WHERE DID THE BOOK GO?

An empirical study about reading habits and reading ecologies of Swedish Kindle-users

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Media and communication studies
One-year master
15 credits
Spring, 2016
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Abstract

Through the introduction and popularisation of e-books and e-readers, the way books are read is changing. This paper aims to investigate the reading habits of five Swedish-based Kindle users to understand their reading ecologies and what place the Kindle has in their reading ecologies. The Kindle proves an interesting research focus as it is one of the most sold e-readers in the world, but has yet to establish itself on the Swedish market. The research focuses on three main themes: the reading ecologies and habits of the interviewees; why they use the Kindle; and how they use reviews on Kindle Store. The research uses the methods of communicative ecology mapping and qualitative interviews for collecting empirical data, which is then contextualised and analysed through the theories of communicative ecology, mediatization, and media as practice.

The research shows that the interviewees prefer reading on digital devices, and that particular practices of reading are done in specific spatial dimensions. Three practices of reading are visible in the interviewees’ reading ecologies: news-reading, social media-reading, and Kindle-reading. The interviewees use the Kindle as a replacement of the physical book, which is shown in the way the interviewees list the e-ink technology and lack of backlit screens as motivations for using the device, in addition to the vast amount of niched literature available on Kindle Store. Moreover, reviews on Kindle Store are valuable to the interviewees when buying books, but the type of book changes how much validity the reviews hold. The reviews, no matter if they are being read or written by the interviewees, are viewed as helping the community of readers who use Kindle in finding ‘good’ literature.

**Keywords:** communicative ecology, e-book, e-reader, Kindle, Kindle Store, mediatization, media practice, reading, reading habits
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1. Introduction

How do you read?

Had this question been asked 50 years ago, there would not have been much hesitation in the response: reading is done with a physical book; pages with printed words, enclosed by a cover. The book has essentially looked the same since the 15th century, when Gutenberg invented the press and forever changed the way culture is mass produced (Davies & Sigthorsson 2013, p. 33). However, during the last decade, technological developments and changes in the attitude to new technology have made the book a more fleeting entity than before (Striphas 2011). The publishing landscape is constantly changing with new technology and merging of different modes of media production, affecting how reading is practiced, which is important to study in order to understand how the future of the book might look like.

The aim of this paper is to investigate how the digitalisation of the book has affected the practice of reading, with focus on Kindle-users in Sweden. Looking at the Kindle is important because it is one of the world’s most sold e-readers, but its place on the Swedish market is not yet established. It is therefore interesting to consider why Swedish Kindle-users motivate their use of a device that hinders their reading in their native language. This paper will investigate three particular questions: How do the interviewees’ daily reading habits look like, and what place does the Kindle have? Why do they use a Kindle when e-books can be read on their phones and/or computers? And how does the social aspect of reviews on Kindle Store affect their reading? The investigation will be carried out through a combination of communicative ecology mapping of the participants’ daily reading habits, and a qualitative interview. The results will be contextualized and analysed through the theories of communicative ecology, media as practice, and mediatization, which will help me to understand what is being read in which context and on what device in the daily reading habits of the interviewees, which will put the research in an interesting perspective, as it concerns not the author or the text itself, but the practice of reading. This research is thus relevant to media and communication studies through its investigation of how the practice of reading connects with technological formats, media habits and communication.

In Sweden, the technological merging of the printed book and virtual text files has not been an easy transition, and is still in process of finding itself on the Swedish book market (Bergström & Höglund 2013, 367-368). The Kindle is thus important to study, as it is one of the most sold e-readers in the world today, yet its place on the Swedish market is small. Not even the Swedish
e-readers which have been introduced on the market has gained much attention (ibid.). So how come some people use the Kindle in Sweden, where next to none native language literature cannot easily be read on the device? What differentiates it from other reading-devices that are not dedicated e-readers? Moreover, it is important to consider what happens to the practice of reading when the text is not printed on paper and can be accessed in an instant. Are there changes in how, when, and why we read on different devices? And how does the collaborative aspect of the community of reviews on Kindle Store affect reading practices?

Investigating reading practices is important in order to understand the complex relationship between socio-cultural contexts and reading, as well as the individuals who read. Instead of asking what impact media and mediatization has on the individual and what it does to society, it is more interesting to think about what we do with media and mediatizing processes (Couldry 2012, p. 106). Concerning the practice of reading, it is of importance to understand how reading habits work in the daily life of an individual, which is done by applying communicative ecology as both theoretical framework as well as method. Just like the word ecology suggest, the focus of the investigation turns to the organic, from the individual to different content, devices, and communities in different contexts and spatial dimensions.

However, it is not only the reading on digital devices that is interesting in the context of the e-book, but also how we interact with other readers. Reading has traditionally been seen as a personal matter, but at the same time it is also highly dependent on the socio-cultural determents that the individual is confined to. In this paper, sociality will be explored through the use of the reviews-section on Kindle Store, where community can be built through collaboration by sharing opinions about books. Reading on an e-reader is simultaneously private and social: no one will see the cover of the book being read, and the title bought online on Amazon cannot be displayed in the bookshelf: The reader alone knows what is being read. Meanwhile, Kindle Store enables connections and collaboration with the community of readers. The collaborate aspect is thus important to investigate in relation to new ways of reading on digital devices, as it creates a dichotomy of social versus private, connected to the same device.

This paper will begin by introducing the development and concept of the e-book and e-readers in “Background”, which will also explain the Kindle’s role in this development. The following chapter “Literary review and previous research” will discuss the theoretical framework of the research. Here, the theories mediatization, communicative ecology, and media as practice will
be explored in order to conceptualize the research question and results. In the following chapter “Data and methodology”, I will further explain the methods used to collect and analyse the empirical data, as well as the selection process and ethical considerations. After this follows “Research results and analysis”, where the results of the ecology mapping and interviews will be presented and analysed. Each subsection will focus on the three themes of my research question: the reading ecologies of the interviewees; why they use the Kindle; and the social aspect of reviews in Kindle Store. Lastly, I will in “Discussion” discuss the results on a larger scale in connection to the theories. Here, I will also propose possible future research connected to the subject.

2. Background

2.1. The Gutenberg legacy: the advent of the e-book

It would be easy to explain the e-book as a new concept coined in relation to the invention of e-readers like the Kindle. However, the e-book as a concept is older than that. As early as 1971, the first attempts at digitalizing books were made with the launch of Project Gutenberg, which is still running to this day. Project Gutenberg consists of a large collection of free, scanned books, and contains many classics whose copyright since long has expired. The project is thus the “oldest digital library of electronic texts” (Smith 2012, p. 52), and has paved the way for the digitalization of the book.

In the wake of Project Gutenberg’s success, Google decided to design their own digital library in 2004. Google Books would not only scan books, but also index them and make them searchable on Google. According to Philips and Clark (2008), this decision caused controversy in the publishing world, as both publishers and authors feared that Google Books would interfere with copyright and also, perhaps more importantly, “[T]he publishers realized that unless they gave the search engine companies (Google, Microsoft and Yahoo!) access to their content for indexing they and their authors would face potential invisibility on the internet” (2008, p. 31). Subsequently, in 2006, the big publishing houses started to digitalize their back-lists, and also put forth agendas to digitally publish their future books as well (ibid.).

2.2. Electronic reading devices enter the market

When the first electronic reader was introduced on the market in 1986 by Franklin Electronic Publishers, it was met with scepticism by publishers of fiction, and was mainly used as a
referencing tool at universities (Smith 2012, p. 52). The big turn for the e-reader came in 2007, when Amazon launched their Kindle and changed the e-book’s place on the book market.

The Kindle was created for Amazon’s own digital e-book format, and gave the mass audience access to large quantities of old and new books, but most importantly, fictional. Amazon’s Kindle was an instant success amongst readers, but for publishers, the e-reader lead to an unstable book market due to major competition between not only different companies, but also between file formats. It was not until the EPUB file format was introduced as a standard format for e-books that the market found a stable ground again (Smith 2012, p. 52-53). However, the Kindle only supports Amazon’s own e-book format and not the EPUB file format, which has rewarded Amazon with a special place on the e-book market (Smith 2012, 146). Today, millions of Kindles have been sold, and it is one of the most popular e-book readers in the world (ibid.). However, due to Amazon’s reluctance to release their sales numbers, the total of Kindles sold can only be guessed. Forbes (2014) has estimated the number of Kindles that are in use, and they conclude that up to 30 million Kindles of various versions may be in use today (Forbes 2014). The Kindle is thus an institution in itself, and the various generations and versions increases its stance on the market.

2.3. The Kindle and Kindle Store

Today, four versions of the Kindle are available: Kindle, Kindle Paperwhite, Kindle Voyage and Kindle Oasis (Amazon 2016a). The Kindle is their cheapest and most basic e-reader, and the current version is the 7th generation. The Paperwhite was introduced in 2012, and the Voyage launched in 2014. During the time this research was conducted (April 2016), Amazon released their latest Kindle: the Oasis, which, according to Amazon, is the most advanced Kindle up to date (Amazon 2016b). What all of these versions of Kindle have in common is that they use e-ink, which means that they are designed as to replicate a printed book (Smith 2012, p. 146). They also lack backlit screens, which require that the reader have an external light if they want to read in the dark.

