The Publishing Activity of the University Library "Svetozar Marković" in Belgrade: The Role of the Editor-Copyeditor in the Publishing Process

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ABSTRACT: The publishing activity of the University Library "Svetozar Marković" in Belgrade constitutes a significant dimension of its cultural and academic mission. This paper examines the specificities of library publishing, with particular emphasis on the professional role of the editor-copyeditor as a linguistic expert. By tracing the historical development and contemporary practices in this field, the paper highlights the diversity of publications and their relevance to both the academic community and the broader public. It is argued that library publishing is grounded in principles of social responsibility and academic reliability, and is characterized by a high degree of linguistic and structural editorial refinement. The central section of the paper is devoted to the analysis of editorial and copyediting work as a complex, multilayered, yet frequently underappreciated process. The conclusion underscores that the editor-copyeditor, building upon the author's contribution, serves as a crucial link in the final shaping of the text, and bears professional responsibility essential to its linguistic quality, reliability, and enduring value.

KEYWORDS: publishing activity, University Library "Svetozar Marković," editor, copyeditor, linguistic norm, academic standards, linguistic expertise, cultural and scholarly responsibility.

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1 Introduction

Libraries have traditionally occupied a distinguished position in contemporary society, owing to their significance for educational processes at various levels and to the unique cultural mission they have fulfilled over centuries.[1] The role of the modern library is not confined to the acquisition, preservation, and provision of library materials; it entails active participation in the shaping of knowledge, the culture of memory, and scholarly discourse. In recent decades, a discernible trend in academic communication has emerged whereby university and research libraries increasingly assume the role of publisher or partner in scholarly publishing, particularly in the context of open access (Brown et al. 2013).

2 An Example of European Practices

During a study visit to Berlin[2], we had the opportunity to gain direct insight into how university libraries integrate publishing activities into their operations. In this context, we visited the Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm Centre — the University Library of Humboldt University of Berlin (Universitätsbibliothek der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin), the Philological Library of the Free University (Philologische Bibliothek der Freien Universität Berlin), the Library of the Technical University (Universitätsbibliothek der Technischen Universität Berlin), and several other scientific research institutions.

The example that best illustrates this integration is the publishing platform Berlin Universities Publishing – BerlinUP[3], which enables researchers to publish the results of their work in peer-reviewed monographs and journals under an open access model. As an academic, non-commercial publisher, BerlinUP applies the diamond open access model, whereby both publication and access to content are free of charge for authors and readers alike. This

1. The author of this paper has worked as a copyeditor and editorial manager for nearly two decades, and for more than twelve years has been employed as an editor and copyeditor at the Publishing Center of the University Library "Svetozar Marković" in Belgrade. The text is based on many years of experience, condensed into a role that requires equal responsibility toward the author, the reader, and the language itself.

2. As part of the program financially supported by Bibliothek und Information Deutschland (BID)

3. Berlin Universities Publishing

activity is organized through an integrated system that includes series editors, editorial boards, and a dedicated team for open access and academic publishing. A particularly important aspect of its operation is a standardized peer review and editorial control process, in which editors, editorial managers, and copyeditors are responsible for the substantive, formal, and ethical quality of submitted works; they organize the review process and determine which submissions meet the criteria for publication. All publications receive a DOI identifier and are archived in the repository of the Technical University of Berlin (TU Berlin), with integration into national and international open access platforms to ensure lasting availability, transparency, and the tracking of scholarly output. In addition, BerlinUP provides comprehensive and personalized support to authors at every stage of the publishing process.

An analysis of the data gathered during this visit suggests that a high degree of integration of publishing activities within library and information systems constitutes a factor of both efficiency and quality in the publishing process, and that such integration is accompanied by well-developed mechanisms for author support. This model demonstrates that libraries can successfully combine academic expertise with editorial and technical infrastructure, covering the entire process from content preparation and metadata management through to final publication.

In the context of Serbia, this model is relevant to an understanding of the role of the University Library "Svetozar Marković" in Belgrade (hereafter referred to as the Library), which has already distinguished itself in providing access to scientific information and developing digital collections. The development of a centralized publishing infrastructure could ensure high-quality scholarly communication in accordance with contemporary international standards for academic publishing.

