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THE PROFESSION OF A LIBRARIAN IN POLAND: PAST-PRESENT-FUTURE

Although the education of librarians in Poland can boast of a long tradition and experience, which has resulted in the preparation of a huge number of educated librarians finding employment in various libraries – school, public, scientific or professional – the current state in terms of preparing new staff for the profession does not look too optimistic. Of course, this does not mean that there is something wrong with the libraries themselves, but it indicates that the current formula and model of preparation for the profession has become unattractive: library studies are not as popular as they were a few or so years ago. Certainly, contributing importantly to this state of affairs are changes in the regulations defining the conditions of employment in libraries and their employees' qualifications. The amendment to the *Law on Higher Education* carried out in 2011, extending the autonomy of universities in the scope of, among others, creating their own curricula while not complying with the uniformity of mandatory contents or names of majors, has meant that employment as a librarian is not subject to the condition of completing library studies. This situation, commonly referred to as the so-called deregulation of the librarian's profession, has as a consequence led to the pronounced decline of education in the field of scientific information and library science.

The current state of affairs raises concern among library managers, as well as among practitioners and theoreticians of librarianship. This is because, on the one hand, we observe the need to transform libraries, following new trends in this area, adapting them to the changing needs of users and the environment in which they operate. On the other hand, the lack of comprehensive librarian competencies and often rudimentary professional knowledge among newly employed adepts to the profession imposes a limitation on the organizational efficiency of these institutions, which are so special and important for the development of education, information efficiency and the general level of knowledge in society.

That is why we have decided to devote the current special issue of *The Library Review* (*Przegląd Biblioteczny*) to considerations of the past, the present and the future of preparation of the academic staff for libraries. We have included six articles in this issue discussing:

- the crisis of academic education of librarians in Poland, showing its causes and the current state but also developmental prospects (Renata Malesa);

- library studies at the University of Warsaw, one of the first and largest courses of study of this type in Poland (Dariusz Grygrowski);

- educating teacher librarians in Poland (Dorota Grabowska);

- educating librarians working with children aged 0 to 5 and their families at Polish universities (Agata Walczak-Niewiadomska);

And two texts showing actions already taken to modernize and adapt the existing educational offer to the new challenges facing Polish librarianship, introducing new specializations:

- Data Stewardship – discussing the origins of its creation and implementation, its program, and the acquired competencies, professional profiles and career paths of its graduates (Anna Wałek);

- UX / user experience librarian – with a focus on designing user experience, along with an indication of the competencies necessary to work as a UX specialist in the library and the situation of this specialization within the Polish education system in library studies (Bożena Jaskowska).

Similarly to the regular quarterly issues of *Przegląd Biblioteczny*, in this special issue we also publish a selective analysis of the latest Polish literature in the field of library science (Barbara Koryś).

We also present an interesting project, “Information and communication – popularization of scientific research and technological solutions”, implemented by the Polish Librarians’ Association, the aim of which is to inform the public about scientific works in the field of social communication and media sciences, to promote the achievements of researchers and to disseminate innovative technological solutions that can be used in library practice (Aldona Zawalkiewicz).

Transformations in the process of academic education in the field of library science and scientific information, and the problems that are emerging in this area, do not concern only Poland and our universities, but have a global character. In presenting this issue to you, we want to share our observations and experiences as well as initiate a broader discussion leading to the development of solutions that will enable the improvement and modification of educational programs, making them more attractive, so that graduates who go to work in libraries fully meet the expectations of employers, and, with their knowledge and acquired competencies, meet the dynamically developing needs of users.

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THE CRISIS OF ACADEMIC EDUCATION OF LIBRARIANS IN POLAND. CAUSES – CURRENT STATE – PROSPECTS



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KEY WORDS: Education of librarians. Library studies. Deregulation of the librarian profession. Academic library centers.

ABSTRACT: Thesis/goal – The academic education of librarians in Poland is in a deep crisis. The subject of the article is the changes in the academic education of librarians in Poland that have taken place over the last several years. The aim

is to try to diagnose the causes of the crisis of education in the field of library science, to present the current educational offer of academic centers educating in this field so far, and to discuss the possibilities of changing the current situation. **Method** – The method used is an analysis and criticism of the literature and a critical analysis of the sources. The main source of data was the catalog of the National Library, websites of universities with traditions in educating librarians and available teaching curricula. The collected material was analyzed in order to verify the current educational offer in the field of library science and to identify the directions of changes in the didactic offer of academic centers that so far have given instruction in the field of scientific information and library science. **Results** – The offer of academic education for librarians is systematically decreasing, which results in a decreasing share of professionals among library staff. In many regions of the country, there is not a single center educating librarians at the university level. Changes in the offer of academic centers educating librarians so far are moving towards information architecture and information management. It is necessary to consolidate the community of practitioners and theoreticians, and a broad social discussion on the future of librarian education is needed.

INTRODUCTION

This article deals with the problem of the crisis experienced in the academic education of librarians in Poland. For several years, the number of academic centers offering studies in the field of scientific information and library science or other fields directly preparing for work in libraries of various types has been systematically decreasing. The article consists of four parts. In the first, the traditions of educating librarians in Poland are briefly presented. The second part contains a discussion of the current educational offer in library studies. The next part focuses on presenting the probable causes of changes in the educational offer, e.g. legal changes (Law on Higher Education, deregulation of the librarian profession) and discussing changes in the educational offer (new fields of study) of centers that have so far provided education in the field of scientific information and library science. The last part of the article concerns forecasts regarding the further education of librarians and questions about the possibilities of counteracting further impoverishment of the offer of library studies.

TRADITIONS OF LIBRARY EDUCATION IN POLAND

The education of librarians in Poland has a long tradition, beginning with university lectures on bibliography, through courses and trainings organized during the Second Polish Republic, to university education organized after World War II. Lectures on bibliography conducted at the Universities of Warsaw, Kraków, Vilnius and the Warsaw School of Economics by Joachim Lelewel, Jerzy Samuel Bandtkie, Aleksander Bohatkiewicz

wicz and Karol Estreicher in the 19th century were the first harbingers introducing the subject of book and library science to academic education (Kowalewska & Mikołajuk, 2013, p. 203). During the period of the Second Polish Republic, librarian knowledge was acquired mainly through professional practice, which, however, required supplementation with theoretical knowledge. Therefore, various courses and trainings were organized. Great achievements in this field were made by such institutions and organizations as: *Wolna Wszechnica Polska* (the Free Polish University) - Study of Social and Educational Work (1925-1939), *Polska Macierz Szkolna* (the Polish Educational Society), *Dwuletnia Szkoła Pracownic Społecznych* (the Two-Year School of Social Workers) (1928-1932), *Jednoroczna Szkoła Bibliotekarska* (the One-Year Library School) of the Warsaw Public Library (1929-1939), or the Polish Librarians' Union and its Vocational Training Commission (from 1935). Until 1939, the only institution educating librarians at the higher level was *Wolna Wszechnica Polska*. However, this school did not have the right to award academic degrees. A librarian course was created at the Pedagogical Faculty, where lecturers were, among others, Helena Radlińska and Jan Muszkowski (Gaca-Dąbrowska, 2007, pp. 102-106). For the purposes of the faculty, the first systematic program of library studies at the higher level was developed. It consisted of three groups of subjects: humanities; vocational subjects such as book studies, librarianship and readership; and practical classes (Więckowska, 1969, p.115).

After World War II, the education of librarians took various forms. These ranged through courses and trainings organized by the ZBP and then the SBP, the State Librarians Training Center in Jarocin (1948-1978), librarian high schools (1950-1959), the State Librarians Correspondence Training Center (1953-1975) and the H. Radlińska Center for Continuing Education of Librarians (1976-2006) in Warsaw, which included fifteen branches of Post-secondary Extramural Library Study (Żmigrodzki, 1998, pp. 388-391).

The tradition of educating librarians at the university level in Poland dates back to 1945, when the first Department of Library Science was established at the University of Łódź. Gradually, library studies appeared at the Universities of Warsaw, Wrocław, Poznań, Toruń, Katowice, Lublin, and Gdańsk, and at the Pedagogical Colleges in Bydgoszcz, Kielce, Kraków, Olsztyn, Szczecin, and Zielona Góra. Since 1968, the academic education system has also included post-graduate studies (Konieczna & Kurek-Kokocińska, 2016; Wojakowski, 1989; Więckowska, 1972; Konieczna, 2016). At the turn of the 21st century, the situation of library science academic centers seemed relatively stable. They systematically expanded their scientific staff and didactic offer, and studies in the field of library science and scientific information continued to attract many students, without causing major recruitment problems. At the end of the 1990s, such

studies were conducted in fourteen academic centers (the University of Warsaw, the University of Wrocław, the Jagiellonian University, the University of Silesia in Katowice, the University of Łódź, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, the Pedagogical University of Kraków, Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce, Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz, the University of Białystok, the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, the University of Gdańsk, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, and the Faculty of Pedagogy and Art in Kalisz). Among the units offering the field of scientific information and library science, eight had the rank of an institute, two functioned as academic departments, and four as faculties (Konieczna, 2016, pp. 16-19; Grygowski, 2020, pp. 145-148). Stabilization was confirmed by the introduction of ministerial standards in 2007 (Regulation, 2007). These unified the principles of education for librarians, starting from the name of the field of study – scientific information and library science – through the profile of the graduate program to the educational content framework (defining groups of basic and major subject matter). It was assumed that a graduate of library studies “should be prepared to work in various institutions operating in the field of public communication, culture, education, business, science and administration dealing with the collection, development and sharing of documents and collections of information about documents and information systems. They should be prepared to work in: all types of libraries, information centers, bibliographic workshops, publishing houses, archives, bookstores [...]” (Próchnicka, 2008). This situation of relative stability and uniformity of curricula was changed by the amendment to the *Law on Higher Education* of 2011 (Act, 2011) and the introduction of the National Qualifications Framework. One of the main provisions of the Act was the extended autonomy of universities in the sphere of didactics, which allowed for independent creation of curricula, abolishing the uniformity of compulsory content and names of fields of study. This was one of the reasons for the gradual liquidation of the field of information science and library science from the educational offer and its replacement with other “more attractive” fields. Adoption of the National Qualifications Framework made it necessary to define the effects of education, qualifications acquired in the Polish higher education system, and to define the profile of studies: practical or general academic (Regulation, 2011).

CURRENT EDUCATIONAL OFFER IN SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION AND LIBRARY STUDIES

Since the situation was still relatively stable in the first decade of this century, one should ask what happened in recent years that, as prof. Ja-

cek Wojciechowski writes, led the professional education of librarians to be gradually abolished: "There is no need to tell fairy tales: this is the annulment of professional education for librarians at all levels and in all forms. From this perspective, therefore, it is also the germination of the disappearance of decent academic librarianship and of any other librarianship. The devil knows why, and only in Poland" (Wojciechowski, 2020). These words seem completely justified if we compare the current educational offer with the state presented above. Of the fourteen universities that offered studies in the field of scientific information and library science (bachelor, master and post-graduate studies), the field of study remained in the offer of only four: at the University of Warsaw's Faculty of Journalism, Information and Book Studies – full-time and extramural first and second cycle program; the University of Wrocław's Institute of Information and Media Sciences – full-time and extramural studies (extramural studies – no recruitment for the first year); the University of Silesia in Katowice's Institute of Cultural Studies (former Institute of Library and Information Science) – full-time and extramural studies of the first and second cycle (extramural studies – only the first year) and at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań's Faculty of Pedagogy and Arts in Kalisz, Department of Scientific Information - first-cycle studies. From the current academic year, a major in librarianship has been introduced at the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw¹.

Analyzing the descriptions of fields of study in the recruitment systems of universities, it can be noticed that emphasis is on the dominance of content in the field of information management and organization, social communication, or media communication in education programs, in a way hiding strictly librarian-related content. In the description of the field of study at the Faculty of Journalism, Information and Book Studies of the University of Warsaw for undergraduate studies, one can read: "During your studies you will learn to recognize information needs; create information resources; design and use tools for their organization, development and sharing in various centers (information departments of institutions and organizations, computer information networks or libraries)" (see footnote 1). At the University of Wrocław, it is emphasized first of all that studies prepare students for professional careers as information brokers and managers, and only secondarily as librarians – "If you are interested in media communication, management and information transfer in the modern world, and in the future you would like to move efficiently in thicket of information and knowledge, work as an information broker

¹ All information on the current educational offer was verified on the basis of information contained on the websites of individual universities and in the POLON database (list of pages in the bibliography).

and manager, run a publishing business, become a qualified librarian and bibliotherapist – you should choose this field of study” (see footnote 1). At the University of Silesia in the offer addressed to potential candidates we read: “Studies in the field of scientific information and library science offer preparation for professions in which knowledge is necessary, as well as provide a set of skills in the field of organization and social communication through written documents (traditional and electronic) and non-textual media [...] supporting or satisfying needs that are educational, knowledge-creating, artistic, entertainment providing, or compensatory in the life sphere of individuals and societies systematically striving for general progress” (see footnote 1). It is not difficult to notice that the possibility of working in a library is not particularly exposed, and sometimes is even overlooked. A clear difference in the particular emphasis placed on content of education can be seen in the program of the latest major – librarianship – which has been introduced, starting from the current academic year 2022/2023, at Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University. This is a master’s program, definitely of a historical nature - “Studies in the field of librarianship at Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University give you the opportunity to gain a thorough knowledge of the history of books, periodicals and libraries throughout history, including the creators of libraries and bibliographies, and their impact on the socio-cultural environment of Poland and Europe. During classes students gain detailed knowledge about the development of historical book collections and special collections in Poland, and are also prepared in the field of acquiring, cataloging, sharing and storing library resources.” (see footnote 1). We can observe great diversity in the field of specializations or thematic blocks offered at individual universities. And here our attention is drawn to the dominance of information science content over bibliological or librarian content. The offer of the University of Warsaw for undergraduate studies includes the following thematic blocks, from which the student chooses two: digital librarianship, science management, culture animation. The following specialties are offered for MA studies: editing, information and knowledge architecture, cultural heritage, information and communication in cultural institutions, library organization and management, information and knowledge management. At the University of Silesia, students are offered such thematic blocks as: culture and book editing, modern library, the young reader in the world of books and media, protection and conservation of library collections. At the University of Wrocław, students can choose from the following specialties: teaching (1st cycle), digital cultural heritage, information brokering, information management (2nd cycle). Bachelor’s studies in the field of scientific information and library science are also conducted at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań (Faculty of Pedagogy and Art in Kalisz). These are the only studies with a practical

profile, the others have a general academic profile. In the course description, we find information about the possibility of obtaining typically librarian qualifications. The library is also indicated as the first, potential place of work – “Studies in the field of Scientific Information and Library Science allow you to obtain specialist education in the field of information and librarianship broadly understood. The content of education includes the theory and methodology of information and library activities, i.e. the collection, processing and sharing of data and information from various fields of knowledge. Students acquire the skills to create and navigate databases, on-line catalogs and other electronic information resources, learn to search for information in automated systems and on the Internet. They are able to develop various types of documents in the MARC21 International Format, in accordance with the RDA rules. The study program prepares you to work in libraries, information broker companies, as well as in all positions related to information management.” (see footnote 1). The studies offer two specialties – information brokering and school librarianship.

Postgraduate studies complement the educational offer for bachelor’s and master’s studies. However, here too a decrease in interest from candidates is observed, which results in the suspension of recruitment or the removal of studies from the offer. At present, from the former library science centers, postgraduate studies are offered by: the University of Warsaw, Postgraduate Studies in Library Science; the University of Silesia, Qualifying Postgraduate Studies in Library and Information Science; the Pedagogical University in Kraków, Library and Information Science (2 or 3 semesters); the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, Library Science and Scientific Information; and the University of Białystok, Postgraduate Studies in Reading Animation, Scientific Information and Librarianship.

Due to low interest, recruitment remains suspended at the University of Wrocław, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce, and Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz. Some centers offer post-graduate studies thematically related to the issues of bibliology and information science, which can complement or extend library knowledge. These are: Postgraduate Studies in Publishing Policy and Bookselling and New Media in Cultural Heritage Institutions at the University of Warsaw; Editing at the Pedagogical University of Cracow; Postgraduate Studies in Information Brokering and Information Management and Postgraduate Studies in Web Publishing at Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń.

Postgraduate studies in the field of library science can also be found in the offer of some private universities, such as Poznań University of Social Sciences (Scientific, electronic information and library science); the Uni-

versity of Vocational Education in Wrocław, University of Lower Silesia, (Library Science); the University of Humanities and Economics in Łódź (Library science with elements of digital information management). It should be clearly noted, however, that not all of the above-mentioned universities have inaugurated these studies which are included in the recruitment offer, due to too little interest.

CHANGES IN THE EDUCATIONAL OFFER OF ACADEMIC CENTERS EDUCATING LIBRARIANS

As it has already been mentioned, when analyzing the current educational offer in library science studies, in the last decade we have observed significant changes in the educational offer of academic centers that have so far educated future library staff. There are several main reasons for this state of affairs. These are primarily legal changes whose consequences for the education of librarians are still observed today. They were initiated by the already mentioned *Law on Higher Education* of 2011 (Ustawa, 2011) which expanded the autonomy of universities in the sphere of teaching, allowing for the independent creation of curricula. As a consequence, in 2012 new fields of study appeared in the offer of centers educating librarians and information services employees, instead of or in addition to scientific information and library science. These included: information in e-society (UMCS), information management and bibliology (UMK Toruń), information management (UJ), information in the digital environment (UŁ), electronic and online publishing (U Wroc.) or information architecture (UP Krakow). Some of these turned out to be odd ephemera which were liquidated after several cycles of education. Others, such as information architecture or information management, became dominant over time in the didactic offer of library science centers. A detailed summary of the current didactic offer of these centers (apart from scientific information and library science) is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Didactic offer (1st and 2nd cycle program) of academic centers educating so far in the field of scientific information and library science. (as of March 2023). Author's study.

University	Faculty / Institute	Field of Study
University of Warsaw	Faculty of Journalism, Information and Book Studies	<i>Architecture of Information Spaces – 1st and 2nd cycle program</i> <i>Modern publishing – 1st and 2nd cycle program</i>

Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń	Institute for Information and Communication Research	<i>Information Architecture – 1st and 2nd cycle program</i>
Maria Skłodowska-Curie University in Lublin	Institute of Cultural Sciences	<i>Information Architecture – 1st and 2nd cycle program</i>
	Institute of Social Communication and Media Science	<i>Public Relations and Information Management – 1st cycle program</i>
University of Wrocław	Institute of Information and Media Sciences	<i>Digital and Web Publishing – 1st and 2nd cycle program</i>
		<i>Information Management – 1st cycle program</i>
University of Silesia in Katowice	Institute of Cultural Sciences	<i>Information Architecture – 1st cycle program</i>
Pedagogical University of Cracow	Institute of Information Sciences	<i>Information Architecture – 1st cycle program</i>
		<i>Information Management and Digital Publishing – 1st and 2nd cycle program</i>
Jagiellonian University	Institute of Information Studies	<i>Information Management – 1st and 2nd cycle program</i> <i>Digital information processing – 1st and 2nd cycle program</i>
University of Łódź	Department of Library and Information Science	<i>Information in the digital environment – 1st cycle program</i>
		<i>Computer science with business English – 2nd cycle program</i>

Two main trends in education emerge from this tally: information architecture and information management. When reviewing individual programs of study, one may note the presence of educational content in some of them, which was also included in the programs of library science studies. Often, this content is somehow “smuggled” in as optional items. This is undoubtedly related to the research interests of researchers and a specific attachment to bibliological issues. Some specialties even suggest that they prepare for work in libraries (e.g. modern librarianship – information science with business English at the University of Łódź), with an emphasis on modernity, digital libraries or libraries functioning in the new digital reality. The descriptions of most of these majors contain provisions stating that their graduates may work, among other places, in libraries, for example: “The program content is complemented by issues devoted

to the functioning and management of the so-called information institutions, i.e. all organizational forms in which information plays a key role in their functioning. This applies to libraries, archives, galleries and museums [...]” (Architecture of Information Spaces at the University of Warsaw); “Graduates of the PCiS (*Publikowanie cyfrowe I Sieciowe – Digital and Web Publishing*) field of first-cycle studies will be competent employees of the information sector [...]. They can look for employment in publishing houses of traditional and digital publications (books and magazines), Internet portals, companies digitizing publications, digital libraries, scientific institutions opening Open Access repositories, online bookstores, publishing and marketing departments” (Digital and Network Publishing at the University of Wrocław); “The offered program will provide preparation for work in institutions dealing with the collection, development and publication of traditional and digital documents” (Information Management and Digital Publishing at the Pedagogical University of Cracow). The fact that their graduates, as in the case of many other majors, can look for work in libraries is obvious. It remains an open question whether they are really properly prepared for this and whether there is a demand for them in libraries.

Another important legal act that undoubtedly influenced the situation of academic centers was the Act of 13 June 2013 amending the acts regulating the performance of certain professions (Act, 2013), including deregulating the profession of a librarian. Its consequence was the liquidation of the obligation to have a higher education, have professional experience (0-10 years) depending on the position, and passing the state exam for the position of a certified librarian. The act was adopted despite strong opposition from librarians, librarian associations and representatives of academic centers conducting library studies. Undoubtedly, this did not contribute to an increase in the professional prestige of librarians, and thus caused a further decline in interest in library studies (Brzezińska-Stec & Żochowska, 2013; Grygrowski, 2020, pp. 157-161).

The last legal act that has left its mark on the activities of libraries and universities is Act 2.0 - a constitution for science (Act, 2018). Its direct consequence for librarian training centers is their further reorganization due to *the Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of September 20, 2018 on the fields of science and scientific disciplines and artistic disciplines* (Regulation, 2018). Bibliology and information science ceased to be an independent scientific discipline in the field of humanities and was included in the field of social sciences, added to a group of disciplines defined as social communication and media sciences, together with media sciences and sciences of cognition and social communication (Koredczuk & Woźniak-Kasperek, 2019; Hofman, 2019). For many centers, this had far-reaching consequences, such as the liquidation of Institutes of Scientific Information

and Library Science (e.g. in Lublin, where two departments were created on the basis of the Institute: the Department of Information Science, Book Studies and Media Education at the Institute of Social Communication and Media Sciences in the Faculty of Political Science and Journalism, and the Department of Digital Humanities at the Institute of History in the Faculty of Humanities – currently the Department of Information and Digital Culture at the Faculty of Philology; or in Katowice, where the Institute of Library Science became part of the Institute of Cultural Sciences), transformations and changes of names, structures and locations at faculties (e.g. in Toruń – Information Research Institute and Communication; or in Wrocław – Institute of Information and Media Sciences). All this can undoubtedly have a negative impact on didactics and research in the field of what is broadly understood as book science.

