

# POLISH TEXTBOOK MARKET (1970–2012): CHANGES AND TENDENCIES

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*This paper analyzes the Polish market of textbooks in the last four decades with reference to the political, social, and technological changes of that period. The whole span of forty years can be divided into two stages – before and after 1989. The analysis concerns the three key actors involved in communication through books: the author, publisher, and the recipient. It was investigated how the social status and independence of these actors have changed over time. The description is not of a quantitative character and it only allows to identify the tendencies in the analyzed field. After the period of the publisher's monopoly, when any publishing house was an emanation of the power of political authorities, there came the time of the recipient's (teacher's) importance. With the introduction of free market principles the teacher became the actor who selects textbooks out of many and thus influences not only the profit but also the future of the publisher. Free electronic resources, announced in the program „Cyfrowa Szkoła” (2012), lead to an increasing independence of the teacher. A part of his new tasks used to belong to the publisher.*

KEY WORDS: *book market, publisher, textbooks, Poland.*

## INTRODUCTION

Among the factors that in the past decades have caused the most significant changes in people's lives and functioning of institutions in Poland are social-political breakthrough of 1989 and the dynamic development of modern technologies that started as a result of the opening of borders and the introduction of free market mechanisms. The two factors should be also recognized as decisive in the development of the Polish book market. This article presents an analysis of one of its components: the market of school textbooks<sup>1</sup>, in which – as it seems – one may observe all evolutionary processes characteristic of the whole book market in that period, the differences being only in intensity, scale, and the time of occurrence of particular changes.

The first twenty years of the analyzed period are the times of PRL (Peoples' Republic of Poland), when PZPR (Polish United Workers' Party) dominated the political scene and the country was officially a socialist state. This stage ended in 1989, when, as a result of semi-free elections, the Solidarity trade union formed a coalition government. It was also the time of other important transformations in many areas: the state was renamed as the Republic of Poland; new political system, alliances, and economy emerged; there were also major changes in education. The program „Cyfrowa Szkoła“, launched in 2012, may lead to changes of similar significance, since educational resources are to be digital, free and prepared by central institutions.

The key actors in the book market are: the author, publisher, and the recipient. This paper is an attempt to provide descriptions of the positions of these actors with reference to the conditions in which the book functioned at this time. To make the descriptions consistent and comparable to one another, two criteria were chosen: the actor's social status and the level of the actor's independence. The actor's social status is conditioned by the degree of necessity of the actor's existence in the book market, the uniqueness of the actor's competencies, and the actor's replaceability in the market. To evaluate the level of the actor's independence, it is necessary to point at the particular constituents of the market of which the actor may possibly be more or less independent. They may be various but the most interesting seem to be the other two actors and – because of the political changes in the state and political institutions. For instance, the social status of the author is determined by how exclusive the author's social milieu is, by the author's reception within the society, and by how strong the competition with other authors can be. Outward signs of the author's high position are his high royalties, the widespread use of the textbook (a proof of that may be high print runs), its editorial characteristics, additional supplies, extra benefits offered to the author, his professional career advancement. The author's independence means first of all being free to make decisions about the content and form of the publication (and additional supplies) as well as to choose co-workers. The author's independence also implies that the criteria of evaluation of the textbook together with the procedures of its authorization for school use are stated openly and clearly.

The publisher's social status is determined by: the size of print runs, the publisher's share in the market, revenues, the scale of promotion events, the contribution of the publisher's editors to the content and editorial form of the book,

1 Before 1989 a textbook used to be the only book which was dedicated to the student. Along with the free market auxiliary books have ap-

peared. Yet the main element of the bundle remains the textbook.

presence at educational conferences, popularity and recognizability of the publisher's series, release of an educational periodical, the quality of publications (estimated on the basis of reviews and teachers' opinions). The independence of the publisher has two dimensions: economic and political. In the economic dimension, the publisher's independence is manifested in non-standard actions that may be, for instance, innovative and costly promotion campaigns; it may also be more content-related, when the publisher ventures into new project areas, such as the preparation of e-textbooks or internet educational platforms. The publisher's political independence means freedom from external ideological influences and concentration on the subject matter of the textbook.

As far as the third actor in the book market is concerned – the receiver – it is not easy to clearly specify who it really is in the case of textbooks. Textbooks are, obviously, used by schoolchildren, but the decision about which textbook series to choose out of many available is made by the teacher and implemented by parents, who simply buy the series selected by the teacher. For the purpose of this paper it is assumed that the target receivers of textbooks are the teachers, who decide about the use of textbooks in their schools. Both publishers and authors of textbooks are very well aware of this role of teachers.