Kindle Store is the market place for books that can be downloaded to the Kindle devices. It is hosted by Amazon, and contains millions of titles in English and foreign languages. However, the Swedish share on Kindle Books is small. On April 14th 2016, Kindle Store offered 1 577 Swedish titles, making it one of the least popular foreign languages there (Amazon 2016c). Scrolling through the Swedish titles, it becomes apparent that the titles on sale are either self-published or classic Swedish literature which no longer have copyright (ibid.). Due to Amazon
not being present on the Swedish market, they lack the rights to sell newly published works, which means that Swedish e-books are sold by Swedish retailers, and the format these e-books are sold in is not supported by the Kindle. This is also the case for e-book loans through Swedish libraries (Bergström & Höglund 2013, p. 357-358). Thus, Swedish readers face limitations in reading Swedish literature on the Kindle.

3. Literary review and previous research

Media is a concept in flux, which changes with societal, cultural and individual progress. As media research will subsequently always depend on the historical and societal contexts it is being investigated in, “there can be no ‘pure’ theory of media” (Couldry 2012, p. 32). The theoretical framework in my study focuses on three main theories: communicative ecology, mediatization, and media as practice. These theories work as separate contextualization starting points, but in this research they will be connected through the complexities of reading and how the ecology of communication in relation to reading is related to not only mediatization, but also reading as practice. Together, these theories help to frame the understanding of the individual’s reading in connection to their socio-cultural contexts, as they connect with the idea of media as being complex processes that cannot easily be pinpointed. Thus, the theories clearly relate and help explore reading habits and ecologies, as they show the complex practices of media use.

3.1. Theoretical framework

3.1.2. The mediatization of reading

When it comes to media, and what role media plays in the everyday life of any society, it is important to understand how media is not an entity in itself that can be discussed and analysed without social and cultural context. Putting reading into the context of media, it becomes evident that reading’s role in the everyday life in Swedish society is closely connected to processes concerning more than books and texts, but also in relation to other forms of media. Hepp (2013) explains mediation as “describing the general characteristics of any process of media communication” and “a concept to theorize the process of communication in total” (2013, p.616). Mediation is therefore a very broad and general term that is simultaneously important to conceptualize in order to understand media communication, and difficult to apply due to its broad meaning. Subsequently, both Hepp (2013) and Hjarvard (2013) argue, that it makes more sense to theorize and conceptualize media usage through the term mediatization.
The term was coined in order to create “a more specific term to theorize media-related change” (Hepp 2013, p. 616).

The importance of mediatization in relation to communicative ecology becomes evident in Couldry’s (2004) discussion about how media research has changed over the last decade. Couldry (2004) problematizes traditional media research centred on the media text and media production, and instead purports that the focus shift to “media as the open set of practices relating to, or oriented around, media” (2004, p. 117). Through this shift to the practices of media, researchers can be given a more specific and diverse view on media and mediatization, which is also advocated by Hjarvard (2013), who argues that “mediatization stimulates the development of a soft individualism”, which is caused by the way users of media connect though communities of “weak ties” (2013, p. 137). The soft individualism is closely connected to how communities are formed online in a translocal dimension, where the physical place of the community and the individual’s relationship with the community is not as deeply rooted as it is in face-to-face relationships. Soft individualism can also be connected to Fortunati’s (2013 [2002]) arguments about chosen social space. Fortunati (2013 [2002]) argues that the mobile phone users make a choice about their socialization when they take out and use their phones in public instead of conversing with strangers. The mobile phone has thus become a device where the user’s personal space can extend into the public one, by just taking up place. Soft individualism is thus connected to the chosen social spaces of the users, as well as how the content that is being read on the phone can be personalised through the global aspect of mediatization, which will be of interest in this paper, especially regarding the reading of news and social media, but also concerning reviews on Kindle Store.

According to Couldry (2004), the traditional research paradigms treating topics such as media effects and audience consumption do not provide enough complexity in today’s media landscape (2004, p. 118-119). Studying media effects, for example, is difficult, and is often done by looking at media as a “casual chain” (2004, p. 117), where the media producer sends content which is received by the consuming audience. However, Couldry (2004) argues that studying ‘media effects’ and ‘media audiences’ as homogenous groups is linear, and does not provide research with the depth required to suitably map out the complex relations of every-day use of media. Instead, Couldry (2012) proposes a theory of media as practice, where focus lies on the complexity of the usage and practices of media, and how they relate not only to technological inventions and individual habits, but how the practice of using said media is shaped according to socio-cultural settings and changes. Additionally, Slater (2013) argues that
“the idea of ‘communicative ecology’ is simply a recognition that, in any actual situation, the media are always mediated (or re-mediated)” (2013, p. 43).

To summarise, the concept of mediatization will be important in this research in order to create understanding for the changes in reading the Kindle has brought, as mediatization concerns changes in not only the media content and distribution, but also in media consumption. The theory of mediatization is thus closely connected not only to my research topic, but also to the more complex theories of media practice and communicative ecology, which will be further discussed in the following section.

3.1.1. Understanding the communicative ecology

Slater (2013) argues that media is a concept that is renegotiated depending on which social context it is put, and used, in (2013, p. 29). Media holds different meaning for different individuals, in different situations and formats. Couldry (2012) goes as far as stating that “[M]edia is processes in space” (2013, p. 63); media shapes and enables communication and social changes, but is at the same time changed by society. It is therefore both important and interesting to study “media” through reading in the everyday life in order to explore what reading today actually means for the individual.

Slater (2013) and Hearn et al. (2009) proposes “communicative ecology” as a way of approaching media’s complexity and importance in the context of the individual user’s everyday life. Communicative ecology is, at its heart, a way to understand media in terms of practice and what place it has in people’s life, and thus shift focus from the production of the media that is consumed to the actual consumers (Slater 2013, p. 42). As the word ecology suggests, communicative ecology tries to trace the complete flow of media, which concerns not only what type of media that is consumed by the individual, but also where, on what device, and in what context it is consumed. According to Hearn et al. (2009), communicative ecology as a theory can help the researcher understand how old forms of media interact and is consumed in relation to new forms of media (2009, p. 31), which is a particular important aspect in this research about reading habits on Kindle. By exploring the individual’s reading habits in their communicative ecology, I hope to be able to map not only reading habits, but also reading habits in relation to technology.

Hearn et al. (2009) also argues that in order to “understand the potential and real impacts of individual media technologies in any given situation, you need to place this experience within a broader understanding of the whole structure of communication and information in people’s
everyday lives” (ibid.). Therefore, communicative ecology has two aspects: the local individual, and the socio-cultural. These two aspects need to be juxtaposed against each other in order to gain perspective on the communicative ecology at large. Furthermore, Hearn and Foth (2007) recognises that there are three layers to communicative ecology, which are important to investigate: the technological-, the social-, and the discursive layer (2007, p. 1). The technological layer concerns the physical devices and the media which allows the individual to communicate and interact with their community; the social layer “consists of people and social modes of organising” communities and people in relation to their communicative habits; and the discursive layer investigates what is the “content of communication” which creates the particular world which “the ecology operates in” (Hearn & Foth 2007, p. 1). These layers of communicative ecologies are then investigated in relation to three dimensions: “(a) online and offline communication modi, (b) local and global contexts, and (c) collective and networked interaction paradigms” (Hearn et. al. 2009, p. 181-182). However, Hearn et. al. (2009) recognise that the “online and offline communication modi” has become merged during the last decade, and “interactions between online and offline communities should not be separated” (ibid.). Thus, the communicative ecologies are contextualised in relation to the particular contexts of both the layers and the dimensions.

As previously mentioned, media is a complex concept that is hard to define. Technological devices like the smartphone can be used for a variety of media, and in relation to other media and devices. However, the theory of communicative ecology offers a bottom up approach, which is hard to come by in other theories surrounding media usage. Communicative ecology shifts the focus from the dominant players in media, and also de-centralizes the notion of media usage to the individual in relation to the society and locality they live in, as well as the preconditions and opportunities they have to use media (Lennie & Tacchi 2012, p. 48; Allison 2007). Thus, it is important to acknowledge that communication, media usage, and media itself, look different depending on the individual’s conditions. Subsequently, the individual conditions are not purely based on country, city or cultural and societal contexts. They are also based on the individual’s “social status, levels of access and engagement, and power”, which leads to the understanding that the communicative ecology of people living in the same society with the same cultural values will ultimately still differ because of the individual conditions (Lennie & Tacchi 2012, p. 51). Moreover, the individual’s communicative practices in relation to the de-centralizing of power in the particular socio-cultural contexts is also talked about by Clay Shirky (2010), as he discusses the importance of collective sharing of knowledge in
communities, which is closely connected to communicative communities and ecologies, which will be further discussed in relation to reading and writing reviews on Kindle Store. Shirky (2010) argues that are particular values which are directly connected to the way personal and social motivation for sharing work, and how “social motivations can drive far more participation than can personal motivations alone” (2010, p. 173). Thus, knowing that the knowledge you possess can mean something to someone else and do something for society, whether it be at large or the community in your communicative ecology, is a major motivator for participate in sharing online (Shirky, 2010, p.172 ff.).

Sharing online can be further connected to the idea of collaborative media, which is explained by Löwgren and Reimer (2013) as mediated places of communication where users can share, connect and collaborate in creating both content and meaning in their shared community (2013, p. 134 ff.). In the case of the Kindle, collaboration in sharing reviews is thus vital in creating community, which is also visible in Shirky’s arguments about the motivations of sharing, as it helps create community. Additionally, collaborative media is according to Löwgren and Reimer generally more open than traditional media, as it is the shared knowledge and meaning making of the users within the community that creates the content and not gatekeepers of culture (2013, p. 136). Collaborative media thus connects with communicative ecology as it enables the social- and discursive layers of communicative ecology through the shared knowledge and collaborative nature of, in the case of this study, reviews on Kindle Store.

