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Multimedia forms of library information on the Internet

The multimedia library information has only recently been present on the Internet. It is difficult to set exactly a specific date, but that appearance has become widespread in recent 10 years. In Poland that form of information has gained in popularity in library practice from only a few years. More or less since 2010 we have observed its noticeable development. Previously, in that field there were significant civilization and material limitations, such as in the first place: a slow process of Polish libraries computerization, due to their chronic underfunding, as well as a low degree of general access to the internet. A low awareness, under-appreciation of the major role which the multimedia could play in information dissemination, and poor appreciation of its value were not without significance for the situation of Polish libraries before 2010. The situation slightly improved only when there was considerable progress in the aforementioned factors and visible transformations. The increasing popularity of library information multimedia forms was accompanied by development of digital communication technologies, which made easier the access to the internet and to multimedia devices for the many. As a result of this technological revolution, sending and receiving information in the form of digital data has begun to assert itself, ergo entered our everyday lives. The popularity of smartphones, tablets and other mobile devices, equipped with multimedia applications facilitated access to close-coupled video and audio information (i.e. multimedia information), on an unprecedented scale¹. The Internet, as a transmission channel of information in that audio-video form, has played the determinant role. Thanks to the internet a traditional concept of multimedia exceeded its definition and started functioning in the wider context of information – as a hypertext². In the general sense multimedia technologies are understood as tool devices transmitting information, i.e. every informative digital media, for instance: the press, radio, television and recently also e-books, audiovisual equipment and computers. In terms of information technology multimedia are technical measures applied to digital processing and presentation of information in the integrated form: textual, graphical (static and dynamic – video, animation) and sonic. Hypermedia

¹ More information related to the subject of multimedia and multicast's definition can be found in W. Pisarek (ed.), *Słownik terminologii medialnej*, Kraków 2006, p. 124–125.

² Hypertext: *Słownik terminologii medialnej...*, p. 75–76.

defined as the totality of messages and information technology tools have become a synonym of contemporary multimedia. Common features of multimedia and hypermedia are: multiplicity and integration of messages, usage of information technology in the message and the possibility of active participation (interactivity), as well as creation of virtual reality³. To sum up, the condition of transmission and reception of multimedia information is a combination of several forms of messages, their integration into one, parallel message-information and usage of information technology tools for this purpose, that make this transmission and reception by the costumer possible. In case of the contemporary multimedia there is also aforementioned interactivity (e.g. games, language courses) and technology application to creation and usage of the virtual reality (e.g. oculus rift). Characteristic of all interactive multimedia is the fact that they cannot exist without the system of hyperlinks, because being a necessary component of the navigation process is a requirement of reading, reception and information transmission⁴. In the M. McLuhan's typology, multimedia are part of "cool media", but they have been applied to e.g. education, information and entertainment. Participants of communication act executed with multimedia have a direct opportunity or a feeling of a life contact in a real time⁵. The multimedia make possible the so-called multimedia communication, the distance dialogue, effected as an audiovisual transmission through applications/communicators, e.g. Skype, conference calls, video chats or e-learning⁶.

The inception of the multimedia portals and services on the Internet – such as YouTube – was a real milestone in development and in rapid spread of multimedia forms of library information. This video streaming service is currently the largest and the most popular source of this type of content. There are many materials in its vast, global resources, which have a very broad subject area and different levels – from frivolous ones to scientific topics, both private and institutional. The popularity of this service and unlimited range of its influence were noticed and appreciated not only by private individuals, but also by institutions, including libraries. In recent years the presence of library subject area on YouTube has been more and more not only visible, but also essential. The same applies to library's web pages and library presence on social network services, such as Facebook. The libraries apply the YouTube mainly to carry out their primary purposes: informative, educational and propagandistic. Every multimedia content put on a portal is subordinated to these purposes. This kind of typology could seem too simplified, though, because of different topics and diverse forms. The analysis of their contents contributed to the emergence of five most popular types of multimedia library information:

- 1) Advertising spots
- 2) Docuganda films about libraries activity

³ Read more on the subject of hypermedia in B. Siemieniecki, *Komputery i hipermedia w procesie edukacji dorosłych*, Toruń 1994.