In addition to legal changes, several other reasons for changing the didactic offer should be indicated. The main one is undoubtedly a decrease in interest in the current educational offer and recruitment difficulties that some universities have struggled with or are still struggling with. The profession of a librarian is not perceived as attractive, both in terms of remuneration and career opportunities. Consequently, another impulse for changes was the desire to make the didactic offer more attractive and adapt it to the needs of the modern labor market. This shows the growing demand of companies and institutions from the information sector for specialists conducting information activities, managing databases and electronic content. I leave open the question of whether this resulted in a lack of demand for librarians. Undoubtedly, Western patterns were also important, where one can see the desire to educate information and knowledge managers with competencies in the field of knowledge management, information architecture, ICT skills, information systems, user support, project management, promotion and marketing, and communication skills (Nowakowska, 2013; Ślaska, 2013). It should be noted, however, that this has not resulted in the complete liquidation of library science studies.

FORECASTS / QUESTIONS ABOUT THE FUTURE

In the context of the described changes, many questions arise about the future of librarian education, starting with what the content of teaching should be, what organizational shape it should take, whether there should be one unified name of the field of study, whether first – and second-cycle studies in library science are necessary, or whether postgraduate studies should be adapted to the specificity of work in particular types of libraries, what is the fate of library science graduates in the labor market, whether employees of particular types of libraries need separate skills and thus specific fields of study, to the question of how to revive library education.

Professor Elżbieta Barbara Zybert rightly notes that “in order to improve the perception of the librarian profession and library studies, and thus contribute to the increase of candidates’ interest in studies in this field, it is not enough to modernize the curricula. Broad social support is needed” (Zybert, 2020). According to her, the main reason for the poor condition of librarianship in Poland is the negative attitude of society to education and the low level of readership. This translates into the perception of libraries, and an important element of this perception is the professionally trained staff. Only a staff educated with modern methods will be able to effectively find themselves in both the digital and real environment and meet the expectations of the new library user. Henryk Hollender, writing about the profession of a librarian, remarks quite controversially that although library workers today in Poland carry out an extensive repertoire of tasks, and the results of their work have extensive social consequences, they do not conduct professional activity. This judgment was influenced by the following observations: “librarianship lacks commonly recognized points of reference, which are generally human authorities, strong institutions and the canon of publications; there is a lack of exemplary solutions, accepted as rational and perpetuated by professional literature; discussions ending with the adoption of such solutions and their implementation are absent; there are no librarians in public life; the librarian’s point of view is irrelevant in the discourse on science, education, media and social communication, the past and historical values, etc., despite the solidification of the political ritual consisting in public celebrations of all kinds of openings (library premises, digital libraries, etc.); significant initiatives, undertakings, activities that change the “state of the art” in the area of librarianship, bibliography and related areas come from representatives of other professions, especially IT specialists, or are a derivative of general trends such as digitization, open access, theories of “friendliness” of buildings and devices, etc.; Among young employees there is an office vision of library practice as repetitive activities consisting in “getting things done” (Hollender, 2015, p. 329-330). According to the author, the explanation for this situation is the lack of a professional education that would dominate the process of preparation for the profession: this once defined patterns and measure of success, inspired innovation and ensured a minimum of prestige. It seems that this process can only deepen in the situation of crisis in library studies.

It is difficult to give an unambiguous answer as to whether to be a good librarian it is necessary to have completed library studies. People with education other than that of a librarian have often worked in libraries, but it is worrying that in many environments they are beginning to constitute the majority. Practice and observation of the legal situation in many countries around the world, where professional preparation is required to take

up employment in librarian positions, shows that professionals should work in librarian positions (Zybert, 2020).

Forecasts regarding the situation of library studies in Poland are not optimistic. It is difficult to count on a sudden increase in interest in the field of study if no consolidated actions from theoreticians and practitioners are taken to improve the prestige of the profession, as well as intensive lobbying activities to restore the legal requirements for filling library positions. It is necessary to involve librarians, directors of institutions, academic teachers, and professional associations, and to undertake a broad social discussion on the problem. The fact that this discussion is getting wider and wider is a source of some optimism. However, it is impossible to resist the impression that a significant part of both the representatives of state authorities and the managerial staff of library institutions do not notice the problem.

If the community does not consolidate in joint actions to change this state, in a few years we may wake up in a situation where library studies will simply cease to exist.

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LIBRARY STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW – FROM DIFFICULT BEGINNINGS TO A DIFFICULT PRESENT¹



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KEY WORDS: Library science education. University of Warsaw. Joachim Lelewel. Karol Estreicher.

ABSTRACT: **Thesis/goal** – The aim of the article is to present the 200-year history of library science education at the University of Warsaw. **Method** – analysis and criticism of the literature and sources. **Conclusions** – In the 19th century, library studies appeared twice in the curricula of the University of Warsaw, thanks to two outstanding Polish bibliologists – Joachim Lelewel and Karol Estreicher. But each appearance was short-lived, which was also partly due to Poland’s turbulent history and the difficult political situation. Library studies at the University

¹ The text contains excerpts from the author’s article entitled “Three anniversaries of Warsaw library science”. In: *Around libraries and cultural heritage*. Science editor. R. Kotowski. Warsaw 2022, pp. 156-174.

of Warsaw developed intensively in the second half of the 20th century. At the beginning of the 21st century, the Institute of Scientific Information and Book Studies of the University of Warsaw was the largest of 14 Polish academic centres providing education in Library and Information Science. At one point during that period, this field had over 500 students in full-time, part-time or post-graduate programmes in one academic year. Today, library studies are undergoing a serious crisis, and one of the reasons is the statutory abolition of requirements regarding library science education for people taking up work in a library.

The tradition of library education at the University of Warsaw (UW) is 200 years old, dating back to the academic year 1820/1821 when it was initiated by the historian, political activist, and bibliologist Joachim Lelewel with his lectures on bibliography. One might ask at the outset why we are speaking of the tradition of library science education here, when in fact Joachim Lelewel's obligation as part of his employment at the University of Warsaw was to give lectures on bibliography. Terminological issues related to the names for studies in the field of book and library knowledge in foreign and Polish academic centers in the 19th century have been described many times over, then and later. It is enough, therefore, to briefly recall that at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries the term "bibliography" was most often used in Poland to describe studies concerning books and libraries. Jerzy Samuel Bandtkie gave his lectures at the Jagiellonian University under this name. This was also the title of Aleksander Bohatkiewicz's lectures at Vilnius University, and of Karol Estreicher's later lectures at the Warsaw Main School in the 1860s. However, these researchers noticed a naming problem consisting in the fact that the term "bibliology" was being used interchangeably for research and academic teaching. It should therefore be recalled that Paweł Jarkowski, the Polish precursor for didactics in book and library science at the Volyn Gymnasium (and from 1819 at the Krzemieniec High School) used the term "bibliology" for his lectures. Joachim Lelewel also noted the naming issue when he wrote: "bibliology, i.e. bibliography, is the collection of science and knowledge, used to mechanically enlarge the knowledge of books" (Lelewel, 1826, p. 255).

Some scholars and lecturers from this area devoted their lectures to a greater extent to discussing the history of handwritten and printed books, while others shifted the emphasis to librarianship and bibliography. Joachim Lelewel belonged to the latter. As shown from the schedule of classes conducted by him, as well as from his later writings, in his lectures he emphasized the knowledge of libraries, their organization and management. That is why Helena Więckowska, analyzing the subject matter of Lelewel's lectures, stated that they could be considered "the first studies in library science in the modern sense of the word" (Więckowska, 1979, p. 13). It is also possible, by a certain analogy, to use the argument of Lelewel himself, who in his considerations on bibliography stated: "That the word Biblio-

graphy is Greek, that it had different meanings in different ages, is understood by everyone, and it is certain that although there was no such thing, bibliography and bibliographers already existed in the world" (Lelewel, 1826, p. 239). Thus, using similar arguments, it can be said that although the term "library science" entered the scientific language in Poland only in 1862 thanks to Włodzimierz Górski and his book entitled "A short outline of the principles of library science", nevertheless library studies in Poland had functioned already in the first decades of the 19th century, even if they were not conducted under that name.

The history of Joachim Lelewel's activities as librarian and lecturer at the University of Warsaw began in 1818. Earlier, in the years 1815-1818, he had held the position of deputy professor at the Department of History at the University of Vilnius (Więckowska, 1952, p. 4), which is worth recalling because after a relatively short period of employment at the University of Warsaw, Lelewel took advantage of the opportunity and willingly returned to Vilnius University, this time taking the position of full professor. Returning to Vilnius marked the end of the three-year period in Lelewel's life in which he worked as a librarian, combining these duties with conducting lectures on bibliography. However, it was an important and effective period for his later bibliological work, also favorable for the organization of the library at the newly established university, and finally significant for the tradition of library studies at the University of Warsaw.

Lelewel later mentioned the new library and his appointment to it in the second volume of his work "Two Bibliographic Books", writing: "in this way, things accumulated around the library work, and a bibliography course was needed at the university: I was summoned to teach this course along with the duties of librarian in the university library. But before I came to Warsaw, this university library had ceased to be. (...) It was a public library at the university (like its erstwhile section in the appellate court), it had a seal on which the name was the national one, it was a public library but without being called by that name" (Lelewel, 1826, p. 176).

So Lelewel was employed in a library that was no longer a university library. Let us recall then the sequence of events. In November 1816, under the edict of Tsar Alexander I, and on the initiative of the Government Commission for Religious Denominations and Public Enlightenment (hereinafter also the Government Commission or KRWRiOP), the Royal University of Warsaw was established. One and a half years of organizational work led to the opening of the university in May 1818. Two months earlier, the status of the university library had changed. The library, which was to support scientific and didactic work in the new university, was established in 1817 on the basis of the combined collections of the Warsaw Lyceum and the Library of the Court of Appeals, and was located in the Kazimierzowski Palace on Krakowskie Przedmieście st. However, in

March 1818, the library formally found itself outside the structure of the University of Warsaw. The decision to change the status of the Library was taken by the Administrative Council of the Kingdom, which decided: "The library, which is attached to the Royal University of Warsaw, will henceforth be called the Public Library and will be open to the public on days designated by the Government Commission for Religious Denominations and Public Enlightenment" (Bieliński, 1907, p. 747). From then on, the library was referred to as the Public Library at the University of Warsaw, but it did not report to the rector of the University, but directly to the Government Commission for Religious Denominations and Public Enlightenment (Mycielski, 2016, pp. 99-103).

According to the statutes of the university, a person employed as a librarian at the Public Library at the Royal University of Warsaw was to combine these duties with bibliography lectures at the Faculty of Sciences and Fine Arts². For this purpose, the University Council presented the candidacy of Joachim Lelewel to KRWRiOP. In the first version of the arrangements for employing Lelewel at the University of Warsaw, it was assumed that he would become a sub-librarian in the university library. The issue of precisely determining the position in the Public Library that was offered to Lelewel seems perhaps of secondary importance. However, for himself, the difference between the position of librarian and sub-librarian was significant. First of all, it should be recalled that the position of a librarian used to mean a person holding a managerial position in a library, sometimes its director³. Thus, a person with the title of sub-librarian, which nowadays has a not very prestigious connotation, was actually the deputy director of the library.

Initially, Lelewel had hoped that the summons to Warsaw to take up the position of librarian at the Public Library at the University and professor of bibliography would mean the position of Library Director in the case of the former. But he had to lower his expectations. It is even clear from Lelewel's letters that he hesitated whether to take the job in Warsaw if it turned out that he would be "only" a sub-librarian, that is, that he would have a director as a supervisor. Even before coming to Warsaw, Lelewel knew that the prospect of becoming the director of the Public Library was clearly receding. The dean of the Faculty of Law and Administration informed Lelewel by letter, but asked for his discretion, because the information that Lelewel was to take the position of sub-librarian was unofficial. Lelewel wrote to his father about these reports: "I am just receiving (...) a letter from Bandkie, in which he informs me that I am a sub-

² The University's statute of April 15, 1818 stated: "In the Faculty of Sciences and Fine Arts there is to be a bibliography chair with the supervision of the library". See: Bieliński J. (1912). *Królewski Uniwersytet Warszawski (1816-1831)*. Vol. III. Warszawa, p. 542.

³ See entry „Bibliotekarz” [„Librarian”] [in:] *Encyklopedia wiedzy o książce. Warszawa 1971*, col. 205.

-librarian, that there will be a librarian, i.e. the director of the library. Reporting this, he asks for discretion probably because he did not expect me to be summoned by the committee so soon. In this summons, bibliography is shown as the main duty, and the title of librarian (under the director) is additional" (Lelewel, 1878, p. 305). In studies devoted to Lelewel and in those fragments that concern his employment at the Royal University of Warsaw, there is information that he was a sub-librarian or deputy librarian at the Public Library, and in one instance that he was a librarian, which, however, did not mean that he was the director.

For the purposes of this article, the second function assigned to Lelewel's full-time job is more important – the obligation to lecture on bibliography. This happened with a significant delay compared to the initial assumptions, because during the first two years of his employment at the University Library, Lelewel was released from the obligation to conduct classes with students. The temporary exemption from bibliography lectures turned out to be indeed justified. Organizing and expanding the library absorbed Lelewel to such an extent that he could not devote more time to his basic historical interests, which he had initially hoped to do. He also did not manage to prepare lectures on bibliography.

Thus, in the academic year 1818/1819, Lelewel was exempted from bibliography lectures at his own request, but at the same time it was decided that already in the second year of his employment at the University of Warsaw he would teach bibliography classes for two hours a week. However, that didn't happen either. In the following year, Lelewel again applied to the Government Commission for an exemption from bibliography lectures due to the numerous duties related to the function of a librarian at the Public Library at the University of Warsaw. The workload that had motivated the application for a new exemption from the obligation to teach bibliography resulted from a large influx of collections to the library, which in turn resulted from the dissolution of monasteries in the Kingdom of Poland carried out in 1819. And since it was Samuel Bogumił Linde, as the general director of libraries and Lelewel's superior, who actively participated in taking over book collections from liquidated monasteries⁴, it is not surprising that the public library at the University of Warsaw was the beneficiary of these acquisitions. There was a lot of work to be done on the development of the new collections, so the Government Commission again agreed to Lelewel's request and in September 1819 notified the University Council that for the year 1819/1820 it would again exempt Joachim Lelewel from "bibliography lessons" (Bieliński, 1912, p. 545), which he would recall a few years later: "(...) due to the great employment in the

⁴ Lelewel writes about this activity of Linde in the second volume of his bibliographic books on pp. 179-180.

library, I did not conduct the bibliography course in the first and second year" (Lelewel, 1826, p. 177).

Perhaps it is worth asking the question here, what did it mean that Lelewel was supposed to teach bibliography classes? After all, it did not concern "bibliography" in the sense that the word is usually used today. Thus, Lelewel did not have the task of teaching students how to prepare bibliographic descriptions in scientific dissertations. The answer to the question of what was to be the subject of his lectures may be in the study program at the Faculty of Sciences and Fine Arts in the academic year 1819/1820. It is already known that Lelewel was finally released from the obligation to teach bibliography in that year and did not start teaching this subject until a year later. However, it can be assumed that the syllabus from 1819/1820 did not change significantly, and that classes conducted by third-year students in the academic year 1820/1821 were conducted according to the previously adopted plan, which he presented in four points:

a) General bibliography is the history of book-keeping (*Bücherwesen*) from the first writing beginnings through all antiquity. Palaeography and diplomatics as well as getting to know the materials from which the books are made.

b) The continuation of book-keeping taken from the Middle Ages to the invention of printing.

c) On printing and typography with a brief mention of bookselling.

d) Completion of the most recent history of book-keeping; then on librarianship" (Bieliński, 1912, p. 322).

In this plan, Lelewel's use of the German term *Bücherwesen* as an equivalent of a general bibliography is noteworthy. This is clearly the influence of Michael Denis, who used the term *Bücherkunde* (Denis, 1777-1778) in the title of his 2-volume work from 1777-1778, but then already in the table of contents, and within the pages of the book, used the term *Bücherwesen* interchangeably. Lelewel writes about the influence of Denis in his remarks to the schedule, stating: "The general order of the bibliography lecture will be taken according to Michał Denis (...)" (Bieliński, 1912, p. 322). In addition, in preparing the bibliography course, Lelewel also used the advice of Jerzy Samuel Bandtkie and Paweł Jarkowski, to which he openly and gratefully admitted in "Two Bibliographic Books". Thus he wrote: "I used to meet Bandtkie and Jarkowski, from whom I could acquire various librarianship ideas and seek advice on the bibliography course. Finally, Bandtkie gave me advice, and Jarkowski, at my request, communicated to me his bibliography plan" (Lelewel, 1826, p. 177). Lelewel knew Jarkowski, who is considered to be the precursor of bibliography lectures in Poland, from his time in Krzemieniec, where he stayed in 1809-

1810 teaching ancient geography at the Krzemieniec Lyceum and waiting – unsuccessfully – to take over the chair of history there (Serejski, 1953, pp. 18-19).

The fears and doubts that Lelewel had before starting work at the University of Warsaw turned out to be justified, because later – speaking already from a certain perspective – he recalled: “Without experience, entangled in the whole library maelstrom, I necessarily found the first year very unpleasant for me. The following years, if they were not more pleasant, whatever satisfaction they could have were given to those who had been somewhat experienced” (Lelewel, 1826, p. 177). The problem with Lelewel as the patron and precursor of the academic education of librarians at the University of Warsaw is that he treated his bibliography lectures as an activity performed more out of duty and as a sideline to his main historical interests. In the third year of work at the University of Warsaw, Lelewel was even able to undertake the anticipated history lectures, but it did not mean that he could later recall his time working in Warsaw with any more satisfaction. The students at the University of Warsaw were not eager to listen to his lectures on history, and Lelewel himself wrote about his students: “I have heard many times, one to another in a loud voice: *why are you attending, the course is not mandatory. I had no audience. Soon the number dropped to three (...)*” (Lelewel, 1858, p. 30).

The small attendance at his lectures in Warsaw, compared to what he had experienced in Vilnius, must have been unpleasant for Lelewel. Meanwhile, in 1821, there was a chance to return to Vilnius and take over the coveted chair of history, this time as a professor, and not – as before – as an assistant professor. The University of Vilnius announced a competition for the position of professor of history, and after dispelling all doubts related to this, which Lelewel described in his “Adventures” (Lelewel, 1858, p. 31), he submitted the documents for the competition. One of these doubts was that despite several years of university experience, he could not formally prove his academic titles. He himself wrote as well: “(...) I had no degree, neither doctor nor master; which I had no desire to receive (...)” (Lelewel, 1858, p. 32). However, fate favored him, because in June 1820 the Jagiellonian University awarded Lelewel a doctoral diploma (Bieliński, 1912, p. 547). Later, on June 8, 1821, Minister Stanisław Grabowski from the KRWRiOP signed a document granting Lelewel the patent of full professor, stating: “Known for his glorious manners, abilities and scholarly works, I appoint JP. Joachim Lelewel, the former sub-librarian, librarian of the public library, as well as permanent professor of bibliography and some part of history at the Faculty of Sciences and Fine Arts of the Royal University of Warsaw (...)” (Bieliński, 1912, p. 547). Practically at the last moment, just before leaving the University of Warsaw and moving to the chair in Vilnius, Lelewel was promoted to librarian and full professor.

However, this did not change his decision to move to Vilnius, and in August 1821, i.e. two months after he was promoted to full professor of "bibliography and some parts of history" (along with the confirmation of the position of librarian at the Public Library), Lelewel resigned with a request to KRWRiOP to release him, from October 1, 1821, from his professorial and librarian duties at the University of Warsaw. Minister Grabowski agreed to this request, and thus Lelewel's three-year period of employment at the University of Warsaw, during which he lectured on bibliography for less than a year, ended.

The period of librarian activity in Lelewel's life was – as H. Więckowska put it – "short and episodic", and his achievements in this field remain overshadowed by his works in the field of history and by his political achievements (Więckowska, 1952, p. 2). But this time, although short and perhaps not supported by particularly good memories, was very fruitful when we look at the works he published after leaving Warsaw for Vilnius, which were created on the basis of research and experience that Lelewel gained from the period of work in the University of Warsaw. First of all, the already cited two-volume work of "Bibliograficznych Ksiąg Dwoje" ("Two Bibliographic Books") published in Vilnius in 1823 and 1826 should be mentioned here. It is also worth mentioning here the dissertation "Dzieje bibliotek" ("History of Libraries")⁵, which, according to Lelewel's initial idea, was to be included in the supplement to "Two Bibliographic Books", which was announced on the title page of these first two volumes with the announcement "a useful catalog of Polish incunabula" (Lelewel, 1858, p. 45). Eventually, the dissertation was published in fragments in the scientific and literary journal *Dziennik Warszawski* (from December 1827 to September 1828) and testified to Lelewel's in-depth studies in the history of libraries from ancient to contemporary times. In this series, one might also mention the work "Projekt utrzymania i urzadzania biblioteki" ("Project of maintaining and equipping the library"), which - if chronological order is applied - should be listed first. While "Two Bibliographic Books" and "History of Libraries" are works that are the aftermath of the Warsaw period in Lelewel's academic activity, "Project of maintaining and equipping the library" was created in Warsaw. At least this is what the author of the study on this text, Maria Magdalena Biernacka, claims, who noticed that although Lelewel's text does not explicitly state that his remarks concern the Public Library at the Royal University of Warsaw, it does mention the library of the Lyceum and the University, so it should be assumed that it was about the Warsaw Lyceum and the University of Warsaw, and that the text must have been written in the period 1818-1821 when Lelewel was

⁵ The dissertation was published in the form of a condensed publication entitled "Dzieje bibliotek do Dziennika Warszawskiego" ("History of libraries for Dziennik Warszawski") at the end of 1828 in Warsaw.

a librarian at the Public Library in Warsaw and a professor of bibliography at the University of Warsaw (Lelewel, 1989, pp. 20-21).

Certainly, based on a few memoirs taken out of context, Lelewel cannot defend the thesis that he was disappointed and bored with librarianship, since he became so involved in it that he *de facto* became the author of the first Polish librarian's handbook. For the chapter "Bibliotekarstwo czyli Książnictwo" from the second volume of "Two Bibliographic Books" (Treichel, 1957, pp. 167-230) has been recognized as such. H. Więckowska described this fragment in Lelewel's works with this designation, writing that it was "the first in Poland, and one of the first in general, modern textbook covering all library issues" (Więckowska, 1952, p. 8). Lelewel's librarian practice also resulted in the development of librarianship methodology. As noted by Irena Treichel, Lelewel was the first in Poland to include the material aspect of the book in bibliographic descriptions, and the development of the method of typographic analysis in his works on the history of printing was possible thanks to the fact that the author of "Two Bibliographic Books" had the opportunity to describe the books from personal observation and that the Warsaw Public Library provided him with vast material for research (Treichel, 1955, p. 146, 150).

Thus, when Lelewel left Warsaw in the autumn of 1821, the young University was losing its professor and librarian. But Polish bibliography was gaining the builder of its foundations. And from Lelewel's point of view, the decision to return to Vilnius turned out to be the right one, as evidenced by the warm welcome at the Vilnius University and the large audience attending his inaugural lecture. It is also worth recalling that Adam Mickiewicz's poem "To Joachim Lelewel" was written on this occasion. It is therefore understandable that when recalling that time, Lelewel wrote: "For the sake of Lithuanian kindness, I left a somewhat inconvenient position in my home environs" (Lelewel, 1858, p. 32).