The teacher's social status grows together with the number of textbooks available in the educational market. Teachers are persuaded to use the methods offered by a particular publisher and wooed with workshops, easy access to teaching resources, and free additional supplies. Any teacher's choice, however, of a particular publisher's offer is a limitation of the teacher's independence. A change of the textbook used in class is usually not welcome by parents and, because of the affluence of additional supplies and resources (also available in the digital form), it may be difficult for teachers themselves. Also, there is a problem of the ability to compare a number of available educational options to do that a teacher must have enough time, expertise or even develop new skills, for instance technological, that may be necessary to use new types of materials. The teacher's social status is also determined by participation in educational conferences (preferably as a speaker), membership and activity in professional associations and circles, the authorship of textbooks or educational materials (printed or available on particular publishers' web pages and in free internet resources).

## SOURCES

As far as the 1970s and 1980s are concerned, there are many accounts of particular people available. In that period many textbooks were issued

whose authors worked for the Ministry of Education or for other institutions or publishers related to it<sup>2</sup>. The most comprehensive study of textbooks of those years was done by Joanna Wojdon. Her main concern was the propaganda dimension of textbooks but she also attempted to reconstruct the model process of a textbook creation.<sup>3</sup>

Not much time has passed since the 1990s – this is probably why there are only a few comprehensive studies of the changes in the Polish book market in the new political and economic system. The most important one is definitely a book by Klukowski and Tobera<sup>4</sup>, in which not much is said about the schoolbook market itself but the authors managed to grasp the atmosphere of the time as well as to point at reasons and consequences of what happened in the book market back then. The analysis of this period will also be based on the personal experience of the author of this paper, who worked in the 1990s as a manager in a large educational publishing house.

One should mention here annual publications which present data concerning the functioning of the Polish book market. *Ruch Wydawniczy w Liczbach – Polish Publishing in Figures* has been issued by Biblioteka Narodowa every year since 1955.<sup>5</sup> It is prepared on the basis of legal deposit copies received from all publishing houses based in Poland. Since 2010 the annual has been published only in the digital form available at the web page of Biblioteka Narodowa. Another valuable source of information is *Rynek Książki w Polsce*, which has been issued yearly since 1998 and is supplemented with a volume that covers the years from 1944 to 1989<sup>6</sup>. This originally inconspicuous two hundred pages long publication quickly developed into five volumes: *Wydawnictwa, Dystrybucja, Poligrafia, Papier, and Who is Who*. It is published by Biblioteka Analiz, a company specializing in market analysis<sup>7</sup>. Each volume includes, among other things, lists of most important events in a given year, numerous tables presenting the data on publishing output and

2 See for example: Parnowski, Tadeusz. *Merytoryczne i edytorskie problemy podręczników*. Warszawa, 1976; *Z prac nad koncepcją podręcznika dla ucznia powszechnej szkoły średniej: (Założenia, propozycje, sugestie, materiały)*: Seminarium – grudzień 1976. Ed. by Barbara Koszewska. Warszawa, 1977.

3 WOJDON, Joanna. *Propaganda polityczna w podręcznikach dla szkół podstawowych Polski Ludowej (1944–1989)*. Toruń, 2011, p. 261–287.

4 KLUKOWSKI, Bogdan; TOBERA, Marek. *W tym niezwykłym czasie. Początki transformacji polskiego rynku książki (1989–1995)*. Warszawa 2013.

5 Biblioteka Narodowa. *Ruch Wydawniczy w Liczbach* [accessed 4 September 2014]. Access through Internet: <<http://www.bn.org.pl/zasoby-cyfrowe-i-linki/elektroniczne-publicacje-bn/ruch-wydawniczy-w-liczbach>>.

6 KITRASIEWICZ, Piotr; GOŁĘBIEWSKI, Łukasz. *Rynek książki w Polsce 1944–1989*. Warszawa 2005.

7 *Rynek-Książki.pl* [accessed 4 September 2014]. Access through Internet: <http://rynek-ksiazki.pl/onas/>.

readership, presentations of the largest companies as well as long and short term prognoses for the Polish book market.

Every book is a result of work of many people although only the person whose name is printed next to the title is recognized as the author. It is so because of the secrecy of actions that precede the publication. And it is in these actions where one can notice the whole complexity of the publishing process, the process which is particularly interesting in the case of textbooks. It is not easy to decide in which of the periods distinguished here the secrecy was the greatest. Before 1989, what mattered most was ideology; in the following years it was in the interest of a commercial company to protect its secrets from the competition.

