THE CASE OF THE E-BOOK IN "SMALL LANGUAGE" CULTURE: MEDIA TECHNOLOGY AND THE DIGITAL SOCIETY

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The article describes a research project conducted in Sweden and its initial base-line results that were produced by investigating statistical data from general statistical sources, representative surveys of the Swedish population, and from public and academic libraries. The project looks into the change introduced into the book sector by e-books. Sweden was chosen as a special case – a country with a high literacy level and high penetration of information technology into everyday life of people. At the same time, the spread of e-books is at the very start and it seems that the diffusion of e-books, their production, distribution and use are affected by the problems characteristic of a typical small publishing markets.

The authors present the goals of the project and the theoretical framework. The data were collected in 2012 and demonstrate the relatively low scale of e-book publishing and use. Libraries emerge as the main channel of access to e-books for readers. The usual problems of e-book production and distribution that are visible in other countries are observed in Sweden as well: e-books legally are not books, but services of licensed software and thus excluded from the privileges enjoyed by paper books; readers demand more e-books but are not ready to pay for them the same price as for traditional books and prefer to acquire them through free channels. Publishers seek to maintain the monopoly of e-book distribution and fear piracy. Libraries

lose independence of acquisition and collection management. The choice of e-books by readers is determined by access to technology, age and education as well as reading habits.

INTRODUCTION

E-books are big news for libraries in the West, with reports on significantly increased demand. Their impact elsewhere appears to be somewhat less, but can be expected to grow as the number of devices that can be used for access increases. The big problem everywhere is that, just as the music industry attempted to limit the distribution of music tracks, book publishers are seeking to maximise the return on their investment in authors and minimise the possible exposure to piracy. On the other hand, there are other social and cultural factors that influence the slower or quicker rate of e-book acceptance in different countries and regions.

Aware of the developing interest in e-books, a team at the Universities of Gothenburg and Borås, in Sweden, prepared a proposal to the Swedish Research Council (Vetenskapsrådet) and succeeded in getting a 12 million Swedish crowns (approx. LTL4.67 million) to explore the impact of e-books in Sweden through the production, distribution and use chain, from author to reader.

This project concentrates on the *system of e-books production, distribution and adoption* in Sweden as a significant part of digital knowledge production and use in modern (digital) society. The arrival of the e-book on the stage of modern society has a further impact on the traditional roles and functions of each and every actor in the system that was already changing in such sectors as music production, the journals and newspapers business, or scholarly communication and education at large.

The project, launched in January 2013, uses two national surveys: the survey of a large sample of the Swedish population in general, and the NORDICOM survey of young people. In addition, the project will employ interviews and group interviews to gain an understanding of the perspectives of the different actors in the situation; authors, publishers, booksellers, librarians and readers.

A particular interest is what we have called 'the small language' problem. That is: what particular difficulties arise in a country like Sweden, when publications in the local language are potentially in competition with books in English, and where the local publisher or bookseller is competing with international publishers and Amazon.com?

The goal of this paper is to introduce the main ideas of the project and the first base-line results that were established by November 2013.

GOALS AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
OF THE PROJECT

The aim of the project is to investigate the impact of modern information and communication technologies, as represented by the electronic book (or e-book), in the book publishing, distribution and use system in Sweden and the changing book culture[1] in Swedish digital society. The changes in society and in the book as such, or in any part of the system, brings a change in the whole system overall.

According to Winston[2], the change introduced by a technological innovation may be sustainable if it rests on a "supervening social necessity". The project should reveal the social necessity, which is best met by the e-book, if any such necessity is to be found.

The publishing industry has been affected by technological change throughout its history, beginning with Gutenberg's (re)invention of movable type. Subsequently, the hand press was replaced by mechanical presses, hand assembly of pages was replaced by the Linotype and Monotype machines and these, in their turn, were replaced by computer typesetting. The industry, therefore, has a long history of coping with, and adapting to, technological change.

Other parts of the total system have been less exposed to technological change: a sixteenth century Stockholm bookseller would immediately recognize the modern bookshop, although he would probably be quite overwhelmed by the volume and diversity of material. Libraries, too, although technology has played a major part in their management, remain recognizably libraries, although librarians of even the early twentieth century would find the number of desktop computers available and the notion of access to the Internet quite astonishing.

Authors and readers have been less exposed to technological change: even now some authors prefer to write their works by hand, rather than use even a typewriter, although it is probably the case that the vast majority now use a word-processor. Readers have also had continuity in the artefact of the book, which, regardless of how it has been produced, looks today just about the same as it has since the invention of the codex form.

The situation in Sweden with regard to the successful introduction of e-books into the national 'book culture' is complicated by a number of factors, not least of

1   The term "book culture" here is borrowed from the history of book and means a sub-culture that emerges out of the relations between creators of the book (authors, publishers, etc.) and its users. It reflects a society's relation to the book as a material and intellectual asset at a particular period of time (Kaunas 2009, Raabe 2002).

2   WINSTON, B. *Media technology and society*: a history from the telegraph to the Internet. London, 1998, p. 7.

which is that Sweden is a so-called "small language" market, but with a techno-logically literate population, many of whom also read English or other European languages. The spread of a Swedish e-book (as in any "small language" society) may have to rely on the supervening social necessity to a greater extent than, say, in the English-speaking world, as there is no great financial profit in savings by either reduced production or distribution costs[3].

One of the consequences of the "small language" phenomenon is that the Swed-ish book industry is prey to the negative effects of globalization, since books have an international market and a Swedish multilingual citizen can buy e-books from the UK, or Germany or France, if the book they want is not available in Swedish. In common with all countries, Swedish publishers are affected by piracy and the availability of free download sites.