After Joachim Lelewel left the University of Warsaw, his place as librarian at the Public Library and as professor of bibliography was taken by Adam Tomasz Chłędowski, who worked at the Library at the University of Warsaw in the years 1821-1831, but, despite such long employment, did not lecture on bibliography (Nowak, 1972, p. 113).

Chłędowski, in turn, was replaced for a relatively short time by Łukasz Gołębiowski, who worked at the Public Library at the University of Warsaw from January to October 1831, and who also had in his job description lectures on bibliography. He also did not take up these classes, although he had a lecture prepared and a nearly 500-page manuscript of the planned lecture entitled "A bibliography course prepared by Łukasz Gołębiowski when, as a librarian of a public library, as well as a professor of the University, he was to lecture on bibliography to students of this

University." The creation of this manuscript was known for a long time, because it was mentioned in the "Diary of Łukasz Gołębiowski" (Gołębiowski, 1852, p. 88)⁶ published in 1852. The manuscript itself was found in 2014 in the National Library of the Parliament of Georgia in Tbilisi and published in 2017 with an introduction and editing by Elżbieta Maruszak and Jacek Puchalski (Gołębiowski, 2017).

It turned out that Lelewel's departure from the University of Warsaw meant that lectures on bibliography disappeared from the schedules of Warsaw students for a long time. Naturally, Paweł Jarkowski continued his courses in this field in Krzemieniec, and in Kraków Jerzy Samuel Bandtkie, and after him Józef Muczkowski. And although compared to them, Lelewel's didactic achievements in the field of bibliography were undoubtedly more modest, the theoretical basis he created was a valuable support for those who continued research in the field of book and library science. It was shown quite quickly by Aleksander Wiktor Bohatkiewicz, a bibliography lecturer at Vilnius University, who willingly used the achievements and findings of Joachim Lelewel. From 1819, Bohatkiewicz was an employee of the Vilnius University Library, and in 1828 he was appointed a "university assistant professor with the duty of giving lectures on bibliography" (Nowak, 1972, p. 77). The plan of his lectures was presented by Bohatkiewicz in a work entitled "On the matter of general bibliography for the opening of this course at the Imperial University of Vilnius on January 10, 1829". In this work, he benefited from the achievements of his predecessors, and especially from Lelewel's findings. Let us note, for example, that for the lecture on librarian practice he planned the same title that Lelewel had used in the second volume of "Two Bibliographic Books", published three years earlier, i.e. "Bibliotekarstwo, czyli księżnictwo" ("Librarianship, or about Books") (Bohatkiewicz, 1830, p. 68).

The re-emergence of book and library science issues in Warsaw's academic life and study program took place only forty years later thanks to Karol Estreicher. In October 1862, Karol Estreicher was approved as an assistant professor at the then reactivated university in Warsaw under the name of the Szkoła Główna Warszawska (Warsaw Main School). After arriving in Warsaw in December of that year, he was employed on the same basis as Lelewel during the period of the Royal University of Warsaw. So he became a sub-librarian at the Main Library in Warsaw⁷ with the obli-

⁶ See also Fraczyk T. (1972). Gołębiowski Łukasz. In: *Słownik pracowników książki polskiej (Dictionary of Polish Book Workers)*. Warszawa, Łódź, p. 276.

⁷ Similarly to the times of the "first" University, the Main Library was not subordinate to the university authorities, but to the Director of Libraries in the Kingdom of Poland by the Government Commission of Religious Denominations and Public Enlightenment. However, the Act "On Public

gation to give a lecture on bibliography at the Main School (Muszkowski, 1918, pp. 5-6). Also, as in the case of Lelewel, he focused particularly on work in the library, which meant that he did not take up bibliography lectures for a long time. This took place only in 1865, and it might not have happened at all, because in 1864, in connection with the work on the act for universities⁸, an attempt was made to remove bibliography from the list of subjects taught at the Faculty of Philology and History of the Warsaw Main School, explained by the need to adapt the curriculum of Warsaw studies to programs at Russian universities where there was no bibliography subject. But this plan was not implemented, which may have been influenced by the attitude of Estreicher himself, who sent a memorial to the university authorities in defense of the bibliography department (K.Ś, 1928. p. 49).

Thanks to letting the department of bibliography remain in the organization of the Faculty of Philology and History, Karol Estreicher was able to pass on bibliographic knowledge to Warsaw students for four consecutive years, until he left Warsaw in 1868 to take the position of director of the Jagiellonian Library. Jan Muszkowski pointed out that in the Act "On Public Education in the Kingdom of Poland" of May 1862, Art. 235 lists the subjects taught at the Faculty of Philology and History, including a subject under the surprising name "bibliology and bibliography". Thus, Muszkowski stated: "The combination of these two terms to designate one lecture subject is the fruit of confusing terminology, which continues to this day" (Muszkowski, 1918, p. 16). It should be noted that Muszkowski's comment about confusing terminology was contained in his paper from 1918, i.e. more than a hundred years ago. And in fact, even until the middle of the 20th century, there were statements in which the terms bibliology and bibliography were treated interchangeably. However, in the second half of the 20th century, the process of harmonization of the basic terminology defining research in the field of book and library knowledge progressed, so that now arguments regarding confusion in the relationship between the terms "bibliology" and "bibliography" are no longer valid.

However, in relation to the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, the term "confusion of terminology" in the field of book science studies was indeed justified. This is evidenced by the very beginning of Estreicher's paper from 1865, with which he inaugurated his lectures for students of the Main School in Warsaw. According to his job, Estreicher

Education in the Kingdom of Poland" of May 1862, in Art. 363, stated that "The Main Library is also the Library of the Main School".

⁸ Work on the law for the university was initiated in 1864, in connection with the planned transformation of the Main School into the University of Warsaw. See K.Ś. [Ksawery Świerkowski] (1928) Karola Estreichera memoriał w obronie katedry bibliografji. *Przegląd Biblioteczny* 1, 49.

was supposed to lecture on bibliography. This was also the title of the paper – “On bibliography”. However, his first sentence begins with the words: “Beginning the lecture on book science, I consider ...” (Estreicher, 1865, p. 1). It does not follow that the author of the “Polish Bibliography” used these names freely and thoughtlessly. On the contrary, he noted terminological nuances, proposing a division into “pure bibliography” (in the theoretical sense) and applied bibliography (in the practical sense). He also noted that the former is “called bibliology by French scholars” (ibid., p. 3).

After the Second World War, with the establishment of the Department of Library Science, a new stage began in the history of education in book and library science at the University of Warsaw. It should be recalled, however, that the Warsaw library center was not the first link of this type in the structure of a Polish university. The first university unit in Poland with this profile was the Department of Library Science of the University of Łódź⁹.

It was only five years later that a similar research and teaching institution appeared within the structure of the University of Warsaw. The Regulation of the Minister of Higher Education and Science of October 6, 1951, on organizational changes at the University of Warsaw¹⁰ declared that the unit under the name of the Department of Library Science would be part of the Faculty of Philology of the University of Warsaw. And just as its initiator and first head, Jan Muszkowski, had contributed to the establishment of the Department in Łódź, so the creation of the Department in Warsaw would be linked above all with the name of prof. Aleksander Birkenmajer, who was also its first manager. Birkenmajer was a historian of exact sciences and philosophy, but he showed his interest in book and library research already in the interwar period, being one of the first people in Poland with a habilitation in bibliography (Więckowska, 1979, p. 25). He was also a practicing librarian. Even before the outbreak of the war, he was a curator at the Jagiellonian Library and briefly director of the University Library in Poznań, and in order to organize library studies at

⁹ In this context, one should also recall the initiatives undertaken in the interwar period. Thus, in the academic year 1916/1917, the Society of Scientific Courses in Warsaw (TKN) briefly created two departments: the Department of General Book Studies and the Department of Librarianship and Bibliography. And after the transformation of the TKN into the Free Polish University, librarian studies were conducted from 1925 at the Social and Educational Work Study at the Pedagogical Faculty of this university. see Więckowska H. (1979). *Akademickie kształcenie bibliotekarzy. Zarys historyczny (Academic education of librarians. Historical overview)*. Warsaw: SBP, pp. 22-23.

¹⁰ *Rozporządzenie Ministra Szkół Wyższych i Nauki z dnia 6 października 1951 r. w sprawie zmian organizacyjnych na Uniwersytecie Warszawskim (Regulation of the Minister of Higher Education and Science of 6 October 1951 on organizational changes at the University of Warsaw)*. “Dziennik Ustaw” (Journal of Laws) 1951, No. 52, item 370, p. 458.

the University of Warsaw, he moved to Warsaw directly from the position of director of the Jagiellonian Library (*ibid*, p. 37).

Two significant changes for the Warsaw library science center took place in 1968. At that time, a regulation was issued changing the internal organization of the University of Warsaw, which meant that the Department of Library Science was elevated to the rank of an Institute, and the new Institute under the name of the Institute of Library and Information Science was this time included in the structure of the Faculty of History of the University of Warsaw¹¹. One more change contributing to the further development of the Institute took place in 1970, when scientific and didactic work was undertaken at a new address in the center of Warsaw, at 69 Nowy Świat st. in the Zamojski Palace rebuilt after the war. The proof of further development and gradual strengthening of the Institute was its organizational development. In 1968, the Institute consisted of only two Departments – Library Science and Scientific Information – and from the academic year 1977/1978 there were already four departments – the Department of Bibliography and the Department of Old Book Knowledge were added (Czekajewska-Jędrusik, 1978, p. 119, 124-125). The period of the 1980s and 1990s was a heyday for library science centers at universities in Poland, and at the peak there were 14 of these centers – most often with the rank of an institute (Grygowski, 2020, p. 145). And the Warsaw Institute, which in 1997 was renamed the Institute of Scientific Information and Book Studies (IINiSB UW), was at the turn of the century the largest of the institutes that together formed the Faculty of History of the University of Warsaw in terms of the number of students.

The traditions of library education at the University of Warsaw are currently maintained by the Faculty of Journalism, Information and Book Studies of the University of Warsaw (WDIB). The Faculty was created from the merger of two Institutes that previously functioned at two different faculties: the Institute of Journalism, which was part of the Faculty of Journalism and Political Science of the University of Warsaw, and the Institute of Scientific Information and Book Studies, which was one of the institutes forming the Faculty of History of the University of Warsaw. Two kinds of communities spoke in favor of merging the Institutes. First, by

¹¹ Zarządzenie Ministra Oświaty i Szkolnictwa Wyższego z dnia 27 czerwca 1968 roku w sprawie organizacji wewnętrznej Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego (*Ordinance of the Minister of Education and Higher Education of June 27, 1968 on the internal organization of the University of Warsaw*). "Dziennik Urzędowy Ministerstwa Oświaty i Szkolnictwa Wyższego" (*Official Journal of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education*) 1968, No. A-10, item 65.

2015¹², thus even as the unification plans were crystallizing, it was a literal community, as both Institutes occupied adjacent floors in the Zamojski Palace on 69 Nowy Świat st. Secondly, the juxtaposition of journalistic issues on the one hand and bibliology and information science on the other was visible in international classifications of scientific disciplines. An example is the International Classification of Educational Fields ISCED (UNESCO), which places journalism in the field of social sciences in class 0321, and librarianship, information and archival sciences in class 0322 (Grygowski, 2020, p. 169).

The creation of WDIB and thus the opening of a new stage in the history of book and library science education at the University of Warsaw turned out to be a trying time. The field of study under the name of “scientific information and library science” before the unification of 2016 was the only field of study offered to students at the first and second cycle of full-time and extramural studies at IINiSB UW. After the “unification” this changed. The emergence of “competition” from other fields of study at WDIB (primarily the fields of Architecture of Information Spaces and Modern Publishing) coincided with the nationwide phenomenon of the disappearance of library studies (in the didactic sense) in Polish academic centers, which has previously been described in detail in the article “Library studies in crisis” (Grygowski, 2020).

The crisis in this area is clearly demonstrated by the numbers of people taking up these studies in the last two decades. At the beginning of the 2000s, the number of people starting studies in the first year of full-time studies for a short time even exceeded 100. And these were people actually studying, which has changed in recent years with the lists of people admitted to university including many people studying fictitiously due to regulations that are favorable to employers (exempting them from paying social security contributions in the event of employing a student). In this situation, out of a number of several dozen people admitted to the university in recent years, those who took exams and actually intended to study the field of scientific information and library science numbered just over 10.

The decline in interest in these studies is evident – both at the University of Warsaw and throughout Poland. Currently (2023), for the second year in a row, full-time bachelor’s and master’s studies in Scientific Information and Library Science have not been offered at the University of Warsaw: only extramural studies are being conducted, but these are not largely followed either. There is still a satisfactory interest in postgradu-

¹² In September 2015, the Institute of Journalism of the University of Warsaw moved to Powiśle to the renovated building of the former Baths of Teodozja Majewska at 2/4 Bednarska st. See *Sprawozdanie Rektora Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego z Działalności Uczelni w 2015 roku (Report of the Rector of the University of Warsaw on the University’s activities in 2015)*. Warsaw 2016, p. 16.

ate studies in this field, but they are not attracting as large groups as they were a few years ago. It remains to be hoped, however, that the currently observed crisis in these studies is only a temporary state of turmoil. The interest in these studies on the scale observed at the beginning of the 21st century will certainly not return, but less interest in books and libraries in the era of the Internet, social media and artificial intelligence, with the increasing availability of electronic sources online, should not lead to a hasty conclusion that book and library studies are no longer needed or useful. Graduates of these studies will still be needed as employees for the basic activities in various types of libraries, as well as in publishing activities, in cultural and educational institutions and in the broadly understood information and public communication sector.

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THE EDUCATION OF LIBRARIANS WORKING WITH CHILDREN AGED 0-5 AND THEIR FAMILIES IN POLAND



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KEY WORDS: Librarian education. Children aged 0-5. Public libraries. Early literacy.

ABSTRACT: **The aim** of the article is to present the issue of education of librarians working with children aged 0-5 in public libraries in Poland, as well as to discuss the educational offer available on the market. **The method** of critical analysis of the literature and Internet resources was used to analyze the material. **The con-**

ducted analysis showed that representatives of the discussed professional group, due to the lack of adequate formal education (e.g. at the university level), most often use the offer of courses offered by professional institutions and companies that provide commercial training for employees of the cultural sector. Knowledge and skills related to the methodology of working with the youngest reader are also passed on through cooperation with publishing houses.

INTRODUCTION

For many years in Poland we have had to deal with a deficit of research on early literacy in public libraries. These issues have been tentatively recognized, and have been discussed in the foreign literature of the last few decades, at the same time establishing new fields of activity for libraries. From the 1980s, Polish public libraries slowly began to open up to readers younger than school-age children due to more frequent contacts with pre-school educational institutions (Białkowska, 1980). In 1989, specialists in library methodology drew attention to 2- to 3-year-old children and their initiation at this age, shaping future reading tendencies and preferences (Białkowska, 1989a, p. 13). This was followed by demands for greater "care of the librarian to supply book collections with books for the youngest and to popularize among adult readers (parents) knowledge about the rights of children's reading development (already at pre-school age)" (ibid., p. 18). Thanks to this change in approach, examples of library activities for preschool children began to appear in the professional literature (e.g. Pijanowska, 1996; Kulik, 1998; Kuprel, 2002).

At the beginning of the 1990s, the first voices appeared in Poland suggesting that the target group of users should be expanded to include children younger than 3 years old, which was related to the recognition of research conducted abroad on early childhood education, as well as the modernization of libraries introduced on the basis of this. The postulates of a new concept of a children's library began to be formulated, the essential component of which was to start the child's reading initiation early in cooperation with adults (parents, grandparents, guardians), using the assumptions of the concept of family literacy (Papuzińska, 1992, p. 25). The publications of G. Lewandowicz-Nosal, which were innovative at that time, also contributed to the introduction of changes. By introducing the issue of "a small child in the library" into her research, she encouraged the expansion of the repertoire of libraries for preschoolers and, later, infants. She mentioned the need to create a department of books for the youngest (with particular emphasis on picture books) and to include games and toys in the collection (Lewandowicz, 1994, pp. 14-16, 20-21, 28).

At that time, in addition to the above-mentioned publications, there were works on libraries for children, however they addressed the issues

related to servicing their youngest users only to a small extent, and at the same time there were no general works that took into account the place and role of public libraries in the contemporary system of cultural education of a small child. It was only in 2019 that a book was published in the Polish literature on the subject which more comprehensively addressed the issue of the participation of the public library in the process of literacy of a small child, and not only in the context of children aged 0-3, but also preschoolers (research carried out over the years, especially at the Book and Readership Institute of the National Library, focused mainly on quantitative and statistical analyses). We are talking about the monograph *Wczesna alfabetyzacja i jej miejsce w działalności bibliotek publicznych* (Early literacy and its place in the activities of public libraries), which, in addition to explaining the concept of early literacy, presents the possibilities of public libraries taking part in developing the pre-reading skills of children aged 0-5 in terms of infrastructure, collections, and the methodology of working with a child and his guardian (Walczak-Niewiadomska, 2019).

THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN'S LIBRARIANS – THE STATE OF RESEARCH

The education of children's librarians is one of the points raised in international and national discussions regarding public librarianship. However, an analysis of the available sources shows that, unlike deliberations on the general shape and future of education in the field of library and information science, the situation in the case of this particular specialization is quite different: there are few comparative and cross-sectional studies on the education of children's librarians (e.g. Glistrup, ed., 1986; Fisher, 2000; Walter, 2014; Hamada & Stavridi, 2014). Despite this, several interesting studies have appeared in the foreign literature, referring to the issue of the professional development of children's librarians. These are rather articles whose aim is to indicate new perspectives for the development of this specialization of library staff. Among them is, for example, a text by Frances Smardo, which is one of the first to ask the question of how to prepare librarians to serve small children (1980). A more detailed discussion of the set of qualifications that staff should have when working with children aged 0-5 is provided in the chapter *People and partnerships, skills and knowledge from the collective monograph Library services from birth to five: Delivering the best start* (Rankin & Brock, 2015).

In Polish professional literature, the situation is similar: especially after 1989, there is a noticeable lack of scientific texts discussing the status of education of children's librarians, in contrast to publications relating to the education of librarians in general. In order to develop their compe-

tencies, Polish librarians would mainly use popular publications in which the issue of servicing small children appeared sporadically and did not cover the subject completely (Lewandowicz, ed., 1993; Lewandowicz, 1994; Kumiega, 2003). Most texts dealing with this topic were published in guidebooks and professional publications, serving librarians-practitioners in the daily organization of work (e.g. in the journal *Poradnik Bibliotekarza* ("The Librarian's Handbook")), while only some of them appeared in monographs (Łopińska, 1965; Białkowska, 1989b), including collaborative works (Grabowska, 1996; Woźniczka-Paruzel, 2003; Grabowska, 2013). Greater interest in this problem among Polish specialists was noticeable after 2007, i.e. from the date of publication of the IFLA *Guidelines for libraries serving infants and young children* (up to 3 years old), explaining the role of public libraries in the literacy of the youngest children, as well as providing valuable and universal tips on the preparation of the premises and the offer of classes (IFLA, 2007; IFLA guidelines..., 2009). One of the latest texts devoted to this issue was published in 2016, but even here services for children aged 0-5 are only mentioned (Walczak-Niewiadomska).

THE EDUCATIONAL OFFER IN POLAND

In the 1970s and 1980s, the requirements regarding the skills and knowledge that a librarian working with infants should have were gradually clarified, thanks in part to the commitment and publications of practitioners, especially American ones. The desired competencies of the staff working with the youngest children were discussed, and for this purpose recommendations were developed to support the educational process of librarians. It was proposed, among other things, to expand the content of librarianship students' curricula and professional training to include elements of pre-school education, the theory of learning and play, and human development. It was also suggested that the didactic offer in schools for future librarians be supplemented with classes in the field of child development and psychology, methods of teaching reading, and special apprenticeships (Smardo, 1980, p. 277).

So what is the educational offer for people who want to work with the 0-5 age group in public libraries in Poland? Further in this article education at the university level will be presented and, above all, the offer of courses and training that truly meets the needs of librarians. The departure of Polish academic centers from education for the needs of libraries (and the redirection of efforts to areas closely related to information and knowledge management) results in a reduction in the possibility of obtaining specialist knowledge on the provision of services to children and young people in a public library. The matter is further complicated by the

fact that since 2013, pursuant to the so-called deregulation act, candidates for the position of a public librarian are not required to have specialized education. Analysis of all courses available in the academic year 2022/2023 (as of April 2023) offering education to librarians at the academic level in Poland¹ shows that the subject of children's librarianship is implemented in most in the form of individual subjects, mainly within a specific major (e.g. the subject „Methodology of working with a children's reader” in the „Animation of culture” major at the University of Warsaw within the Bachelor's degree „Scientific Information and Library Science”; the subject „Reading among children and youth” in the „Public and school libraries” major at the University of Wrocław in the MA field of „Scientific information and library science”; the subject „Methodology of working with a child reader” within the „School librarianship” major at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Faculty of Pedagogy and Art of the branch in Kalisz in the field of „Scientific information and library science”). Only in second-cycle studies at the University of Silesia is there a module „The young reader in the world of books and media” as part of the „Scientific information and library science” field of study. Probably the only option for post-graduate studies in this field is offered by the University of Warsaw under the name „Bibliotekoznawstwo” (Library Science). In the path (specialization) „Libraries in the education and culture system” we find the subjects „Public libraries for children and youth” and „Methodology of working with children and young readers”. Despite the presence of didactic elements devoted to working with children in the library at some universities, it is not difficult to notice that these contents are treated more generally, in relation to the entire category of young readers, than to children aged 0-5.

The deficiencies of the formal mode (at the university level) of educating children's librarians in Poland are being redressed by the libraries themselves and the institutions cooperating with them, e.g. non-governmental organizations (NGOs). For several years, companies specializing in commercial training for employees of the cultural sector have been operating more intensively on the market. Content is most often provided during one- or two-day conferences, as well as being part of workshops or training. These meetings often have a regional character and are part of the methodological offer of provincial public libraries², but there are

¹ Based on data taken from the Wybierz Studia (Select Studies) search engine, which contains information from, among others, the POLON government database on higher education (Ministry of Education and Science, 2023).

² Among others in Olsztyn (April 17-18, 2016) – a nationwide conference “Let's not force children to read – a new look at children's reading”, organized as part of the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the Municipal Public Library in Olsztyn and the 10th anniversary of the Multimedia Children's Library ABECADŁO as a seminar combined with workshops (Multimedialna Biblioteka..., 2023).

also national ones, e.g. the annual National Bibliotherapeutic Conference, organized by the Polish Bibliotherapeutic Society³, or one summarizing the 5 years of the campaign "Little book, great man"⁴. The network of pedagogical libraries also presents its own training offer, directed mainly at librarians and teachers of pre-school and early school education⁵. These initiatives are largely devoted to preparation for work with children and youth in a broader sense (but containing elements of animation for the youngest); we can observe fewer focused solely on the 0-5 age group.