3 Publishing at the University Library "Svetozar Marković"

The University Library "Svetozar Marković" in Belgrade, as the central academic library in Serbia, aspires to a broader role in the development of scholarly communication. Beyond its core function of acquiring, processing, preserving, and providing access to library materials, the Library participates in the production and mediation of knowledge through its own publishing activity, which has expanded considerably over the past fifteen years. The developmental trajectory of the Library's publishing work can be traced

from the earliest lists of received books and periodicals from the year 1948, through regulations, guides, catalogues, and annual reports, to bibliographies and reviews of doctoral dissertations defended in Serbia, and works dedicated to Svetozar Marković in the mid-1970s. From contemporary perspective, of particular historical significance are the phototype editions of Ivo Andrić's works *Ex Ponto* and *Nemiri* (1975), prepared in collaboration with the literary association "Petar Kočić." These editions were not isolated undertakings; they were subsequently followed by phototype reprints of Vuk Stefanović Karadžić's *Pismenica serbskoga jezika* (1984) and Stojan Novaković's *Srpska knjiga: njeni prodavci i čitaoci u XIX veku* (1982). Together, these publications illustrate the Library's academic commitment to the preservation of cultural and scholarly heritage. In the years that followed, this publishing activity was further expanded to include the first bibliographies of works, scholarly proceedings (1976), specialized monographs, and exhibition catalogues.

Speaking more broadly, in the first quarter of the 21st century the Library entered a new phase of development, characterized by a deliberate and systematic enhancement of its publishing activity. A dedicated organizational unit — the Centre for Publishing Activity — was established within the Library, and from that point the publication of contemporary scholarly and specialized monographs, studies, thematic proceedings, manuals, documentary materials, conference abstract books, and electronic and digital publications was undertaken systematically, along with linguistic and multidisciplinary journals offering overviews of the latest research and contemporary linguistic and library practices. It is thus evident that publishing has ceased to be a peripheral function and has become a continuous and distinctive activity of the academic institution, fully attuned to the contemporary information and cultural environment.

In this spirit, new series have been launched with the aim of advancing scholarly thought and popularizing knowledge, each with a recognizable visual identity. Among these, the series *Homilije*[4] is particularly noteworthy, as it publishes scholarly and specialized monographs as well as edited

4. *Dinamika pripovednog prostora* (2016) by Aleksandra V. Jovanović, *Teška slika: megalopolis angloameričkog i srpskog romana* (2016), by Maja Cvijetić, *Vreme i prostor u 'Zlatnom runu' Borislava Pekića* (2016) by Nebojša Lazić, *Figure preobražaja u književnom delu Danila Kiša i Prima Levija: od književne poetike do kulturne antropologije* (2019) by Aleksandar Kostić, *Kartografija mašte* (2020) and *Angloamerička teorija na prelazu milenijuma: diskurs i granice* (2024) by Aleksandra V. Jovanović.

volumes of doctoral dissertations in the field of literary studies. The series includes the subseries *Biblio*, devoted to edited volumes of doctoral dissertations on library and information science topics. Four titles[5] in this subseries are authored by members of the Library's staff — a fact that illustrates a highly significant and relatively uncommon dimension of library practice, whereby the institution itself provides a platform for publishing the scholarly contributions of its own employees. The series as a whole comprises ten titles to date and has established a stable foundation for the presentation of long-term research results.

The editions *Kanon*[6] and *Karnegi* have featured poetic translations and an anthology of Serbian war prose.

One of the most significant achievements of the Library's publishing activity is the collection *Knjigohranilište Univerziteta u Beogradu*[7] (*The Book Repository of the University of Belgrade*), dedicated to a systematic examination of the Library's history, development, and role in the national educational, scholarly, and cultural tradition. Conceived as a long-term publishing and research project to mark the centenary of the institution, this collection represents a form of institutional self-reflection designed to illuminate comprehensively the Library's history, evolution, and significance from its founding to the present day. It brings together scholarly research, a culture of institutional memory, and public presentation of institutional heritage, with plans for its continuation in the years ahead.

Within the domain of specialized and scholarly documentary monographic publications, works are published that are oriented towards the systematic analysis, processing, and contextualization of library and archival materials, as well as the study of the infrastructural and functional aspects of the scholarly information system. These publications address topics in the

5. *Pronalaženje informacija u digitalnim bibliotekama*, (2017), by Aleksandra Trtovac, *Nova paradigma saradnje u bibliotekama* (2017) by Adam Sofronijević, *Paralelni srpsko-nemački korpus književnih tekstova: izrada, pronalaženje informacija i semantički veb* (2021) by Jelena Andonovski and *Fenomen pseudonima kao vid autorstva u bibliotečko-informacionoj delatnosti* (2024) by Nataša Dakić.

