literary studies was born in the late 19th century with the development of mass culture and sociology. The industrialization of book production meant that it became cheap and available to a wider community and to various social groups. In the research on literature in the 20th century, several models of literary communication processes were developed discussing the problem of literature as an act of reading and circulation of literature in society thanks to various book institutions, forming part of the research on the literary audience as more widely understood. Examples of this might be the theory of the functional book by Robert Escarpit (Escarpit, 1976) or the concept of literature as a communication and message between creator and reader according to Janusz Lalewicz (Lalewicz, 1985). In turn, the contemporary literary theory of the literary field of Pierre Bourdieu (Bourdieu, 2001), which assumes that the system of literary institutions links a literary work with the social world, is now very often used in book studies research. Of course, there are more such examples, however, it can be seen that literary studies, especially sociology of literature and book science, support each other by studying the social circulation of the book and its cultural conditions, including readers' perceptions.

The transmission of the culture of print has become the basis of book institutions' activities, that is, bookstores and libraries, thanks to which these also play a culture-forming role by distributing books, gathering and disseminating collections and information about literature. As such they participate in the creation of the information society. Libraries and other cultural and scientific centres in Poland have obtained the status of information centres, and library science itself has largely become a field of scientific computer science, communication theory, or cybernetics (Wilkoń, 2012, pp. 114-115).

The links between literary communication and book studies communication grew into book culture as an independent research category. Book culture "gives a chance for a full and in-depth description of the phenomenon of a book as a product and tool of culture, to embrace the entire world book heritage in its various manifestations and functions" (Migoń, 2003, p. 17). The focal point of research would be in such categories as: print culture, typographic culture, library culture, reading culture or information

culture, and historically, theoretically and methodologically they will be embedded in humanities research.

## BOOK STUDIES COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL COMMUNICATION

Due to connections with literature and sociology, book studies communication began to evolve in the direction of social communication, over the years playing an important informational and civilizational role in it. The connections between book studies and social sciences have their own tradition and in principle one should not be surprised by its current location there. It is worth recalling that in the mid-1970s Krzysztof Migoń published a work entitled "Nauka o książce wśród innych nauk społecznych" ("Book science among other social sciences") (Migoń, 1976), and as you can easily see, the term book studies was not yet used more broadly to describe book science, and yet its social significance was already recognized.

According to Radosław Cybulski, the content of the book is a factor constituting the book, and the transmission of content to recipients is the essence of social communication (Cybulski, 1984, p. 19). All the stages related to the "book life", the classic term already adopted in book studies (Muszkowski, 1953), starting from the publishing implementation through the circulation of the book to its reading reception create the process of book science communication. At the beginning of the 20th century, Kazimierz Piekarski, an outstanding Polish librarian and book researcher, clearly emphasised that "not every manuscript and not every print is a book. What constitutes the essence of the book lies not only in its external aspect, nor only in its content, but also in its function. Only a manuscript and a print intended for free impact on society becomes a book" (Piekarski, 1932, p. 1). In this way he set the paradigm focused on the social functions of the book, which is developed by successive generations of researchers. Głombiowski perceived book studies processes as social in nature, since they generated various social groups and their specific behaviours related to the life of the book (Socha, 2012, p. 103). But we can look at the book both in terms of its function and its use, because it has to be socially useful in order to make contact with readers, and therefore it should be read and perform various communication functions, and indirectly also social functions.

The book, especially the printed one, "brought social needs to life, which it meets in specific conditions with full acceptance of the social community. In some respects, it cannot be replaced by other means of interpersonal communication" (Głombiowski, 1980, p. 12). The same applies to elec-

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tronic books, because the information recording plays an important role. Writing and books are powerful material means of social interaction. However, not all elements of book studies communication will be the same in the case of printed and electronic books (network, hypertext, multimedia), which, nonetheless, does not change their important role in society. At the centre of book science issues are rich and multidirectional relations between books and people (groups, society in general) (Głombiowski, 1974; Migoń, 1984, p. 114). Book studies communication, regardless of whether it is based on writing, printing or digital recording, is part of social communication, although one should be aware that in the second half of the twentieth century there were also opposite opinions, associated with the postmodern trend, negating the usefulness of the book and its functioning in the social communication system and its characteristic message organization (Górska, 2005, pp. 49-51).

Book science communication is closely related to the introduction of the book into social circulation through the activities of the book institutions, which intercede in the author-reader relationship and are intended to consolidate and provide the widest possible transmission of information contained in the content of the book and its individual and group reception (Cybulski, 1979). Book institutions are a social communication system organized according to specific principles. In the case of libraries, they are composed of people professionally prepared for its operation, specific library materials, a suitably adapted room or building, and a rational organization of work and its users (Piotrowicz, 2015, p. 403). In the last quarter of a century, digital tools have played an important role in supporting the work of these institutions in the field of social access to literature and writing (Kolasa, 2012, pp. 70-73).