### POLISH BOOK MARKET BEFORE 1989

Our analysis begins in early 1970s as this is the time, when, according to Wojdon, “a new way of creating schoolbooks emerged”.<sup>8</sup> During the first years after the Second World War the schoolbooks written before the war were used. In 1948, however, PZPR starts to insist that schoolbooks be more politically oriented. The pressure is released in the middle of 1950s, when, again, educational value of schoolbooks begins to matter more than political correctness. This shift in priorities is reflected in documents issued by the official institution of censorship (Główny Urząd Kontroli Prasy, Publikacji i Widowisk). Initially they were long lists of detailed remarks on the social and educational role of a particular textbook, including instructions on how the text of the book should be necessarily amended. In time, they got shorter and shorter to become in the 1970s brief statements about the authorization of the textbook for school use. All that led to the reorganization of the committees that functioned within the Ministry of Education and were responsible for the reviews of schoolbooks and to the formation of a research institute (Ośrodek Doskonalenia Podręcznika Szkolnego) that was to initiate work on new educational resources. After 1972 schoolbooks were authorized by Instytut Programów Szkolnych, a unit at the Ministry of Education. One year later, Państwowe Zakłady Wydawnictw Szkolnych (WSiP), the monopolist of the market of textbooks, was merged with Państwowe Wydawnictwo Szkolenia Zawodowego and thus the publishing house Wydawnictwa Szkolne i Pedagogiczne was formed. This new institution included also two large print-works in Łódź and Bydgoszcz, which made it possible to supply teachers and schoolchildren with necessary educational resources. The publishing output of WSiP would reach even 30 million copies a year.<sup>9</sup>

Until 1989 WSiP was the monopolist of the schoolbook market and a very important constituent of the Polish centralized economy. WSiP also played an impor-

tant role in all changes of the Polish education such as, for instance, the reformation of the whole educational system<sup>10</sup> that resulted in the new teaching curricula for which new textbooks had to be prepared. The duty of this publishing house was to cooperate with authors, to supervise the whole process of reviewing textbooks (they were first reviewed by the Ministry of Education, then by the publisher and, finally, they were approved by the official institution of censorship), and to print the textbooks at appointed times and in a specified number of copies<sup>11</sup>. The publisher also cooperated with academic institutions while conducting tests of trial versions of textbooks in selected schools and organizing conferences and seminars.

Although textbooks were published in hundreds of thousands of copies, the preparation of a textbook was not a lucrative and comfortable job. The deadlines were usually very tight and the royalties were very low. In the beginning of the 1970s the Polish Government issued a decree on contracts with authors and royalties, which slightly improved the authors' situation<sup>12</sup>.

Until 1989 the Polish book market was best described by three words: centralization, censorship, and rationing<sup>13</sup>. Publishing houses were state-owned as well as the book warehouse Składnica Księgarska and the company Dom Książki that possessed 90% of bookshops. Decisions were made by PZPR, which rationed paper supplies, controlled the market, prices, and the size of the print run in each edition of a particular title as well as supervised publishing plans. PZPR also decided about the reforms in teaching curricula and when to introduce them, the result of these decisions being updates of old textbooks or issuing new ones. A teacher very rarely had more than one textbook to choose from. Particular titles were used for a long time and printed in large print runs but the royalties paid to the authors were low. There was no freedom in shaping the content of textbooks and the textbooks had to go through several different stages of control process. Communication with teachers was possible via educational periodicals published for every school subject and during conferences organized by academic centres and the Ministry of Education.

8 WOJDON, Joanna, op. cit., p. 263.

9 KITRASIEWICZ, Piotr; GOŁĘBIEWSKI, Łukasz, op. cit., p. 216.

10 FRYCIE, Stanisław. *Przemiany w treściach kształcenia ogólnego: Kompleksowa modernizacja programów w latach 1977–1991*. Warszawa 1989; Maciaszek, Maksymilian. *Treść kształcenia i wychowania w reformach szkolnych PRL*. Warszawa 1980.

11 ŁOZIŃSKI, Józef. Rola wydawcy w kształtowa-

niu koncepcji książek szkolnych. In *O nowoczesną koncepcję książki dla ucznia i nauczyciela: Materiały z seminarium*, maj 1976. Warszawa, 1977, p. 37, 45.