In conclusion, communicative ecology is important when researching individual habits and communications, as it takes into consideration the complexity of communication and use of media. In this paper, communicative ecology will be used in relation to both method and theory. By applying communicative ecology theory though the different layers and dimensions and how they overlap in the respondents’ ecologies, it is possible to pinpoint socio-cultural contextual aspects that might affect the reading habits, which will be further contextualised with the use of the theories of mediatization, and media as practice which follows.

3.1.3. The practice of reading

Media is a concept that is does not determine any kind of physical object, but rather complex processes and practices, which have “a deep embedding in social space” (Couldry 2012, p. 69). This idea is deeply rooted in sociology and anthropology, where theorists like Bourdieu and Focault played important parts by researching different aspects and points of view of practices in society (Postill, 2010, p. 6 ff.). They, together with other famous theorists, built the
foundation to the type of practice theory that is today used in media research. The early practice theorists tried to study practices connected to structural social order and how the individual was shaped – and in some cases also shaped – society through different practices (ibid.). By putting media into the context of practice, researchers are able to investigate the complexity of the practice of media in relation to the socio-cultural contexts of the individual and how media works in relation to both the individual and society.

The theory of media as practice is thus a good complementary theoretical framework to communicative ecology and mediatization. Couldry (2012) explains the theory of media as practice as way to deconstruct the simplistic view of media as shaping its users’ habits and society, and instead offer a much more complex mode of analysing media habits (2012, p. 70). Furthermore, analysing media as practice goes hand in hand with the theory of communicative ecology in the way that they are both concerned with the habits, behaviour and use of media in a socio-cultural context, and thus de-centralises the common view of media as a linear process from producer to audience, and moves away from the analysis of the media text.

The term practice in media practice theory connotes the importance of not the media itself, but its users and the way they use media. At its heart, it asks the question “what types of things do people do in relation to media?” (Couldry 2012, p. 106). For instance, audience researcher Elizabeth Bird (2010) suggests that the communicative practice aspect of media is important to study in order to understand the audience of media (2010, p. 88). She argues that media practices “maintains the focus on local, grounded activities, rather than theoretical (and possibly speculative) analyses of culture”, and also points to the direction of “rituals” as an important term in the theoretical use of media practice (2010, p. 87), which also shows how media practice, in combination with communicative ecology, directs focus from media text and cultural analysis to the act of using media. Connecting the focus on media usage to the practice of reading, Collins J. (2010) argues that reading traditionally has been a “thoroughly private experience in which readers engaged in intimate conversation with an author between the pages of a book”, and that this intimacy has changed to “an exuberantly social activity” in the wake of the commodification of the book (2010, p. 4).

Couldry (2012) further discusses media practice and its connection to the idea of rituals, as he argues that “[H]abitual repetition is one way actions get stabilized as practices” (2012, p. 126). Some habits are more integrated into our social lives and daily routines than others, and even though the format or medium changes, the habits of the practice can take a longer time to
change, as they are not related to one single media practice, but “as complex articulations of many media related practices” (ibid.). In the case of this research, where the practice of reading is placed in the socio-spatial dimension of communicative ecology, it is important to analyse both habits and the subsequent rituals that are shaped through the complexity of these practices in a communicative ecology context. However, as Peterson (2010) comments, rituals connected to media practice hold more meaning than simply being an action that repeats itself (2010, p. 138). Thus, the ritual of, in this case reading, is connected to more than space: what is read, and how it is read makes the practice ritualistic, and also gives it a place in the ecology of reading, as well as explains how it is seen as a media practice. Furthermore, media rituals are not created or shaped in isolated individual environments, but are affected by power dynamics and the social order of media practices (Hobart, 2010, p. 59; Couldry 2012, p. 158).

In summary, the theory media as practice is used to understand how media is used by individuals, and how it relates and is affected by their socio-cultural worlds. Moreover, as the research question of this paper concerns reading habits, it is important to look at reading as a practice in order to grasp its place in the communicative ecologies of the interviewees, and to understand how the practice connects with the mediatization of reading through new devices and socio-cultural processes.

3.2. Previous research

Research about reading habits in Sweden are not too common, especially concerning the e-book. However, in 2015, the Swedish institute SOM, connected to Gothenburg University, conducted a large scale survey-based research about reading habits connected to e-books, which provides useful information to this study. In addition, research about Estonian reading habits in the post-Soviet socio-cultural context will also help to frame this study.

3.2.1. E-reading in Sweden

Bergström and Höglund (2015) discuss how the e-book has had a slow development in Sweden, much due to the high taxes connected to the e-book sales, which has caused e-book prices to be as high as the prices of printed books (2015, p. 492). Partly due to these factors, the e-reader has not had the same breakthrough in Sweden as it has had in other countries like Great Britain and the US, where Amazon is established (Clark & Phillips 2008, p. 31). However, the fact that Amazon is not yet established on the Swedish market is also a factor contributing to the slow development of e-books in Sweden. However, Bergström and Höglund (2015) show that statistically, the reading of e-books in Sweden has increased since 2012, despite the percentage
being much lower than the readers of printed books: in 2014, 86% had read at least one book the last 12 months, and 18% had read one or more e-books in the same time span, which shows that e-books have gained popularity since 2012, where the number of readers of printed books were the same as 2014, but number of e-book readers was 9% (Bergström & Höglund 2015, p. 483). There has been attempts at introducing a Swedish-based e-reader by several actors on the market. However, none of them has reached the kind of popularity that the Kindle has. Instead, the majority of Swedes that read e-books do so primarily on tablets, but also computers (Bergström and Höglund 2015, p. 481). Only a small part of the e-book readers read on smartphones (ibid.).

Moreover, Bergström and Höglund (2015) are able to distinguish what type of reader has a positive attitude towards and frequently reads e-books. The typical Swedish e-book readers are “young, visits libraries relativity more frequently and to a greater extent live in a town or city rather than on the countryside or smaller towns” (2015, p. 486). It is also concluded that the most popular way of acquiring e-books in Sweden today is through library loans (ibid.).

3.2.2. Reading in Estonia

In addition to the Swedish point of view, I would also like to bring up research regarding reading habits conducted in Estonia by Lauristin in 2014. The Estonian research was conducted with the focus on what changes reading habits have undergone since the fall of the Soviet Union and what societal impact that has had on reading culture in Estonia, which is interesting for my research in terms of how it connects with the socio-cultural aspects of both media as practice as well as communicative ecology.

Lauristin (2014) uses Bourdieu’s theories about habitus and “cultural practices as a specific field” as theoretical framework in order to understand how the digitalisation of culture in post-Soviet Estonia has shaped and changed reading habits (2014, p. 58). Lauristin (2014) identifies six different types of reading-related lifestyles by investigating different aspects of cultural participation and consumption: “New multi-active non-fiction reader”; “Traditional active humanitarian reader”; Traditional recreational and practical reader”; “New moderate hobby- and entertainment-oriented reader”; “New hedonistic Internet-oriented non-reader”; and “Traditional passive non-reader “ (2014, p. 67). These types of reading-related lifestyles provide an interesting starting point in this research, as it allows for contextualisation of the Swedish Kindle-user in their particular socio-cultural context.
In this paper, the type of reader that will be investigated can be placed into the first category of “new multi-active non-fiction reader”, which Lauristin (2014) calls “the new, multi-active young ‘reading class’” (2014, p. 68). This type of reader is young, knows how to use new technology, reads all kinds of literature, and reads because it “is an important dimension of their self-enhancement” (ibid.). Considering the respondents in my research, it is interesting to consider these aspects of the reading type suggested by Lauristin (2014), and how the introduction of the Kindle into the equation changes aspects of their reading habits. In Lauristin’s (2014) research, reading on Kindle is not mentioned, and the reading that is investigated is printed. Therefore, the reading-lifestyle typology needs to be critically analysed in comparison with Lauristin’s (2014) type, in order to fully grasp the place the Kindle has in the daily reading habits of the Swedish readers in this research.

4. Data and methodology

4.1. Methods used in the research

Reading habits are very personal. However, they are also shaped – and changed – by the socio-cultural context that the reader is living in. Researching reading habits is therefore difficult if focus is not on the communicative flow of the practice of reading in a daily, habitual context. In this paper, two methods are used to collect empirical data: communicative ecology mapping and semi-structured qualitative interviews.

4.1.1. Communicative ecology mapping

Communicative ecology mapping as method is often used in ethnographic research. The method is, as the name suggests, closely connected to the theory of communicative ecology, which is further explained in “Literary review and previous research”.

As a research method, communicative ecology mapping is concerned with media’s place in the everyday life of the individual person. However, it recognises that the individual’s communicative flow is dependent on socio-cultural contexts that the person lives in. Communicative ecology mapping is thus a way of mapping this flow through ethnographical research in relation to the individual’s own socio-cultural ecology, with focus not on the media itself, but the practices surrounding the use of said media (Hearn et al. 2009, p 31).

In this research, I was interested in what place reading on the Kindle, and the device itself, have in the daily life of the interviewees. I therefore decided to let the participants map their reading...
on an average day on a 24 hour clock in order to gain understanding about their behavioural habits connected to reading. Moreover, they were asked to map any reading they do during a day: when, where, and on what device. By letting the interviewees map and reflect over their daily reading habits I hoped to achieve a better understanding of their reading habits, and in particular when, where and how they used their Kindles in their daily reading routines. The communicative flow of the individuals’ reading habits was then collected and analysed in relation to the theoretical framework. The interviewees’ maps were rendered in InDesign by me in order to create a coherent narrative that would be easier to read and compare, since the interviewees mapped in various ways.