Today, a major technological revolution is taking place that affects every ele-ment in the total publishing, distribution and use system and in the wider book culture environment. The development of the electronic book (or e-book) changes the nature of the artefact from a physical object to a digital object: in Negroponte's terms[4], it has changed from an assembly of atoms to an assembly of bits. This change is already affecting all parts of the system and has the potential to bring about even greater change. The project will look into the potential of production and use of the digitally born e-books to some extent. However, in the project and in this article the main focus is on the e-books that are entering the mass market, i.e. digital equivalents of printed books that do not boast of advanced features but already have a force of disruptive technology and change the tradi-tional relationships of the market participants. The research team be-lieves that they are paving roads for digitally born e-books of the future.

An outline of the present system is shown in Figure 1. An author sub-mits a manuscript to a publisher; the publisher assesses the market potential of the book and a contract is signed between the author and publisher. The publisher produces the book, subcontracting the physi-cal production to a printing com-pany, or using in-house printing
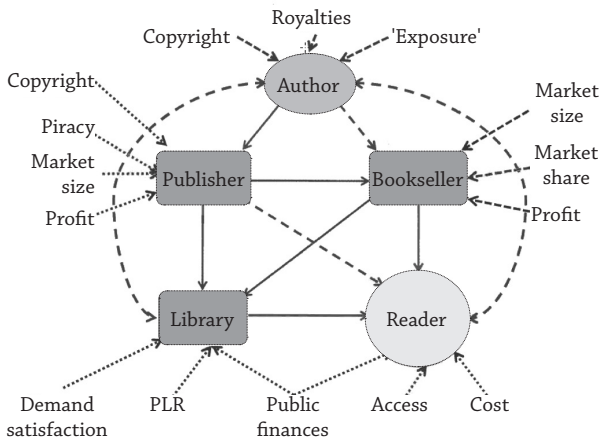

FIGURE 1. Interactions in the e-book field[5]

capacity, and retails it through booksellers. Libraries buy books through a combination of specialist library supply firms and local booksellers and individual readers either borrow from libraries or buy directly from bookshops. The alternative lines of interaction are the dotted lines and some of the factors that affect each player. We see information and communication technologies (of which e-books are a part) as potentially affecting all of these factors.

This basic model has variants, of course: some publishers own bookshop chains, and some sell directly to the public and to libraries. The invention of the e-book, however, has the potential fundamentally to change not only the technology of book production but also how authors decide to publish their work and how readers decide to read. It also has the potential to remove the small bookseller completely from the system, although it is possible that large chains will survive by becoming more diverse in the functions they perform for society. It has a potential to obliterate all other links in the chain, such as libraries and publishers leaving a bare carcass of direct communication between the author and the reader, though it is more likely that other mediators will enter the changing book sector as is already happening.

Several alternative theoretical frameworks are used by the researchers for the project that we outline in this paragraph. We can see the various parts of the total chain as a series of linked activity systems and employ activity theory as the base[6]. We could use systems theory more generally and conceive of the entire chain as a system for the delivery of reading materials to the end user[7]. The technology acceptance model (TAM)[8] offers another approach, which is widely adopted for the study of technological change. However, Winston's model[9] of technological innovation in media was chosen as a central theoretical approach as offering a useful framework for considering the factors that impact upon the adoption of an innovation and its consequent effects. The model is shown in Figure 2.

The model offers a number of dimensions under which the problems of the e-book innovation could be explored and how the tensions between the radical

3 DARNTON, R. *The case for books*: past, present and future. New York, 2009.

4 NEGROPONTE, N. *Being digital.* New York, NY: Knopf, 1995, p. 4.

5 Figure presented by the authors in the original project application to the Swedish Research Council.

6 OWEN, C. Analysing joint work between activity systems. *Activités,* 2008, vol. 5, no. 2, p. 52–69 [retrieved 16 April, 2012]. Access through Internet: <http://www.activites.org/v5n2/owen-EN.pdf>.

7 BUCKLEY, W.F. *Sociology and modern systems theory.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1967.

8 DAVIS, F. D. Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and user acceptance of information technology. *MIS Quarterly*, 1989, vol. 13, no. 3, p. 319–340.

9 WINSTON, B. *Media technology and society*: a history from the telegraph to the Internet. London, 1998, p. 7.
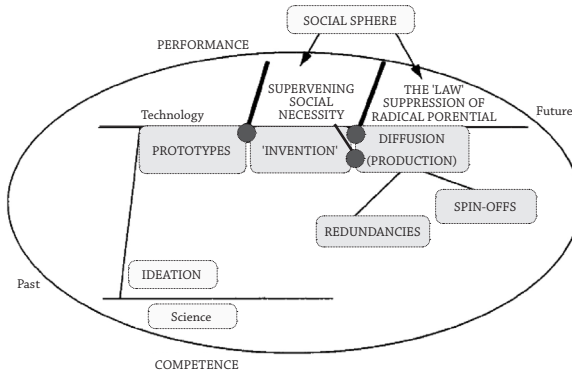
FIGURE 2. Based on Winston's model of technological innovation[10]

potential of the new medium conflict with the established investment in the existing technologies. The underlying social necessity for the emergence of e-book should be disclosed investigating each part of the model and the relationships between the parts. The supervening social necessity and the suppression of radical potential are treated as the main source of tensions that affect the pace of innovation acceptance by all the actors introduced in Fig 1. Small language cultures and markets affect both the social necessity and the need to suppress the potential of an e-book in a particular way that we expect to discover over the duration of the project. This overall theoretical framework will be supplemented by other subordinate theoretical approaches suitable for different elements of the system. Innovation theory[11] is applied to a smaller extent to make sense of some of the findings.