12 KITRASIEWICZ, Piotr; GOŁĘBIEWSKI, Łukasz, op. cit., p. 176.

13 According to: KLUKOWSKI, Bogdan; TOBERA, Marek, op. cit., p. 62.

## POLISH BOOK MARKET AFTER 1989

As one can read in the sources available, the establishment of the first private publishing houses had to be approved by the officers of the old system that was about to end. Later, everything got out of control. It is estimated that in the first year of transformation about 200 private publishing houses were registered<sup>14</sup>. The beginning of 1990 was the time of changes crucial to the development of free market. Paper supplies were no longer rationed and a bill was passed that abolished the censorship, which resulted in a boom of street trade. This is also when the institution Izba Książki (from 1991 Polska Izba Książki – the Polish Chamber of Books) was established to regulate the new Polish book market. The first two units in this institution were the Book Section (1992) and the Educational Section (1993). There were numerous problems to be dealt with: prices of books (they were no longer printed on book covers because of the high rate of inflation), illegal translations that violated copyrights, unregistered publishers. An additional difficulty was that most of publishing companies did not belong to PIK, which rendered the decisions issued by this institution ineffective. It soon turned out that it was impossible to prevent the crisis caused by the bankruptcy of Składnica Księgarska in 1992. Undoubtedly, an important success of PIK was a long campaign for zero rates of VAT on books, which were finally introduced and maintained until 2011.

The top position in the ranking of publishers was still occupied by WSiP. Between 1990 and 1994, this publishing house updated 351 textbooks and issued over 1000 new ones<sup>15</sup> and yet despite the growing number of published titles (616 in 1995, 718 in 1998)<sup>16</sup>, its share in the market was steadily going down (19.8% in 1995, 12.5% in 1998). It was generally believed that previously state-owned publishing houses may survive in the market when they got privatized but for many companies it could not be done immediately. WSiP became a private company 15 years after the political breakthrough. For a long time it did not feel threatened by the competition from 178 new publishing houses that were established within the first three years after the transformation<sup>17</sup>. Some of these publishers are today very important players in the book market.

A rapid grow in the number of publishers led to the book market segmentation and to the limitation of print runs for each edition. Let us compare the number of textbooks titles with print runs within the range between 10.6 and 20.5 thousand. In 1975 and 1980 there were over one hundred such titles<sup>18</sup> whereas in 1985 and 1990—only about 50<sup>19</sup>. In 1995 most of the textbook titles were printed in the number of copies that fell within the range between 4.6 and 6.5 thousand (170

titles) and within the range between 8.6 and 10.5 thousand (167 titles)<sup>20</sup>. In the following years most titles were printed in the number of copies that fell within the range between 4.6 and 6.5 thousand<sup>21</sup>. Also there were fewer titles with the highest print runs. In 1995 there were 23 books that were printed in the number of copies exceeding 300 thousand; in 2000 there were 5 such books and in 2005 there was no such book at all. Also interesting is the data concerning the number of titles with unknown number of copies. Until 1990 there were almost no such books. In the following years their number rapidly increased (159 in 1995, 721 in 2000, 769 in 2005), which is connected with the fact that new publishers often neglected to deliver legal deposit copies of their titles.

Successive Ministers of Education allowed for greater autonomy for schools, which meant elimination of political bias and control mechanisms. In 1999, the first reform of the educational system in free Poland was implemented. After the reform, teachers could not only choose any teaching curriculum out of many authorized by the Minister of Education but also prepare those on their own and use any textbook they found suitable<sup>22</sup>—as long as they were conformable with the Core Curriculum and approved of by the principal of the school. Finally, teachers could adjust their actions to the level of their pupils and teaching conditions.

The abundance of titles available to teachers is well reflected in the list of teaching curricula authorized by the Minister of Education in 1999 that is in the first year after the reformation of the educational system. For grades one to three of the primary school there were 41 curricula for integrated education. For all the subjects taught in grades four to six the number of curricula was over 160 and for the subjects in 'gimnazjum' (gymnasium) (Polish equivalent of junior high school)—almost 240<sup>23</sup>.