The first group includes, for example, workshops regularly organized (for a fee) by the Association of Polish Librarians individually and in cooperation with partners (including the National Library, the District Pedagogical Library of the Commission of National Education, the Stanisław Staszic Public Library in the Bielany District, the Goethe Institute) in Warsaw. These workshops on children's and youth's reading and bibliotherapy can be an inspiration for the participants to introduce changes in the service offer of their facility. Among the topics offered in recent years have been: „Active forms of work with the reader - how to discuss books?“, „New media in the library for young people“, „The use of therapeutic fairy tales in working with children“, „Bibliotherapy in the process of developing reading competencies“, „Unconventional methods of supporting the reading of children and teenagers“, „Board games in the library“, „Fairy tale therapy in the process of supporting child development“, „Bibliotherapy and fairy tale therapy in crisis situations“, „Creative forms of book and reading promotion in libraries“ (Polish Librarians Association, 2023a, 2023b). Currently available courses can be conducted in person or online, depending on the needs of the library.

The National Library has a similarly wide range of proposals, including paid training sessions such as „Selection of new products for library book collections for children and teenagers“, „Book for workshops! On conducting creative classes based on children's literature“, „Genres of publications for children and youth: the theory and practice of cataloging“, conducted onsite (Biblioteka Narodowa, 2023a). Bibliotherapeutic workshops conducted by the Polish Bibliotherapeutic Society in cooperation with the Polish Librarians Association (e.g. Powiatowa Biblioteka..., 2023) are held regularly. In person and/or online workshops are also offered by Good Books, a company that conducts training for, among others,

³ The latest edition is planned for September 2023 (Regionalny Zespól..., 2023).

⁴ It took place in November 2022 (Book Institute, 2023).

⁵ Among others the conference "Children like books – a book as a tool supporting the development of positive behavior in children", which was held on May 9, 2015 thanks to the efforts of the West Pomeranian Teacher Training Center of the Pedagogical Library of Helena Radlińska (Zachodniopomorskie Centrum..., 2018) and the training "Kamishibai, theater of illustration – how to work with text?" (Lower Silesian Library..., 2023).

librarians (e.g. „Working with children and youth in the library using the project method” (Good Books, 2023)), as well as the Public Library Academy, the educational portal of the „Biblioteka Publiczna” magazine (for example „Sensational Reading”, „Creative Forms of Book Promotion and reading in public libraries” (Biblioteka Publiczna, 2023)). Librarians can take advantage of free training options when organizing book fairs, when such meetings are prepared by the organizer in cooperation with publishing houses and industry associations. An example is the 4th edition of the Virtual Fair for Libraries organized by the OSDW Azymut book warehouse in 2022, which included meetings such as „Literature in action! Practical ideas for workshops with a book”, “How to talk to children about values? Workshops with Literature” (Wydawca.com.pl, 2022). The publishers of children’s and youth literature themselves prepare webinars for public libraries, but they are often devoted more to discussing novelties in the publishing repertoire than to the methodology of working with children (e.g. Dwie Siostry, Mamania, Księgarnia Tuliszków, Literatura). On their websites you can find class scenarios (or coloring pages) for specific books. Similar materials are also published in professional magazines (“Poradnik Bibliotekarza”, “Biblioteka w Szkole”, “Biblioteka Publiczna”).

Training offers for people who want to work with the youngest children have appeared much less often in Polish librarianship. One of the first initiatives that drew the attention of the community to this issue, directing its offer to a wider audience than the local one, was the project „Laboratory of an active librarian” run by the Municipal Public Library in Olsztyn (Leksykon Kultury..., 2014). The aim of this project was to inspire the community of librarians from all over Poland (from towns with less than 20,000 inhabitants) with the possibility of enriching the offer of their institutions with activities addressed to the group least present in these (e.g. children up to 3 years old), while efforts were also made to promote literature and provide methods of motivating reading in relation to children and their parents. The training offer was enriched by the projects of the Comenius Foundation for Child Development – Play Groups, Library for the Youngest, Library classes for children and parents and Little Researchers – developed in many cases in cooperation with public libraries in rural communities. Each of these required the person conducting the training to develop the animator’s competencies, and to this day you can take advantage of the offer of improvement courses implemented at the Comenius Institute (Comenius Institute, 2023). To some extent, in order to supplement knowledge and find inspiration, one can use the database of ideas available on the LABiB website, a network of Polish public librarians for the purpose of sharing experience (Labib, 2023).

Currently, the educational offer in the field of work with the youngest children is available through courses and workshops of profession-

al associations and commercial companies, mainly for a fee. An example would be the training of the Association of Polish Librarians entitled "Picturebooks – the art of evoking emotions", which provides, among other things, knowledge on how to work with this type of book form (National Library, 2023b). Two free webinars (for subscribers of the magazine "Biblioteka Publiczna" magazine) can be found on the Akademia Biblioteki Publicznej portal ("Into space with a book: ideas for workshops for the youngest readers (from 6 months to 4 years old)" and "Parent with a child in a public library: training" (Biblioteka Publiczna, 2023)). However, the librarian has the greatest choice from the aforementioned Good Books, which offers a series of face-to-face or online meetings around early literacy, family literacy, and issues of reading initiation in the library ("Baby in the library - reading needs of children up to 2 years of age", "Child – parent – senior. Intergenerational integration in the library", "From an infant to a bookworm. How to raise a young reader?", "Parents in the library. Who are they and how do you encourage them to come with their children?", "Moms club in the library. How to organize space, events and an offer for future and young mothers with babies", "Fathers' club in the library – a reading dad as a new type of user in the library", "Shaping reading habits in non-reading children (0-6 years old). Classes for librarians and parents") (Good Books, 2023).

SUMMARY

Although the introduction of children aged 0-5 and their guardians to public libraries occurs at a different pace and intensity, it is comforting that in the field of education of librarians in other countries a specialization has appeared – Early Years Librarian – which is a signal emphasizing the complex nature of library services for the youngest children. This is understandable if we realize that the offer for such children and their caregivers will differ from the one traditionally addressed to older children, and will require slightly different skills, tools, and forms of expression from the librarian. The progressive specialization will require better profiled training options for children's librarians, taking into account the knowledge and skills in the field of the latest publishing offer, forms of work with the youngest children and their guardians, and bibliotherapy.

It is not difficult to notice that the educational offer for children's librarians in Poland most often focuses on a more general approach to serving young readers. There is a lack of specialization towards the 0-5 age group, although this is starting to change, mainly due to commercial trainings and webinars which can be more clearly specialized to reach specific groups of interested audiences. Content related to serving the youngest readers,

especially work methodology and literature, is provided by bibliotherapeutic organizations and industry magazines, as well as publishing houses promoting their publications in this way.

The pandemic has brought several useful solutions in the field of training and education, which can be seen in the multitude of webinars and online training offered. This is probably of great importance for people working in libraries who want to develop and improve their qualifications, but do not have sufficient funds for travel and accommodations. However, can we definitely say that online training is the optimal form for acquiring knowledge and skills in working with such a demanding group of users as infants and small children? Certainly not, but combining online training with subsequent practice in the library would help to develop staff competencies.

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EDUCATION OF TEACHER LIBRARIANS IN POLAND



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ABSTRACT: Thesis/Purpose of the article – The article shows the specificity of the profession of a teacher librarian. These employees are librarians (they are required to have librarian competency) and teachers (they need pedagogical qualifications). It discusses the changes taking place in the approach to education in this profession. **Methods** – In writing the article, publications related to the training of teacher librarian in Poland, as well as relevant legal acts, were analyzed. **Results/conclusions** – Double qualifications are required from teacher librarian: those of a librarian and of a teacher. The profession began to take shape in the 1960s and this approach was consolidated over the following years. The education law clearly reinforces this, which is reflected in the training of teacher librarian. Similar provisions can also be found in the international IFLA guidelines.

Employees of school libraries are a specific group among librarians in Poland. Their distinctiveness is evidenced primarily by the fact that they are subject to the education and librarian law and must have double qualifications (librarian and pedagogical). Jacek Wojciechowski stated that „in our school libraries, as in pedagogical libraries, but unlike in all other libraries, professional employees are teachers” (Wojciechowski, p. 1). The profession of teacher librarian does not have a long tradition, it was created when full-time staffing was introduced in school libraries (Andrzejewska, p. 52).

THE BEGINNINGS OF PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR SCHOOL LIBRARIANS

Professional qualifications for school librarians were introduced for the first time by the Ordinance of the Minister of Education of March 11, 1957 (Ordinance of the Minister of Education of March 11, 1957) issued on the basis of Art. 3 of the Decree of April 17, 1946, on the Library and the Care of Library Collections (Decree of April 17, 1946). Although it obliged teaching and educational institutions to create libraries and defined ways to achieve educational goals with the use of books and libraries, including school libraries next to public, general, and scientific libraries in the network of libraries, this document did not precisely define the qualifications of library staff. It assumed that school libraries were to provide students and teachers with the readings needed for school education and instruction. The school library has been recognized as an important institution in preparing teachers and students for self-education. It was not until the Ordinance of 1957 that the right to work in a school library was granted only to persons who had professional qualifications to teach and educate in a given school or educational institution, as well as: having had at least one year as a practicing librarian and completed at least a 6-week

course in librarianship; or completed at least one year's practice as a librarian and passed an exam; or having passed an exam entitling them to hold positions of the 1st and 2nd category in the state librarian service; or passing a librarian's exam before a commission appointed by the Minister of Culture and the Arts. In addition, they could also be persons who had completed higher studies in the field of library science or higher studies with a librarianship specialty. An instruction was issued to the ordinance (Instruction of 13 March 1957), which regulated the salaries of teachers and librarians and introduced the transfer of librarians to teaching positions. According to Jadwiga Andrzejewska and Bogumiła Staniów (Andrzejewska, Staniów, p. 11), it is only from this moment that one can talk about the status of the profession of a school librarian. Mariola Antczak emphasized that "something slowly began to change in terms of qualifications desired by librarians, and in a positive direction. The role they could play in educational projects at school was partially noticed" (Antczak, p. 225). It is also worth noting that the exam for a school librarian has been detailed in the Ordinance of the Minister of Education of December 28, 1960 on the Exam for a School Librarian (Ordinance of the Minister of Education of December 28, 1960), which entered into force in 1961. A person working in a school library had to have an education in librarianship and pedagogy and pass an exam before the state board of Examiners. The issues that were binding on it were also clarified (Ordinance of the Minister of Education of February 28, 1961).

CONSOLIDATING THE PROFESSIONAL AND PEDAGOGICAL REQUIREMENTS OF LIBRARIANS WORKING IN SCHOOL LIBRARIES

The Subsequent Ordinance of April 12, 1962 (Regulation of the Minister of Education of April 12, 1962) repeated the qualification requirements for teacher librarians. It stated that a person who has scientific and pedagogical qualifications to teach in a given school has scientific and pedagogical qualifications to conduct library classes in schools, has completed at least one year of librarian practice, and additionally has completed at least a 6-week librarianship course or passed an exam. In addition, persons qualified to hold the position were also considered to be those who had graduated from a librarianship high school or a library department at a cultural and educational and librarianship college, and passed an exam, and those who had completed higher education master's or vocational studies in the field of librarianship or studies with a librarian specialty and completed a pedagogical course. The Subsequent Ordinance consolidated the professional and pedagogical requirements required of librarians working in school libraries. It has been clearly emphasized that librarians

who have completed master's or vocational studies but have not obtained pedagogical qualifications must supplement them. It was proposed that pedagogical courses be completed at teacher training colleges.

At the end of 1968, the Ordinance of the Minister of Education and Higher Education was published on the Rules and Procedure for Running Libraries in Schools and Other Educational and Instructional Institutions (Ordinance of the Minister of Education and Higher Education of December 31, 1968). This document is accompanied by the Instruction on Running a School Library, which specifies the requirements for school library employees: "The librarian, together with all teachers is responsible for developing reading at school, in which he should be the main assistant of the school head. The pedagogical work of a librarian with students consists in:

- familiarizing all students with the rules of using the school library;
- allowing them to freely browse and select books;
- preparation for independent selection of valuable books and other library materials adapted to the needs and development possibilities of readers;

- conducting conversations with individual readers about their reading and providing library, bibliographic, factual and textual advice according to the needs and level of recipients;

- instilling skills in the use of books, magazines and other library materials, using various types of publications and library aids;

- training all students to use public libraries, students of vocational schools to use professional libraries, and students of teacher training institutions to use pedagogical libraries;

- preparing schoolchildren, starting from the last grades of primary school, to use bibliography and other sources of information about printed materials and library materials, and students of the last grades of vocational schools additionally to use the services of technical and economic information centers;

- developing the habit of reading magazines and the press in students" (Instruction on Running a School Library).

Despite specifying these pedagogical tasks, an employee of a school library, being a member of the teaching council, was not a teacher (Antczak, 2009).

THE STATUS OF LIBRARIAN TEACHERS

The Teacher's Charter of 1982 (Act of January 26, 1982, Teacher's Charter, 1982) granted school librarians the status of pedagogues. As with all teachers, it required them to conduct "didactic, educational and care activities conducted directly with students or pupils or for their benefit; other lessons and activities resulting from the school's statutory tasks, including

care and educational activities that take into account the needs and interests of students; classes and activities related to preparation for classes, self-education and professional development” (Act of 26 January 1982, Article 42.1, point 2). The Teacher’s Charter also established the weekly working time for teachers, which could not exceed 40 hours for full-time classes, as well as their weekly number of hours of obligatory didactic, educational, and care activities, which in the case of teacher librarians was 30 hours.

PREFERENCE FOR MASTER’S STUDIES IN LIBRARY SCIENCE

It was not until 1982 that the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Instruction (Regulation of the Minister of Education and Instruction of August 24, 1982) reversed the order of entries, recognizing that “a person who has qualifications to conduct library classes in schools and other educational and instructional institutions has completed higher education in the field of librarianship and scientific information and has a master’s degree, or has completed higher education in library science and scientific information, has a master’s degree and has completed a pedagogical course of study” (Regulation of the Minister of Education and Instruction of August 24, 1982, §13.1). It should be recognized that there is a preference here for master’s studies in library science. Of course, the paragraphs that follow list persons qualified to teach in a given school and who have completed post-graduate studies in library science and scientific information or pedagogical studies in the field of librarianship (Regulation of the Minister of Education and Instruction of 24 August 1982, §13.2), and in addition those who have graduated from a library high school or post-secondary librarianship study (Regulation of the Minister of Education and Instruction of August 24, 1982, §13.3). The latter persons had qualifications to conduct librarianship classes in primary schools, in care and education facilities and in pre-school education facilities. Subsequent orders of the ministry regulating the qualification requirements of librarians, specifying the list of subjects necessary to obtain teaching qualifications and the minimum number of hours were published in 1991, 1993, 1999, 2002, 2004, and 2017. The currently applicable Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 1 August 2017 on the Detailed Qualifications Required of Teachers clarifies that pedagogical preparation is “the acquisition of knowledge and skills in the field of psychology, pedagogy and detailed didactics, taught for at least 270 hours in connection with the field (specialty) of education and positively assessed teaching practice – in the amount of not less than 150 hours; in the case of teachers of practical vocational training, the necessary number of classes in the field of pedagogical

preparation is not less than 150 hours; a diploma of graduation or another document issued by a university, a diploma of graduation from a teacher training institution or a certificate of completion of a qualification course proves having a teaching qualification" (Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 1 August 2017 on Detailed Qualifications Required of Teachers).

EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS-LIBRARIANS

Until 1994, there were various forms of educating school librarians: short course training, two-year post-secondary studies, secondary and post-secondary education, as well as higher professional and master's studies in library science (Andrzejewska, 1996, pp. 55-56). Until the 1970s, the role of universities in acquiring librarian qualifications was small, then it gradually increased. In the mid-1970s, librarians were educated at 14 universities. In 1990, school specialization was conducted by 6 universities (University of Warsaw, University of Wrocław, University of Gdańsk, University of Łódź, University of Silesia, University of Szczecin) and 3 pedagogical schools (Kraków, Olsztyn, Kielce). In the academic year 1995/1996 this was done at 7 universities (Jagiellonian University, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, University of Silesia, University of Łódź, University of Warsaw, University of Wrocław, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń) and 4 Pedagogical Universities (in Kielce, Bydgoszcz, Olsztyn and Kraków) (Andrzejewska, p. 56). Therefore, it should be noted that until the 1970s, formats focused on educating professionally active school librarians prevailed in Poland, and in later years (after 1982) specializations in library studies were the preferred format. These were created in centers for educating librarians (universities and pedagogical colleges) (Staniów, 2012, p. 58).

STANDARDS OF EDUCATION IN PREPARATION FOR THE TEACHING PROFESSION

From October 1, 2004, the rules for obtaining teaching qualifications in full-time and extramural studies began to shape the standards of education. The Regulation of the Minister of National Education and Sport of 7 September 2004 on Teacher Education Standards introduced fundamental changes in teacher education, requiring, for example, the creation of a separate teaching specialization in a given field of study, the obligation to teach two subjects in three-year vocational studies (giving qualifications to work in primary and lower secondary schools), increased the total number of teaching hours, the need to learn a foreign language, and mandato-

ry inclusion of information technology classes. The obligation to teach two subjects was abolished by the Regulation of 17 January 2012 (Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education on the Standards of Education Preparing for the Teaching Profession of 17 January 2012), leaving this option non-compulsory.

Currently, it is the Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education on the Standard of Education Preparing for the Teaching Profession of 2019 that is in force (Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of July 25, 2019). It assumes that in order to work as a teacher, it is necessary to complete first-cycle and second-cycle studies or uniform master's studies in a given field, in the case of librarians in the field of scientific information and library science, because such a requirement appears in the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 1 August 2017 on Detailed Qualifications Required from Teachers (Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 1 August 2017 on Detailed Qualifications Required from Teachers. Journal of Laws, item 1289). It is an attachment to the Announcement of the Minister of National Education of July 1, 2020 concerning the Declaration of the Consolidated Text of the Regulation of the Minister of National Education on the Detailed Qualifications Required of Teachers (Announcement of the Minister of National Education of July 1, 2020 concerning the Declaration of the Consolidated Text of the Regulation of the Minister of Education on Detailed Qualifications Required of Teachers, Journal of Laws 2020, item 1289). It stated that the qualifications for the position of teacher librarian are held by someone who: "has completed studies in library science at the level required to hold the position of a teacher in a given type of school or type of institution and has pedagogical preparation, or who has education at the level required for a position of a teacher in a given type of school or type of institution and has pedagogical preparation, and has also completed:

a) first-cycle studies, post-graduate studies or a qualifying course in the field of library science, or

b) studies at a teacher training center in the specialty of library science or

c) post-secondary librarianship studies" (Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 1 August 2017 on Detailed Qualifications Required of Teachers. Journal of Laws, item 1289, §7.1).

It was also noted that "qualifications for the position of teacher librarian in primary schools are also held by a person who graduated from a teacher training institution in the specialty of library science" (Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 1 August 2017 on Detailed Qualifications Required of Teachers. Journal of Laws item 1289, §7.1 point 2).

The standards assume that education in studies preparing for the teaching profession includes: substantive classes for teaching the first subject (A1), in the case of librarians - library science, psychological and pedagogical (B), teaching in the field of basic didactics and voice emission (C) and didactic for teaching the first subject or conducting the first classes. Studies in the field of scientific information and library science prepare one to run a library, fulfilling basic tasks which include:

- collection, development, storage and protection of library materials;
- user service, especially sharing collections;
- conducting information activities, especially providing information about one's own collections, about other libraries, museums and scientific information centers and cooperation with archives in this respect.

The tasks of libraries may also include the following activities: bibliographic activity, documentation, scientific activity and research, publishing, education, popularization and instructional-methodological activity (Act of 27 June 1997 on Libraries. Journal of Laws 1997 No. 85 item 539.).

Psychological and pedagogical preparation (B) includes: psychology (at least 90 hours), pedagogy (at least 90 hours) and professional practice (30 hours); basic teaching and voice emission (C – at least 60 hours), didactic preparation (D) didactics (at least 150 hours) and professional practice (at least 120 hours). The standards also specify the learning outcomes, both general and specific. It was assumed that in terms of knowledge the graduate knows and understands: the basics of the philosophy of education and pedagogical axiology, the specificity of the main educational environments and the processes taking place in them; classical and contemporary theories of human development, upbringing, learning and teaching or education and their application values; the role of the teacher or tutor in modelling the attitudes and behavior of students; standards, procedures and good practices used in pedagogical activity (pre-school education, teaching in primary and secondary schools, technical and vocational schools, special schools and special and integration departments, in various types of educational centers and lifelong learning); the issue of inclusive education, as well as ways of implementing the principle of inclusion; differentiation of students' educational needs and the school's tasks related to adapting the organization of educational and instructional processes; methods of designing and conducting diagnostic activities in pedagogical practice; structure and functions of the education system – objectives, legal basis, organization and functioning of educational, instructional and care institutions, as well as alternative forms of education; the legal basis of the education system necessary for the proper implementation of the conducted education activities; the legal basis of the education system necessary for the proper implementation of educational ac-

tivities; the rights of the child and people with disabilities; the principles of occupational health and safety in educational, instructional and care institutions and the legal responsibility of the teacher in this respect, as well as the principles of first aid; interpersonal and social communication processes and their regularities and disturbances; the basics of the functioning and pathologies of the speech apparatus, the principles of voice emission, the basics of the functioning of the eye and balance; learning content and typical learning difficulties for students; and teaching methods and the selection of effective teaching aids, including Internet resources, which support teaching a subject or conducting classes, taking into account the diverse educational needs of students. In terms of skills, the graduate is able to: observe pedagogical situations and events, analyze them using pedagogical and psychological knowledge and propose solutions to problems; adequately select, create and adapt materials and resources to the diverse needs of students, including in the field of information and communication technologies, and working methods in order to independently design and effectively implement pedagogical, didactic, instructional and care activities; recognize the needs, abilities and talents of students and design and conduct activities supporting the integral development of students, their activity and participation in the process of education and instruction and in social life; design and implement curricula taking into account the diverse educational needs of students; design and implement educational and preventive programs in the field of content and educational and preventive activities addressed to students, their parents or guardians and teachers; create educational and didactic situations motivating students to learn and work on themselves, analyze their effectiveness and modify activities in order to achieve the desired effects of instruction and education; undertake work with students that stimulates their interests and develops their talents, properly selects teaching content, tasks and forms of work as part of self-education, and promotes students' achievements; develop students' creativity and independent, critical thinking skills; effectively animate and monitor the implementation of team educational activities of students; use the process of assessment and feedback to stimulate students in their work on their own development; monitor the progress of students, their activity and participation in the social life of the school; work with children with special educational needs, including children with adaptation difficulties related to the migration experience, coming from culturally diverse environments or with limited knowledge of the Polish language; responsibly organize school and extracurricular work of the student, respecting their right to rest; effectively implement activities supporting students in making informed and responsible educational and professional decisions; use the Polish language correctly and use the terminology of the subject correctly and adequately with regard to the age of

the students; use the speech apparatus in accordance with the principles of voice emission; provide first aid; and independently develop knowledge and pedagogical skills using various sources, including foreign languages and technology. In terms of social competence, the graduate is ready to: use universal principles and ethical standards in professional activity, guided by respect for every human being; build a relationship based on mutual trust between all subjects of the instructional and educational process, including the student's parents or guardians, and involving them in activities conducive to educational effectiveness; communicate with people from different backgrounds and with different emotional conditions, conflict resolution through dialogue and creating a good atmosphere for communication in and outside the classroom; make decisions related to the organization of the educational process in inclusive education; recognize the specificity of the local environment and undertake cooperation for the benefit of students and this environment; design activities aimed at the development of a school or educational system institution and at stimulating the quality of work of these institutions; and work in a team, perform various roles in it and cooperate with teachers, pedagogues, specialists, parents or guardians of students and other members of the school and local community (Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of July 25, 2019, pp. 8-11). Teacher librarians, as well as other teachers, are required to be teachers and specialists in a given subject, in this case library science.