Winston's model will be augmented by Bourdieu's field theory, to analyse changes in power between the actors in the field, as identified in Figure 1, as a result of the technical shift to the production of e-books. The benefits of field theory are, first, the possibility of analysing the struggle for position within the field using *The rules of art: genesis and structure of the literary field*[12] and, secondly, to study the social changes in life style, according to the theory set out by Bourdieu in *Distinction: a social critique of the judgements of taste*[13]. We have already mentioned the "book culture" concept that may enrich our approach to the changing Swedish habits and values attached to the use and creation of the book.

To understand the connection between the rise of the e-book in Sweden and internationally today, Bolter and Grusin's theory of remediation[14] will be of help, through its combination of technology and social necessity.

Research questions

The research-related questions that arise out of the theoretical framework are:

1. What prototypes and alternative forms of e-book exist and what determines the most successful form?
2. What supervening social necessity drives the adoption of the e-book technology in Sweden?

3. What forms of the "suppression of radical potential" exist in Sweden and how successful are efforts to overcome them?

4. What power relationships exist among the different actors in the field, and how these relationships change as a consequence of the adoption of the e-book?

Base-line data collection methods:

With these questions in mind the project team has carried out investigations and explored other sources to establish the base-line data in several areas, namely:

1. The overall overview of Swedish e-book market and book dissemination through various channels. The data from statistical sources and reports was used for this purpose.

2. The e-book use by Swedish population. E-book reading in the Swedish population was captured in a quantitative mail survey with a representative sample of the Swedish population aged between 16 and 85 years old. The study is based on data collected in the Swedish national SOM surveys (Society, Opinion, Media)[15] conducted in the autumn and winter of 2012. The SOM survey has been conducted as an annual national mail survey since 1986. The 2012 survey was made up of four slightly different questionnaires. The relevant part of the 2012 survey was administered to 3000 persons, with a net response rate of 58% (1,631 respondents)[16]. The average questionnaire consists of approximately 20 pages and 80–90 questions, most of them with fixed answer options. The dependent variable focused in this study – e-book reading – was operationalized into a set of questions in the questionnaire: How often during the last 12 months have you read the following types of books? The answering options were divided into fiction and non-fiction with three distribution forms respectively: as a printed book, as an audio-book and as an e-book. A seven-grade scale was used: *Never, once during the last 12 months, once during the last 6 months, sometime in the quarter, monthly, weekly* and *several times a week*. Together, the respondents in the survey provide accurate reflection of the original sample, statistically significant data, and the possibility of recognizing patterns

10 Ibid.

11 ROGERS, E. *Diffusion of innovations.* New York, NY, 1962.

12 BOURDIEU, P. *The rules of art*: genesis and structure of the literary field. Stanford, Calif., 1995.

13 BOURDIEU, P. *Distinction: a social critique of the judgments of taste*. Cambridge, Mass., 1984.

14 BOLTER, J. D.; GRUSIN, R. *Remediation: understanding new media.* Cambridge, Mass., 1999.

15 SOM-institute is an independent survey organi-

sation at the University of Gothenburg. The Institute has collaborated with researchers from a range of disciplines since 1986, aiming to explore Swedes' attitudes in a range of areas and to understand the evolution of the Swedish society.

16 VERNERSDOTTER, F. Den nationella SOM-undersökningen 2012. In L. WEIBULL, H. OSCARSSON and A. BERGSTRÖM (eds). *Vägskäl* (Report no. 59). Gothenburg, 2012, p. 653.

in a large population, as well as in smaller groups. As with other statistical surveys, this one gives a general picture of e-book reading. The methodological choices, however, cannot give more in-depth information about issues such as how much time is spent on reading, what e-books that are read or how readers interpret reading on a digital device compared to in print[17]. The results of 2012 were published by Bergström and Höglund[18].

3. A survey of e-book lending in Swedish public libraries. A total of 291 questionnaires was issued and 225 or 77.3% began to complete the questionnaire. However, only 185 fully completed it, an effective response rate, after three follow-up messages, of 63.6%. The SurveyMonkey online survey service was used for the study. The percentages reported below are the percentage of people responding to a specific question. The questionnaire was composed of 35 mainly closed questions in Swedish, with some open questions or follow-up questions that allowed for open responses. The questions were grouped into the categories of: Policy for handling e-books, Access to e-books, License agreements with suppliers, Inclusion of e-books in the library catalogue, User training, How does e-book provision affect the relationship with the existing book suppliers, Assessment of user demand and satisfaction, The need for a library consortium for e-book purchases, Provision of e-books in Swedish[19]. The results of the survey were presented at the Theory and Practice of Digital Libraries conference[20] in September, 2013, and in a report[21]. This data characterises the situation as it was by the end of 2012.

THE OVERVIEW OF THE SWEDISH E-BOOK MARKET

Channels of distribution. According to the report on book trade the Swedish book market is so far strong though the overall sales were diminishing since 2007 and another downturn was observed during the first half of 2012 after some growth in 2011. In 2011 its total value was 7000 million Swedish crowns: general literature sold for 4600 millions, textbooks for schools for 900 millions, university course literature for 1000 million and professional literature for 500 million crowns[22]. The printed book is still the main format that dominates the market, though in professional markets, such as legal and normative texts digital formats play a greater role than printed ones. The same but much slower process can be observed in the textbook and coursebook segments. However, according to the Publishers Association statistics, e-books reached 23 percent of the whole annual production, however, only one percent of income[23].