Changes in teaching curricula came together with the changes in the structure of the schooling system. The primary school with eight grades was replaced with

14 KLUKOWSKI, Bogdan; TOBERA, Marek, op. cit., p. 70–71.

15 GOŁĘBIEWSKI, Łukasz. *Rynek książki w Polsce*. Edycja 1998. Warszawa, 1998, p. 29.

16 GOŁĘBIEWSKI, Łukasz. *Rynek książki w Polsce*. Edycja 1999. Warszawa, 1999, p. 36.

17 According to: KLUKOWSKI, Bogdan; TOBERA, Marek, op. cit., p. 127.

18 *Ruch Wydawniczy w Liczbach 21:1975*. Warszawa, 1976, p. 31; *Ruch Wydawniczy w Liczbach 24:1980*. Warszawa, 1982, p. 31.

19 *Ruch Wydawniczy w Liczbach 31:1985*. Warsza-

wa, 1986, p. 31; *Ruch Wydawniczy w Liczbach 36:1990*. Warszawa, 1991, p. 23.

20 *Ruch Wydawniczy w Liczbach 41:1995*. Warszawa, 1996, p. 23.

21 *Ruch Wydawniczy w Liczbach 46:2000*. Warszawa, 2001, p. 23; *Ruch Wydawniczy w Liczbach 51:2005*. Warszawa, 2006, p. 23.

22 MOSIEK, Tadeusz. *Dla nauczyciela i ucznia*. Od programów nauczania do egzaminów. Warszawa, 2001, p. 17.

23 Ibid., p. 18.

six grades of primary school and three grades of ‘gimnazjum’, which meant that teaching resources for the fourth grade of the primary school and the first grade of ‘gimnazjum’ had to be prepared first. In the following years there were also changes in the curricula for nursery schools, high schools and vocational schools. This revival of the book market could be observed in turnover growth in the market: from 250 million PLN in 1996 to 450 million PLN in 1999<sup>24</sup>. It seems that this is the time when the monopoly of WSiP collapsed. Its share in the market dropped from 50% in 1998 to 37% in 2000<sup>25</sup>.

Fierce competition among publishers brought about both positive and negative results. On the one hand, the market was flooded with valuable and modern products. On the other hand, it sometimes happened that teachers did not choose the best textbooks but the ones, the publishers of which offered additional benefits: gadgets, free copies, and discounts. There were conferences during which publishers advertised their titles and the guests of such conferences were often well known figures representing the world of culture. Eventually, the Ministry of Education enforced a ban on selling textbooks in schools, which curtailed such practices and disciplined both teachers and publishers<sup>26</sup>.

The most prominent publishing houses that were established in early 1990s are Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Oświatowe (GWO), Nowa Era, and MAC. Let us now briefly present these companies.

GWO is one of the first private educational publishing houses. It was established in 1991 by Adam Mysior, a mathematician from the University of Gdańsk. Initially GWO issued additional supplies for teaching mathematics and popular books on that subject. In 1992 GWO published two titles and in 1998—92 titles, printed altogether in 3 million copies. In the ranking of publishers GWO occupied then the 25<sup>th</sup> position<sup>27</sup>. In the beginning of the next century, the publisher retained its position but did not release any information about the number of printed copies and its net income. The competition in the market was very tight but teachers of mathematics in primary schools most frequently chose the textbook “Matematyka z Plusem” published by GWO<sup>28</sup>. In the ranking of publishers for 2011 GWO is not recorded – it still refuses to provide any information about its revenue and the number of printed copies.

Nowa Era is a publishing house that was also established in the beginning of the 1990s. Educational resources published in that period included mainly exercises and tests and that was also the content of the first titles issued by a company started by a teacher of history. Next year, published under the label Nowa Era, there appeared workbooks for primary school subjects that were sold in 1.8 million of copies. In 1994 Nowa Era started to publish textbooks (the first was a

primary school textbook for biology) and for the very first time used coated paper for that purpose. Between 1993 and 1998 the number of titles published by Nowa Era doubled (from 20 to 44) and in 1998 the number of printed copies reached 3 million. In the ranking of publishers Nowa Era was then on the 18<sup>th</sup> position<sup>29</sup>. Three years later Nowa Era moved to the 8<sup>th</sup> position with a turnover of 30 million PLN. This turnover was one sixth of the turnover of WSiP that was still the leader in the market<sup>30</sup>. The titles of Nowa Era have always been addressed to ‘gimnazjum’ teachers, although the publisher has also successfully issued resources for lower levels of education. The development of Nowa Era was accelerated by mergers and takeovers. In 2007 it was sold to Sanoma WSOY, an international media group that had already taken over Young Digital Planet, a company with which Nowa Era cooperated in the production of CDs. In 2013, in the ranking of publishers Nowa Era occupied the first position, for the first time ahead of WSiP<sup>31</sup>.