The social role in the process of providing information is best seen in the example of reading. Reading is an individual process but readership is collective. The reading process is assumed to be asocial and individual, because we usually read separated from others, focusing on the text. But sharing with others reading and exchanging views on what is currently read will be subject to social exchange of thoughts, both verbal (e.g. during conversation) and graphic. In the latter case, text highlighted or marked with notes will in book science be examined using the provenance method, which will be the culmination of (or another link in) the process of book studies communication. In the process of examining reading phenomena, sociological, psychological and pedagogical approaches have become established, which, according to Jacek Wojciechowski, does not represent any contradictions, as they are not alternative positions (Wojciechowski, 2000, p. 5). Research on reading and on the social reach of a book in Poland are interdisciplinary and are methodologically oriented towards the social sciences (Janusz-Lorkowska, 2018, p. 19).



Book studies communication is closely related to the social, political, legal, economic or media situation, and especially with technological and digital development. It should also be added that besides books, newspapers and magazines also participate in the book studies communication process; also leaflets, which are ephemeral, and other types of non-book documents are equally important in the process of social communication.

## BOOK STUDIES COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA COMMUNICATION

The book is the central object of book science research and considered as the first medium, as it became the basic communication tool much earlier than other media. There were different ways of influencing a manuscript or a print society, even though these represented similar ways of preserving the text, in material and spiritual form, and modern digital recording plays yet a different role. We will omit the manuscript book in these considerations, because currently it participates only marginally in the media circulation. It was Gutenberg's revolution and then the digital revolution that changed the status of the book, because both, in the case of the first through print, and the second through recording, enabled a significant increase in the amount of circulation and led to the dissemination of the messages contained therein. Therefore, since the 19th century, the development of other media has changed the role of the book in society and partially replaced it by other mass media. In the modern world, the Internet as multimedia has become a basic source of information, as both a tool and a medium. Data saved in the form of a digital code is not only a linear record, but also one of graphics, photos and videos. We have moved from the invention of Gutenberg and the printed word towards a civilization of the image and visual communication, which is clearly seen in the example of book studies editing.

The intensive development of editing as a separate research field of book science took place only in the second half of the 20th century, when a huge increase in publishing production contributed to scientific reflection on publishing activity, both in the historical and contemporary aspect (Hojka, 2018, p. 93). The subjects of book studies editing are processes aimed at adapting the book to its public distribution.

The printed book appeals to the reader the fastest and introduces them to the area of communication through its external features, i.e. characteristic publishing and typographic features, but this mainly applies to mass literature, where the means of communication is its visual side. It turns out that when choosing a book, we evaluate it by its graphic design, and only then pay attention to who its author is and what content it has. However, in the case of scientific and literary books, the communication process is

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reversed, here the author and content plays a leading role, and its editorial side is less important. This creates a situation where scientific books are published in a more modest graphic design than literary or mass books (Siekierski, 1992).

Typography, according to E. Repucho and T. Bierkowski, belongs to “the field of visual communication, one of the tasks of which is to create the most assimilable and maximally understandable translation of the text using a specific (created differently each time) visual language grammar” (Repucho, Bierkowski, 2018, p. 99). It is the visual language and its elements that increase the perception of a given message, affect its usefulness and readability. Changing the medium, i.e. the transition from the printed word towards digital recording, already leads to a mental tuning of societies and a much greater use of new network technologies in book studies communication. Today, not only a book, but other forms of communication, such as newsletters, blogs, portals, vortals, fanfics, etc., and even computer games, are becoming the subject of book science reflection, and the definition of readership has changed, which is confirmed by online test reports on readership in Poland, run in consecutive years by the National Library in Warsaw. While studying these new cultural and social phenomena at the same time, it is impossible not to use the tools and methodology developed by media studies, including cybernetic methods (Tadeusiewicz, 2017, pp. 300-306).

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The current discussion on whether book science (and information science together with it) should be classified according to the ministerial classification of sciences in the area of the humanities, and fit within the sciences of culture and religion, or perhaps more in history, or closer to the area of the social sciences and disciplines in which it has found itself since 2018, seems inconclusive and causes a general agitation in the environment of book researchers, librarians, and information science specialists.

Therefore, the above considerations were intended to indicate the need for further detailed research on the book system and its role in book studies communication in connection with literary, social, and media communication, to show what has influenced the location of book science within the system of classification of the sciences under different areas at different times. The location of book science in the area of the humanities was influenced by its strong links with literature and history of literature, as well as with cultural sciences. However, the parallel development of interdisciplinary research in the field of book studies and sociology led to the creation of a separate subdiscipline – book sociology – in the middle of the 20th century. Links with psychology paved the way for bibliopsychology, and with pedagogy to create library pedagogy. The area of the social

sciences has become closer to these sub-disciplines. In turn, a traditional, printed book contains more humanistic elements, and an electronic book, based on visual language and using the Internet as the main medium, is the subject of reflection in social and media disciplines. Just as the book being the subject of book studies reflection is a component of its content and graphic materialization, so is book science in equal parts composed of the humanities and social sciences. From the humanities it took more elite value, hence the focus on sophisticated recipients and readers, while from the social sciences it took egalitarian and utilitarian values, which made it a mass phenomenon and widely available to anyone with any reading interests. *Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis.*

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