Table 1 shows a modest growth of the income from e-books to the publishers, though downloadable and streaming books are the category that is growing much faster than others. It is also visible that the e-books are loaned through the libraries and to a very high degree the income is derived from these loans. The growth of e-book usage and reading in Sweden shows a very specific context where "libraries, not booksellers, are at the forefront of the trend, as they account for about 85 percent of the e-book market today"[24] and readers prefer to download a book through a library (63807 loans by March 2012), rather than buy it (7786 sales same period)[25]. As one can see, in Table 1, comparing the actual proportion of e-book use through libraries (345 000 loans) is higher than the part of income derived from it (6.9 million SEK), because libraries pay only a 20SEK fee for each loan, not the full price of a purchase.

TABLE 1. Growth of e-book sales in Sweden 2010–2012[26]

E-book sales category	2012 (mln. SEK)	2011 (mln. SEK)	2010 (mln. SEK)
Loaned through libraries	6,9	-	-
All other sales	10,2	7,3	3,4
Downloaded and streaming audio-books	19,9	10,7	11,2

It is necessary to draw attention to the fact that this data relates to only one type of e-books published by commercial publishers and distributed in the market for profit. Economic copyright for these books is in force and is held by authors and/or publishers. Most of these e-books have printed equivalents, but some can

17 Ibid.

18 BERGSTRÖM, A. and HÖGLUND, L. Tidiga läsare av e-böcker. In L. WEIBULL, H. OSCARSSON and A. BERGSTRÖM (eds). *Vägskäl* (Report no. 59). Gothenburg, 2012.

19 MACEVIČIŪTĖ, E. and WILSON, T. D. E-books in Swedish public libraries: policy implications. In T. AALBERG, C. PAPATHEODOROU, M. DOBREVA, G. TSAKONAS and C. J. FARRUGIA (Eds) *Proceedings of the International Conference on Theory and Practice of Digital Libraries*: Sharing Meaningful Information, Valletta, Malta, September 22–26, 2013. Berlin, 2013, p. 30.

20 Ibid, p. 29–34.

21 WILSON T. D.; MACEVIČIŪTĖ, E. *Summary report on a survey of e-book provision in Swedish public libraries*: unpublished report. Borås, 2012.

22 BOHLUND, K. and BRODIN, B. Bokmarknaden 2012. Rapport. Stockholm, 2013, p. 10.

23 *Svenska förläggareföreningen.* Branschstatistik 2012. Stockholm, 2013, p. 3.

24 WISCHEBART, R. *Global eBook: A report on market trends and developments*. Vienna, 2013, p. 42.

25 FACHT, U. (2013). Aktuell statistik om e-böcker. In U. CARLSSON and J. JOHANNISSON (eds). *Läsarnas marknad, marknadens läsare*. Göteborg, 2013, p. 235.

26 *Svenska förläggareföreningen.* Branschstatistik 2012. Stockholm, 2013, p. 10.

be available only in digital formats. There are other types of e-books that are digitised books or digital copies of the texts entirely free of copyright, or those that are in copyright but distributed freely by authors, producers, or other distributors.

This slow growth of e-books in Sweden is quite remarkable as the internet and other information technology is wide-spread among Swedish population and literacy is practically omnipresent.

According to the e-book dissemination data, libraries should become a serious player in relation to e-books use in society. Therefore, it is necessary to explain the operation of this market part.

The provision of e-books to libraries (and until recently in general) in Sweden was dominated by one provider Elib (a network book seller), which had a monopoly position as a result of being established by a consortium of the country's four major publishers (Bonnier, Natur & Kultur, Norstedts and Piratförlaget). The model that Elib offers to libraries includes a firm sum for each loan of an e-book (20 SEK= approx. €2.4)[27]. The books are always loaned for 28 days and only for offline reading. The access through local libraries is advertised not only through the websites of public libraries, but also on the website of Elib. It is displayed prominently on the Elibs website representation in Google search hit list (see Figure 3). The loans of e-books through libraries are entirely free of charge to library users and this is also advertised on the Elib website with explanation that a reader just needs to acquire a library card for easy download of their e-books (Figure 4).

FIGURE 3. Elib entry as displayed in Google

FIGURE 4. Display of library free download service for e-books and audio books on Elib website

This is an attractive model for readers and in comparison to more restricted models of e-books provision to libraries, as it does not limit multiple use of an e-book or provide other severe restrictions of use. Part of the offered collection is available with watermarks instead of restrictive DRM. Since April 2013, the company also offers a streaming service ElibU for school libraries and schools.

However, the Elib model is increasingly expensive for library loans of popular titles and prevents libraries from managing their collections effectively (see further). Over the last year several new actors, such as Publit (distributor) and Axiell (digital service developer for libraries – with their platform Atingo), Adlibris, and Bokus (internet book shop) with Dito for e-books have entered e-book market and started providing books to libraries. Atingo offers a differentiated price for older and new books, but so far only few libraries have adopted their service (with Stockholm City Library taking the initiative)[28] (Maceviciute and Borg, 2013).

READERS. Reading of e-books depends on many conditions. The penetration of information technologies and high levels of literacy were already mentioned. An important factor for e-book reading is access to convenient reading equipment, such as a dedicated e-reader, a tablet computer (e.g. iPad) or a personal computer, and lately a smart phone. Their functionality and prices influence their spread among society members. In addition, different countries have different preferences. The following section is based on the data previously published by Bergström and Höglund[29].

Thus, in Sweden tablet computers are more usual than dedicated e-readers. In the autumn of 2012, according to the SOM-Institutes survey, over half of the Swedish population of 16 to 85 years of age had access to a smart phone and around 19 percent had a tablet computer at home, which was a double number in comparison with 2011. The tablet computers were owned by 29 percent of people of 30–49 years of age, 27 percent of those younger than 27 years, 18 percent of 50–64 year olds and only four percent of those older than 65 years. People with higher education were more likely to own a tablet computer as well[30].