4.1.2. Qualitative semi-structured interviews

Kvale (2007) argues that the interview as a research method is important and relevant when investigating the lives of people. Kvale (2007) proposes a mode of research interview called “a semi-structured life-world interview” as especially useful when trying to investigate a phenomena or problem “with the purpose of obtaining descriptions of the life world of the interviewee” (2007, p. 7-8). This qualitative interview method seemed to hold particular relevance to my own project, and I thus built my interview guide with semi-structured, open ended questions that allowed me to also probe and ask un-planned follow-up questions, which according to Kvale (2007) is important when conducting these types of interviews (2007, p. 9). Furthermore, according to Collins H. (2010), personal interviews come with an array of positive aspects, such as giving the interviewer control over the situation and the ability for me as a researcher and interviewer to help the interviewee process the questions (2010, p. 134). With the additional communicative ecology mapping the interviewees were asked to do, the semi-structured interview helped me to delve deeper into their personal choices and habits.

4.2. Collecting the data

4.2.1. Designing the empirical data collection

The first step of designing the collection of empirical data was to build an interview guide (Appendix 1), in which I divided the interview into sections which focused on the three topics being investigated: “Individual reading habits”, “Why use a Kindle?”, and “The collaborative aspect of Kindle”. The first part was the communicative ecology mapping, and the following two sections were semi-structured qualitative interviews. I chose to make use of yes- and no questions which were then followed up by questions with the opportunity for the interviewee
to talk more freely. These follow-up questions were written down prior to the interviews and can be viewed in the Interview guide.

4.2.2. Sample selection and finding participants

A combination of judgement- and convenience sampling was used, since I did not have access to a specific cluster of people using Kindle, or had the opportunity to do random sampling for the same reasons (Collins H. 2010, p. 179). I am aware that there are limitations with judgement sampling and convenience sampling, such as bias and lack of possibilities to draw major conclusions about behaviour (ibid.), but due to the unexplored nature of this project, I found these sampling strategies adequate as they would give me insight to the personal use of Kindle and the reading ecologies of the interviewees, which would then be compared with each other.

My sample selection was men and women 30-45 years old, living in Sweden, and who use a Kindle device on a daily basis. The age-group was determined by my wish to investigate possible changes in reading habits. By focusing on an age-group which would have grown up during the mediatization of reading habits, and still have had time to adjust to new devices and ways of reading I hoped to gain understanding of these changes. I am aware that my small sample of five people pose several limitation problems with this research, as it is not possible to draw any large-scale conclusions about the habits of Swedish Kindle-users in general. Therefore, this research will not try to generalise the reading habits of all Kindle-users in Sweden, but analyse the results of the small sample and there find similarities and differences in their individual habits. In the discussion and conclusion, however, some generalisations will be made in order to theorise the result of the paper in a larger context.

I decided that the easiest way to reach a large amount of people was through a Facebook-post. The Facebook-post resulted in eight people contacting me, and of these eight, five suited my sample selection. Two of the interviewees had the opportunity to meet me in person in Malmö, one attended on Skype, and two I interviewed on telephone. For the purpose of my research subjects’ anonymity, it will not be disclosed which interviewee was interviewed in which way. Subsequently, I am aware that the limitations of the telephone interviews are greater than the ones posed in a face-to-face interview; for example there is no way for me to know what facial expressions the telephone interviewees have when talking (Collins H. 2010, p. 135). Ideally, all of the interviews would have been conducted face-to-face, but the results of the interviews were so similar that I decided that for the sake of this research, the differences in setting would not have changed the outcome of my results. The communicative ecology mapping in the phone interviews were done in the same fashion as the ones face-to-face in the way that they had the
24-hour clock before them, and that they commented on their reading habits during an average day.

Every interview began with small talk followed by a briefing of the project and what phenomena I was interested in knowing more about. The interview was rounded off by asking the interviewee if they had any comments or further questions about the subject, the project or the interview itself. This debriefing was important, since the interviewee might have additional comments important to my project that I had failed to bring up, but that they felt they needed to let me know about. I also decided to take notes right after the interviewee had left or hung up, in order to note down certain expressions that I was unsure I could relate to again when transcribing the interview, as recommended by Kvale (2007, p.56).

I decided to include pauses, laughter and sighs in my interview transcriptions, as I felt they conveyed important details and information about the interviewees’ replies. Kvale (2007) argues that there is no right or wrong way of transcribing an interview, and that the amount of detail in the transcripts are determined by what kind of information the researcher is after (2007, p. 95). Subsequently, I chose not to “transcribe verbatim and word by word” (2007, p. 96), as repetitions and other verbal sounds are not important to the narrative, and would make the transcription incoherent. Instead I decided to transcribe in a “formal, written style” (ibid.), not only in order to increase the readability to the reader, but also to create a more coherent narrative not focusing on the linguistic aspects of the interview, and thus making it more story-like.

4.2.3. The participants

The sample selection is represented by five participants, which for the sake of their anonymity have been designated codes. The codes begin with F or M to mark gender, and is then followed by their age, a dash, and a factor that sets them apart from the other respondents.

There are five factors amongst my interviewees that are especially interesting concerning my research: number of Kindles they own; how long they have been using the Kindle; if they commute; and what literature they read on the Kindle. These aspects play important parts in the communicative ecology of reading on the Kindle, and will be used as a basis for the analysis. In the table below, I have summarised these aspects in relation to my interviewees, in order to make it easier to track their ecology in “Research results and analysis”. All quotes from the interviewees can be found in the interview transcripts, which are attached as appendices and specified in the table below.
Table: The interviewees’ codes and specifics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated code</th>
<th>F32-student</th>
<th>M30-new-user</th>
<th>M32-old-user</th>
<th>F42-children</th>
<th>M30-management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Kindles</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commuter</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice of literature</td>
<td>Course literature</td>
<td>Fiction</td>
<td>Fantasy and sci-fi</td>
<td>Mixture</td>
<td>Management books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix number</td>
<td>2.1.</td>
<td>2.2.</td>
<td>2.3.</td>
<td>2.4.</td>
<td>2.5.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3. Data analysis method

In order to analyse the empirical data, I chose to work with a combination of two data analysis methods: thematic analysis and close reading. These two methods were chosen due to the qualitative nature of the empirical data in the form of interviews. According to Jyväskylä university (2010a), thematic reading is useful when trying to pinpoint certain thematic similarities in relation to the phenomena being researched, which is important in this study of the interviewees’ communicative ecologies and reading habits, as I am interested in seeing how they connect to each other. In addition, close reading of the interviewees’ responses is a necessary method to gain a deeper understanding of the data for the analysis. Close reading is particularly concerned with “analysis of words and interpretation of texts” (Jyväskylä 2010b), which suits well with the analysis of this research, as it is based on interviews and thus needs to be interpreted in relation to the theoretical framework and research question.

4.4. Ethical concerns

There are always ethical concerns related to research about the personal lives of people (Kvale 2007, p. 24). This makes informed consent an important aspect of interview research as well as communicative ecology mapping. It was therefore important that the interviewees knew about the project, what I was investigating, and that they were guaranteed anonymity before they decided to contact me. I also made sure that the interviewees were informed about the research and how the interview would proceed before conducting the interview, which according to Kvale (2007) is important when handling informed consent (2007, p. 27). Since one major ethical issue is confidentiality and privacy, I have chosen to omit some details in the answers that could potentially be disrupting their privacy. The omissions would not have changed the outcome of the results, as they were about personal details related to family situations. However, in some cases where I found that personal details were important to the research, I asked for consent to use that information in the research. Therefore, I felt that it was
necessary, both for the interviewees and myself as a researcher, that the mapping was done freely, in the interviewee’s own words, and that my probing questions were considerate of their personal integrity.

Another important ethical aspect is interview bias, which according to Collins H. (2010) has the “greatest chance” to occur in personal interviews (2010, p. 135), which was something I reflected on before conducting the interviews. In my role as a researcher, I have positioned myself in relation to the interpretivist paradigm, as I find the idea of “self-reflexivity” important in research, especially considering the personal nature of the methods used and research problem posed (Collins H. 2010, p. 39). Additionally, Collins H. (2010) also claims that in the interpretivist paradigm, “the research reflects the identity of both the researcher and the research subjects” (ibid.), which I find to be an interesting point of view. Collins H. (2010) also discusses how being subjective in the researcher role is not necessarily a bad thing, but can instead, in accordance with interpretivist and social constructivist paradigms, be valuable since the “researcher’s experiences can provide useful and often compelling research evidence if it helps us [the reader] to understand the context or phenomenon under study in a way that has relevance for others” (ibid.). However, as a researcher, it is important to acknowledge and take into consideration one’s own subjectivity in the matter, and be aware that it can affect the research if I am not being careful in posing biased or leading questions based on my own previous knowledge.

5. Research results and analysis

In this chapter, I will investigate the reading habits and the communicative flow of reading amongst the interviewees. The results are visualised and analysed through mapping their reading on a 24 hour clock, to make their daily habits comparable and visual. The results of the qualitative interviews will be presented in connection to the analysis of the practice of reading amongst my respondents. According to Hearn et. al. (2009), it is important to relate new forms of media with old forms in order to understand their place in the ecology of the individual’s media practice habits (2009, p. 31). When asked to map out their daily reading habits, the participants showed very similar modes of reading and reading habits, with minor variations, which will be presented and analysed in this section.
5.1. Results: Presentation of communicative ecology maps

In the following presentation of the visual communicative ecology maps of the respondents, focus lies on when, where and on what device reading is done throughout the day.