⁴ M. Składanek, *Parateksty w środowiskach informacyjnych mediów interaktywnych*, [in:] A. Gwóźdź (ed.), *Pogranicza audiowizualności. Parateksty kina, telewizji i nowych mediów*, Kraków 2010, p. 402.

⁵ *Słownik terminologii medialnej...*, p. 125.

⁶ For more on that subject see my article: A. Bańdo, *Komunikaty medialne i kształcenie kompetencji współczesnego użytkownika i kreatora informacji multimedialnej z perspektywy bibliologa*, „Kultura informacyjna w ujęciu interdyscyplinarnym – teoria i praktyka”, vol. 2, Kraków 2016, p. 285–295.

- 3) Films and other multimedia informational-and-briefing forms
- 4) Documentary films picturing libraries' histories
- 5) Films about libraries created by the libraries, with or without cooperation of other institutions, organisations and foundations.

Advertising spots are short films, usually lasting 30 seconds (1- to 2-second shots) approximately, although sometimes that type of material can be longer or shorter. Library spots present the library briefly; as a rule they picture its attractiveness, for instance architecture of the building, modern technical equipment, a number and a character of collections; emphasizing that everyone has opportunity to spend time there comfortably. In case of old libraries the advertising spots appeal to rich tradition. The advertising spot is a difficult form and thus is effected generally by large and wealthy libraries which can afford to enjoy services of professional, specialized advertising agencies. The spots of National Library of Poland (in Warsaw) and the spot of Library of Congress in Washington set examples of this group⁷. As examples from scientific libraries see the spot of Warsaw University Library and the spot of Library of the University of Life Sciences in Lublin⁸. One of the spots of the aforementioned Warsaw University Library deserves a special attention; this one was effected with usage of a drone. This is probably the only one or one of first library spots executed in this way, even though it does not fully meet requirements of this form. Due to a bird's-eye view everyone can admire great, modern architecture of the building surrounded by gardens and nature⁹. Without any doubt this presentation of the library will encourage not only potential readers to visit it.

Smaller establishments rarely use services of third-party advertising companies, although there are also such examples, for instance: a cartoon history of the logo of City Public Library in Wrocław¹⁰. The advertisement of Mediateka in Wrocław is also a very interesting library spot¹¹. Other Polish scientific and public libraries, because of their limited financial capacity, go for other forms and affect them on their own, which results in amateur level of these materials, e.g. *Spot Żywa Biblioteka 2016 – Ruda Śląska*¹² and an about 7-minute-long spot of Silesian Library – recorded by that library employees. In case of this last library the so-called spot does not meet requirements of this form – some shots are too long. Nevertheless, the initiative and commitment of its authors need to be appreciated¹³. The situation is different in the developed countries

⁷ *Biblioteka Narodowa – spot*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=4LAGl8LI-fg [accessed 25.04.2016]; *C-SPAN's; „The Library of Congress” – Promotional Spot 5*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=hJUILx9hKgU [accessed 25.04.2016].

⁸ *Kolekcja Tołoczanowa*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=8xxkLQyfPg [accessed 25.04.2016]; *Biblioteka Uniwersytetu Przyrodniczego w Lublinie*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=aUZfVxBiTCo [accessed 25.04.2016].

⁹ *BUW – Biblioteka Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=-69pE8lOzPdW [accessed 25.04.2016].

¹⁰ *Historia bibliotecznego logo (spot reklamowy) – Miejska Biblioteka Publiczna we Wrocławiu*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=-aWyrXfNmOc [accessed 25.04.2016].