It is also possible to read e-books on personal computers. Almost 85 percent of the Swedish population owns a computer or has access to it in the household.

27   This depends on the differing status of the e-book with regard to "public lending right", as they are treated as service and software that should be licenced and does not fall under remuneration scheme for copyright holders that state drives for paper books.

28   MACEVICIUTE, E.; BORG, M. The current si-

tuation in academic and public libraries in Sweden. *Libellarium*, 2014, vol. 6, no. 1, p. 13–28.

29   BERGSTRÖM, A.; HÖGLUND, L. Tidiga läsare av e-böcker. In WEIBULL, L.; OSCARSSON, H.; BERGSTRÖM, A. (eds). *Vägskäl* (Report no. 59). Gothenburg, 2012, p. 357–367.

30   Ibid, p. 359.

	E-books in total (9%)	E-books fiction (6%)	E-books non-fiction (5%)
Never	91,4	93,7	95,2
Once during last 12 months	2,5	2,2	1,2
Once during last half a year	1,2	,9	,7
Once in four months	1,2	,9	,8
Once a month	1,4	1,1	,7
Once a week	1,4	,7	,9
Several times a week	1,0	,7	,5

FIGURE 5. E-book reading total from the SOM survey of 2012, fiction and non-fiction (percent)[31] (n 1523)
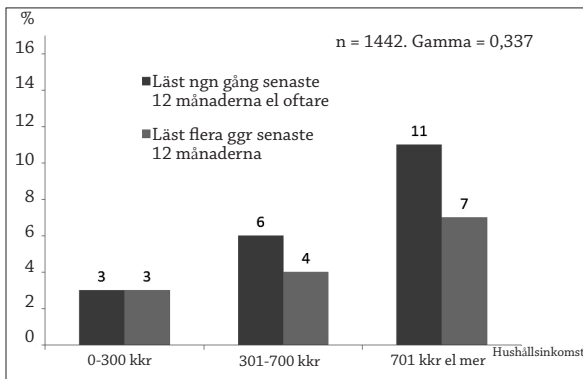

FIGURE 6. Reading fiction in e-book format (according to household income)[32]

		Read book		
		At least once over the last 12 months	Never over the last 12 months	Total
Read e-book	At least once over the last 12 months	8	1	9
	Never over the last 12 months	72	19	91

FIGURE 7. Results from the survey of e-books' provision in Swedish libraries[34]

However, this does not mean that reading of e-books is as widespread as the computers. All in all, the survey has shown that nine percent of Swedish population has read an e-book (fiction or non-fiction) during the last year. Only about two percent reads e-books every week with some more percent reading every month or every quarter and also around four percent who have read an e-book over six months (see Figure 5). Fiction and non-fiction are read equally, at least no difference was identified in the survey. However, persons of 16–29 years old read e-books five times more often than persons of 65 and older. The reading of e-books as in the case of paper books grows in relation to the higher education levels. But the level of income has a high influence on the e-book reading (see Figure 6).

It is also not surprising that reading of e-books is more spread among people who have access to tablet computers and/or smart phones.

The group of e-book readers was quite small in the survey – 133 people. They were asked to indicate how they get e-books. There were several alternatives: downloaded from a library, bought on the internet, and some other way. Most have downloaded the books from the library or got it some oth-

er way, only 27 percent have bought e-books on the internet[33], which confirms the data from the book market statistics.

Reading and library use habits also exert influence on e-book reading. Out of those 9 percent of readers who read e-books, a majority (8 percent) also read paper books. Only one percent of those not reading print books have read an e-book over the last year. However, 19 percent of respondents have not read any book during the last year. E-books are also read more often by those who visit libraries or use them on the internet. However, these statistical relations of reading books and using libraries are very weakly related to reading of e-books and no deeper analysis can be done at the moment.

E-BOOKS IN SWEDISH LIBRARIES

PUBLIC LIBRARIES. The e-books offered for loan through Swedish public libraries also grew relatively rapidly within three years. Figure 8 shows the growth of e-book collection and loans in relation to the printed books. In 2013 the number of e-books in Swedish public libraries has not reached 3% of the total collection and the loans are only over 8% of the latter[35]. The increase in four years in loans is significantly above the growth of the actual stock.

Despite the fact that the latest statistics show that, in 2012, e-book loans

FIGURE 8. Swedish language e-books in Swedish public libraries in 2010 and 2013[36]

from public libraries have increased 65% in comparison with 2011 and 289% in comparison with 2009, the National Library report suggests that the number of Swedish language e-book loans could be even higher, but for economic reasons[37]. The dissatisfaction with limitations on e-book loans can be readily understood looking at the steep increase in the number of e-book loans in comparison with
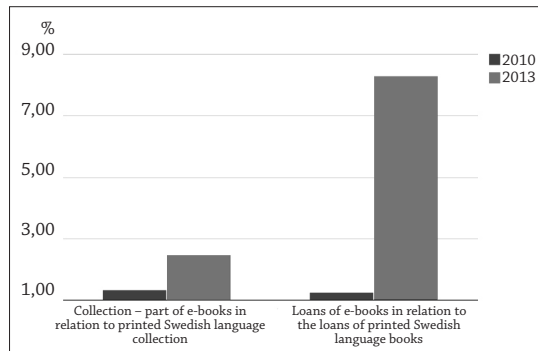
31   Ibid, p. 360.
32   Ibid, p. 362.
33   Ibid, p. 365.
34   Ibid, p. 363.
35   Kungliga biblioteket. *Bibliotek 2012: Folkbibliotek, forskningsbibliotek, sjukhusbibliotek*. Stockholm,