OBTAINING LIBRARY QUALIFICATIONS BY TEACHERS

In recent years, post-graduate studies conducted by universities have been a popular means of obtaining librarianship qualifications by teachers. Postgraduate studies at the University of Łódź were launched in 1980, and from the academic year 1982/1983 education was provided as part of the teaching specialization (for teacher librarians) and general studies (for employees of scientific and public libraries) (Kurek-Kokocińska, p. II). At the University of Warsaw, postgraduate studies in Library Science (previously Postgraduate Study of Scientific Libraries, then Postgraduate Studies in Library Science) were established in January 1992 on the initiative of prof. R. Cybulski (Brzóska, 2021). Until 1999, they functioned in the form of 3-semester courses, ten of which were held. Course XI in the academic year 2000/2001 was also the first 2-semester course. The study program has been modified many times in order to provide people employed in various types of libraries with updated knowledge in the field of modern librarianship. At the beginning of 2000, along with the reform of education, the program was adapted to needs related to its requirements. The author of the program was prof. Elżbieta Barbara Zybert, head of studies in those

years (1999-2021). In the academic year 2000/2001, students could choose two variants of study: the first – 180 hours – intended for people working in scientific libraries and tantamount to a course improving qualifications, and the second – 270 hours – designed for people working in school libraries and providing the second teaching specialization. Due to the need to implement the curriculum in accordance with education standards, since 2003 studies have been carried out over 3 semesters (1.5 years), and their total number of hours on the Library path in the education system is 350. In the first (winter) semester, students study such topics as: Libraries in Poland and around the world; Legal issues in the library; Standardization in librarianship; Library statistics with elements of bibliometrics; Organization and management of libraries; Library marketing; Information retrieval languages in integrated library systems; Universal Decimal Classification; Internet as an information service tool; Choosing a computer system for libraries; Functions of national libraries; Library architecture; Policy for collecting and sharing collections in libraries; Information activities of libraries; Collections conservation. In addition, the group following the second variant (270 hours) studied Psychology and participated in the lecture Libraries-media-libraries.

In the second (summer) semester, all attendees participated in the following classes: Searching for information in databases; A computer laboratory for advanced students; and visits to selected Warsaw libraries were organized. Students who chose the Library's specialization in the learning system (180 hours) studied: Special collections and protection of historical collections; Libraries in the science system; USMARC formats and their support; Monographic Lecture. Students who pursued the Library's specialization in the system of education and culture (270 hours) participated in such subjects as: Literature for children and teenagers; The therapeutic functions of the book; Libraries in the system of education and culture, Information problems for education and culture. In addition, students were required to do library practice outside the workplace (65 hours). The block of computer programs included 5 subjects: Internet as an information service tool, Selection of a computer system for libraries, Computer laboratory for advanced users, Searching for information in databases. In 2000 there was a change in the method of obtaining a graduation certificate, the diploma thesis was replaced with a final exam. Postgraduate studies in Library Science have been completed at the University of Warsaw in 34 courses and have been implemented so far, from 2021, under the supervision of Dr. Dorota Grabowska.

INTERNATIONAL GUIDELINES

The IFLA/UNESCO Guidelines for School Libraries (*School Libraries: IFLA/UNESCO Guidelines*, p. 24) emphasize the role of staff members. They state that the variety and quality of activities undertaken in these institutions depend on them and therefore they must be highly qualified and highly motivated. The guidelines distinguish three categories of staff in school libraries: qualified librarian, library helper and support staff (teachers, technicians, parents and other types of volunteers). It was noted that a qualified librarian should have professional education and teaching qualifications. This category of workers is therefore also required to have a double qualification. Their duties include those related to librarian education, e.g. analyzing the needs of the school community, preparing and implementing services, building a collection policy, cataloging and classifying library documents, carrying out queries, helping students and teachers in using library resources and information technologies, as well as those for which pedagogical qualifications are necessary, e.g. education in the field of information skills or education of library users (*School libraries: guidelines*, 2003, p. 27). *The Guidelines* clearly state that the school librarian is an equal member of the teaching staff and, thanks to cooperation with all school employees, supports the goals pursued. Their knowledge, skills and competencies serve the school environment.

CONCLUSIONS

The teacher librarian in Poland is a specific profession that requires double qualifications, which affects their education. People working in this profession are most often either librarians who have obtained teaching qualifications or teachers who have obtained librarian qualifications. The tasks of school librarians in modern libraries are not only traditional ones covering organizational and pedagogical activities, as well as those devoted to improving work and marketing activities. They are derived from the various functions of modern libraries, which emphasize the use of the Internet, multimedia, and individual assistance to students in their particular health, school, reading and life needs. The implementation of these tasks and functions requires specific qualifications and keeping up with the development of technology. This requires teachers and librarians to be constantly active, improve themselves, be creative and have special social skills for building relationships between the school library and students, and between teachers and management.

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DATA STEWARDSHIP IN POLAND – CURRICULA AND CAREERS PATHS – THE VERY BEGINNING OF THE NEW PROFESSION



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tors (2018-2023), member of Task Force Open Science (2017-2021) and Task Force Openness of Science & Technology (2022-2023) of CESAER (Conference of European Schools for Advanced Engineering Education and Research), as well as the Research Data Alliance. Representative of the Gdańsk University of Technology in the EOSC Association (2021-2023) and a member of the EOSC Association Data Stewardship Curricula and Career Paths Task Force. Originator and coordinator of the national working group of data stewards - Polish Data Stewardship Competence Centers Implementation Network (DSCC-IN PL) established in December 2019 as part of the GO FAIR initiative (DSCC-IN national chapter). Author of scientific publications, organiser and member of the program and organising committees of national and international scientific conferences.

KEYWORDS: Research Data Management. Data Stewardship. Academic libraries. data steward.

ABSTRACT: Thesis/Objective – The profession of data steward is not fully defined. In particular, in Polish scientific institutions, where even the name of this position is still hard to find, this is a new phenomenon that requires a deeper analysis. It is difficult to specify not only the definition of this profession, or rather the role, but also the scope of tasks and required competencies. All this depends on the role of the data steward in the unit, at the university or in the research team. **The aim** of the article is to present the origins of the creation of a new specialisation in Poland, which is the role of a data steward. In addition, the forms of education for data stewards in Poland are discussed, as well as initiatives and projects aimed at defining the professional profile, qualifications and career paths of data stewards. **Research methods:** The critical literature review was used to analyse the content of foreign and Polish LIS literature published in the years 2018-2022. Also, official documents and websites, project descriptions, working group's, and Task Force's working papers were analysed. In addition, a survey was carried out and analysed among the members of the Polish data stewards working group (DSCC-IN PL) on organisational structures and positions dedicated to research data management existing at Polish universities. **Results and conclusions** – The first data stewards appeared in libraries. This resulted directly from the policy of the National Science Centre (NCN) but above all also from the fact that the first unit providing support for researchers in the field of data management – the Open Science Competence Center – was established in the Library of the Gdańsk University of Technology (Gdańsk Tech). The Gdańsk Tech Library has established numerous contacts with international networks and organizations, which resulted in active cooperation and placing it in international structures. In particular as a national chapter of the GO-FAIR network (DSCC-IN PL: Data Stewardship Competence Centers Implementation Network – Poland). This initiated the creation of the Polish working group of data stewards, which is now the foundation of the nascent profession and provides a field for the exchange of knowledge and experience. The lack of educational programs at university or in any other form of vocational education has been filled in a sense through the training activities of the Competence Center and the only Data Steward School in Poland. It was only in 2022 that the increased activity of the National Science Center and the Ministry of Educa-

tion and Science began. In conjunction with the work on the national policy for open data as well as activities within the European Open Science Cloud, a coherent environment began to emerge for the development of a new specialization at the level of Polish universities and scientific institutions.

Research data are becoming increasingly important for researchers who appreciate the benefits of sharing data or are obliged by funders of their research projects to provide open access to the research results. In addition, researchers are beginning to see the advantage of sharing and reusing data sets. More and more funding bodies have defined requirements that Data Management Plan (DMP) for managing the data produced during a research project should be included in grant proposals. These plans show how research data will be collected, organized, managed, shared and preserved during the project and after its completion. What such a plan looks like depends on the specificity and conditions of the project. In general, DMP requires a description of the data that will be produced or used, information about the formats, metadata standards that will be used to store and organize data, the “how” and “where” of the data storage and accessibility (Wałek, 2020). The raising interest in reusing and sharing research data has been confirmed by the results of the research conducted by Digital Science-Figshare. *The State of Open Data Report*, published every year by Science Digital, examined global attitudes toward Open Research Data (ORD) (Science Digital, 2022). Since research data management (RDM) has become the norm in most research projects and providing access to data is becoming more and more common, it is necessary to provide researchers with appropriately qualified support in the form of people and teams dedicated to providing services in the field of data management.

Research data services are defined as services that address the full data lifecycle, including the DMP, digital curation (selection, preservation, maintenance, and archiving), and metadata creation and conversion (Tenopir, Sandusky, Allard and Birch, 2012).

The data steward position has several different definitions, although there is still no official and uniform description of what this profession is really about. An attempt to answer this question was made by a team established within the EOSC Association as a Task Force Data Stewardship, curriculum and career paths¹. Members of the subgroup examining career paths have prepared a state-of-art document in which they summarize the findings so far in this regard (Kalová, T. et. al., 2023).

According to the findings of the Task Force, two main definitions of data steward are adopted for the purposes of this publication.

¹ Task Force Data stewardship, curriculum and career paths <https://www.eosc.eu/advisory-groups/data-stewardship-curricula-and-career-paths>

“Data steward” definition 1: A person (or a group of people) to ensures professional and careful treatment of data throughout all stages of a research process responsible for planning and executing all actions on digital data before, during and after a research project, with the aim of optimising the usability, reusability and reproducibility of the resulting data (OECD, 2020).

“Data steward” definition 2: A person responsible for keeping the quality, integrity, and access arrangements of data and metadata in a manner that is consistent with applicable law, institutional policy, and individual permissions. Data stewardship implies professional and careful treatment of data throughout all stages of a research process. A data steward aims at guaranteeing that data is appropriately treated at all stages of the research cycle (i.e., design, collection, processing, analysis, preservation, data sharing and reuse) (Jetten et al.,2021).

Describing the current state of the art in relation to the career paths of data stewards, the authors of the document highlighted the challenges and recommendations as to the next steps in relation to this issue.

The authors highlighted that the overall objective career paths work stream was to produce a report on how data steward roles map in an international, disciplinary and institutional context. The goal was to build on existing initiatives, projects and professional networks and issue recommendations for data steward career paths. However, the initial discussions have led the team to the conclusion that “the current panorama on Data Stewardship is too scattered, both in terms of training and careers. While many research institutions are hiring data stewards, there does not currently seem to be enough consensus as to how these roles map onto existing professional positions within institutions. With most organisations focusing on the training and embedding of new Data Stewards in the institution, developing sustainable long-term career paths is currently not being addressed in a systematic way. Differences in approach among various countries and types of institutions (such as universities, libraries, scientific IT services, research infrastructures) are also prevalent” (Kalová, T. et. al., 2023). Another finding of the research was that the relationship between data stewardship and research activities is also blurred. It appeared that researchers who fulfil the role of a data steward as part of their job may have different career path perspectives and issues with respect to those who are hired solely as data stewards. Finally, the authors highlighted that data stewardship roles are simply too recent in many organisations and countries to allow for a diachronic investigation of the career paths of those hired in these positions.

As the result of the team’s work was to be a report, the authors of the document indicated that the result of their work is only the beginning of further research and findings, requiring supplementation. That’s why the

document is called “state of art”. In light of the above considerations, the possibility of producing a comprehensive report on the current panorama with a focus on career paths in the opinion of the authors was deemed premature. For the long-term objectives, the document provides recommendations for (a) gathering additional information on Data Steward’s careers (b) monitoring the development of this professional role at the European level and (c) facilitating the creation of a professional network at the European level.

THE ROLE OF THE ACADEMIC LIBRARY

Academic libraries have always been pioneers in implementing openness to research and creating the necessary tools (platforms and repositories) as well as providing training for researchers. Open Access policy implementation, including both access to research publications and data, is accelerating. That is why the role of academic libraries and academic librarians has become crucial. Some new specialisations in librarianship have been developed, e.g. a data librarian who is responsible not only for academic staff training sessions on Open Research Data (ORD) but also for assistance for research teams in the field of data management and data curation. It seems more and more certain, based on past experience, that academic libraries will be responsible for coordinating the work of data stewards responsible for supporting the process of research data producing, managing and archiving at universities and in research teams (Wątek, 2020).

OPEN SCIENCE COMPETENCE CENTER

The idea of creating the Open Science Competence Center (OSCC) at the Gdańsk University of Technology (Gdańsk Tech) Library arose from the global trend of data stewardship and previous experiences. It has been revealed that researchers’ knowledge of Open Science has gaps, especially those related to copyright and research data management issues. To resolve these practical difficulties faced by researchers, a support team that includes data specialists and librarians has been organised and managed at the Gdańsk Tech Library. Part of the team is recognised as data stewards – a relatively new position in the Polish academic landscape. Since the beginning, a data steward is usually seen as a disciplinary expert with diverse knowledge and experience in research data management practices. Another critical role played by OSCC members is that of data support librarians. Their essential characteristic is supporting researchers at multiple stages of the data life cycle, both during the research process and during the curation process (Wątek, 2018).

The Open Science Competence Center at the Gdańsk Tech Library serves as a contact point that offers help and support services for sharing research outputs. The OSCC provides various training, consultancies, and other events promoting the idea of opening science and trying to popularise its benefits such as broader collaboration, increasing usage and citations of scientific articles and data, faster impact, and greater public engagement.

Different types of training are offered to scientific staff and students, such as tailored training (e.g. concerning the scientific discipline), face-to-face consultations, and online webinars focused on the overview of open research data, Data Management Plans (national and EU grant applications), legal support (data licensing, data protection, reusing data), using the data repository (depositing datasets), FAIR meta(data) and Plan S (implications and requirements). OSCC team members also validate the metadata descriptions and data formats entered into the data repository (Bridge of Knowledge²). Another main challenge for the OSCC was considering the differences between scientific disciplines and their different scholarly communication practices regarding sharing scientific output to provide complex support with RDM. Each field has its scholarly communication practices and should be treated individually concerning maintaining the regulations and procedures following the research data issues (Wałek, Nowacki, Lubomski, 2022).

The Bridge of Data project was established to support researchers in their activities regarding different Open Science layers. The project was unique in Central and Eastern Europe. It involved three Pomeranian universities: Gdańsk University of Technology (leader), the University of Gdańsk, and the Medical University of Gdańsk. The Bridge of Data project (Bridge of Data – Multidisciplinary Open System Transferring Knowledge. Stage II Open Research Data) started in October 2018 and finished in June 2022. It was focused on implementing the Open Research Data repository. It also provided system modules that support organisers of scientific conferences and editorial offices of scientific journals in their processes. The project's key objective was to create substantive support in the Open Science Competence Center at the Gdańsk Tech Library. The project was co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund within the Digital Poland Operational Program for 2014–2020.

The Competence Center was created immediately after the Bridge of Data project was launched – in the autumn of 2018. Being the only university in Poland with a team of professionals who can support research teams in the preparation of DMPs for the needs of project applications,

² Open Research Data Catalogue – Bridge of Knowledge Platform – mostwiedzy.pl

Gdańsk University of Technology has grown into the role of a leader in creating services and standards for RDM in Poland.

DATA STEWARDS AT POLISH SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTIONS

The official inauguration of the Polish Working Group (Polish Chapter) of the Data Stewardship Competence Centers Implementation Network (DSCC-IN PL), one of the implementation networks of the GO-FAIR Initiative³ took place on 3rd December 2021. The workshop was an accompanying event for the 5th edition of the Pomeranian Open Science Conference held in Gdańsk on 2nd December 2021. The conference, hosted by the Gdańsk University of Technology, gathered more than 120 attendees and 18 speakers from all over the country and guests from abroad. The event and its theme, “Services based on Collaboration”, focused on obtaining practical experience in Open Science and Research Data Management. The DSCC-IN PL workshop welcomed almost 60 attendees interested in establishing the Polish Working Group. The Working Group and its future possible role and activities were presented by the DSCC-IN Polish chapter coordinator, dr Anna Wałek, the Director of the Gdańsk Tech Library. Participants also enjoyed the pre-recorded guest talk by Erik Schultes, GO FAIR International Science Coordinator, who encouraged them to engage and collaborate. The OSCC Team, which coordinates the activities of the group, presented the dedicated website, which contains the mission of the Group, its structure proposal, tools description and a piece of information on how to become its member. The DSCC-IN PL presentation met great interest among the Polish librarians and researchers who attended the workshop (Dudek, 2021). The first Working Group official online meeting was scheduled for the end of January 2022, and since then the group is meeting every month. At the end of 2022, the team had 102 members from 42 institutions.

In 2022, 9 online meetings took place on the MS Teams platform. The meetings served to exchange information and good practices in the field of Open Science and RDM between group members. Each of the meetings was devoted to current affairs and one of the main topics.

Main topics of meetings in 2022:

- February – organizational meeting
- March – Meeting with Michał Nowacki (CUI, Gdańsk Tech) regarding the MOST Wiedzy platform
- April – Support for scientists in the management of research data at the Lublin University of Technology (dr Katarzyna Weinper)
- May – Subject related to Open Science at Doctoral Schools

³ GO-FAIR Initiative <https://www.go-fair.org/>

- June - Meeting with Wojciech Fenrich (ICM UW) on RepOD
- September – Archiving and sharing research data
- October - The role of Rector’s representatives for Open Science (Dr. Anna Wałek, Prof. Anna Cedro, Dr. Leszek Szafranski)
- November - Publishing in Open Access
- December - Data Governance Plans: Ethical Sharing of Human Research Data (Dr Laura Bandura-Morgan)

During the meetings, notes are kept and all participants of the group can have access to them.

In 2022, there were also two physical meetings of the group:

On May 30-31, 2022, the Bridge of Data seminar was organized in Sopot – on “how to effectively motivate scientists to share research data? Meeting of the DSCC-IN PL working group”. The topics of the papers oscillated around issues related to research data, the profession of data stewards and Open Science, and a number of speeches were presented by members of the group. Participants also had the opportunity to take part in workshops.

On December 1st, 2022, as part of the 6th Pomeranian Open Science Conference, another meeting of the Polish Working Group was held in stationary form. The main topic of the meeting was to discuss legal issues related to research data. Organizational issues were also discussed, including meeting plans for the year 2023.

The basic communication channel is the Google group, where information about subsequent meetings and more important events and resources that may be of interest to the stewards is provided. For information and communication purposes, the team also used the Slack platform (until October 2022), as well as the Trello platform. Since May 2022, the group’s Facebook page has also been in operation: Data Stewardship Competence Centers PL - Polska Grupa Robocza.

In April 2023, members of the Working Group took part in a short survey aimed at determining the state of Open Research Data support services at Polish universities. Representatives of 28 institutions responded to the survey⁴.

⁴ There was no response from: Koszalin University of Technology, Maritime University of Technology in Szczecin, Poznan University of Technology, Main Business School in Warsaw, Cracow University of Economics, University of Adam Mickiewicz in Poznań, Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, University of Opole, The Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow, SWPS University, University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, West Pomeranian University of Technology in Szczecin.

Other institutions represented in the DSCC-IN PL Working Group: Institute of Agrophysics of the Polish Academy of Sciences; Institute of Bioorganic Chemistry of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Institute of Nuclear Physics Henryk Niewodzański, Polish Academy of Sciences, Institute of Animal Reproduction and Food Research Polish Academy of Sciences, International Institute of Molecular and Cell Biology, Information Processing Center - National Research Institute.

University	Competence Centre/ dedicated team	Library involved	Other units involved	Data steward/s	Librarians/Data librarians
AGH University of Science and Technology in Krakow	no	yes	yes	no	yes
Medical University of Gdańsk	yes	yes	yes	no	yes
Bydgoszcz University of Technology	no	no	yes	no	no
Gdańsk University of Technology	yes	yes	no	no / yes in the past	yes
Lublin University of Technology	yes (informal)	yes	no	no	yes
Warsaw University of Technology	no	yes	no	no	yes
Pomeranian Medical University in Szczecin	no	yes	no	no	yes
Warsaw University of Life Sciences	no	yes	no	no	yes
Wrocław University of Economics	yes	yes	yes	no	yes
University of Gdansk	yes	yes	no	no	yes
Jagiellonian University	yes (informal)	yes	no	yes	yes
Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz	no	yes	no	no	yes

University of Lodz	no	yes	no	no	yes
Medical University of Silesian Piasts in Wrocław	no	yes	no	no	yes
Medical University of Lodz	no	yes	no	no	yes
Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń	no	yes	no	no	yes
University of Life Sciences in Lublin	yes (informal)	yes	no	no	yes
Nature University of Poznan	no	yes	no	yes	yes
University of Szczecin	yes (informal)	yes	yes	yes	yes
University of Silesia in Katowice	no	no	yes	yes	no
University of Warsaw	no	yes	no	no	yes
University of Wrocław	yes	yes	yes	no	yes
Military Technical Academy	yes	yes	no	no	yes

The information provided shows that a special team dedicated to Open Science and Research Data has not been established in most institutions (6 formal teams have been created, 4 informal). The information provided shows that a special team dedicated to Open Science and Research Data has not been established in most institutions (5 teams have been created). In seven universities, other units are involved. In five institutions data steward was appointed or employed. At the same time, the analysis shows that this is not a separate position indicated in the employment contract, but rather an additional function. Regardless of whether this person is employed in a library, administrative, technical or research position. Apart from one institution, all of them show the emergence of a new speciality in the competence of librarians. For the purposes of this article, we call all library roles with the original job names retained as data librarians. however, such a function does not appear in official nomenclature and documents.

Due to organizational changes at the Gdańsk University of Technology as well as establishing closer cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science and the National Science Centre, in 2023 there will be organizational changes in the conduct of the working group. Also, focusing the group's activities on more formalized activities and strengthening technical competencies, in particular in the field of EOSC, resulted in deepening cooperation with ACK CYFRONET AGH, which is a leader in the implementation of tools and solutions related to EOSC.

