

Online community of readers = e-reading?

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Abstract

In Hungary the e-book culture is now evolving. The publishers are creating a large number of new e-books, and the libraries are speaking about how can they serve e-books to the readers, because there isn't any law about that in this moment. Up till now the readers could obtain new Hungarian e-books most of the time illegally. For this reason there are a large group of online communities that are dealing with e-book exchanging.

In my presentation I will try to give answers to the following questions:

- 1. Where can we find such communities on the internet?*
- 2. How are these communities working? What behavioral patterns describe the members of the community?*
- 3. What is the attitude of the classical online communities of readers towards the e-books and e-reading?*

I will also show the community of the biggest Hungarian social website for booklovers, named Moly.hu.

Keywords: e-book, web2.0, Hungary, online communities

Extended abstract

In Hungary the e-book culture is now evolving. The publishers are creating a large number of new e-books, and the libraries are speaking about how can they serve e-books to the readers, because there isn't any law about that at the moment (Szalacsi 2013). Up till now the readers could obtain new Hungarian e-books most of the time just illegally, because they couldn't get it from the library and could find only few Hungarian titles in the publishers offer. So if somebody wanted to read an e-book, he could choose from the few titles or must choose another language and bought a book for example from the Amazon.com. Or he could download its illegal Hungarian version from the internet.

For this reason there are a large group of online communities that are dealing with e-book exchanging. In the Hungarian scientific literature we have a large group of results about the social sites for booklovers (Audunson and Tóth 2011) and about the Hungarian website, the Rukkola.hu, in which we can exchange our paper books (Jávorka 2013), but until this time nobody investigated the e-book reader communities on the internet. But from the former researches we can draw important conclusions.

In my presentation I will try to give answers to the following questions:

- 1. Where can we find such communities on the internet?*

Are they using social networking websites, blogs or old type forums, maybe torrent sites? What is the most popular platform? Are they taking advantages of the opportunity of the web 2.0?

- 2. How are these communities working? What behavioral patterns describe the members of the community?*

Do they speak about the substance of the books or just about the exchange? Do they develop friendships? So are they a real community or just some people who like the same things? How friendly and helpful are they in the community? What are the most popular books? Do the users search it single-minded or do they most of the time just browse?

- 3. What is the attitude of the classical online communities of readers towards the e-books and e-reading?*

I will also show the community of the biggest Hungarian social website for booklovers, named Moly.hu. Because we can presume that the users of this site read e-books much more often than the others, they are deeper in the digital reading culture, they are using it regularly and naturally. But we know about the old users of the Rukkola.hu that they exchange their paper books on the site but they don't buy books online. So are the users of these social sites e-book readers and members of online reading communities too?

Apart from these one of the biggest question is that: What is the effect of these communities on the e-book market? (Bodó 2011) Will the members buy books legally if they can download it free? Will this seize back the development of the e-book culture? What can the publishers and the libraries do in this situation without strong law system in the background?

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Curriculum Vitae

Brigitta Jávorka (1989) MA student at the University of Pécs.

This is my 9th semester in the university, and I would like to be a librarian. After the Bachelor's degree of IT librarian I get a diploma. I wrote my thesis about the Moly.hu Hungarian social website for booklovers. The online communities of readers are a part of my new research program. I think this conference could be a great professional experience that I could make good use of in my future librarian jobs