2012, p. 30.
36   Ibid.
37   Kungliga biblioteket. *När kommer boomen? En kartläggning av e-boken i Sverige ur ett biblioteksperspektiv*. Stockholm, 2011, p. 27.
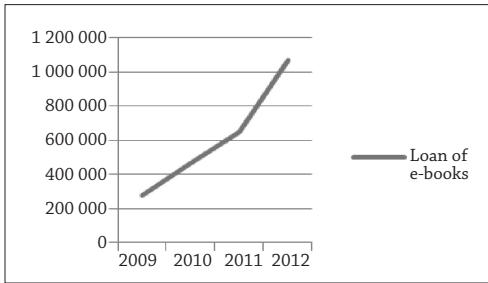
FIGURE 9. Growth of loans of Swedish e-books in public libraries

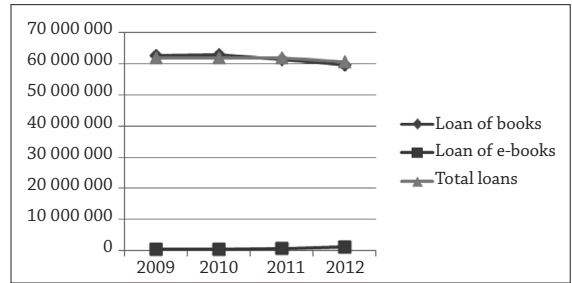(SOURCE HTTP://WWW.KB.SE/BIBLIOTEK/STATISTIK-KVALITET/BIBLIOTEKSSTATISTIK/BIBLIOTEK-2012/)

FIGURE 10. Trend of borrowing books from Swedish public libraries

(SOURCE HTTP://WWW.KB.SE/BIBLIOTEK/STATISTIK-KVALITET/BIBLIOTEKSSTATISTIK/BIBLIOTEK-2012/)

the slowly, but steadily declining loan level in public libraries as presented in Figures 9 and 10.

Though the part of borrowed e-books does not reach one tenth of the whole, it contributes to the improvement of the overall trend of decline in borrowing from Swedish public libraries.

In the survey to public libraries a question was asked about the factors determining the decision to offer e-books. The respondents commented on the demand from readers, the need to develop services appropriate in the 21st century, the fact that an e-book is simply another medium and should be offered just as print books are offered, and, importantly for some, the opportunity was offered to participate in country-wide collaborations in the provision of e-books. A number also commented that the service was a way of attracting new readers to the library. A typical response was:

The library will of course provide all kinds of media formats. Complement to the printed book, allowing more borrowers to read the book at the same time, no queues. Meet borrowers' requirements that we offer new technology, new media formats. Give borrowers the opportunity to test new ways of reading.[38]

Despite this obvious concern about users the efforts to promote and market e-books were quite minimal. The most common way of marketing the service was through the library's Website (99%), followed by direct contact with the users and the issuing of brochures, bookmarks and other documentation. Courses on the use of e-books were offered by a substantial minority of libraries – 29%[39].

Most of e-book provision in Swedish public libraries is done through agreements with the provider Elib. Earlier, we have shown that this is an efficient means of provision from the point of view of the publishers and readers. However, since the demand for e-books has increased, libraries started experiencing severe problems with this model. They feel very strongly that this mode of provision does not enable them to perform their normal professional responsibilities for the selection of material for their readers: they can only accept what the consortium chooses to make available. Furthermore, popular titles may not be made available in e-book form until months after the initial release, if at all, and titles may be withdrawn from the catalogue without notice. The librarians made comments such as:

We cannot decide what we want to buy, what literature we want to promote and offer to borrowers. It feels awful to be dependent on the vendor.
The publishers keep certain books in quarantine and remove the titles willy-nilly. The title choice is very small for adults and virtually non-existent for children and young people.[40]

The librarians also do not have bibliographical control over the catalogue, since the user is transferred from the library's Web page to the Elib site and all the bibliographical data is at that site. Sixty-eight percent of the respondents attempted to deal with this by entering details of the available e-books into their own catalogues, usually simply transferring the data made available by Elib, but, in some cases (only 17%), creating additional meta-data. We have here the emergence of a kind of hybrid digital library; one that is partly under the control of the library and partly under the control of the e-book provider.[41]

The situation with provision of the e-books for public libraries has been changing since the survey. The discontent of Swedish public librarians has manifested in a stormy campaign and public debates. Stockholm City Library together with Publit and Axiel have tried a model of dual licensing that became a basis for the

38   MACEVIČIŪTĖ, E.; WILSON, T. D. E-books in Swedish public libraries: policy implications. In T. AALBERG, C. PAPATHEODOROU, M. DOBREVA, G. TSAKONAS, G. and C. J. FARRUGIA. (Eds.) *Proceedings of the International Conference on Theory and Practice of Digital Libraries: Sharing Meaningful Information*, Valletta, Malta, September 22–26, 2013. Berlin, 2013, p. 31.
39   WILSON T.D.; MACEVIČIŪTĖ, E. *Summary report on a survey of e-book provision in Swedish public*

libraries: unpublished report. Borås, 2012, p. 3.
40   Ibid, p. 2–3.
41   MACEVIČIŪTĖ, E.; WILSON, T. D. E-books in Swedish public libraries: policy implications. In AALBERG, T.; PAPATHEODOROU C.; DOBREVA, M.; TSAKONAS, G.; FARRUGIA, C. J. (Eds.). *Proceedings of the International Conference on Theory and Practice of Digital Libraries*: Sharing Meaningful Information, Valletta, Malta, September 22–26, 2013. Berlin, 2013, p. 32–33.
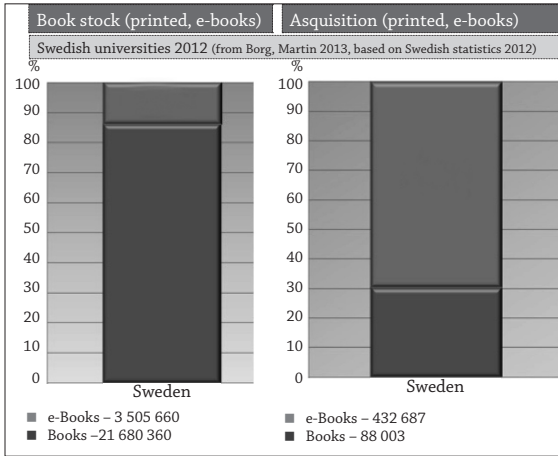
FIGURE 11. E-books in academic library collections and acquisition in 2012