The publishing house MAC was established in 1989 and issued first textbooks three years later. Between 1996 and 1998 the revenue of the company went significantly up. At the end of that period it published only 12 titles but in more than 3 million copies. In the ranking of publishers MAC was then classified on the 23<sup>rd</sup> position.<sup>32</sup> 2000 was the momentous year for this publisher: MAC issued a package of ten workbooks for integrated education (one workbook for each month of the school-year). In the middle of the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century the company took over a few smaller ones and changed the name to Grupa Edukacyjna S.A. Now, Grupa Edukacyjna is a conglomerate of several publishers, IT companies and producers of additional teaching supplies. Its main area of business activity is education in nursery schools and in the first three grades of primary schools. In 2012 Grupa Edukacyjna occupied the 5<sup>th</sup> position in the ranking of publishers<sup>33</sup>. In 2013 Grupa Edukacyjna did not provide any information about the economic results of its activity.

The social and political breakthrough of the 1990s opened up new possibilities and activated teachers in their communities. Some of them established their own

24 GOŁĘBIEWSKI, Łukasz. *Rynek książki w Polsce 2000*. Warszawa, 2000, p. 29.

25 Ibid., p. 30.

26 MOSIEK, Tadeusz, op. cit., p. 15.

27 GOŁĘBIEWSKI, Łukasz. *Rynek książki w Polsce*. Edycja 1999, op. cit., p. 30, 75.

28 GOŁĘBIEWSKI, Łukasz. *Rynek książki w Polsce 2001*. Warszawa, 2001, p. 141.

29 GOŁĘBIEWSKI, Łukasz. *Rynek książki w Polsce*. Edycja 1999, op. cit., p. 30, 70.

30 GOŁĘBIEWSKI, Łukasz. *Rynek książki w Polsce 2001*, op. cit., p. 59.

31 GOŁĘBIEWSKI, Łukasz; WASZCZYK, Paweł. *Rynek książki w Polsce 2013*. Warszawa, 2013, p. 251, 255.

32 GOŁĘBIEWSKI, Łukasz. *Rynek książki w Polsce*. Edycja 1999, op. cit., p. 30, 74.

33 GOŁĘBIEWSKI, Łukasz; WASZCZYK, Paweł. *Rynek książki w Polsce 2012*. Warszawa, 2012, p. 243, 286–290.

publishing houses, whereas some others joined teachers' associations, participated in conferences and workshops, wrote original curricula, articles, and educational books. They all contributed to the modernization of Polish schools. The changes were spurred by the reforms that started in 1999 and 2009. The reforms themselves turned out to be an opportunity to update the textbooks that were in use or replace them with new ones and publishers took full advantage of this situation. Due to the abundance of titles available in the market the average print runs dropped, which caused a decline in the profitability of publishing houses. For each school subject there were tens of textbook titles with additional teaching supplies (exercises, tasks, projects, and tests), which, at a certain point, started to appear on CDs. The introduction of this new data carrier meant additional costs for publishers and a necessity to cooperate with IT companies. In the beginning, the additional supplies were used only for marketing purposes—to build the public image of a publisher as a modern and rich company.

### THE PROGRAM “CYFROWA SZKOŁA”

Despite the fact that the first teaching resources in the digital form started to appear towards the end of the 1990s and in the following years they were offered by numerous publishers, it is the year 2011 that should be regarded as the beginning of the era of e-textbooks. In the spring of 2011, WSiP and Pearson Central Europe presented their new packages of teaching resources for the next school-year. Their distinguishing features were multimedia tools and on-line exercises. This leap forward made by the leading publisher of the country caused a huge disturbance in the market of textbooks. Competing companies followed suit: other big publishers prepared their own multibooks. In the beginning of 2012 another large player entered the market: the Polish Government presented the draft of the program “Cyfrowa Szkoła” (Digital School), in which comparable sums of money were allocated for both equipment and content, that is textbooks in the form of computer files. Such files are to be commissioned by the Government and made available for free. It is projected that, under this program, 14 textbooks of this type will have been prepared by 2015. A competition was announced for the best digital textbooks but it was boycotted by the largest Polish publishers. The companies associated in Polska Izba Książki (Polish Chamber of Books) officially expressed their concern about unrealistic deadlines and completion dates, the reviewing procedures (the textbooks are to be commissioned and reviewed by the same body), and lack of funds for updating the textbooks. Nevertheless, the competition took place and a decision was made. Quite unexpectedly, several Polish schools of higher edu-

cation were selected as the partners in the program and now they are responsible for the content of the new digital textbooks<sup>34</sup>. All publishers have been reassured that the new e-textbooks will only broaden the range of products in the market but it has to be remembered that the new digital textbooks will be the only ones available for free.