POLISH OPEN DATA POLICY AND THE NATIONAL SCIENCE CENTRE ACTIVITIES

The national policy regarding Open Research Data in Poland is under development. This is due to the provisions of the EU directive (Directive no 2019/1024 of the EP and of the Council (EU) of 20 June 2019 on open data and the re-use of public sector information), as well as the Polish act, which was subsequently introduced in 2021 (Ustawa, 2021). However, in 2019, the National Science Centre (NCN), set up the obligation to attach the short Data Management Plan to all grant applications starting from September 2019. It was the first step to implementing the Open Research Data Policy.

The policy of the National Science Centre regarding the sharing of research data was implemented in three stages:

- 2019: Data Management Plan a mandatory element of each research project (in accordance with the guidelines and recommendations of Science Europe),
- 2020: NCN policy on open access to scientific publications based on Ordinances No. 38 and 40 of the NCN Director
- 2021: data related to publications are made available on a mandatory basis (National Science Centre, 2020).

Currently, the agency is the leading institution implementing the Open Science policy, while fulfilling other important roles in this context. The NCN is implementing a grant from the Ministry of Education and Science, aimed at preparing the Polish scientific community for the implementation of the open data policy and assumptions of the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC). The NCN is also a mandated organization appointed by the Ministry to the EOSC Association. It also implements a project with the acronym EOSC Focus (Supporting the development and coordination of activities of the EOSC Partnership), the purpose of which is to implement the EOSC assumptions and engage scientific units in activities for FAIR Data and Open Data.

The NCN is also carrying out a commission from the Ministry, by means of which it intensifies the implementation of the openness policy.

As a result, several MOOC courses are being prepared, which will then be made available on the Navoica platform⁵. They will be addressed to both data stewards and researchers. In addition, domain-specific webinars are carried out. The aim of each webinar is to provide participants with knowledge about research data management in a given discipline and competencies allowing for the preparation and implementation of Data Management Plans. Each webinar covers the following topics: Why is research data management important? FAIR Principles, Research Data Opening Policy, Data Management Plan General Information, Description of Data and Acquisition or Reuse of Available Data, Research Storage and Backup, Legal Requirements, Codes of Conduct, Data Sharing and Long-term Storage.

The above activities show that on the scale of the typeface, the development of data stewards' competencies is seriously considered, and the appropriate tools and regulations require preparation and implementation. Thanks to this, Poland will follow the international trend and will be ready to provide researchers with the appropriate level of support. This can only succeed if systemic solutions are actually implemented, not just bottom-up initiatives.

INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS RELATED TO DATA STEWARDS' COMPETENCIES

One of the first and most important projects dedicated to the development of data stewards' competences was the FAIRsFAIR project⁶.

"FAIR Competence Framework for Higher Education (Data Stewardship Professional Competence Framework)" is the third deliverable from Work Package 7 "FAIR Data Science and Professionalisation" of the FAIRsFAIR project.

The report presents a proposed FAIR Competence Framework for Higher Education (FAIR4HE) that is defined as a part of the general Data Stewardship Professional Competence Framework (CF-DSP) presented in the deliverable. The proposed CF-DSP defines the set of competencies that extend the competencies initially defined in the EDISON Data Science Framework (EDSF). The proposed competence framework is defined based on a recent job market analysis for the Data Steward and related professions. The presented CF-DSP has been validated against existing Data Stewardship competence frameworks defined primarily for the research community or practitioners. CF-DSP provides the competencies definition structure that allows easy mapping to a Body of Knowledge and

⁵ Navoica <https://navoica.pl/>

⁶ FAIRsFAIR project www.fairsfair.eu

a set of Learning Outcomes that can be used for defining academic curricula. The presented CF-DSP has been discussed with and incorporated feedback from, several community events organised by the FAIRsFAIR project (Demchenko et. al. 2021).

Issues related to the creation of definitions and a catalogue of skills for positions related to open science are also the subject of work in the Skills4EOSC project⁷.

The Skills4EOSC project brings together experiences of national, regional, institutional, and thematic Open Science and Data Competence Centres from 18 European countries with the goal of unifying the current training landscape into a common and trusted pan-European ecosystem. Its goal is to accelerate the upskilling of European researchers and data professionals in FAIR and Open Data. Competence Centres (CC) are defined as centres of gravity of OS and EOSC activities in their countries. CCs will pool expertise within research institutions, universities, and thematic and cross-discipline research infrastructures. They should offer training and support, empowerment, lifelong learning, professionalisation, and resources to a variety of stakeholders, including not only researchers and data stewards and funders but also decision-makers and industry.

The Skills4EOSC CC network has the ambition to drive the co-creation of harmonised trainer accreditation pathways, academic and professional curricula and skills quality assurance, recognition frameworks, and learning material creation methodologies (CMCC, 2022).

The assumptions of the project are therefore consistent with the results already achieved in Poland by the OSCC at the Gdańsk Tech Library. What is interesting, however, when applying for the project, Polish partners (PSNC – Instytut Chemii Bioorganicznej Polskiej Akademii Nauk) completely omitted the achievements of the Polish data stewards network and the Gdańsk Tech. This shows that in many places and centres, work in this area is carried out without particular coordination. The first catalogue of such international initiatives was carried out by the EOSC Task Force, which invited, among others, the Skills4EOSC project to cooperate. OSCC, on the other hand, invited Polish representatives of the project to present its assumptions during the Pomeranian Open Science Conference in Gdańsk in December 2022.

One of the deliverables of the project is the so-called Minimum Viable Skillset (MVS). The proposed Minimum Viable Skillsets for the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC) were designed within the Skills4EOSC project for defining the Open Science mission, activities, or outcomes expected of relevant roles. MVS's task is to synthesise and profile each role as an aid to developing new curricula, career paths and courses. A simple MVS format

⁷ Skills4EOSC project <https://www.skills4eosc.eu>

is proposed to articulate key skills and competencies. It describes essential skills and concepts required to deliver Open Science outcomes for communities and organisations. An MVS may be associated with a career profile describing disciplinary variations in skills and competencies needed, or guidance on the improvement in proficiency levels needed for career path progression. The initial set includes roles such as Data Steward, Data Curator, Data Librarian, and Data Manager (Giroletti, et. al., 2023).

DATA STEWARDS EDUCATION IN POLAND

For the purposes of this article, the educational offer of Polish public universities was analysed, in particular, those educating in the broadly understood library and information science. None of the universities offers a course or studies that meet the needs of data stewards education.

The first and so far the only comprehensive training program for data stewards in Poland is the Data Steward School (DSS) initiative. The initiative was implemented by Visnea sp. z o.o. (Visnea) in cooperation with GO-FAIR for the first time in the period from September 2020 to April 2021. 13 participants took part in the first pilot edition of DSS. Librarians accounted for 75% of participants. The total number of theoretical training hours was 65 and practical classes 30 (Pawłowska, Wachowicz, 2021).

Participation in the Data Steward School Training Program is aimed at preparing participants to act as data stewards in their home research unit and allows them to gain new professional qualifications and unique competencies in the field of data management.

One of the objectives of the DSS was also to establish the best practices related to the professional role of the data steward, taking into account the specificities of scientific units. Therefore, the Data Steward School Training Programme was planned as a comprehensive, 7-month programme implemented by Visnea in cooperation with the GO-FAIR Initiative.

The Data Steward School was run in the train the trainers formula, which means that graduates obtained the appropriate competencies to train further persons in their institutions. Such a model was designed to enable the most effective implementation of international best practices in Poland. Program participants take part in the Foundation Level training module, where they learn about key issues related to the processing, collection and archiving of scientific data, and then choose one of the following specializations: strategic management, IT/technologies, scientific information, scientific data management in a research project. The final part of the course is mentoring with the RDM specialists.

The second edition took place in autumn 2021 (Pawłowska, 2021) and the third edition took place in autumn 2022 when the Strategic Partner of

the Data Steward School Training Program was Digital Intelligence Offensive from Austria, a European leader in the use of data in science and business⁸. Each edition of the course allowed for the education of 12-14 new stewards. Taking into account the growing needs and the dynamic development of the data management area, this number is only a fraction of the needs. Nevertheless, DSS lecturers and graduates are the backbones of the growing network of data stewards in Poland.

STUDIES AND COURSES

The unit that has been involved in the development of data stewards' competencies in Poland from the beginning is the Library of the Gdańsk University of Technology. It conducted a series of stationary workshops and webinars, in particular in the field of DMP preparation, which were attended by a total of almost 700 people – employees of libraries, university administration and researchers.

Gdańsk Tech Library was also involved in partnerships aimed at preparing materials and courses for people related to data management and Open Science.

From the 6th to 10th of September 2021 the CODATA-RDA Schools instructors together with the FAIRsFAIR project, EOSC-Pillar, EOSC Synergy and the Gdańsk Tech Library, delivered a three-day train-the-trainer workshop on Data Stewardship. The key aim of the workshop was to empower a network of peers where best practices are exchanged and where those with more experience can share their knowledge with those just getting started.

The workshop combined a series of theoretical and practical sessions, where participants were given the opportunity to interact and get to know each other and exchange experience in supporting researchers with RDM. The workshop aimed to introduce participants as data stewards to the key concepts and drivers for Open Science, RDM and FAIR principles, to enable the resulting network of practitioners in peer institutions who can collaborate, work and learn together. Participants were also introduced to key concepts of pedagogy and were able to put these into practice with a brief course design and development activity. In addition, attendees were asked to reflect on their own role as data stewards and got to evaluate the existing training offer and the status of RDM services in their respective institutions in the perspective of training their members in the future (Dudek, Krajewski, 2021).

The pre-and post-course evaluation showed that most of the participants had been in their data-related role (often managing data stewards'

⁸ Data Steward School 2022 <https://www.visnea.org/data-steward-school>

tasks besides regular duties) for less than 6 months and worked on their own or in teams of less than 5 people. The workshop met the expectations of the participants, who joined with an interest to learn more about topics like the range of skills and knowledge associated with data stewardship, political drivers for RDM, FAIR and Open Data, how to explain the difference between FAIR and Open Data to researchers, how to provide and develop effective training using open learning resources, how to implement RDM services and advance FAIR data within their organization. However, attendees identified also gaps and areas of improvement to support research activities in their respective institutions like lack of the required data management skills to effectively provide data services, lack of sufficient time to handle the requirements of data management, lack of advisory services and training on RDM, DMPs as well as they confirmed the need of developing local peer network. The event gathered more than 30 participants from the emerging RDM support staff community in the country. It was conducted in English although there was a chance to speak Polish during all practical sessions as each breakout room had the local moderator, a member of the Open Science Competence Center at Gdańsk Tech Library, to feedback in English. The purpose of the workshop, therefore, was to provide a better understanding of data stewardship, and the research data management process and support the development of data stewardship skills among staff in universities and other research institutions in Poland (Dudek, Krajewski, 2021).

The first comprehensive postgraduate studies were launched by the University of Vienna⁹. It is worth looking at the thematic scope to see that the skills that constitute the professional profile of a data steward are both technical (IT and data science) and closely related to research practice and knowledge of the scientific discipline. The creators of the course list the following areas: Basics of Research Data Management and Open Science, Basics of IT and Data Science, FAIR Research Data in the Life Cycle, Research Data Management Support and Data Stewardship in Practice. However, it is still hard to find similar courses or studies at most universities, not only in Poland.

SUMMARY

The first roles of data stewards in Polish scientific institutions appeared in libraries. This resulted directly from the policy of the National Science Centre but above all also from the fact that the first unit providing sup-

⁹ Data steward. University of Vienna Postgraduate Center <https://www.postgraduatecenter.at/en/programs/communication-media/data-steward/content-and-objectives/>

port for researchers in the field of data management – the Open Science Competence Center – was established in the Gdańsk Tech Library. The Gdańsk Tech Library worked with international networks and organizations, which resulted in active cooperation and placing it in international structures. In particular as a national chapter of the GO-FAIR network (DSCC-IN PL: Data Stewardship Competence Centers Implementation Network – Poland) and several working groups related to EOSC. This initiated the creation of the Polish working group of data stewards with more than 100 participants, exchanging knowledge and experience on a regular basis. The lack of educational programs at university or in any other form of vocational education has been filled in a sense through the training activities of the OSCC and the only Data Steward School in Poland.

It was only in 2022 that the increased activity of the National Science Center and the Ministry of Education and Science began. In conjunction with the work on the national policy for open data as well as activities within the European Open Science Cloud, a coherent environment began to emerge for the development of a new specialization at the level of Polish universities and other scientific institutions.

Not only in Poland but all around the world, depending on the institution, data stewards are located in libraries, at infrastructure providers, in research projects, and at RDM competence centers or support desks. Despite efforts to work out competencies for data stewards, there is no final, demand-oriented, formal model of data stewards and the associated roles.

Nevertheless, libraries' services provided to researchers and research institutions in order to assist them with the research data management process are evolving. The new duties of libraries differ from the previous tasks they have been responsible for so far, and libraries must adapt to the new conditions to be up to date with services provided in data management. Librarians have become a part of the research process from the very beginning of the data lifecycle. Their knowledge and engagement are essential from the very early moment of DMP creation through collecting, describing, preserving, and curating data. Additionally, librarians are usually also responsible for ensuring that data sets prepared by research teams are properly used and cited. The future role of the academic library may be to coordinate the work of such multi-task teams responsible for creating repository tools. The role will also include developing institutional research data management services and providing research data management advisory and training services. These new tasks and activities will entail the need to work collaboratively with other stakeholders to ensure that future research is supported effectively. However, despite the fact that libraries have been trying to meet the challenges so far, it is necessary to introduce systemic solutions, educate and employ qualified data stewards in scientific units who will be able to support researchers

at every stage of research work and its settlement, as well as making the results public.

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THE UX SPECIALIST IN POLISH LIBRARIES – TASKS, COMPETENCIES, CHALLENGES



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Flexibility of Academic Libraries in a Vuca Reality: the Example of the Functioning of Libraries During the Covid-19 Epidemic” in *Przeegląd Biblioteczny* (2020, Special Issue, pp. 70-93); „Problematyka zarządzania bibliotekami w świetle analizy zawartości wybranych czasopism naukowych z lat 2015-2020” co-authored with Magdalena B. Król in *Annales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis. Studia ad Bibliothecarum Scientiam Pertinentia* (2021, Vol. 19, pp. 709-727); and „Lustrzany świat sportowców – user experience platformy treningowej Zwift w świetle badań” in *Annales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis. Studia ad Bibliothecarum Scientiam Pertinentia* (2022, Vol. 20, pp. 691-714).

KEYWORDS: UX librarian. User experience. Competencies, UX

ABSTRACT: Thesis/objective – The aim of the article is to attempt to characterize a new, user experience-oriented specialization in the librarian profession in Poland, as well as to indicate the competencies necessary to work as a UX specialist in a library. Based on in-depth interviews, the awareness of and approach to user research with regard to UX on the part of academic library management

is characterized, as well as experiences and reflections on this topic. The scope of duties and competencies of a UX designer on the commercial market is characterized and an attempt is made to relate them to work in a library. An analysis of educational curricula in library science studies in Poland is made in terms of UX.

Methods – The method of literature analysis was used to characterize the UX librarian profession, while diagnostic survey, in-depth interview technique and case study were used to learn about UX activities in selected Polish academic libraries, as well as the comparative method in the analysis of library education programs.

Conclusions – The UX librarian can play a significant role in improving the quality of library services by designing the user experience in traditional and digital spaces. The need to get to know the library user in-depth and to conduct research is deeply rooted in the awareness of the management staff of Polish libraries, and various needs and satisfaction surveys are conducted, but the methodology typical for UX is rarely used. The UX librarian's competencies relate to designing, conducting research and building UX awareness in the organization using appropriate tools and programs, and also include a number of soft skills. Curricula of academic library studies include the subject of UX to a minimal extent.

Formulated by D. Norman in the 1990s, the term “user experience”, referring to the experience of the user of a given product or service, is now widely used in many fields of knowledge and practical activity. Interaction and digital environment design, service design, psychology and behavioral aspects of use, architecture, marketing and market research, and for over 20 years now also librarianship – wherever there is a need to understand, plan and improve the interaction between the user and the system, product or service, the term “user experience” appears. The definition of UX by the International Standard for Human-System Interaction Ergonomics, ISO 9241-210, as “a person's perceptions and responses that result from the use or anticipated use of a product, system or service” (*ISO 9241-210. Ergonomics of human-system interaction – Part 210: Human-centred design for interactive systems*, 2019) reflects the versatility and multidirectional nature of this thematic area. UX, therefore, is all the user's emotions, beliefs, preferences, perceptions, physical and psychological reactions, as well as behaviors and achievements that take place before, during and after using the product. In the context of designing and delivering services that take into account UX, we mainly talk about: processes based on a thorough understanding of the needs, behaviors, habits and contexts of the user, engaging the user at the early design stages, creating a sense of co-ownership of the product / service for the user, and referring to the overall experience of the user. At the same time, an in-depth understanding of the user's needs and emotions is achieved through qualitative and quantitative research, analysis, and interpretation of the data obtained, modeling the results in various ways, thanks to which solutions based on facts, not

designers' intuitions, can be implemented. UX practice also includes the preparation of prototypes and mock-ups, and may also include designing interfaces, writing texts understandable to users, and even managing a project team.

The purpose of this article is to characterize a new specialization in the librarian profession, focused on building and designing positive user experiences, with particular emphasis on Polish academic librarianship. Referring to the work of a UX designer on the commercial market, as well as analyzing the experience of American librarians in the field of UX implementation, the tasks and competencies of a UX librarian on a national basis are presented here. Using the diagnostic survey method and in-depth interview technique, the experience of selected academic libraries in the field of user research is presented. Based on the literature on the subject, and the author's own research and personal experience, the competencies of a UX librarian are characterized and compared with the education system in library science studies.

THE PROFESSION OF A SPECIALIST / DESIGNER / UX ANALYST IN POLAND

In the UX industry, there are experts dealing with both a narrow thematic scope, as well as specialists whose task is a comprehensive approach to designing user experiences and impressions. The first group includes, among others: UI designers, interaction designers, copywriters, information architects or researchers – these usually work in interactive agencies and software houses specializing in designing digital products. A UI Designer (*User Interface Designer*) designs user interfaces, including layout, typography, colors, icons, and other visual elements, focusing on aesthetics, readability, and consistency of the interface. A UX Researcher is responsible for researching users in order to understand their needs, preferences and behaviors; A Usability Specialist assesses the usability of interfaces, conducts audits and recommends changes to ensure a better user experience. The Interaction Designer's tasks include designing user-system interactions, prototyping interfaces, and defining user paths. The Information Architect takes care of the clear and logical structure of information on the website, while the UX writer focuses on creating clear, legible and understandable content and messages. In the case of large and advanced projects, specialists responsible for individual UX branches form teams, but sometimes these duties rest on one person dealing comprehensively with user experience as a UX Designer or UX Specialist. In such a case, this person's task is to integrate various aspects of user-oriented design: planning, research and testing in order to offer users a product that is useful, attractive and provides positive emotions.

Market observation and analysis of industry portals, training offers and thematic discussion groups allow us to conclude that the UX industry in Poland has been developing dynamically for nearly a decade. According to the data presented in the *User Experience and Product Design in Poland 2021 Report*, the average length of experience in the UX profession is 5 years, and every third respondent has more than 6 years of experience. In Poland, people employed in the positions of UX designer (this has been the most popular job title for years) perform tasks in three basic areas: design, research, and proselytization. Therefore, the most frequently performed duties include: designing mock-ups, usability studies, interaction design, building UX awareness, needs research / discovery, visual design, workshops with businesses, providing consultations, expert audits, and workshop facilitation. The report also shows that UX designers are employed primarily in: product and service companies (22% and 17% of responses), software houses (14%) as well as interactive agencies and the e-commerce industry (11% of responses each), and the preferred work system they use is a mixed mode, i.e. a hybrid one, consisting in alternating remote work with stationary work in various proportions (Mościchowska et al., 2021).

It is worth adding that such a picture of the UX industry in Poland is not reflected in the *Classification of Professions and Specialties for the needs of the labor market* developed by the Ministry of Family and Social Policy. In this Classification, as of January 31, 2023, there is only one item related to UX, and it is *User experience analyst* - code 251104 - belonging to the group of computer systems analysts, and therefore strictly anchored in the technological division. According to the characteristics published on the Ministry's website, "the user experience analyst analyzes the behavior, attitudes and emotions of users regarding the use of a given IT product, IT system or IT service in order to increase the satisfaction of customers using a given IT solution by improving its functionality and usability. The UX analyst also suggests ways to improve the user interface and usability of web products, systems or services; designs prototypes of products, ensuring that the tool is intuitive and pleasant to use" ("User experience analyst", 2023). Referring in turn to the most popular job advertisement website in Poland, Pracuj.pl, which was visited by 4.4 million users in 2021 (*Grupa Pracuj.pl - information about the company, April 2022*, 2022), searches on job descriptions related to user experiences yielded only the description of the profession called UX specialist. According to Pracuj.pl, the UX Specialist (placed in the "internet / e-commerce" category) is responsible for "creating functionalities dedicated to specific users, such as websites, web and mobile applications or interfaces in accordance with applicable guidelines; in addition, they prepare prototypes or mock-ups of solutions and examine the needs of users, and after implementation, conduct usa-

bility tests of new solutions” (“Specialist UX – profile of the profession”, 2023).

As you can see, a UX specialist is mainly identified with a person responsible for building useful and friendly digital products and services. Is there a place for one also in the library environment?

UX SPECIALIST IN THE LIBRARY

In library science and librarianship, the subject of UX has been of concern for over 20 years, although the essential problem related to the in-depth knowledge of the needs and expectations of users has been analyzed much earlier (Jaskowska, 2023). An analysis of the literature on the subject indicates that the first librarian employed as a *User Experience Librarian* was Brian Mathews and it took place in 2007 at the Georgia Tech Library (MacDonald, 2015). The person in question described his new responsibilities at the time as follows: “Basically my job now consists of user research and making recommendations to management and department heads. I will also work with others to develop targeted communication and branding strategies. The biggest challenge will be convincing all departments to trust me – just say the word ‘evaluation’ and people go crazy” (Mathews, 2007). Over the years, the scope of duties of a UX specialist in a library changes and develops, but it always remains in close relationship with the specificity of the library, it is the structure and organizational culture as well as the type of user. It is also clear that this position is not exclusively related to the design of digital services, as is the case in a commercial environment. The UX specialist in the library is tasked with designing and implementing user-oriented solutions that apply to both the library’s virtual and traditional space.

In 2015, C. MacDonald conducted an interesting study on the profile of the UX librarian in American institutions. The data was collected using the technique of a structured in-depth interview, which was conducted with 16 librarians identifying themselves with the UX area (respondents were searched for by appropriate phrases in Google, as well as on LinkedIn, Twitter, and by analyzing the hashtags used in social media). MacDonald’s analysis shows that people dealing with UX in libraries look at their profession very differently, but most often they list the following features when characterizing their duties and UX librarianship:

- user-centric thinking,
- activities strictly based on research (qualitative and quantitative),
- activities covering both the digital environment and the real library space,
- processes that are more about usability testing than product/service design (MacDonald, 2015).