(SOURCE: NATIONAL Library, see http://www.kb.se/bibliotek/ Statistik-kvalitet/biblioteksstatistik/Bibliotek-2012/)
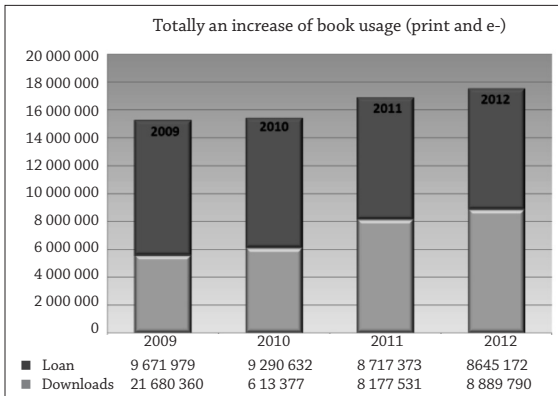

FIGURE 12. Total usage of books in Swedish academic libraries: 2009–2012

(SOURCE: NATIONAL Library, see http://www.kb.se/bibliotek/ Statistik-kvalitet/biblioteksstatistik/Bibliotek-2012/)

Atingo service. Elib has offered a new business model this autumn seemingly working in the same direction. The negotiation between the Swedish Library Association and publishers that ended without results has been taken over by the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions.

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES. In 2011 the National Library of Sweden produced a report mapping the problems related to the introduction of e-books into the library activities in the country.[42] The report stated that there was no problem with the acquisition and provision of e-books in academic libraries: by then most university libraries in Sweden had already accepted the policy that if there was a choice between a printed book and an e-book they would buy an e-book (especially books used in teaching).

Despite this, e-books are so far significantly outnumbered by the collections of printed books in Swedish university libraries. But if we look at newly bought books in 2012 we will see that the situation looks entirely different throughout the country (see Figure 11) and in separate universities: 70% (overall) to 88% (in some of the universities) of all new acquisitions consist of e-books.

The loans of printed books and materials, as well as physical visits to the libraries are decreasing rapidly (upper part of the column in Figure 12), on the other hand the usage of e-books has increased by one third since 2009

(lower part of the column in Figure 12). Thus, overall book usage in Swedish academic libraries is increasing as one can see from Figure 12. This trend seems to be reversing the trend of diminishing use of library resources and e-book loans are actually outnumbering those of printed books.

The trend also coincides with the investments that Swedish academic libraries have made recently according to the accepted policy.

There are many different models of providing access to e-books available to university libraries. Maceviciute and Borg[43] provide a short overview of those that were tested in Swedish academic libraries:

1. A subscription model offers a quick access to a large number of e-books without spending much money. These systems impose limits to the printing and copying of the material due to copyright issues. The DRM systems used by each of the vendors ensure this limiting function. The books can disappear from the collections without notification and this is the biggest shortcoming of all subscription models. Most of the books can be downloaded for off-line reading on e-readers or tablet computers. There are also additional limitations on how many days a reader can have a book.

2. Pick-and-choose model is convenient to satisfy purchase requests. The aggregators, such as Ebrary, Dawson and Ebsco enable this model of purchasing. In this case, the library owns the book, but certain limitations on the number of printouts and copies are in place. The rules of how many people can use the book at the same time can differ significantly: from one user per book to an unlimited number of users. Very often an e-book costs approximately 1.5 times more than an equivalent printed book. These books are also available for download and reading off-line.

3. PDA (Patron Driven Access or Acquistion) model has several modifications, but all of them employ the same access to a certain number of books, which are bought after the first use or loaned to the library for a certain sum. Criteria are set at the start of a PDA-project. Most of international suppliers offer some type of the PDA-model.

4. The model that gives a library highest degree of freedom in working with e-books is direct purchase of a book from a publisher. Springer, Elsevier, Wiley-Blackwell, Royal Society of Chemistry, Woodhead Publishing and other publishers offer this possibility. In certain cases the Library can buy individual titles, but

42   Kungliga biblioteket. *När kommer boomen? En kartläggning av e-boken i Sverige ur ett biblioteksperspektiv*. Stockholm, 2011.

43   MACEVICIUTE, E.; BORG, M. The current situation in academic and public libraries in Sweden. *Libellarium*, 2014, vol. 6, no. 1, p. 13–28.

mostly a whole package (collection) divided according to the publishing date or discipline is obtained. The advantage is that e-books are mainly free of the DRM systems and can be used by an unlimited number of users, freely printed out or copied. The shortcoming is that prices are often higher than buying the same books from aggregators.

5. Elib model is offered since 2001 and provides access to Swedish language books (see in the section on Swedish book market).

It is always the publisher who decides the conditions.