### Conclusions

In the 1970s and 1980s the functioning of publishing houses depended very much on political decisions. The publisher was a “transmission belt” from the state and party (PZPR) authorities to schools. Its exceptional position was ensured by its being the exclusive provider of textbooks, which also meant large print runs in each edition of every title. Additionally, the position of the publisher was strengthened by the competencies of the authors of textbooks, who frequently were academics, as well as by the relationships with academic centres that participated in all phases in the life-cycle of the textbook: from writing the curriculum to the validation of learning outcomes.

From the beginning of 90s a new factor started to determine the publisher’s position: namely, the revenue, which depended on the size of the print run of particular titles. There soon appeared competitors to WSiP. In 1997, two publishing houses that had been established a few years earlier printed 2.6 million copies of textbooks each and acquired the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> positions among all publishers<sup>35</sup>. The needs of the market were enormous so the independence of the publisher was high. It was limited when the competition in the market became tight. The most successful companies were those that managed to recognize the expectations of large groups of receivers and cater to them.

It is very likely that the publisher’s position will soon be lowered due to the introduction of free and widely accessible teaching resources that are being prepared by the Government. The state authorities are trying to go over the heads of publishers and communicate with the receivers of textbooks directly. There is widespread acceptance for the Government’s decisions as the new system seems to be less costly to the citizens. Nothing is known, however, about long-term consequences of these decisions in the fields of economy and education.

34 *Ośrodek Rozwoju Edukacji*: E-podręczniki – wyłoniono wszystkich partnerów projektu [accessed 4 September 2014]. Access through Internet: <[http://www.ore.edu.pl/strona-ore/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=2683:e-podreczniki-wyo-](http://www.ore.edu.pl/strona-ore/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2683:e-podreczniki-wyo-)

[nio-no-wszystkich-partnerow-projektu&catid=200:e-podreczniki-aktualnoci&Itemid=1733&Itemid=1733](http://www.ore.edu.pl/strona-ore/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2683:e-podreczniki-wy-)>.

35 GOŁĘBIEWSKI, Łukasz. *Rynek książki w Polsce*. Edycja 1998, op. cit., p. 67.

Nearly throughout the entire analyzed period the situation of the author was similar to that of the publisher. In the 1970s and 1980s, high sales of a textbook did not mean high revenues paid to its author and the independence of the author was limited by complex reviewing procedures and censorship. In the next period, the publishing contracts in which the author's revenues were connected with the number of sold copies made it possible for the authors to become economically successful and thus the position of the author was strengthened. Yet, the authors' professional satisfaction was declining as their independence was decreasing: the publishers needed textbooks that might be sold in large numbers, not necessarily ones of high quality. The program "Cyfrowa Szkoła" is going to change the situation completely. It is assumed that there will be a single fee paid to the author and it will not be related to the popularity of the specific textbook. The teaching resources acquired in this way will be then made available under a Creative Commons license or any other free license, which means that there will be a possibility to modify and distribute them further. The publisher no longer selects the author.

It seems that it is the receivers (teachers) of educational publications who benefited most from the political, social, and technological changes. In the beginning of the whole analyzed period they had to follow the decisions of political and educational authorities; after 1989 the receiver's choice of a particular textbook out of many available was decisive to the future of the publisher. The Government's initiative to make textbooks available under free licenses changed the balance of power in the market of schoolbooks. There is a risk that the changes will ultimately lead to the limitation of the range of textbooks in the market, which, in turn, will force teachers to search for new educational resources or to prepare them by themselves. The result may be a further increase of the independence of teachers' decisions but their responsibility and effort will also grow since they will take over many tasks now belonging to the publisher. The model of publishing with the publisher in the very centre seems to be becoming a thing of the past<sup>36</sup>.