6. Ivan V. Lalić: *Koraci prema moru* (2014); new translations by Fransis R. Jones, ed. Aleksandar Jovanović and Svetlana Šeatović Dimitrijević; Vladimir Kašnar: *Ustrajni otisci* (2017).

7. *Put do knjigohranilišta: obeležavanje 100. godišnjice osnivanja Univerzitetske biblioteke "Svetozar Marković"* (2021); *Knjigohranilište kao građevinski i arhitektonski izazov* (2024); *Posebne biblioteke i legati* (2025), ed. of the collection Dragana Stolić.

area of scientific information and document supply, and include the critical processing and publication of significant archival materials of historical, cultural, and scholarly importance. An illustrative example is the publication *Porodična prepiska kneza Miloša Obrenovića iz Arhivske zbirke Joce Vujića* (2016, edited by Tatjana Brzulović Stanisavljević).

In the first quarter of the 21st century, the Library has also published volumes of collected papers that advance critical and scholarly discourse in the humanities and social sciences, including domestic and international interdisciplinary proceedings exploring cultural, historical, and literary themes. Work on such volumes is especially demanding, as it involves harmonizing different authorial styles, methodological approaches, and levels of linguistic competence, imposing complex and responsible tasks on the editor and copyeditor. A title worthy of particular mention is *Kultura sećanja: medicina, bioetika, nacizam, etika u bibliotekarstvu*[8] which emerged from a roundtable attended by university professors and experts, and was devoted to ethics in scholarly research and librarianship. Its occasion was the contemporary debate surrounding the use of a publication of contested bioethical status — Pernkopf's *Atlas of Topographic Anatomy* — which the University Library had received from the Nazi organization DOB during the German occupation in 1942.

An especially productive segment of the Library's publishing output consists of exhibition catalogues, which function as a form of synthesis of the historical, cultural, and scholarly heritage held in its collections. Far from serving merely supplementary material, these catalogues often evolve into independent publishing projects that enrich the Library's overall output. They most commonly combine original scholarly texts with systematic bibliographies, thereby acquainting both expert and broader audiences with the contents of exhibitions and the collections themselves. Since exhibitions are organized to mark significant anniversaries, jubilees, and important cultural and scholarly events, these occasions shape the thematic and conceptual framework of the accompanying catalogues. The significance of this category of publication is reflected also in quantitative terms: in the period from 2000 to 2026, ninety catalogues have been published. This is hardly coincidental, as exhibition catalogues serve to present to professional and wider audiences alike the intellectual treasures that the Library holds in safekeeping.

Periodicals, as a regular form for the publication of new research and critical reviews, connect authors and readers through continuous professional

8. *Kultura sećanja: medicina, bioetika, nacizam, etika u bibliotekarstvu: zbornik sa okruglog stola*, 2023, ed. Dragana Mihailović et al.

and scholarly communication. At the Library, contemporary developments in digital humanities and linguistic practice are covered by the journals *Infotheca* and *Novorečje*. *Infotheca*[9] is a multidisciplinary journal for digital humanities that publishes original scholarly and professional articles subject to peer review by an international editorial board, as well as various types of publication and event reviews in this field. It is published simultaneously in Serbian and English, is fully open access, and all its content may be downloaded free of charge. *Novorečje*[10] is a scholarly and popular journal launched with the aim of publishing new, as well as previously published, texts in the field of neological research. It is published twice a year.

The influence of the Centre for Publishing Activity is felt throughout the Library's entire operation. It is there that ideas take material form and manuscripts become books and digital publications. From 2000 to 2026, the Library as publisher has issued nearly three hundred titles. A comparison with available historical data indicates that approximately 75% of the Library's total publishing output since its founding was produced during this period. This figure, beyond attesting to a quantitative expansion, speaks to the systematic modernization and institutional consolidation of library publishing. The Centre's vision is oriented towards the further development of its publishing program, the broadening of its thematic scope, and the establishment of a reliable and recognized position in the creation of academic and cultural content in Serbia and the wider region.