All the mentioned suppliers, except Elib, provide books in English. As it is the main language used in scholarly communication and spreading to higher education reading materials, the needs of university library users are readily satisfied with regard to the content. This situation is not without problems, however. The providers of the e-books set the conditions of their use and the librarians have lost most of their freedom of managing them in comparison with printed books. There are significant barriers to cataloguing e-books and marketing them efficiently. The discovery tools have to be specifically fitted to be able to access e-book collections. The Library has to train a number of librarians as experts in separate e-book platforms as each provider has its own system. Librarians have to organize workshops and training for the users of e-books for the same reason. There is never enough content in the Swedish language.

Conclusions and further plans

The data presented in this text will be used mainly for further monitoring of the developments of the e-books in the Swedish market. At present it allows us to define the e-book as an innovation in its introductory phase in Sweden. Further change and e-book advancement is related to legal, normative, social, and also technological developments. The situation at present can be characterised as very dynamic and we saw a number of significant events and attempts to adapt to the situation within one year.

These initial data will be enhanced by further quantitative and qualitative investigations into the attitudes of authors on e-books, deeper studies of readers and their preferences in relation to e-books. The SOM-Institute survey of 2012 should provide more varied and nuanced data on e-book reading in Sweden. We also will explore the discourse on e-books as it occurs in Swedish state documents, reports of various agencies and Swedish media. This should provide a richer picture of opinions, attitudes and values attached to reading in digital age and e-books.

The library/publisher interface is only one of the areas the project intends to address. From the perspective of libraries it is probably the most important one.

The changes are happening in relation to this interface already now and monitoring the dissemination of e-books through all the channels lies within the project.

Of course, it is not only public and university libraries that are affected by the e-book phenomenon: their use in schools, both for teaching and for use by school libraries continues to grow, trade and scholarly literature migrate into digital formats quite rapidly and in a variety of ways.

So far, the issues of book sellers were addressed only marginally, though problems of these actors related to e-books are varied and the scene is changing more rapidly than for the publishers. A comparison of changes introduced by e-books to the whole distribution link in the system will be carried out.

News of the project is announced on a blog at http://projectebooks.wordpress.com This is a closely moderated blog, with entries from project staff and fellow researchers elsewhere, but others can read about the project as it progresses. A magazine for news on e-books appearing in media is compiled as a Flipboard magazine *News on e-books*.

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SKAITMENINĖ KNYGA NEGAUSIOS KALBOS KULTŪROJE: MEDIJŲ TECHNOLOGIJOS IR SKAITMENINĖ VISUOMENĖ

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Santrauka

Straipsnyje aprašomas Švedijoje atliekamo mokslinio tyrimo projektas ir pradiniai rezultatai, gauti tyrinėjant statistinius duomenis, surinktus iš bendrųjų statistinių šaltinių, reprezentatyvių Švedijos gyventojų apklausų ir viešųjų bei akademinių bibliotekų. Projekte tyrinėjamos skaitmeninių knygų knygininkystės sektoriuje sukeltos permainos, veikiančios visus jo dalyvius – autorius, leidėjus, knygų prekybininkus ir kitus platintojus, ypač bibliotekas, taip pat ir skaitmeninių knygų skaitytojus. Švedija pasirinkta kaip ypatinga šalis, kurioje nepaprastai aukštas raštingumo lygis bei informacinių technologijų skvarba į kasdienį žmonių gyvenimą. Tačiau skaitmeninių knygų plitimas čia dar tik prasideda. Atrodo, kad skaitmeninių knygų leidybai, platinimui ir naudojimui Švedijoje būdingos tipinės mažų leidybos rinkų problemos. Straipsnio autoriai pristato projekto tikslus, teorinį pagrindą ir pirminius duomenis, surinktus 2012 metais. Šie duomenys rodo, kad skaitmeninių knygų Švedijoje leidžiama mažai, jos taip pat labai mažai skaitomos ir naudojamos. Bibliotekos šiuo metu atlieka pagrindinį prieigos prie skaitmeninių knygų kanalo vaidmenį, kurį labai palaiko ir leidėjai bei platintojai. Jau šiame pradiniame etape išryškėja skaitmeninių knygų gamybos ir sklaidos problemos, kurios būdingos ne tik Švedijai, bet ir kitoms šalims: skaitmeninės knygos teisiškai laikomos paslauga ir kompiuterine programa, todėl joms netaikomos popierinių knygų lengvatos (pavyzdžiui, sumažintas PVM), skaitytojai reikalauja vis daugiau skaitmeninių knygų, bet mano, kad jos turi kainuoti daug mažiau negu popierinės knygos, ir ieško nemokamų jų platinimo

kanalų, leidėjai siekia išlaikyti skaitmeninių knygų platinimo monopolį ir baiminasi piratavimo, o bibliotekos praranda fondų komplektavimo ir tvarkymo savarankiškumą. Skaitytojų pasirinkimą skaityti skaitmenines knygas lemia prieiga prie technologijos, amžius ir išsilavinimas bei skaitymo įpročiai. Viešųjų ir akademinių bibliotekų situacija įsigyjant skaitmenines knygas skiriasi, nes akademinės bibliotekos yra tarptautinės mokslinės komunikacijos proceso ir rinkos dalyvės, todėl turi didesnį skaitmeninių knygų komplektavimo modelių bei platintojų pasirinkimą. Viešosios bibliotekos, kurių skaitytojams reikia knygų švedų kalba, priklauso nuo vieno skaitmeninių knygų platintojo. Leidėjai neskuba leisti skaitmeninių knygų, o knygų prekybos per knygynus mastai traukiasi. Vėliau projekto autoriai sieks surinktus duomenis įprasminti naudodami Winstono naujovių sklaidos teoriją, knygos kultūros, naujovių priėmimo, Bourdieu socialinio lauko ir kitas teorijas.

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