Undoubtedly, the specific tasks performed by the UX librarian depend on the specificity and size of the library, its organizational structure and the managerial and cultural context. Therefore, it is difficult to indicate one universal scope of duties of a UX specialist / librarian. However, based on the literature on the subject (Dorney, 2009; Fox & Doshi, 2011; MacDonald, 2017; Dagan, 2018), the dominant areas of the UX librarian's activities can be identified as follows:

- designing and conducting research with users using methods and techniques typical of the UX approach,
- usability testing of digital library services,
- modeling and reporting research results to the management and the entire library team, as well as (in the case of services from external providers) to other entities in order to introduce changes,
- identification and coordination of activities related to the assessment of the quality of library services,
- designing the library website and other digital library services,
- analysis of the library space in terms of user-friendliness and designing way-finding navigation signs,
- proposing changes resulting from the obtained research data; participation in the team implementing changes,
- activities aimed at ensuring digital accessibility of library services,
- being the "advocate" for users in contacts with the library,
- cooperation with other library agencies, IT department, marketing, etc. with clear support from the management.

As can be seen from the presented tasks, the UX librarian views library services comprehensively (digital and traditional) – designing, researching, analyzing and organizing various processes taking into account the user's impressions and experiences.

THE UX SPECIALIST IN THE POLISH ACADEMIC LIBRARY – OUTLINE OF THE SUBJECT BASED ON THE AUTHOR'S OWN RESEARCH

Is there a place in Polish libraries to carry out tasks focused on designing and implementing positive user experiences? How, in the opinion of the management staff, should these processes be implemented and organized? Do academic library managers see a place for a librarian / UX specialist in their organization? These questions, among others, were an impulse to conduct my own research on the presence of UX topics in academic libraries in Poland¹.

¹ The research presented here was described in the article entitled "UX librarian – a new specialization in the profession?" *Przegląd Biblioteczny* V. 91, 2023.

The aim of the study was to get acquainted with the issues discussed, to determine whether and to what extent an approach oriented to user impressions and experiences is present in academic libraries, and to consider how to effectively implement the UX idea in academic librarianship in Poland. This research should be considered as an introduction to more advanced analysis in this area and to other quantitative and qualitative research conducted on a larger scale, which would give a broader view of the phenomenon discussed and would allow the identification of certain trends or relationships.

The research was conducted using a semi-structured in-depth interview according to a prepared research scenario. Interviews were conducted with eight respondents who represented seven academic libraries (university and technical) – they were library directors and (in two cases) people directly related to user research in the spirit of UX. The interviews took place between December 20, 2022, and January 30, 2023.

The qualitative analysis of the collected material, in which the MAX-QDA program was used, allowed for the identification of the following issues and topics: activities undertaken in connection with research and learning about the needs and impressions of users; the organization of this process and the management's awareness of the user-oriented approach; reflections, questions about the future. As part of the analysis, an attempt was also made to indicate what competencies, according to the directors, are desirable in the job in question. Further in the article there is a summary of these topics, including anonymous quotes and fragments of respondents' statements, which are also supplemented with two case studies of interest from the UX perspective.

The basic conclusion that can be drawn from all the interviews is the high awareness of management staff in terms of conducting user research and gaining knowledge about the needs of readers. This awareness does not always boil down to taking specific actions and does not always lead to the use of techniques and tools typical for UX, but the way of looking at library services through the prism of the user seems to be quite firmly rooted in library practice. One may even be tempted to conclude that the subject of UX in Polish academic libraries is mainly (with a few exceptions) limited to the issue of user research, especially in the context of learning about their needs, expectations and assessing satisfaction (and not a thorough analysis of user experiences and impressions). Another conclusion is not so optimistic and concerns insufficient financial and human resources to implement interesting projects and changes aimed at user satisfaction.

RESEARCH CONDUCTED AND TECHNIQUES USED

The analysis of the interviews shows that the dominant technique of formalized research of users in academic libraries is the survey. The questionnaire (distributed electronically, as well as in paper form) is appreciated for its universal nature, standardization facilitating repetition and cyclicity of research, and its universal, quantitative character.

- “The questionnaire is the same, at most we add questions to it that result from our current activities”
- “The assumption was to periodically survey users and compare these results over time”
- “If we are going to do research, it will only be through a survey”
- “A modern library simply has to adapt its services to users, and the survey – apart from daily conversations and observations – is the easiest way to learn about their needs.”

In the surveyed libraries, both one-off surveys were conducted, including the use of a tool prepared by the SBP for surveying user satisfaction (“Library User Satisfaction Survey”, 2018), as well as cyclical surveys, carried out at appropriate intervals and developed individually taking into account the specificity of the library and its users. As emphasized by the respondents, in the case of a survey, it is important when the research is conducted, significantly affecting the results obtained and the determination of cyclicity. While in the past, an interval of several years between examinations was justified, in today’s very dynamic and changing times an interval of 2 years (maximum 3 years) seems to be optimal.

In the respondents’ statements, there was also the conviction that formalized research is not always necessary to understand the needs of users. The important role of individual contacts with users, which take place in sharing branches, was emphasized, as well as direct contact, e.g. during a traditional library training session. Many times in this way, during informal and casual conversations with users, you can obtain valuable information to improve the quality of services.

- “These are not formalized surveys, but we always try to respond to every reported need of the user, guided by the principle of maximizing the availability of the service (i.e., making the resource available) and the product (i.e., the book). We’ve asked a lot, especially during the pandemic, how we can simply help our users.”
- “Users know that we are always waiting for their feedback and that we analyze all their requests and proposals and that we implement what is possible from an organizational perspective.”

Other research techniques that, in addition to the survey, appeared in the respondents’ statements were analyzing statistics and hard data (shares and use of electronic resources), reading comments in social media, collec-

ting opinions and suggestions from users using special forms and physical boxes / urns made available in the library or through guest books, as well as using typical UX techniques as was present in two libraries: observations, in-depth interviews and focus groups, and various types of research on the usability of library digital services. The latter will be discussed in the case studies section.

ORGANIZATION OF RESEARCH AND REQUIRED COMPETENCIES

It is difficult to point to a dominant trend in the organization of research in libraries, apart from the fact that most often the person or team conducting the research is located in the reader access / service department. With the exception of one library, issues related to research are not permanently assigned to a specific position and person – they are rather conducted ad hoc, as a result of an emerging need, or on the initiative of the employee him or herself. Respondents emphasized the fact that teamwork and a common understanding of the UX perspective among all library employees is necessary here – one specialist in research looking at services from the user's perspective is not enough.

- “All library employees, including those from the so-called back office need to look at the services we offer from a broader perspective and understand the needs and behaviors of our users”
- “It seems to me that in every user-related department there should be a person (or a team of people) who will look at the user's activity through user's 'eyes'. And when a need for change is perceived, that person brings it up to the supervisor for further action.”

The exception on the map of the surveyed libraries is the University of Warsaw Library, where since 2020 there has been a position dedicated to designing and developing services from the user's perspective. The characteristics of activities undertaken in this area will be presented in the further part of the analysis.

An interesting observation is the fact that libraries are open to cooperation with other university units and even external companies in terms of research and getting to know users. Cooperation is undertaken, for example, with the scientific circle of sociologists in the case of conducting surveys, or employees of the Faculty of Architecture in order to determine the needs of users regarding the development of space in the library building.

When it comes to the virtual space of the library and user research related to it, librarians also establish cooperation with other units. These are scientific and didactic institutes at the university dealing with designing information and testing the usability of websites, central units from the

broadly understood “research and development” sector, as well as external companies.

- “External research and commissioned expert analysis can be more powerful than research conducted by librarians. If we paid for something, if it was examined and analyzed by experts, maybe money could also be found to implement these solutions?”

When asked about the best positioning of the person “responsible for research” in the structure of the library, there were various suggestions from the respondents, but the prevailing opinions focused on the lending department or the functioning of an interdisciplinary team that would research and implement the proposed changes, with the clear cooperation of people responsible for library marketing.

And what do respondents say about current and desired user research competencies? Some of the respondents did not hide their doubts whether their team included the right people with sufficient competencies and skills to conduct reliable research. In these statements, the issue of remuneration was often raised, which rather discourages than attracts committed employees willing to develop libraries.

- “She was a fantastic librarian, with passion, openness and great commitment. Unfortunately, when it came to talking about a raise, I couldn’t offer her anything competitive to the offer she got on the commercial market. She is no longer working for us.”

However, there were also completely contradictory opinions, affirming the fact that the library has appropriate employees who are willing and able to conduct research, as well as statements regarding the required training and teamwork skills.

- „Yes. I have a few really competent people in my team who, if properly directed, will surely manage the project of implementing a new library website”
- “Informal communication plays an important role in learning about the needs of our users. The ability to listen, ask questions and just ordinary human cordiality – seemingly obvious, but these are very important features in everyday work with the reader”
- „Conducting good research, going beyond the questionnaire, would certainly have to be preceded by appropriate training for the library staff”
- “It seems to me that not only the issue of individual competencies and skills, but rather the ability to work in a team is crucial here. Which, in a way, is also a competency”.

As the analysis presented here shows, it is difficult to indicate one, best way of organizing research in academic libraries. On the subject of competency, there is a need for training in order to acquire additional qualifications, the ability to work in a team, openness, commitment, asking

questions and listening, and passion as well. It is also worth emphasizing the fact that the management pays attention to the organizational culture – one person or department is not enough, all librarians should be aware and “vigilant” towards the user and look at the library from a broader perspective.

AWARENESS AND REFLECTION

All respondents were convinced of the need to take into account the user’s perspective in the current functioning of the library.

- “I have the impression that we rarely answer the fundamental question of modern librarianship: what kind of library do users need?”
- “A modern service unit should carry out research to find out the requirements of students. If we want our services to reach the interested parties, we absolutely cannot close ourselves to traditional and theoretically proven frameworks. I can’t imagine a library that doesn’t research and analyze hard data provided by users”
- “So far we have not conducted research, but I see a great need to carry it out. We need this knowledge”
- “The library’s priority should be to respond to the specific needs of the community it serves. And knowing these needs is only possible through research.”

All respondents point to the fact that the current time is a good (ideal?) time to conduct research and to consider the direction of further development of library services in the academic environment. The pandemic has redefined the way we function – it has moved many things into the digital world, but at the same time it has made physical space and personal contact play an important role again. If you are to study users, now is the time – this is one of the main conclusions of the study.

- “The pandemic has changed us employees and, above all, changed the users and their habits and approach to using the library and its services. The physical space of the library must now be a place not only for studying, individual or group work, or waiting out the gap between classes, but it should also take into account the so-called social distancing and be adapted, for example, to remote participation in lectures that take place at our university and will probably continue to take place in this way. I will not mention the use of digital resources – after all, everything is happening online and in the mobile environment today”
- “Although we see that everything is now moving to the digital world, we are also surprised to see that our library is full. Students come, spend time in our open spaces and really expect a personalized ap-

proach to them as people, not avatars on [Microsoft] Teams. They want to be in the library and spend time there: both in groups and not necessarily quietly, as well as individually and in guaranteed comfort and concentration. This somewhat contradicts the common view that we are all escaping to work, study, and remote contacts right now.”

In libraries where user surveys are not currently conducted or have not been conducted in the past few years, there are plans for them to be carried out, for example in connection with the creation of a new library website.

- “We are planning to implement a new version of the library website and a project team will be established, which will include librarians and a person from the university IT project support center. We will start with interviews with users to find out what content and services on the website are most important to them. I am counting on professional substantive assistance from our Centre.”

Increasing attention is also paid to the analysis of the so-called hard data, which, thanks to advanced analytical functions in computer systems, provide extensive and reliable information about the real behavior of users.

The respondents drew attention to the important fact that the implementation of changes initiated by a signal from users should always be accompanied by appropriate marketing communication.

- “It is important to communicate to users that we are changing, taking into account their proposals and reported needs, that we hear their opinion. Each implemented change must be accompanied by an appropriate promotional and PR campaign.”

In several conversations there was a (sad) opinion expressed that asking users about their visions and needs misses the point, since the library cannot meet them.

- “Let’s assume we do great and comprehensive research, get nice data and valuable conclusions, but unfortunately we can’t implement the suggested changes due to lack of resources and capabilities.”

There were also voices that some users’ expectations (e.g. opening the library on Sunday or 24/7, as well as unlimited increase of resources for borrowing or liquidation of fees for late return of books) simply cannot be met for organizational, financial or legal reasons.

- “However, our goal is to come as close as possible to these expectations and needs; we act in accordance with these needs, but within the limits of our physical and organizational capabilities. After all, the decision is made all the time by us – librarians, not users”
- “In general, students’ requirements will probably always exceed our capabilities, but this does not mean that we should not learn about these needs and try to implement what we can anyway.”

Respondents also pointed out that the library functions in a certain university ecosystem and research, e.g. on visual identification or the design of the digital space of the entire university, should be conducted from the central level, not the library level. The lack of standardization in the field of electronic user service across the university is also not conducive to building positive user experiences and impressions.

- “Many systems, many patches, lack of coherent data flow results in the lack of a unified system of information about users – this is not conducive to building positive experiences and impressions of our recipients.”

According to the conducted analysis, the topic of UX in academic libraries in Poland is strongly related to the issue of user research. Undoubtedly, knowledge should be promoted more intensively and this perspective extended to comprehensive design of positive user experiences: both in the traditional and digital space. The ideal examples illustrating the implementation of the UX concept in modern academic librarianship are the activities carried out in two academic libraries: the University of Warsaw Library (BUW) and the University Library in Toruń. These practices differ from each other, but as they take into account the physical and digital spaces, and use techniques and tools typical of the UX approach, they deserve a separate characterization.

CASE STUDY – UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW LIBRARY

In September 2020, the position of Service Design Representative was created at the Library. The Representative’s activities focus on researching users’ experiences and impressions and designing library services with this perspective in mind; they cover both the Library’s physical space and its website. On the BUW blog, the Representative writes about her tasks and work: “We ask ourselves a question, e.g. how to make our readers quickly find the book they are looking for in Free Access. The process of finding a solution has several steps, the most important of which is conducting research in the form of conversations with users, asking them how they see this problem, but also observing their behavior and checking what is most difficult for them in a given process. Then, we analyze the collected data and come up with possible solutions, which are quickly tested together with users and improved on an ongoing basis. Thanks to this, the whole process is very educational, and mistakes made are important feedback. The end result is a service or product that will make life easier for both users and employees” (Kajczuk, 2021).

When it comes to physical space, one of the projects implemented so far was (and still is) research on how users find their way in such a (specific) building as BUW. The aim of the activities is to improve navigation

and the entire way-finding system in the library. The research techniques used include: desk research (analysis of the literature on the subject of way-finding in public institutions), user observations (what is happening in a given place, how users react or do not react to the marking system), organization of “cognitive tours” around the building, where users played the role of guides and thus showed their perception and understanding of the physical library space, as well as interviews with users and testing prototypes of way-finding markings. Some of the identified problems have been solved (e.g. liquidation of the division of toilets into men’s and women’s toilets, thanks to which their accessibility has been increased, change of toilet markings, as well as the design of visible navigation arrows), other ideas to improve navigation in the building are still being researched or waiting for funding. The second area of the Representative’s activities is the design of services that take into account the user’s experience in the digital space, which currently boils down to the design of the new website of the Library. In this area, the Library cooperated with an external company, and the Representative was responsible for collecting requirements and needs from BUW branches and employees (interviews), organizing interviews with users, carrying out constant project consultation with the company and proposing changes. The current challenge is to design the content for the website: content that, on the one hand, will reflect the needs and expectations of librarians, and, on the other hand, will be legible and understandable for users, i.e. created in accordance with the principles of accessibility and UX writing. Another area in which the Representative plays an important role is ongoing consultation of minor matters and decisions made in the library, in other words: answering the question of what a given problem may look like from the user’s perspective.

- “I am such a user advocate in our library.”

Among other projects implemented in the spirit of UX, carried out by the Representative, it is worth mentioning among others carrying out and coordinating cyclical surveys among BUW users, as well as focus groups with users on communication conducted by BUW in social media.

What is the greatest difficulty and challenge facing a person designing good services for users? It is primarily the lack of one’s own team with the help of which it would be possible to implement projects or at least discuss and deliberate certain issues including the efficient reconciliation of the “interests” of the library and librarians and users.

- “Sometimes I simply rely on the kindness of other people who can join my projects and research only after performing their basic professional duties”
- “For me, employees are also users, which is why I try to notice and take into account their needs, which sometimes differ from the needs of readers. Finding a good solution is not always easy then, but just

noticing these differences is already an important element of the design process.”

And what is the biggest advantage? What does the Representative particularly like about her job? “Firstly, that I am close to people and their needs. I believe that an empathetic conversation and asking about the perspective of our users is an extraordinary privilege and an important task. I also like the variety of topics that it allows me to deal with. I have a chance to get to know various aspects of work in the library, constantly improve my education and learn new things.”

Among the planned project activities, taking into account user experience, there is among others further improvement of navigation in the BUW building and creation of a coworking space. There are also plans to train all library employees to take a broader, UX-inclusive view of the user (Z. Kajczuk, personal communication, January 13, 2023).

CASE STUDY – NCU UNIVERSITY LIBRARY IN TORUŃ

Assessment of usability and functionality of online library services in accordance with UX principles is one of the areas of activity of the Information Department at the University Library of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń. The implementation of the Alma system in 2020 together with the PRIMO VE multiseach engine provided an impulse to conduct comprehensive usability studies of the website. The aim of the research was to optimize and adapt the PRIMO discovery layer to the needs of users. The usability test consisted of 12 tasks, and the research – due to the then prevailing pandemic – was entirely carried out remotely (Marzec & Piotrowski, 2023). During the analysis, the following factors were taken into account: the success of each task, various quantitative metrics (number of interactions, task completion time, path compliance), and qualitative data. Data analysis indicated the need to improve some labels as well as certain functionalities through manipulation of the CSS, which resulted in improving the interface in the implemented version of PRIMO – the system became more intuitive and understandable for users.

- “Thanks to the research, we used the configuration and customization possibilities of the interface offered by PRIMO. We improved the labels and implemented additional elements using cascading style sheets. Usability testing was successful.”

The effective teamwork within the working group (responsible for optimizing PRIMO) in the Library, as well as cooperation with the University’s academic staff, is typical of UX practices.

“We greatly appreciate the cooperation with Dr. Paweł Marc from the Institute of Information and Communication Research of the Nicolaus Copernicus University – we have created a valuable platform for ex-

changing experiences between practice and theory and we have received a measurable effect in the form of a useful and user-friendly PRIMO interface.”

The vision of implementing a useful system also guided the launch of a new version of the website based on the ECMS Liferay Portal (Piotrowski & Marczak, 2018). Thanks to the use of Liferay and Lighthouse, an automatic tool for analyzing and assessing the quality of websites, the refreshed library website was compliant with the latest standards of accessibility and usability (Marzec & Piotrowski, 2018). In addition, the use of Lighthouse was an impulse to develop a progressive web application, i.e. an application that is something in between a website and a mobile application. The progressive web application is characterized by among others high performance, fast loading and availability in offline mode and the ability to add a shortcut to the start screen.

- “Thanks to Lighthouse, we were able to examine how our library website fares in terms of quality (including usability), implement some features of a progressive web application and finally adapt it to the requirements of our users in the spirit of UX.”

In addition to Lighthouse, the NCU Library also uses other analytical tools to improve user experience: e.g. Mouseflow – a “mouse tracking” application, i.e. tracking mouse movements on the screen.

- “We used Mouseflow to analyze the library’s home page (making minor changes to the search area), and now we are trying to track mouse movements on the library training website. Maybe we will be able to find some correlations between the activity and learning content on the library’s website and the results of the Moodle test.”

Task tests with users, the use of tools for automatic website quality audits and the mouse-tracking application, and in the future maybe also eye-tracking tests, are activities thanks to which digital services are built in the NCU Library taking into account the experiences and impressions of users. In addition, in order to learn about the needs and behavior of users, analytical tools offered by the integrated computer system Alma are also used (D.M. Piotrowski, personal communication, January 9, 2023).

This research, conducted in the form of in-depth interviews, should be considered as an introduction to further analyses and learning about the topic of UX in Polish librarianship. As pointed out by A.M. Cox and S. Corall, surveys of current practitioners, case studies of individual institutions and analysis of job advertisements are most often used to study new specializations in librarianship (Cox & Corall, 2013). It would therefore be advisable to continue qualitative discussions with the management and/or persons responsible for researching the needs and experiences of users, combined with an analysis of selected job descriptions, quantita-

tive research using a structured questionnaire and a possible review of job advertisements.

COMPETENCIES AND EDUCATION OF THE UX LIBRARIAN

UX Designer is a relatively young profession, chosen by people with various educational backgrounds, not always in the field. According to *the User Experience and Product Design in Poland 2021 Report*, every third respondent has completed post-graduate studies related to the design of digital services and products, but the majority (63%) do not have a relevant education. Most graduates of postgraduate studies in the field of experience design hold a diploma from the SWPS University (University of Social Sciences and Humanities) and graduated from User Experience Design studies there, as well as from the AGH University of Science and Technology and User Experience & Product Design studies (Mościchowska et al., 2021). In addition, UX specialists gain competency at various professional courses and bootcamps², deepening their knowledge.

And what should be the educational path of UX librarians? Should librarians interested in the subject of UX gain knowledge through library science studies, or educate themselves in other ways in the field of user experience design? Research by C. MacDonald proves that UX librarians in the American environment expand their competencies in this area in various ways. Among the most frequently mentioned methods were knowledge and help from other UX librarians, exchange of experience in the industry community of experience designers (including self-expanding knowledge from books and articles), learning by doing in your own library, and – what is worth emphasizing – completing courses related to UX at a library school. Five out of eight respondents who graduated from library schools after 2009 declared that they gained UX competencies during this learning process (e.g. in the field of usability testing, user-oriented interaction design, user research, functionality testing, interface design). Undoubtedly, the trend related to the popularization of UX is quite clear in the American environment and is reflected in library science education. The analysis of programs for the education of future librarians accredited by the American Library Association (ALA), which was carried out in 2014 by M. Maceli, confirms this thesis. Among the 93 thematic areas identified during the study, user experience was the most popular (followed by web design and development, database design and development, introduction to information technology, and digital libraries and

² Bootcamp – intensive training that allows you to acquire practical skills necessary to perform a new profession in the IT industry in a relatively short time; the name is taken from Boot Camp, i.e. from the English term for a recruit camp.

information retrieval). The analysis also shows that many ALA-accredited programs offer various courses within a specific research area, and UX is the most common (32%) of these thematic areas. The topic of UX appears in 18 curricula, where it is represented by a minimum of two and a maximum of eight courses (Maceli, 2015).

In this context, it is worth considering whether Polish majors in library science equip their graduates with competencies in the field of designing impressions and user experiences.