¹¹ *Spot reklamowy wrocławskiej Mediateki*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=fh0TKk300Qk [accessed 25.04.2016].

¹² *Spot Żywa Biblioteka 2016 – Ruda Śląska*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=qX-q1iu-B5Z4 [accessed 25.04.2016].

¹³ *Biblioteka Śląska: Spot 2014*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=KzTTfjrvQP4 [accessed 25.04.2016].

of the West, where public libraries use more often professional advertising spots. These successful examples include the film of the Fresno County Public Library¹⁴.

The second group includes docuganda films about libraries' activity, which is the most representative group of libraries' multimedia materials. It is typical for most types of libraries, from large cities and small towns and villages. Most of this type of "productions", however, come from public and school libraries. The docuganda films about libraries' activity may be divided into two categories. The first category includes informational films about libraries, their collections, technological advancement and provided services, for instance: *Welcome to Maynooth University Library*¹⁵ or *The Hunt Library*, which are good examples of usage of the most modern multimedia technology¹⁶. Among Polish examples this category includes: *Wszystko, co chcielibyście wiedzieć o bibliotece* (*All you want to know about the library*) – a professionally made film for City Public Library in Knurów¹⁷, as well as many amateur productions executed by public and school libraries. Unfortunately, in many of these titles the term "spot" is misapplied¹⁸. The second category includes reportages which document celebrations, parties and events organized by libraries, e.g. exhibitions, meetings with authors, workshops and activities for various group of readers, e.g. children and senior citizens. From this very large category a few typical and characteristic examples could be mentioned: the meeting with Maria Czubaszek, a songwriter, screenwriter and journalist (*Spotkanie z Marią Czubaszek*) at the Regional and City Public Library in Bydgoszcz¹⁹, as well as paintings and graphics exhibition and *Seniors for children* (*Seniorzy dzieciom*) – coverages of the meetings at City Public Library in Bolesławiec²⁰. The multimedia announcement-invitation to meet the authors at Public Library in Czarne, recorded by the local television channel, was rather an exceptional form²¹.

The third group are multimedia informational-and-briefing forms, characteristic for scientific libraries, mostly academic and also large public libraries. Their subject area includes: briefing on how to sign up to that library and how to use its collections, library training concerning the usage of electronic catalogs and databases.

¹⁴ *Fresno County Public Library TV Spot*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=2U_-Tncy-Flg [accessed 25.04.2016].

¹⁵ *Maynooth University Library Video*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=HSdrjaGHLu4 [accessed 25.04.2016].

¹⁶ *The Hunt Library Story (Update)*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=Okr78MUrImI [accessed 25.04.2016].

¹⁷ *Wszystko, co chcielibyście wiedzieć o bibliotece*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=-5Ph5PYy1uhs [accessed 26.04.2016].

¹⁸ *Spot reklamowy Biblioteki Publicznej w Budzynie (Filia Wyszyń)*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=9SiVR3VSONw [accessed 26.04.2016]; *Biblioteka Publiczna im. H. Święcickiego w Śremie*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=ByjveKGZxQw [accessed 26.04.2016]; *Nasza szkolna biblioteka. [Film o bibliotece szkolnej w Bieruniu]*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=9mkrw5o8KyU [accessed 26.04.2016].

¹⁹ *Spotkanie z Marią Czubaszek*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=46LdZPfVj7Q [accessed 26.04.2016].

²⁰ *MBP w Bolesławcu Władysław Garnik. Wystawa malarstwa i grafiki*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=-32YjyFY-JA [accessed 26.04.2016]; *Miejska Biblioteka Publiczna w Bolesławcu. Seniorzy dzieciom – czytanie bajek i inne atrakcje*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=1381BlgtteU [accessed 26.04.2016].

²¹ *Zapowiedź spotkania z Piotrem Rozmusem – Biblioteka Publiczna w Czarnem*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=g6fZr8d6jBg [accessed 26.04.2016].