*Fig. 1: Communicative ecology map of F32-student*

A regular day in the life of F32-student starts with reading news on the computer. The news, she says, are local. On the commute to her university, she uses her phone to check Twitter and read news she finds there. The next time any reading is done is during lunch, where she “update myself by reading Twitter and Facebook on the phone”. During this reading, it is news and status updates that are of interest for her. On the train home, she again checks Twitter on the phone, and around 19.00, when she is at home, she spends time on her computer reading news and Facebook. The Kindle reading is generally done sometime in the evening, usually around 21.00, and then it is only course literature that is being read. Occasionally, she also reads on her computer and printed books during the evening reading, depending on what literature is required to be read at that time.
In M30-new-user’s mapping, it is visible that he engages with reading throughout the entire day. He starts off the morning on his phone with reading news on Twitter and “keeping myself updated with certain people”. He then commutes to work, and during that time he reads on his Kindle. During his work day, M30-new-user reads sporadically on Facebook and other websites. He comments that “during the day, I consistently look at Twitter and Facebook”. He also notes that he only uses his computer for work and reading during that time. In total, he reads about an hour at work. On the commute home, he again reads on his Kindle, and in the evening he uses his computer to update himself on social media and other news outlets, and sometimes there is reading done on the Kindle before bedtime.
M32-old-user starts his reading on the bus to work, where he reads news on various websites and social media on his phone. Next time any reading is done is during lunch, when it is once again news and “various stuff” that is read on the phone before going back to work. The commute home is similar to the commute to work, as he reads news on the phone there. In the evening, before going to bed, M32-old-user reads on the Kindle, specifically science-fiction and fantasy literature. He also comments that he has a particular place in his home where the Kindle reading takes place, as he “always read while lying on the sofa” during the evening.
In F42-children’s daily reading ecology, the map differs depending on if it is a week where her children are at her place or not. In the map she made, she decided to map out a regular day when her children are at her place, as that is when the most reading is done.

F42-children starts her day by reading news on her computer. The news content is read on some of Sweden’s major news websites. At work, she works in teams, which she says takes away the opportunity to do reading during the workday. On her lunch break, she reads news on Twitter on her phone, and she does not read again until after dinner, where she reads articles connected to her line of work and other news on her computer. Before bedtime, when her children are at her place, she always reads together with them. The medium of this reading varies: “Either they [the children] have a print book that they are already reading, or I make an e-book loan on the iPad from the local library”. The Kindle is not often used when reading with her children because of the lack of Swedish literature on Kindle Store. During days the children are not at her place, she reads on her Kindle, and the majority of the Kindle reading is done on the weekends.
M30-management starts his day by reading his “personal news feed”, which includes Twitter, blogs, and Reddit. During his commute to work, and then consistently through the day, he reads on his Kindle. He says that “I always keep my Kindle in my pocket or in my backpack, so anytime I am going somewhere, or have to wait for something, I take it out and read”. He therefore found it hard to map out exactly when the reading was done, but it is done through the whole day. At work, he reads “a lot of technical documents on the computer, but sometimes, if it’s a really long document, I actually email it to my Kindle because I prefer to read it on the Kindle”. In the evening, he sometimes reads on the Kindle before going to bed, and even though he commented “sometimes”, he still made sure to map that reading out as a part of his daily reading habits.
5.2. Analysis

The results of the individual communicative ecology maps have, as shown, both similarities and differences. I would argue that there are four trends visible in the reading ecologies of my respondents:

1. Reading is done exclusively on digital devices
2. Reading is done when waiting or commuting
3. The Kindle is predominantly read at home and in the evening
4. Reading is individualised

These four trends frame an interesting starting point in the analysis of the reading ecologies of my interviewees, since they connect spatial, technological and communicative aspects of their reading. Furthermore, three practices of reading can be seen in the respondents’ reading ecologies. I have chosen to call these practices news-reading, Kindle-reading and social media-reading. Additionally, there are two types of Kindle-reading: work- and leisure-reading. News-reading refers to the reading of news, social media-reading is reading status updates on social media, and Kindle-reading is the practice of reading literature on the Kindle. Despite news-reading including reading news both on specialised news websites and Twitter, I have chosen to differentiate news-reading with social media-reading due to social media-reading being concerned with personal updates and communication between the individuals and their friends and family. The two types of Kindle-reading is determined by the literature being read: work-reading concerns course literature and non-fiction, and leisure-reading concerns fiction.

Looking back to Hearn et. al.’s (2009) theories about communicative ecologies consisting of three layers in the context of three dimensions, the technological layer of my respondents’ reading ecologies should be considered the starting point of analysis, as they showcase the same position in this layer, and use the same devices for communication. Moreover, as the focus of this research is the usage of Kindle in the reading ecologies of the respondents, I find the technological layer of communicative ecology as a valid starting point in studying the Kindle-using community in Sweden. The technological layer can therefore be placed in several dimensions, as the community is determined by the usage of the device. However, in this study the community as a whole cannot be generalised due to the size of the sample selection, but is still valid in terms of investigating similarities and differences in the respondents’ ecologies. In addition, the technological layer and its space in the subsequent dimensions can be problematized, which will be discussed in the next section.
5.2.2. Read what you want: Individualised reading

Beginning with the practice of news-reading, its technological layer amongst my respondents is confined to phone and computer. None of the respondents read paper-based news (or printed books) and use only digital devices. The practice of news-reading is thus placed in an interesting context, especially in relation to the social layer and the local-global dimension, as the respondents all seem to share the same practice of finding news, which I argue is highly personal and local, but still conforms to the global socio-cultural context of their lives. For instance, M30-new-user says that he “keep myself updated with certain people – I don’t know all of them personally you know, but I’m interested in what they have to say”. Here, it becomes clear that M30-new-user actively chooses what he reads by following “certain people”, but at the same time he does not know them personally, which shows that he has his own personal locality online through communication. However, at the same time he is connected to people he does not share social relations with in the sense that he does not “know all of them personally”, which fosters the global socio-cultural context connected to the practice of news-reading on communicative devices such as the phone, which will further analysed in the following section.

5.2.2.1. Personal news: Spatial and technological aspects of news-reading

The practice of news-reading in the morning on a digital device is an important part of the communicative ecologies of the respondents. I argue that it is not only the constant flow of news being updated in the technological layer and the online dimension that attract the respondent to use their digital devices for the practice of news-reading, but also its connectivity to the discursive layer, as it enables communication through news and topical issues, which in turn help to establish community. This is interesting in terms of mediatization, as news in particular has encountered a shift in the way it is being read in the light of new technology. Hepp (2012) argues that news today is not simply journalistic articles being spread to an audience, but rather a social interaction where news has become a point of communication instead of transmission (2012, p. 32-33), which is particularly interesting when considering that a majority of the respondents also talk about using Twitter as a source of news.

Subsequently, something that seems important is choosing what news to read and through which outlets: M30-management says that he has a personal news feed; F42-children has a personal selection of news sites she turns to in addition to Twitter; F32-student uses Twitter and selected news sites; M32-old-user uses Twitter; and M30-new-user states that he keeps himself updated with people he does not personally know, but have interest in their opinions.
This personalisation through soft individualism creates an interesting dichotomy in the local-global dimension, as the respondents connect with news and those who share them through a globalised context, but create their own locality through the selection of people to follow and news-outlets to read. Turning again to mediatization, the terms “translocality” and “imagined communities” are used to describe communities and social relationships that transcend the physical locality of people, and instead moves to a mediatized spatial location where individuals do not necessarily have to have direct communication with each other to be a part of the same community (Hepp 2012, p. 102-103). By connecting with chosen news communities online, the respondents actively create their own translocality where direct communication is not necessary to be a part of the “communitization” of their reading (Hepp, 2012, p. 98).

This is further exemplified in Fortunati’s (2013 [2002]) arguments about the mobile phone as a chosen social sphere, which can be seen in the cases of the respondents. They use their phones in spatial contexts where they are not home, but in public settings, and by using their phones and connecting to their chosen communicative translocality, the phone becomes their chosen medium of social interaction through news- and social media-reading. In the communicative ecologies of my respondents, the phone thus transcends the online-offline dimension, and moves more toward the local-global dimension as the communication and interaction is not focused on the online world of the news-reading. Moreover, it is also important to connect the reading practices to what physical places they are conducted in, which will be discussed in the next section.

5.2.2.2. Morning, at home: Spatial rooms of news and social media-reading

In the communicative ecology maps of the interviewees, it is clear that news-reading can be put in the spatial rooms of morning-home, commuting and evening-home, whereas social media-reading is mainly done during lunch when the respondent has time between their spare time and work. F42-children, who share a computer with up to four other colleagues at work, says that

I don’t really do any reading until lunch time when I have coffee and read news on Twitter… It’s actually quite interesting come think of it, when you can’t browse around looking at news during the day like you would if you were the only one on the computer, and it’s really noticeable somehow.
Here F42-children shows self-awareness about how her reading habits would have changed had she been alone on the computer during the day. Her reading ecology and habits are thus shaped by the social dimension she enters at work, and I would argue that her communicative ecology thus changes depending on the physical location. M30-new-user, as a comparison, does sit alone at his computer during his work day, and seems to practice more news- and social media-reading because of that:

...during the day, I consistently look at Twitter and Facebook... perhaps a bit too much [laughter]. No, but like, I work a lot with connecting with people on Facebook and other social media platforms... so it’s pretty easy to get stuck on there while I’m at it [laugh] I think it’s like 45 minutes in total ... no, you know what, it’s probably closer to an hour... That’s really too much [laughter].