4 Between Manuscript and Reader: The Editor-Copyeditor as a Holder of Multiple Roles

The publishing activity of the University Library "Svetozar Marković" represents a confluence of scholarly, educational, and cultural functions. The publishing process itself is complex and multilayered, as it encompasses a range of tasks that precede the final publication of a work. Editorial policy is grounded in clear quality criteria, with manuscripts passing through multiple stages of substantive and linguistic review. Given limited staffing and financial resources, publishing activity often relies on a small number of collaborators who perform several roles. In the practice of our library publishing, the tasks of editing, content editing, and copyediting are therefore frequently carried out by a single individual. In this paper, the combined

9. Infotheca
10. Novorečje

position of editor-copyeditor is treated as a hypernym — that is, a collective term encompassing multiple stages of textual revision.

The diversity of the Library's publishing output also implies a variety of conceptual approaches and methodological procedures, since each category of publication brings with it specific editorial, preparatory, and linguistic challenges.

Unlike commercial publishing, library publishing operates in the service of the community and is grounded in principles of social responsibility and academic reliability (Skinner et al. 2014). The Library's publishing activity therefore plays an undeniable role in the promotion of scholarly, educational, and cultural content. In such a context, the quality of linguistic and structural editorial work carries particular weight, as it directly affects the institution's reputation. What must first be emphasized is that such a function of library publishing presupposes complex linguistic interventions, encompassing the consistent application of standard orthographic and grammatical norms, the syntactic and stylistic harmonization of the text, adaptation to functional style and genre, the preservation of the author's voice while ensuring readability and clarity, the identification of linguistic inconsistencies that affect meaning, and frequently the verification of citations, quotations, and sources.

One of the central problems encountered in practice is the intuitive conflation of literacy with competence held by an editor-copyeditor. The capacity for deep reading and writing is not generally considered a qualification for editorial or copyediting work — a misconception that ultimately devalues this profession. A responsible engagement with a text requires higher formal education, a thorough command of the norms of the standard language (grammar, orthography, syntax, and stylistics), familiarity with different functional styles and registers, and years of experience working with diverse types of texts and the specific challenges they pose. In short, multiple philological competencies are required — competencies that belong to the domain of linguistic expertise. The editor-copyeditor's work protects the author, the reader, and the language itself, not merely by aligning the text with established norms but by preserving its vitality and the diverse authorial styles it contains — and at times even their deliberate innovations. The editor-copyeditor prevents grammatical, stylistic, or terminological errors from impairing the clarity of the text or its scholarly reliability. At the same time, linguistic interventions have a significant educational dimension: through comments, suggestions, and explanations, the editor-copyeditor guides the author toward a better understanding of linguistic norms and lexical and

stylistic variants. This kind of dialogue enables the author to understand why particular changes have been made, to enhance their own linguistic competence, and to apply the knowledge gained in future work.

The professional procedures of the editor-copyeditor can be described through various levels of reading and interventions in a text, which in our case correspond to editing, content editing, copyediting, and proofreading. Editing is a process that requires careful structural organization of the text, the logical connection of its parts, a clear definition of chapters (Mackenzie 2011), as well as consistent treatment of bibliographies, footnotes, and ancillary elements. By virtue of its complexity, it has been considered "more an art than a craft, something best acquired through a combination of sharpness and experience" (Skinner et al. 2014). Content editing (from German *Redaktion* — refinement) is the most demanding step in the editing process; in terms of the scope and complexity of interventions, it is comparable to the changes made to a text by an editor. It is followed by copyediting (from Latin *lector* — reader, language teacher, from the verb legere — to read), which implies comprehensive correction of the linguistic and stylistic shortcomings of a text — that is, its improvement in accordance with the grammatical, orthographic, and stylistic rules of the standard language. Copyediting also entails the correction of individual substantive errors, the harmonization of terminology with linguistic norms, and the ensuring of a clear and consistent textual structure. Finally, proofreading (Latin *correctura*, from the verb *corrigere* — to correct, to rectify) represents a final review of the text, the aim of which is the correction of typos and compliance with the standards of the printed or digital edition. Particular attention is paid to hyphenation, punctuation, line formatting, and typographic appearance so as to ensure that the text is visually neat.

To this sequence we would add a further important and somewhat rare editorial-copyediting skill — knowledge of, or at least the ability to recognize, multiple languages, especially when working on translations. By comparison with the source text, it is possible to identify semantic deviations, to correct unnatural constructions arising from the influence of a foreign language, and to ensure a semantically precise and functional rendering into the target language. Even when a translation initially looks satisfactory, grammatical errors may remain, such as incorrect use of prepositions and their associated case constructions, as well as inconsistencies in gender and number. Furthermore, in longer texts or those produced by multiple translators, terminological inconsistencies frequently arise. Finally, the editor-copyeditor identifies stylistic unevenness caused by an overly literal adherence to the original —

including the excessive use of the passive voice, passive constructions and participles, and other forms of linguistic interference — and proposes linguistic and stylistic corrections to ensure that the text is natural, clear, and appropriate to the spirit of the target language.