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## VADOVĖLIŲ RINKA LENKIJOJE (1970–2012): POKYČIAI IR TENDENCIJOS

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### Santrauka

Kaip vienas svarbiausių veiksnių, pastaraisiais dešimtmečiais padariusių didelę įtaką tiek žmonių gyvenimui, tiek institucijų veiklai Lenkijoje, vertėtų paminėti 1989 m. įvykusį socialinį politinį proveržį ir dinamišką šiuolaikinių technologijų plėtrą, prasidėjusią atsivėrus sienoms ir įvedus šalyje laisvosios rinkos mechanizmus. Šie du veiksniai laikomi lemiamais ir plėtojant Lenkijos knygų rinką. Straipsnyje pateikiama vieno iš knygų rinkos komponentų analizė, būtent vadovėlių mokykloms rinka. Atlikto tyrimo tikslas – nustatyti pagrindinių veikėjų, tai yra autoriaus, leidėjo ir mokytojo kaip paslaugos gavėjo, socialinio statuso ir nepriklausomybės pokyčius bėgant laikui.

XX amžiaus aštuntame ir devintame dešimtmečiuose leidyklų veikla labai priklausė nuo priimamų politinių sprendimų. Leidėjas tuo metu atliko „perdavimo diržo“ vaidmenį tarp valsybės

36 The impact of „Cyfrowa Szkoła” (Digital School) Program to the future system of preparation and distribution of educational materials was

discussed in: E. Jabłońska-Stefanowicz. Katedra czy bazar? Podręcznik jako projekt open source. *Kultura i Edukacja*, 2013, nr. 2, p. 107–127.

institucijų ir mokyklų. Tuometinis leidėjas, turintis išimtines vadovėlių tiekėjo teises, užėmė išskirtinę padėtį rinkoje, kuri užtikrino didelius visų leidžiamų leidinių tiražus kiekvienos laidos atveju.

Nuo XX amžiaus paskutinio dešimtmečio pradžios rinkoje pastebimas naujas veiksnys, ėmęs daryti įtaką leidėjo užimamai pozicijai – t. y. pajamos, kurios priklausė nuo konkrečių leidžiamų leidinių tiražo. Iki tol rinkos poreikiai buvo milžiniški, taigi leidėjas mėgavosi beveik neribojama nepriklausomybe. Vis dėlto, didėjant konkurencijai rinkoje, ši nepriklausomybė vis mažėjo. Sėkmingiausios leidybos įmonės buvo tos, kurios sugebėjo numatyti didelių paslaugos gavėjų (mokytojų) grupių lūkesčius ir juos patenkinti.

Beveik visu nagrinėjamu laikotarpiu autoriaus situacija buvo panaši į leidėjo. Aštuntame ir devintame dešimtmečiuose dideli vadovėlių pardavimo mastai neužtikrindavo didelių pajamų autoriams. Be to, autoriaus nepriklausomybę ribojo sudėtinga peržiūros procedūra ir cenzūra. Vėlesniu laikotarpiu leidybos sutartys, kai autoriaus pajamos priklausė nuo parduodamų egzempliorių skaičiaus, leido autoriui tikėtis geresnio ekonominio rezultato, taigi jo pozicija sustiprėjo. Vis dėlto, imant riboti autoriaus nepriklausomybę, mažėjo ir jo asmeninis pasitenkinimas. Leidėjai buvo suinteresuoti leisti vadovėlius, kurie jiems užtikrintų didelius pardavimus. Kokybė dažnai nebuvo lemiamas veiksnys.

Galima daryti prielaidą, kad didžiausią naudą iš šalyje įvykusių politinių, socialinių ir technologinių pokyčių pajuto švietimo leidinių gavėjai (mokytojai). Nagrinėjamo laikotarpio pradžioje jie privalėjo vadovautis politinių ir švietimo institucijų priimamais sprendimais; po 1989 m. konkretaus vadovėlio pasirinkimas iš daugelio galimybių rinkoje, buvęs gavėjo (mokytojo) prerogatyva, tapo lemiamu veiksniu sėkmingai leidėjo ateičiai užtikrinti.

2012 m. Lenkijos vyriausybė pristatė programą „Cyfrowa Szkoła“ (Skaitmeninė mokykla). Joje nurodoma, kad vadovėlius turi užsakyti vyriausybė ir kad jie turi būti platinami pagal laisvasias licencijas. Galima įžvelgti riziką, kad rinkoje vykstantys pokyčiai galiausiai gali sumažinti leidžiamų vadovėlių įvairovę ir jų pasirinkimą. Savo ruožtu, mokytojai tokiu atveju būtų priversti ieškoti naujų mokomųjų priemonių arba pradėtų patys jas rengti. Galima teigti, kad leidybos modelis, kai leidėjas užima pagrindinį vaidmenį šiame procese, ima atgyventi.

*Įteikta 2014 m. kovo mėn.*