The self-reflexivity shown by M30-new-user about his (extensive) news- and social media-reading during his work day is interesting as it shows similarities in the reading habits, and reading ecology, despite them being on two ends of the spectrum. F42-children displays that she knows that she would spend more time practicing social media- and news-reading if she had individual access to the means of reading, while M30-new-user exhibits the habits that F42-children talks about. Furthermore, F32-student also started to self-reflect about her news- and social media-reading habits while mapping her 24-hour clock:

[...] at lunch time, around 12 I’d say, I update myself by reading Twitter and Facebook on the phone … Wow, this is weird, I’ve never really thought about how much time I spend on there during the day [laughter]… [What content do you read on Twitter and Facebook during lunch then?] Ah, it’s mainly updates from my friends and people I follow, but also like, shared articles that seem interesting…

News-reading as a practice is not a new phenomenon, and neither is keeping oneself updated with friends’ status updates on social media. However, I would argue that in the communicative ecology of reading of the interviewees, news-reading and social media-reading takes the role of a ritualistic practice, where the social dimension of time and place transcends the technological layer of communicative ecology. More specifically, the self-reflexivity shown by some of the respondents in their mapping seem to highlight the unconscious choices they make while news- and social media-reading throughout the day. This corresponds with Couldry’s (2012) theories about media rituals, as the respondents expressed that the news- and social media-reading was done almost by reflex, and in the particular spatial dimensions of morning, home, commuting, and lunch break. The ritual of news-reading, I would say, is
particularly interesting when looking at the traditional contexts of reading news in print. The ritual of reading news in the morning amongst the respondents could be said to stem from the traditional reading of morning newspapers, which through mediatized changes in the technological socio-cultural context of connectivity though the phone, has been transferred to other spatial dimensions, which connects to the action of waiting or wasting time: lunch break and commuting. These spatial dimensions connected to news-reading amongst the respondents are also interesting in relation to Fortunati’s arguments of the phone as a chosen and private social sphere, as the device is mostly used by the respondents in public places, which confirms that the presence of the phone gives access to the mediatized community chosen by the individual.

Additionally, the ritualistic behaviour concerning news-reading is also explored by Peterson (2010). He analysed the habit of physically picking up the newspaper *The Times*, and discovered that the habitual action of picking up the particular paper in the morning was so integrated in the individual’s life that they could not imagine reading another news-paper (Peterson 2010, p. 127 ff.). Here, I would argue, similarities can be drawn between the practice of reading *The Times* and news-reading in the cases of my interviewees. News-reading on the phone or computer seem to be more habitual and unconscious than reading on the Kindle, which I believe have to do with the access to the devices used. The Kindle is a one-function device, dedicated to the practice of reading literature, whereas the phone is a constant companion, and can connect to imagined communities with the blink of an eye.

The Kindle’s place in the communicative ecology of my interviewees is the main focus for my research, but it is necessary to investigate all reading to contextualise and juxtapose the respondents’ usage of the Kindle in their daily reading routines. When considering why reading is done, the respondents display different motivations. M30-new-user reads because it helps him pass time while commuting and for leisure. F32-student reads out of necessity, to learn and pass her course work, and M30-management, similarly to F32-student, reads books about management and leadership to acquire knowledge. M32-old-user reads purely for his enjoyment, and F42-children has two motivations for reading: one is the social interaction she gets with her children when they read together, and the other is for enjoyment when she reads on the Kindle when alone.

I would argue that Kindle-reading is less habitual than news-reading and social media-reading, in the sense that the interviewees seemed more aware of their Kindle-reading habits than their
news- and social media-reading habits, which showed more unconscious ritualistic behaviour in the spatial dimensions. The Kindle-reading’s communicative aspect thus differs from other reading practices, which will be further investigated in the next section.

5.2.3. The practice of Kindle-reading: A library in your pocket

In the technological layer, the Kindle as a device for reading seems to have clear place in the reading ecology of the respondents. Therefore, placing into the context of the practice of reading as well as the socio-cultural context of reading in Sweden is vital to understand the practice of Kindle-reading. Thus, I first want to investigate why the respondents use a Kindle: when and how they got it, why they decided on the Kindle and not another e-reader, and what experiences they have had while using the Kindle in Sweden, which, as previously mentioned in “Background”, does not have an extensive market.

First, I want to explore the reasons why the Kindle was chosen, which will be followed by an analysis of Kindle Store and its role in the communicative reading ecology of my respondents. During the interviews with the respondents, I found that they expressed two main reasons for getting a Kindle:

1. The technology of e-ink and no back-light on the screen
2. Easy access to large amounts of literature

These aspects and their relation to the interviewees’ communicative ecologies will be further analysed in the next section.

5.2.3.1. Technology matters: Reasons to use Kindle

Due to the particular state of the e-book market in Sweden, Swedish e-book readers are more prone to use their smart phones or tablets when reading (Bergström & Höglund 2015). So why decide to use a separate device like the Kindle for reading when the same selection is available on multi-function devices?

When asked about how they got their Kindles, three of the respondents told me that it was given to them as a present, and the other two bought it themselves. F42-children told me that she had never considered getting a Kindle prior to receiving one, because of her bad experiences with reading on her iPad:

   When I got the Kindle I was certain I would never use it because I had such bad experiences with the iPad – it really annoyed me that I couldn’t read on it outside – and I thought that the Kindle
would be the same [But it wasn’t?] [laughter] No, it’s completely different, the lack of backlight makes the reading experience so much easier!

The technology of the Kindle seems to be of great importance for its place in the respondent’s reading habits. The same reasons for wanting – and actively using – the Kindle is shown in the cases of M30-new-user and M30-management, who had been talking about wanting a dedicated e-reader before receiving one as a present. In all of these three cases, the technology, size and convenience of the Kindle in their particular social circumstances are important factors. M30-management, for example, was given the Kindle because he had complained about the back-light from his phone and iPad disturbing his reading: “I was really annoyed with the backlight technology when it came to reading, and it was actually the reason why I preferred to read printed books at the time”. Same can be seen in M30-new-user’s recounting of reading on the Kindle, when he explains that “it’s just not the same reading on the phone, you know… it’s hard on the eyes”. However, the e-ink technology was not the main reason for M30-new-user to getting the Kindle. M30-new-user is facing more time commuting with a new job, and thus he “really think it’s gonna be a life-saver […] much easier to bring than a printed book, you know?”. Additionally, M32-old-user also expresses interest in the technology of the Kindle. He bought his Kindle eight years ago because he “was really interested in the new paper technology they were using”. He also gives the reason that he wanted to try digital reading because of spatial confinements:

I only read books once, and I don’t have a lot of space in my home to store books. So I used to throw away tons of books, which I though was a huge waste and pretty sad. So when I read about the Kindle, I realised that reading digitally should be something for me.

M32-old-user later on also comments that he has looked into the newer versions of the Kindle, as he still owns the one he bought eight years ago. Although the newer Kindles have extended functions, he is happy with the one he has: “I’ve seen they have Kindles with built in lights and stuff now, but I kind of like having to have a light in order to read on it”. Additionally, F32-student and M30-new-user both talk about how easy it is to read on Kindle. M30-new-user even goes as far as claiming that he thinks that he will finish books on the Kindle that he has tried reading in print before, just because of the medium of the Kindle. F32-student further comments: “[…] when I bought the first book on Kindle store I couldn’t believe how easy it was, it took like two seconds and then I had it in my hand … and it looks really nice on the device as well, really easy to read”, which also stresses the importance of access to literature on the device.
5.2.3.2. Almost like the real thing: Replicating an old medium

The Kindle is thus a prime example of a device created for a mediated socio-cultural context, where easy access and convenience are vital aspects of the particular media practice. The Kindle can store vast amounts of books, and its size allows it to be easily brought when commuting. However, what is interesting with the Kindle, and subsequently problematizes its place in the communicative ecology of the respondents of this research, is that it replicates an old medium and works as a one-function device.

Juxtaposing the Kindle and the mobile phone, it is clear that the two devices represent two different practices of reading. I would argue that while the phone takes the place of a mediator between the reader and the chosen news- and social media-reading, the Kindle takes the place of the mediator between the Kindle-reading and traditional reading habits, even though Kindle-reading too is individualized. One factor of this mediation is the technology itself: the e-ink and lack of backlit screens is a clear indicator that the Kindle tries to replicate the physical book (Smith 2012, p. 146). Since these technological factors are frequently mentioned as a positive amongst the respondents, it shows that choosing the Kindle was a conscious decision in pursuing a device which makes reading feel 'natural'. The mediation of the physical medium to a digital medium affects the practice of reading, but it is interesting to note that amongst the respondents, Kindle-reading is not a mere change in the practice of reading in their communicative ecologies, but rather a change in the medium the practice is connected to.

This is highlighted not only by the respondents’ comments about what they read on their Kindles, which will be further discussed in the next section, but also in what spatial and social contexts the reading is done in their ecologies. For example, in their ecology maps, it is visible that Kindle-reading is confined to two places: public transport and the home environment. Furthermore, the time of day when the reading takes place is also similar amongst the respondents: during the commute to or from work, or in the evening. None of the respondents practice Kindle-reading in the mornings, and only M30-management says that he uses the Kindle for reading literature during the course of the work day. The spatial confinements seen in the Kindle-reading are interesting in terms of old media meeting new media through mediatization, as it seems like the practice of reading literature as something done ‘in peace’ has transferred itself to Kindle-reading. The Kindle is not used like a smart-phone; on the contrary, the Kindle seems to substitute the physical book, which in terms of mediatization provides complexity to the practice of Kindle-reading. This complexity takes shape in the way the Kindle mimics the physical book in the ecologies and practices where other multi-
functional devices are used for reading. The mediatization of literature has here found a middle-ground, where the reading is done offline on an ‘online’ device. In the socio-cultural context of the respondents, where being online, having their own personal newsfeed and using devices for reading, the Kindle has a unique place as a one-function device.