In the Library's publishing practice, the role of the editor-copyeditor may be described as a bridge between language and the profession — given that this is a specific domain where traditional library concepts and new terminology from information technology intersect. The rapid proliferation of such terminology further complicates the work, as new terms appear — predominantly anglicisms widely used in information science — which do not yet have established translations in practice and consequently appear in various forms (translated, transliterated, or retained in the original form). A decision must be made as to the most appropriate term, which must then be applied consistently. It falls to the copyeditor to resolve such linguistic dilemmas, drawing upon dictionaries, normative linguistic handbooks, and grammars. Recourse is also frequently made to relevant translations of international standards and recommendations in order to align terminology with contemporary scholarly and theoretical currents and practice. Throughout this process, it is essential to seek a balance between general linguistic norms and the specificities of specialized usage, since language must be both firm and flexible.

Within our library publishing practice, at least three levels of reading may be distinguished. The most demanding is the substantive and conceptual level — what is known as heavy copy-editing[11] (Linnegar, n.d.; Einsohn and Schwartz 2019) — at which the text is considered as a whole: its structure and clarity are assessed, terminological consistency and stylistic coherence are evaluated, and logical gaps, insufficiently substantiated claims, and potential omissions in source citation are identified. The inferential level involves linguistic and stylistic editing focused on the harmonization of style, the refinement of formulations, and the adaptation of register to the purpose of the publication. The last and easiest level, literal, encompasses linguistic standardization and final review — that is, the correction of grammatical and orthographic errors.

11. It refers to different levels of linguistic intervention—from the so-called light copy-editing, which minimally intervenes in the text, through medium copy-editing, to deep, complex editing — heavy copy-editing, which includes more extensive linguistic and content-related interventions, as well as fact-checking and the verification of citations.

A particular challenge lies in finding the equilibrium between an author's individual linguistic voice and the imperatives of standardization, particularly in manuscripts originating from heterogeneous genres and scholarly disciplines. It should be noted that authors come from diverse academic and professional backgrounds and consequently exhibit varying degrees of linguistic competence and stylistic refinement. For this reason, the editor-copyeditor employs in-text commentary functions in order the author may identify limitations in expression, logical inconsistencies, or stylistic unevenness. Where the author demonstrates linguistic proficiency and a clear understanding of the communicative aims of the text, the copyeditor's role remains clearly defined: in such cases, editorial intervention is directed to orthography, terminological consistency, and the technical aspects of the text, where necessary. Accordingly, interventions are minimal and oriented towards improving readability, with full respect for the author's intent. Such a collaborative editorial process is grounded in mutual trust and respect.

5 Conclusion

The role of editor-copyeditor is, by its very nature, neither merely technical nor marginal. On the contrary, it constitutes a form of intellectual and linguistic mediation between the authored text and the normative framework of the Serbian standard language, integrating editing, content editing, and copyediting into a complex and responsible process of preparing a manuscript for publication. Within the contemporary digital environment — characterized by automated translation, superficial modes of communication, and the accelerated production of content — this phase of textual preparation must not be neglected, although it frequently is. The copyeditor's contribution is rarely acknowledged; their role is largely invisible, yet precisely in its absence the consequences become unmistakably apparent. The editor and copyeditor guard against the erosion of linguistic norms. The Library's Publishing Department, as a newly established organizational unit within the institution, represents a paradigm of the possible: it demonstrates that within a single cultural institution it is possible to develop a publishing system in accordance with high academic standards — one in which, between manuscript and reader, an entire world of quiet, expert practice unfolds, with the editor-copyeditor as one of its key links. Although editorial and copyediting responsibilities have long existed as an integral component of the work performed by librarians and other experts within the institution, the novelty resides in the fact that this function is now acquiring a clearer professional definition

within the framework of library publishing. This paper serves as a reminder that in every high-quality publication — however imperceptible this may appear at first glance — the editor and copyeditor have, through their careful labor, breathed final form into the work. In this sense, the role of the editor-copyeditor in institutional library publishing may justifiably be understood as an overarching, hyperonymic professional category that encompasses all forms of linguistic intervention in a text. It is precisely in this synthetic capacity that its significance lies — a significance that is at times decisive for the quality of a publication.

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