The landscape of academic education for librarians in Poland has changed significantly over the last two decades. As noted by R. Malesa, out of fourteen universities that offered studies in the field of scientific information and library science (bachelor, master, postgraduate), in 2022 the field of study remained in the offer of only four: the University of Wrocław (1st and 2nd cycle studies), the University of Silesia (1st and 2nd cycle studies), the University of Warsaw (1st and 2nd degree studies – part-time) and Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań (1st degree practical studies conducted by the Faculty of Pedagogy and Art in Kalisz) (Malesa, 2022). For the purposes of this article, the curricula of these faculties were analyzed in order to check whether the didactic content takes into account the subject of user experience design. It turns out that there is no course in any major that directly relates to user experiences and impressions, or has the term UX in its name. However, there are items that may, to some extent, relate to the subject under discussion. They occur mainly in second-cycle programs and are related to specializations. These are, for example, courses on information users (service and needs research), designing information spaces and assessing the quality of services. The offer of the Faculty of Journalism, Information and Book Studies at the University of Warsaw is particularly interesting in this area. A detailed list of courses indirectly related to the subject of UX is presented in table 1.

It is worth emphasizing, however, that future library employees also acquire education in other “post-library” fields of study, such as: Information in e-society (Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin), Information Architecture (Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń; Pedagogical University in Krakow), Information Management (Jagiellonian University), Architecture of Information Spaces (University of Warsaw), Information Management and Digital Publishing (Pedagogical University of Krakow), Information in the Digital Environment (University of Lodz), or Digital and Web Publishing (University of Wrocław). In the curricula of the above-mentioned studies, especially those focused on designing information spaces, there are already many more specialized courses devoted to UX.

University	Faculty	UX related courses
University of Wrocław	Scientific information and library science. 1st cycle	None
	Scientific information and library science. 2nd cycle	Specialty: Digital Libraries – Website design – Needs of users of electronic information – Assessment of the quality of electronic documents Specialty: Libraries in the knowledge society – Quality of work of modern libraries – Studying the needs of library users
University of Silesia in Katowice	Scientific information and library science. 1st cycle	– Support for users with special needs
	Scientific information and library science. 2nd cycle	– Design and arrangement of the library space
University of Warsaw	Scientific information and library science. 1st cycle	– Psychology – Users of information – Designing information services – Working with a user with special needs – Introduction to database design and digital repositories
	Scientific information and library science. 2nd cycle - extramural	Specialization: Information and knowledge architecture – Information architecture – Quantitative information research – Analysis and visualization of information Specialty: Information and communication in cultural institutions – Psychology of social behavior – Project management – Methods of working with the user – Information behavior in culture – Evaluation of work efficiency in cultural institutions

Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań	Scientific information and library science. 1st cycle (practical) (Faculty of Pedagogy and Arts, branch in Kalisz)	Specialization: Infobrokering – Information architecture – Information heuristics – Information quality assessment – Data visualization
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Table 1. Offer of courses related to the subject of UX, which are included in the curricula of studies in Scientific information and library science. Source: Author's own study based on the 2023 study plans available on the universities' websites, 2023.

The analysis of the literature on the subject as well as this author's own research and personal experience allows us to conclude that a UX specialist in a library should have a wide range of skills. We are talking about both specific UX skills and comprehensive soft skills. Knowledge of tools in the field of product and service design (e.g. Figma, Adobe XD, Axure, InVision, Sketch), research tools in the field of data visualization and analysis (e.g. Google Analytics, HotJar, Mouseflow, Maze, Optimalworkshop, MAXQDA), helpful programs in organizing stationary and remote workshops (e.g. MS Teams, Webex, Skype) and commonly used boards (e.g. Miro, Mural) – these are desirable skills, if not necessary to work as a UX specialist in the library. In addition, there is a wide range of soft skills, without which it is impossible to thoroughly understand the user, cooperate in a team and build UX awareness in the organization. Openness and inquisitiveness in research, analytical and synthetic thinking skills, empathy, charisma and pugnacity, flexibility, creativity, perceptiveness, independence and ability to organize work, as well as high communication and interpersonal skills – undoubtedly having these features will be very desirable as a UX librarian.

On the subject of competencies necessary for the position of a UX specialist, it is worth referring again to the *User Experience and Product Design in Poland 2021 Report*. When asked about the skills missing in their profession, the surveyed UX designers mentioned: business competencies (42% of responses), analytical skills and research (36%), soft skills (35%), theoretical knowledge (33%), and technology support (28%) (Mościchowska et al., 2021). While business competencies useful in the commercial market are unlikely to be at the forefront in library work, fluent mastery of other skills should be of great importance in the proper fulfillment of tasks as a UX librarian. The surveyed UX designers listed among the competencies

they particularly care about developing: web analytics and A/B testing (49%), identification of business needs (44%), cognitive and social psychology, data science and team facilitation (43% each), as well as product and service management (42%), UX writing (41%) and machine learning (40%). Other competency gaps also included: coping with stress, knowledge of patterns and trends, leadership skills, advanced research techniques, selling one's own services, product discovery, and knowledge of HTML, CSS, jQuery, JavaScript (Mościchowska et al., 2021). The analysis of these answers and indications proves how versatile competencies and various skills can be useful to a UX specialist in a library. We should also not forget about the competency that, according to experts, will gain in value in the coming years, namely prompt engineering related to the development and optimization of prompts for the effective use of language models in systems based on artificial intelligence. Skillful use of tools using artificial intelligence can significantly improve projects created for users, e.g. in terms of accessibility, inclusivity and many useful functionalities (Deakin, 2023).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The environment of libraries is changing, users and their needs are changing, and thus the nature of the librarian's work is changing. The emerging new specialization in librarianship in the field of UX is an attempt to meet the expectations and an opportunity to provide services adequate to the requirements and habits of recipients. Looking at library services from the user's perspective and designing them taking into account not only needs and expectations, but also impressions and experiences, seems to be the right direction in the development of modern librarianship.

The experience of foreign libraries, as well as the user experience practices developed in the design and technology industries, have paved the way for Polish academic libraries to enter gradually. Awareness of the field of UX is growing, more and more research and analyses are being carried out taking into account the user's perspective, the first UX-dedicated workstations are appearing, and the virtual space of the library is more and more often being designed and evaluated using the methodology developed by the UX industry. For now, it is difficult to indicate the dominant trend and forecast how the UX specialization in Polish libraries will develop in the coming years. Will these be stand-alone positions, or permanent or interdisciplinary teams appointed as needed? Will Polish librarianship discover the potential and possibilities hidden in UX? These questions remain unanswered.

Undoubtedly, however, a UX librarian who wants to properly fulfill their tasks must have a number of unique hard and soft skills, constantly deepen their knowledge and exchange experiences with other members

of this profession. Unfortunately, most academic programs for the education of future librarians do not include courses related to UX, there is no training offer dedicated to librarians in this field, and industry conferences on LUX (*library user experience*) are currently held only abroad (such as the annual congresses: “UXLIBS” in the UK and “Designing for Digital” in the US). It remains to be hoped that this will change – that the libraries will be filled with graduates of other, sister faculties, such as information architecture or information management, equipped with design competencies; that good UX practices, such as those implemented at the University Library in Warsaw and the University Library in Toruń, will be disseminated and promoted; and that the library environment will discover the role and importance of the UX approach in library activities. As C. MacDonald’s research proves, the implementation of the UX approach in a library can bring many benefits. This includes increased empathy and more efficient response to user needs, better understanding of user needs (decision-making based on research data), improved image, capturing *the big picture*, and increased usability of websites and other digital services (MacDonald, 2017). The coming years will show whether Polish libraries will also be able to boast of these advantages.

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A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE
PUBLISHED IN POLAND

The Warsaw academic community has prepared a jubilee book dedicated to the outstanding librarian, Professor Elżbieta Barbara Zybert, on the occasion of the 45th anniversary of her scientific work. The publication, entitled *Wokół bibliotek i dziedzictwa kultury (Around libraries and cultural heritage)* (Kotowski, ed. 2021), contains thirty articles, among which – in addition to texts devoted to the celebrant – are articles from various fields in the area of social sciences and humanities including bibliology, librarianship, museology, history, and protection of cultural heritage, written by researchers from the University of Warsaw and other Polish universities. It is the intention of the publication's editors that the articles reflect the broad scientific interests and research passions of Elżbieta Barbara Zybert. The initial section of the volume, devoted to prof. Zybert, includes a list of her publications (Dorota Grabowska) and an analysis of her scientific achievements (Grzegorz Gmiterek, Adam Jachimczyk, Bartłomiej Włodarczyk, Jadwiga Woźniak-Kasperek). Other articles include a sketch by Bożena Koredczuk on bibliographic and librarian commissions from the second half of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, reflections on the contemporary concept of museology (Dorota Folga-Januszewska), and a study on bibliophilia and private collections (Anna Tokarska). Two articles are devoted to the education of librarians at the University of Warsaw: a text by Robert Brzóska presenting the activities of Postgraduate Library Studies in the years 2000 – 2001, and an outline of the history of academic librarianship in Warsaw and its current state by Dariusz Grygowski.

Materials from the conference held September 9-10, 2021 on the occasion of the seventieth anniversary of the Białystok University of Technology Library were included in the publication *Biblioteki naukowe – doświadczenia przeszłości, wyzwania jutra (Scientific Libraries – Experiences of the Past, Challenges of Tomorrow)* (Gogiel-Kuźmicka, Kierejczuk, ed., 2022). The volume begins with a historical outline of the Białystok University of

Technology Library by Aneta Gogiel-Kuźmicka. The remaining texts are grouped into three thematic parts. In the first part, entitled *Organizacja i zadania bibliotek (Organization and tasks of libraries)*, the authors examine, among other things, the functioning of libraries during the pandemic, e.g. Marcin Pędich's article *Wykluczenie biblioteczne przed i w trakcie pandemii (Exclusion of libraries before and during the pandemic)*, the issue of presenting digital resources on the websites of Polish public universities (article by Dorota Buzdygan and Maria Pietrukowicz), and the changes in the role of the library in the structure of the university in the context of new legal regulations (text by Danuta Szewczyk-Kłós and Dorota Wierzbicka-Próchniak). The second part, *Biblioteki w służbie nauki (The library in the service of science)*, deals mainly with issues related to the evaluation of the quality of scientific activity of universities (including articles by Iwona Taborska and Grzegorz Szczypa). In the third part, devoted to the profession of the librarian, an article by Katarzyna Weinper and Łukasz Tomczak defines the competencies that a data librarian should have, characterizes their tasks, and presents the education of librarians conducted in the academic environment of the Lublin University of Technology in the direction of developing the skills of a data librarian specialist. In addition, this part of the publication presents the Academy of Leaders – training for the management staff of the University of Warsaw including the University of Warsaw Library (Magdalena Rowińska) – and discusses the phenomenon of job crafting in relation to libraries (Justyna Stępień).

The articles in the second volume of the publication *Wokół "Katechizmu biblioteki" Paula Ladewiga (Concerning Paul Ladewig's „Catechism of the Library")* (Gębołyś; Wodniak, ed. 2021), similarly to the first volume, are inspired by the thoughts of the outstanding German librarian and librarianship expert Paul Ladewig contained in his *Katechismus der Bücherei (the Catechism of the Library)*, a collection of maxims, aphorisms and thoughts on the functioning of libraries first published in 1914. The point of departure for each of the texts is at least one of Ladewig's selected thoughts. The articles are grouped in three parts. The first part, *Bibliotekarze (Librarians)*, opens with the article *Śladami Paula Ladewiga (Following in the footsteps of Paul Ladewig)* by Zdzisław Gębołyś, an expert on the ideas and achievements of Paul Ladewig and the translator of *Katechismus der Bücherei* into Polish. The author points out the places with which the German librarian was connected and describes his professional and scientific activity there. In the remaining articles in this part of the book, the authors deal with, for example, the issue of the presence and activity of women in the scientific life and library of the Jan Kazimierz University in Lviv (Ewa Goumissi), or current socio-legal determinants of the professional development of library employees in Poland (Małgorzata Bańkowska). Among the articles

of the second part, *Biblioteka (Library)*, the following deserves attention: an analysis of the results of research on the organizational culture of the Library of the Łódź University of Technology (Edyta Kołodziejczyk) and Mariusz Balcerek's considerations on the legitimacy of prioritizing entertainment at the expense of education in public libraries. The thematic diversity of the third part, entitled *Wokół informacji naukowej, książki i prasy (Around scientific information, books and the press)*, is represented by, among others, a critical analysis of quantitative research evaluation methods presented by Hungarian authors Attila Juhász and Erzsébet Dani, and an article describing the benefits of using the INTEGRO search engine and the mPRO-LIB mobile application in accessing library collections (Krzysztof Henne).

The collection of interviews with librarians *Praca i pasja (Work and passion)* (Simonjetz, 2021) by Monika Simonjetz is part of a cycle of publishing projects presenting texts that are the result of conversations with extraordinary personalities, creators, and successful people (including Anna Luboń's *Mistrzynie (Champions)* and Helena Zaworska's *Dobrze, że żyłem. Rozmowy z pisarzami (It's good that I lived. Conversations with writers)*). The author and interviewer describes her interlocutors as follows: "The extraordinary heroes of the collection titled 'Work and Passion' are among us, at various stages in their professional paths. Experienced directors, managers, long-term and beginning librarians. Versatile, creative, often with considerable scientific achievements. They combine work in the library with other interests and activities (pedagogical, didactic, social)" (p. 10). The publication is a record of interesting professional careers, it can be a source of role models, an inspiration for innovative library activities, and, as the author points out in the introduction, an attempt to get to know each other and integrate the community. It is also an interesting read, which is undoubtedly due to the merits of both the interviewees and their interlocutor.

The Forum of Young Librarians, a cyclical event organized since 2006 by young employees of libraries from a given voivodeship for an audience of young librarians from all over Poland, serves to further education, exchange experiences and ideas, and establish contacts. Papers and presentations of workshops held as part of the fourteenth Forum organized in Katowice and Zabrze on September 8-9, 2022 were included in the publication *Biblioteka w sercu – jak być bibliotekarzem XXI wieku. Materiały z 14. Forum Młodych Bibliotekarzy, Zabrze – Katowice, 8-9 września 2022 (Library in the heart – how to be a librarian of the 21st century. Materials from the 14th Forum of Young Librarians, Zabrze – Katowice, September 8-9, 2022)* (Gomułka, introduction, 2023). In the part of the volume entitled *Referaty (Papers)*, the authors describe, among other things, the possibilities of intergenerational

cooperation in the library (Anita Rudnicka), analyze comics as useful tools in working with the reader (Agata Zygmunt), and deal with the issue of interior design that will also look good in social media, presenting ideas for arranging a cozy corner in the library (Magdalena Kubacka). The second part describes the workshops organized for the participants of the forum, concerning e.g. the use of new technologies in the promotion of reading, and the rational use of time in the work of a librarian.

The bibliographic commissions established alongside Polish general scientific societies in the second half of the nineteenth century were the equivalent of European bibliographic societies and played an important role in the development of bibliographic works and, to a lesser extent, bibliological research. Their work was also continued by commissions established in Poland after the Second World War. One of these is the subject of the monograph by Bożena Koredczuk, *Badania nad książką, biblioteką i informacją w kręgu towarzystw naukowych. Komisja Bibliologii i Bibliotekoznawstwa Wrocławskiego Towarzystwa Naukowego (1953 – 2003)* (*Research on books, libraries and information in the circle of scientific societies. Commission of Book Studies and Librarianship of the Wrocław Scientific Society (1953 – 2003)*) (Koredczuk, 2021). The first part of the book shows the historical context of the creation of European bibliographic, bibliological, and bibliophile societies and Polish bibliographic commissions, outlines their history, activities, and the people associated with them. The second part presents in detail the activities of the Book and Library Science Commission of the Wrocław Scientific Society operating in the years 1953–2003 and its importance for the development of Polish library science and bibliography.

Empirical research – up to now absent in Poland – on the evidence of reading literature in reading groups is presented by Magdalena Stoch in the work *Jak czytamy książki. Recepcja literatury w krakowskich i wielickich grupach czytelniczych* (*How we read books. Reception of literature in Kraków and Wieliczka reading groups*) (Stoch, 2021). The aim of the author's research was „... to identify and describe the phenomenon of contemporary reading groups operating in Kraków and Wieliczka against the background of the evolution of reading practices and changes within the theory of reception” (p. 11). The most extensive part of the work is an account of her own ethnographic research, in which the author observed meetings of selected local book clubs held in libraries, bookstores, cafes and antique shops. This part of the work was preceded by a presentation of selected theoretical contexts for the reception of literature, a description of cultural practices that have influenced the formation of contemporary reading groups, and a review of research on this subject. The author's research findings show, among other things, that a constant feature of the reception of literature

in reading groups is hypertextuality. „Texts gain new meanings by constantly recalling new interpretative contexts: from other cultural texts, to readers' life experiences” (p. 224).

A collection of studies by specialists, scientists and practitioners dealing with the issues of information architecture is presented in the publication *Architektura informacji. Badania i praktyka (Information Architecture. Research and practice)* (Głowacka, Kortas, ed., 2022). In the introduction the editors of the volume describe the issues raised in the volume as follows: “Information architecture focuses on making information environments easy to search and understandable. Good information architecture helps people understand their environment and find what they are looking for, both offline and online” (p.[7]). The authors of the publication deal with information architecture design (e.g. an analysis of best practices and techniques for creating modern, intuitive interfaces by Jakub Sosnowski), user experience (e.g. an article by Michał Malinowski presenting a proprietary recommendation algorithm), and data and information security. In the last part of the collection, *Architektura informacji – studia przypadków (Information Architecture – Case Studies)*, Kamil Stępień, among others, presents the multimedia magazine *Medialica. Studia Multimedialne z Humanistyki (Medialica. Multimedia Studies in the Humanities)*, whose main task is to use new methods of knowledge transmission in the academic environment.

One of the goals of interdisciplinary research presented in Anna Maj's monograph *Przemiany wiedzy w cyberkulturze. Badania nad kulturą, komunikacją, wiedzą i mediami (Transformation of knowledge in cyberculture. Research on culture, communication, knowledge and the media)* (May, 2021) was to show the broad cultural and communication contexts of knowledge transformation in cyberculture. The first part of the publication is devoted to traditional and contemporary ways of organizing knowledge: mental strategies and cognitive practices developed in various historical periods, with particular emphasis on cybercultural cognitive changes and processes showing the transformation of knowledge under the influence of technology. In the second part, the author discusses numerous selected conceptualizations of knowledge, showing the multithreading of thinking about data, information and knowledge. The last chapter of the publication “... describes the ways of understanding the terms *data, information and knowledge* in research on culture, communication and media in a narrower sense, as it presents selected threads in contemporary media studies” (p. 18).

Interesting research in the field of information behavior has been presented by Monika Krakowska in the book *Zachowania informacyjne człowieka w kontekście zjawiska epistemicznej bańki informacyjnej. Propozycja nowej*

koncepcji (Human Information Behavior in the Context of the Epistemic Information Bubble. A proposal for a new concept) (Krakowska, 2022). "The aim of the theoretical considerations and the analysis of ideas, concepts, terms and models carried out in the book was to propose an original, new concept of an epistemic information bubble" (p. 273). The subject of the work comprises the characteristics of various features and dimensions of information behavior, a presentation of interdisciplinary research in this area, and an analysis of the context and space of information behavior of a human being. In the fourth chapter, *Bańki: filtrująca, epistemiczna i informacyjna oraz komory echa – charakterystyka zjawisk (Bubbles: filtering, epistemic and information, and echo chambers – characteristics of phenomena)*, an analysis of concepts and phenomena related to more or less closed information spaces is presented. The culmination of the author's considerations and analyses is the proposal of a new information science concept, namely the epistemic information bubble, presented in the fifth and final chapter.

As explained in the editor's note, the jubilee publication *Pedagogiczna Biblioteka Wojewódzka w Opolu 1951 – 2021. Historia, działalność, zasoby, ludzie (The Pedagogical Library in Opole 1951 - 2021. History, Activities, Resources, People)* (Zachona, ed., 2021) "... was created to present our Institution's work in conducting rich biblioinformatic, promotional, educational, bibliotherapeutic and publishing activities" (p. 10). Among the many interesting activities and projects carried out in the Opole library described in the book, one can mention the OMNIBUS database – one of the largest electronic resources of information on the content of magazines in the country regarding education broadly understood – or the multi-directional activity in the field of bibliotherapy, with the establishment of the Opole Bibliotherapy Center within the library as its crowning achievement. The publication, richly illustrated with photos, also includes an essay by Henryk Hollender devoted to the library in Opole, *Czego uczy nas historia bibliotek (What the history of libraries teaches us)*, a calendar, profiles of its directors from the beginning of the library's existence, a chapter on the past and present field branches of the library and an extensive annotated bibliography on the activities of the Pedagogical Library in Opole in the years 1951 - 2021.

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M E S S A G E S

SOCIAL COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA SCIENCES AND THE PROMOTION OF TECHNOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS IN LIBRARY PRACTICE

Modern society is based on information and communication. With the dynamic development of media and technology, social communication and media sciences play an increasingly important role in understanding communication processes and their impact on society. However, despite the importance of these issues, scientific works in this area often remain unknown to a wider audience, including library employees and students of library science.

A specific solution to this problem is offered by the project „Information and communication – popularization of scientific research and technological solutions” implemented by the Polish Librarians’ Association, which aims to inform the public about scientific works in the field of social communication and media sciences, promote the achievements of researchers, including the younger generation, and disseminate innovative technological solutions that can be used in library practice.

The target group of the project are librarians from various types of libraries – university, public, pedagogical and school – as well as students of library science. The project provides them with the opportunity to interact with researchers and experts, which contributes to a better understanding and practical use of research results.

The basic aim of the project is to deliver 12 open lectures and record the same number of podcasts, developed by communication and media researchers from leading research centers in Poland. Lectures and podcasts concern research and practices in the field of information and communication, both in Poland and in the world. Recordings of archived online lectures and podcasts are made available to a wide range of interested parties on the project’s bilingual (Polish and English) website: www.sbp.pl/ik

Lectures and podcasts are divided into 3 thematic blocks. The first block concerns information, among others models of information culture, information management and information visualization using social media. The second block focuses on communication and deals with effective project management, interpersonal competency and digital humanities.

The third block is dedicated to technologies such as the use of Google Analytics, augmented reality (AR) and artificial intelligence.

The implementation of the project aims to draw attention to the role of scientific research and modern information and communication technologies in social development. The project also emphasizes the contribution of the academic community to shaping the social responsibility of science and the use of scientific achievements in improving library services.

Projects of this type are not only important for the knowledge society, but also for the libraries themselves, which thanks to them can better respond to the growing information and communication needs of users.

The project „Information and communication – popularization of scientific research and technological solutions” also has an important role in promoting the results of scientific research of Polish scientists abroad.

By making recorded lectures and podcasts available on the project’s bilingual website (Polish and English), this initiative will enable a wide group of interested parties, including the foreign scientific community, to access information and solutions developed by Polish researchers.

The popularization of the results of scientific research by Polish scientists abroad may contribute to building stronger international ties, mutual inspiration and scientific cooperation, as well as to strengthening the position of Polish science in the global research environment.

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