Thinking back on how reading traditionally has been a private and intimate moment between the reader and the book, mediatized changes in the practice of reading has made reading a social activity through the *ability* to communicate and share opinions about literature in a translocal and global community. I would argue that this practice is connected to the mediatization of communication in terms of recommendations online, as the online dimension has become a place users go to in order to gain knowledge about potential purchases (for example through hotel recommendations and websites like Pricerunner). This puts the practice of reading into the social- and discursive layers of the communicative ecology, and in the next section, the social practice of Kindle-reading will be investigated through the usage of Kindle Store and recommendations.

5.2.4. The social practice of reading: Reviews in Kindle Store

In the cases of the respondents in this study, reading seems to be social in the context of a) the device and b) what type of reading is done. For example, engaging in reading news on Twitter on your phone is a way of communicating with the chosen social sphere: the news the reader sees there is chosen by following certain people. The same goes for the practice of social media-reading, which is also done on either phones or computers.

Here, reviews and recommendations on Kindle Store will stand in focus to investigate how the practice of Kindle-reading engage in the social and discursive layers of the respondents’ communicative ecologies.

5.2.4.1. English only: What is read on the Kindle?

In Kindle Store, readers are given the opportunity to comment, review and rate books, which leads interesting questions regarding not only reading habits, but also how community can be formed in the Kindle Store when readers engage with the books they like. It is also interesting to explore what literature the respondents read on their Kindles, and how this corresponds to their reading ecology at large.

Out of the five participants in my research, four read niched literature on their Kindles. Only F42-children comments that she “read a mix of things, non-fiction and fiction”. In the other
cases, M30-management says that he reads “books about management”, F32-student only reads course literature, M32-old-user only reads science fiction and fantasy, and lastly, M30-new-user told me that he likes to read classics, and that the books he has downloaded so far – as he has only used the Kindle for two months at the time of the interview – are books that he had planned on buying in print before he received the Kindle. Subsequently, the respondents seem to have very particular tastes in literature. When asked about what they think about the representation of their preferred literary genres in Kindle Store compared to other book stores, all five comment that Kindle Store is superior to any other book store for the kind of literature they read. For example, F32-student comments that:

Amazon is an absolute giant when it comes to international course literature [laughter]... I know I can always find what I’m looking for in that department there [in Kindle Store]. The Swedish e-book sellers don’t have remotely the same kind of selection.

Similarly, F42-children comments that “there has only been a few occasions where I haven’t been able to get what I’m looking for on Kindle. Almost everything is there”, and M30-new-user even goes as far as saying that “Kindle is the one”. I would argue that it becomes visible that the practice of Kindle-reading is closely connected to the selection of books offered on Kindle Store. The vast amount of literature offered nullifies the need for any other e-reading device than the Kindle for literature. The Kindle’s place in the respondents’ reading ecology can therefore be seen as uncontested, as the literature they want to read is there, does not require another device, or visits to another store. However, Kindle users in Sweden face two major obstacles through the locality and spatial confinements of their physical locations: the lack of Swedish literature on Kindle Store, and the constrictions of the file formats on the Kindle, which is not supported by Swedish libraries or Swedish e-books.

Kindle Store offers millions of titles, but the Swedish market in the online book store is close to non-existent, as Amazon is not established in Sweden. Buying a Kindle thus limits the readers’ choice to English-written titles, and forces the reader to acquire Swedish literature in other ways. For example, F42-children, F32-student and M30-new-user all comment that if they found a Swedish book they wanted to read, they would find another way to read it. When asked if they had encountered any obstacles with the Kindle in Sweden, all of the respondents mentioned the lack of Swedish literature in the Kindle Store. The importance of this obstacle, however, varied. M30-management, for example, mentioned the lack of Swedish literature, but not as an obstacle:
Since I only read English literature, there are no obstacles whatsoever when it comes to using Kindle in Sweden ... I don’t read any translated literature in Swedish. I prefer to read in the original language and I have no interest in translated books at all.

It is interesting that M30-management simultaneously comments that he sees no obstacles with the Kindle since he never reads Swedish literature, but still acknowledges the possible obstacle of the lack of Swedish literature in the Kindle Store. In comparison, the other four respondents mentioned that they see the lack of Swedish literature as an obstacle, but one they do not seem to mind, since the Kindle Store offers such a vast selection of English literature in their preferred genres that it ‘makes up for it’.

The other obstacle noted amongst the respondents is the non-compatibility with Swedish e-book file formats. For example, M30-new-user got the Kindle as a birthday gift and has only used it for two months at the time of the research. He has thus not been able to explore all the functions of the Kindle properly, and comments “that it was a bit of a disappointment when I realised that you can’t open any format on the Kindle” and that “it’s a shame that I can’t get Swedish books on the Kindle …. Or make loans from the library”. F42-children also remarks that she does not use the Kindle when she is reading with her children, as they do not know English well enough yet:

[…] since my kids read a lot I think it would be great if there were more books in Swedish to access on the Kindle. I’ve stopped even trying to find Swedish books there, I go directly to the library website on the iPad instead.

It becomes clear that the practice of Kindle-reading in the cases of the respondents enters a new aspect of the communicative ecology’s technological layer in the local-global dimension, as their locality directly affects their usage of the device. The Kindle as a reading device problematizes the technological layer, as the respondents prefer to use the Kindle in their daily reading habits, but are through their placement in the local dimension forced to move themselves away from the technological – and social and discursive – layers of their communicative ecologies. Here I would also like to look back to the research conducted by Högström and Berglund (2015), where the attitudes of e-book readers in Sweden is investigated. Högström and Berglund (2015) identified a type of reader that is more likely to read e-books: young people living in larger towns, who go to the library regularly, and even though the respondents of this research does not physically visit a library often, they still express that they would like to have the opportunity to make loans from there.
5.2.4.2. “High and low”: Reading recommendations on Kindle Store

Returning to the books the respondents read on their Kindle, all of them express that the vast selection of their preferred genres is the most positive aspect of Kindle Store. This is important to consider when exploring what part the social and discursive layers have in their communicative ecologies connected to the Kindle and the Kindle Store specifically, as reviews and rating become important when selecting and finding new literature in Kindle Store. Four of the five respondents say that they do read reviews before purchasing a book on the Kindle Store. Only F32-student says that she does not look at reviews, since she is always looking for particular course literature. However, F32-student comments that she does read reviews in other places, namely the university library catalogue:

If I’m looking for literature connected to my course, I know the library have good descriptions of the books online, and I can also see if it’s accessible as an e-book there… [So you mainly look for what the book is about and not opinions about it?] Yeah, exactly.

F32-student thus differs from the other four respondents in the way that she is not concerned with opinions about the books she is considering buying and reading which is connected to her using the Kindle for work-reading only. Instead, she is more concerned with the relevance of the content from an objective point of view than the reviews provided on Kindle Store.

F42-child comments that she likes to read reviews about what certain books are about, but that she reads those reviews in other mediums, such as newspapers and magazines. Furthermore, she recognises that there is a difference in different genres’ relationships to reviews:

[…] I do [read reviews on Kindle Store], but only about non-fiction [Why?] Because I find fiction to be so very subjective… like everyone likes different things when it comes to fiction, it has to do with taste. When it comes to non-fiction, it’s different, because there you can find reviews that say “this book taught me a lot about this subject” and you know it could be useful […] reviews are very personal and they write from their own point of view. You have to take it with a grain of salt.

This view on reviews can also be seen in M30-new-user’s comment that he is “thinking that it [the review] might not always give a fair picture of the book”. When asked why he thinks this, he says: “Because I think that if you want to give a rating or write a review, you often have something positive to say… so it might not be fair, you know”. Similarly, when asked about what he thinks about the reviews on Kindle Store, M32-old-user sighs and says: “[H]igh and
low”. M30-management displays a more positive view on the reviews, and claims to always read reviews before buying a book, and that they have actively made him buy books he has been unsure about. M30-management also says that he has “to be able to identify myself with the reviewer somehow” to trust the review, and that most reviews he has encountered has presented both positive and negative aspects of the book. Here, it is important – and interesting - to note that both M30-management and F42-children both express a positive attitude towards reviews on Kindle Store regarding non-fictional literature. The difference in genre thus seem to matter when it comes to the trustworthiness of the reviews. Additionally, M30-new-user also says that he prefers to read literary critique to critique regarding other media, such as music:

I think there are more ”hard values” in literary critique? A good book is a good book, you know. Sure, there’s always the question about taste, but there are common values… like if the language is poor, you can tell… take Dan Brown for example, there is a pretty great consensus about that his language is poor, but his books are entertaining.

At the same time, he does not really trust the reviews on Kindle Store. Thus, M30-new-user seem to question the validity of the reviewer as much as the content of the review on Kindle Store. This is further talked about by M32-old-user, who says that when he is looking at buying a book he has not heard of before, he reads the reviews. In the reviews, he says he is looking for “aspects of books in general that I agree on? Like, if someone comments that they didn’t think that the… characters’ dynamics aren’t good, I might not care about that because it’s not a big part of why I read books”.

Reviews seem to hold different value to the respondents depending on genre and type of Kindle-reading, but in all cases, reviews still matter in choosing what books to buy. This puts the review-community on Kindle Store in an interesting context, as its discursive layer work in relation to both the local-global dimension as well as the collective-networked dimension, especially when investigating if the respondents themselves have written reviews in Kindle Store, which will be analysed in the following section.