I would like to illustrate it with a few examples of materials realized for Main Library of Pedagogical University in Cracow: *Wkręć się w studiowanie* (*Crash into studying*) – an informational-and-briefing film for students who begin their studies, which explains terms and conditions of exploiting the library collections²²; the multimedia instruction explaining the use of “Edukator” database²³. From other noteworthy examples of this group also multimedia informative forms, so-called webinarium, deserve special attention. Webinarium provides information related to evolution of library image on the Internet, among others: guidebooks about how to design a functional web pages and about library’s communication to environment²⁴.

The fourth group may include documentary films picturing libraries’ histories. This type of library information service, for obvious reasons, is characteristic for those libraries that may boast a rich history. In case of multimedia information it mainly refers to foreign libraries, for instance: the Library of Congress (USA)²⁵, the Vatican Apostolic Library (e.g. the film made by RAI-DSE Centro Televisivo Vaticano)²⁶, as well as ancient libraries, for example Ancient Library of Alexandria (A&E Television Networks production)²⁷. The libraries executed most of these documentaries without the involvement of the libraries or with their cooperation. These are custom-films commissioned by professional film studios or TV stations. Against that background, the films representing histories of Polish libraries are not eye-catching, unattractive for the customer and unfortunately non-professional. One of the few exceptions is the documentary film made by the Public Pedagogical Library in Poznań on the occasion of its 85th anniversary²⁸. On the Internet there is no documentary telling history of such famous Polish libraries as Jagiellonian Library (Biblioteka Jagiellońska) or Ossolineum. Other libraries’ “productions” are amateur records of little libraries’ histories, chiefly public ones, often operating in the province, for instance: the library in Polanów²⁹ or the library in Zielonki³⁰.

The fifth group includes films about libraries realized by the library with or without cooperation with other institutions, organizations and foundations. They represent materials of two categories. The first category includes films made during

²² *Wkręć się w studiowanie, odc. 5 – Biblioteka Główna Uniwersytetu Pedagogicznego*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=BL_pjmykVzU [accessed 26.04.2016].

²³ *Edukator – jak wyszukiwać w bazie danych*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=BL_pjmykVzU [accessed 26.04.2016].

²⁴ *Webinarium „Podaj dalej – jak komunikować się z czytelnikiem i promować bibliotekę”*, www.youtube.com/watch?v=8TRIDrLqI4w [accessed 26.04.2016]; *Wizerunek biblioteki – Webinarium*, www.youtube.com/watch?v=yHlf7jAICMM [accessed 26.04.2016].

²⁵ *Library of Congress. Journeys & crossings. [Inside the Library of Congress]*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=LBwVsFZWcNY [accessed 26.04.2016].

²⁶ *I codici preziosi della Biblioteca Vaticana. [Dokument Skarby Biblioteki Watykańskiej...]*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=QWrxN52giI8 [accessed 26.04.2016]; *Vatican Library. 60 Minutes report on the secrets and splendor of the Vatican Library in Rome*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=R2nCN4rhlFw [accessed 26.04.2016].

²⁷ *Ancient Mysteries. [Starożytne tajemnice. Zaginione skarby Biblioteki Aleksandryjskiej...]*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZDqdDqNB10k [accessed 26.04.2016].

²⁸ *Sentymentalna podróż*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=WUGe73nd5e8 [accessed 26.04.2016].

²⁹ *Zarys rozwoju Biblioteki Publicznej Miasta i Gminy w Polanowie od II wojny światowej do współczesności*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=_vrMRzCoMv8 [accessed 26.04.2016].

³⁰ *Historia biblioteki w Węgrzyczach [Historia biblioteki w gminie Zielonki]*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=zD8Rj_Er3qs [accessed 26.04.2016].

different events, social actions (e.g. popularizing reading) which took place in the libraries. An example is – the joint project of Bibliocreatio and Warsaw University Library – the film with a participation of writers, artists, people of art and culture, produced by MyWorks Studio³¹. It is also noteworthy to mention the interesting suggestion of the American libraries (Carnegie Free Library, Beaver Falls), which had involved a well-known basketball player to popularize reading³². Presentations of new publications belong probably to this category, e.g. *Pracownicy Biblioteki Śląskiej polecają...*³³. The second category includes films about library subject area, made by professional film production companies, e.g. the popular animated cartoon for children *Świnka Peppa (Peppa Pig)*³⁴.

Libraries' interest in multimedia information forms results from follows out of their advantages, effectivity and attractiveness. Link-up of audiovisual effects affects the emotional human part, they also act as a motivational factor. Multimedia became a rich source of knowledge and a tool for intellectual growth. They have allowed perception of phenomena, taking properties of analyzed reality on board, more faithfully than ever, but at the same time not limiting thereto. New technologies of a virtual reality make possible recreation of the phenomena already non-existent.

The use of multimedia in library information practice increased a circle of its customers and affected its more effective assimilation (approximately 40%). It became possible due to close-coupled contents and form of a message, simultaneously implemented. Multiplication of information's transmission and multi-sensory (at least two senses) impact made it extremely effective and useful. Multimedia stimulate cognitive motivation, enhance interest, orientate at acquiring the knowledge, cause its better preservation and structuring of information. Not surprisingly, these advantages of multimedia were quickly noticed and used in library practice. When describing advantages of multimedia we cannot ignore the role of the main tool for their usage and popularization, i.e. the Internet. Its hypertextual form and contemporary communicative practice made it a repository of information about cultural texts, thus creating a completely new context of their presence – a paratext³⁵.

Summary

The multimedia forms of library information application have managed to extend the circle of its customers. New multimedia transfer of information has become more attractive and more effective than traditional sources used until very recently. Modern technology of information creation and transfer have made possible perception of appearances, this time more accurately than before, including properties of

³¹ *Czytaj! Zobacz więcej*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=KhrCozn5mi0 [accessed 26.04.2016].

³² „Basketball and Books” *Library Spot*. [Video spot produced for Beaver Falls Carnegie Free Library, starring Geneva College basketball player Keynon Jackson. Written by David Daniels], [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=ofWCtv8C8dk [accessed 26.04.2016].

³³ *Pracownicy Biblioteki Śląskiej polecają...* [*Biblioteka Śląska: Polecamy*], [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=2zL5r-3Hi4M [accessed 26.04.2016].

³⁴ *Świnka Peppa – Biblioteka*, [online] www.youtube.com/watch?v=_nvAMiPdxF4 [accessed 26.04.2016].

³⁵ Read more on that subject in *Pogranicza audiowizualności...*, Kraków 2010.

the reality being perceived. It has also facilitated quicker information assimilation and information understanding. Modern multimedia communication technologies opened unseen opportunities, so far unknown possibility that library's activities (informative, propagandistic and educational) are likely to be realized. Multimedia forms of library information, published on YouTube service, became its manifestation. The analysis of their contents facilitated the emergence of five most popular types of multimedia library information: advertising spots, docuganda films about libraries activity, films and other multimedia informational-and-briefing forms, documentary films picturing libraries' histories and materials concerning libraries' activity. The libraries created them in cooperation with other institutions, organisations and foundations, or without any help.

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Abstract

The article is dedicated to modern forms of library information available on the Internet, in particular on the biggest and the most popular video streaming service – YouTube. The text is an attempt at these forms typology; they will be profiled with regard to their three functions: informative, propagandistic and educational; as well as to a type of statement forms. The analysis provided of the content on YouTube, looking for the presence of library information multimedia forms, permitted to determine five most popular types of multimedia library information. In the introductory part the definition of the multimedia and of multimedia library information development will be discussed.

Key words: library information, multimedia information, multimedia, information technology

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