5.2.4.3. Being useful to others: Writing reviews on Kindle Store

Although only two of the respondents have actively written a review themselves on Kindle Store, all five comment that they could and would write a review in the future. Interestingly enough, they all give the same reason to as why they would consider writing a review: to help other readers. As previously mentioned, Collins J. (2010) argues that the practice of reading books has turned towards a social activity as literature has become more accessible, so review-
writing online is not a novel concept. However, it is interesting to put review-writing in the context of the Kindle – and Amazon – as the practice of Kindle-reading and its place in the respondents’ communicative ecologies seem to have replaced the one of the physical book.

In the case of writing recommendations in Kindle Store, all of the interviewees responded that they would be motivated to write reviews if they felt that they could help someone else, which relates to Shirky’s (2010) theories about value and motivations regarding sharing knowledge online. This puts their participation somewhere between what Shirky (2010) calls public- and communal values (2010, p. 171 ff.). Communal value is created in a particular community where a shared interest is talked about, and some interaction occurs within this particular group. The community where communal value is created, however, is often closed off to the public. Public value works similar to communal value, but is permeated with more openness, which “allows people join in at will, and the results will be made available even to those members of the public who are not participants” (Shirky 2010, p. 174).

The public value of writing reviews on Kindle Store is thus important to the interviewees, and they see their participation as something that could – and should – benefit other readers, and the personal motivator is thus not important. M32-old-user, for example, expresses that he “think[s] it’s important to share your opinions to other readers… like if I really like a book, I would want others to know it’s good as well”, which are also the motivators for F32-student and F42-children to write reviews in Kindle store. However, besides the interviewees talking about how they would consider writing a review to help other readers find a book that they thought was good, M30-management and M30-new-user also comments that they would be motivated to write a review to warn readers if the book was bad. M30-management comments that he would write a review if he thought a book had factual errors in it. This is further talked about by M30-new-user, who says that he “would actually consider writing one if it was to put a book in its place that has undeservedly good reputation”. Here I would like to connect to review-writing on Kindle Store to collaborative media. According to Löwgren and Reimer (2013), collaborative media work to create community through shared content, and that “these interactions lead to the creation of experiences - experiences that change people’s dispositions and worldviews” which is how Kindle Store work in relation to reviews (2013, p. 134). By contributing with reviews on Kindle Store, the readers can in collaboration with each other create value and community regarding the books they read. Looking at Kindle Store as a platform for collaborative media, it is interesting to note that the interviewees’ willingness to
write reviews if they would help others work to create a collaborative database of knowledge about literature.

Furthermore, reviews on Kindle Store falls somewhere in between the communal- and public value, as it on one hand *is* an open community for anyone to join; anyone can access the reviews and there are no walls between the reviews and the public. However, it requires community in the sense that membership through purchases on Amazon is needed in order to become a real part of the community, since many books on Kindle Store are only available in that particular space. This creates diversity in the communicative ecology of Kindle-reading, considering that the practice of reading, as Collins J. (2010) argues, historically has been a straight forward practice where reading is done alone, which has now become a part of the daily communication of readers through mediatization. By this, I mean that compared to a printed book, the Kindle-reader does not have to actively seek out reviews from magazines and blogs to join in on the participation – the reviews are already there, directly connected to the book. Kindle-reading as a practice has thus simultaneously taken the place of the printed book in a communicative collaborate-global dimension, through the three layers of communicative ecology.

6. Discussion

How do you read?

The question posed in the beginning of this paper has been explored through the interviewees and their reading ecologies. The practice of reading has undoubtedly changed with the development of the e-book. However, I would argue that the practice has actually changed less than we are lead to believe, and that the change is mainly concerned with the *medium* in which we read, and there, the Kindle seems to have a special place in the ecology of reading. There is a lot of talk about media and internet revolution, but like Couldry (2012) argues, even though the medium is new, the practices of using media remain the same, and historically, has always been (2012, p. 42). The practice of reading is such a practice, which after conducting this research, I have found to have not so much changed as transformed due to the mediatization of the book.

Couldry (2012) takes the example of reading in 19th century Europe, where not only the *access* and availability of the books as a medium changed the way people read, as the changes in reading also connected with the invention of electricity, which allowed reading to be done after sunset, and changes in the working life of the bourgeoisie, which allowed more spare-time in
which reading could be done (2012, p. 41). I would argue that the practice and ecology of reading amongst my interviewees lack the physicality of the printed book not because the reading is different, but because the mediatization of the book connects with the socio-cultural complexities of society in the 21st century, where connectivity, communitization and translocality are important parts of every-day life. The Kindle’s place is thus at the same time simple – as it is a technological device that replicates the physical book – and complex, as it offers the reader a new practice of reading socially, where the collaborative aspect of reading is in focus instead of the *private* social reading, where recommendations would be shared between friends or read in magazines. With Kindle Store reviews, the reader is constantly in contact with other readers, and even if the contact is one-sided, it helps in fostering the soft individualisation that is visible in media practices in the mediatized society of Sweden. The social aspect of reading is therefore central in the usage of the Kindle, and this is also shown in the way the participants in this research state that they would be interesting in writing reviews themselves if they thought it could help other readers.

Even though Kindle Store belongs in the social layer as it creates community through the different genres and communication through reviews, I would argue that this social layer in the local-global dimension creates an interesting conflict. As a global community, Kindle Store connects a global reader base online. However, I would argue that the amount of literature on Kindle Store places communities and communicative ecologies in a local-collective dimension in a globalized context, as the readers can gather in smaller community-formations in the large community that is “Kindle readers”. By this, I mean that the opportunities for the reader to find more niched and specialized literature is greater on Kindle Store than it is in other literary communities, which I would argue creates communities within the community, as different genres hold different review-value. The communicative ecology of Kindle-reading amongst my respondents are thus defined not only by the device they are using, but also what literature they are reading, as the communicative discursive- and social layer depend on particular reading habits. Reading has thus become a practice which transcends the local-global dimension through the use of the Kindle and the virtual bookstore that is Kindle Store.

Here, I would like to connect with the reading-lifestyle typology discussed in “Previous research”. According to Lauristin (2014) the reading done by the type of reader I have identified the respondents with – the new multi-active reader - is not only reliant on reading many different kinds of books, but also the use of technology (2014, p. 68). By looking at the results of the ecology mapping, it is clear that some of the respondents do not read a plethora of
different genres: M30-management and F32-student, for example, only practice work-reading on the Kindle. However, it is interesting to consider the implications of the reading-lifestyle proposed by Lauristin (2014) in relation to the use of the Kindle. With constant access to literature through the technological layer of the Kindle, the respondents can in theory buy, store, and read more books than a non-Kindle user. This means that the reader-lifestyle typology explained by Lauristin (2014) changes with the use of Kindle, as I would argue that even though the respondents do not consume many different kinds of books, the fact that they have access to more books – instantly - changes the typology. Instead, I would propose a new type of reading-lifestyle as a complement to Lauristin’s, which I call multi-active device-reader. This reader prefers reading on devices, is multi-active in their reading as their practices in the way they collaborate translocally through their devices, and have access to large amounts of literature through their Kindle.

Couldry (2012) argues that media habits are heavily dependent on power relations (2012, p. 134). Therefore, Amazon’s power over the production chain is important to consider, since the company controls Kindle-users’ consumption. Thus, the habit and practice of Kindle-reading, I would argue, is a constructed practice, not only by socio-cultural contexts in the communicative ecologies of the interviewees, but also by the commercial powers of Amazon. One aspect of this is the confinement of the technological layer in relation to the communicative layer, where Amazon successfully has locked out formats from Kindle Store. Thus, if you want to use the Kindle, you are automatically forced to use their own retailing and distribution. This lock-out is something my interviewees talked about in their interviews when they commented on the lack of Swedish literature and the inability to make loans from Swedish libraries. Thus, the mediatization and globalization that can be seen as a positive when it comes to the Kindle could also be seen as a negative, a power aspect that work in order to control the consumers.

What future does the physical book have in a socio-cultural landscape where connectivity, easy access to large quantities of niched literature, and the ability to store hundreds of books in a device that can fit in your pocket? I would say that its future is contested, but not threatened, especially in the local dimension of Sweden. E-book reading takes up a small percentage of the over-all reading done in Sweden. Still, it is a format that is increasing in popularity, but the popularity for dedicated e-readers does not seem to follow the same trend, as the majority of Swedish e-book readers read on multi-functional tablets instead. In my opinion, this is an interesting trend that needs to be researched further, and it would be valuable to conduct future research in connection to Swedish e-book readers who use their tablets for reading, and
compare their ecologies to the ones I have studied in this paper, in order to gain better understanding of the particular Swedish conditions of the e-book and the e-reader.

7. Conclusion

In this research, I have studied the daily reading habits of five Kindle-users in Sweden in order to understand when, where, and how they read during an average day. The devices they use for reading has been of particular interest, as the focus of the research has been what place the Kindle has in their reading habits, and how it affects the practice of reading. To gain understanding of the interviewees’ reading habits, I used the methods communicative ecology mapping and qualitative interviews. By letting the interviewees map their daily reading on a 24-hour clock, I was able to see similarities and differences in their reading, and the qualitative interviews focused on further motivations for using the Kindle and how Kindle Store work as a communicative and collaborative community through reviews. The results were analysed in relation to the theories of communicative ecology, mediatization, and media as practice in order to contextualise and problematize the findings.

The results of the research showed that the interviewees prefer to read on digital devices: phone, computer and Kindle. They also exhibit three practices of reading, which I call news-reading, social media-reading and Kindle-reading. Additionally two types of Kindle-reading were visible: work- and leisure-reading. The different practices of reading seem confined to particular spatial dimensions, like morning-home, commute, work-lunch, and evening-home, which are connected to the three layers and dimensions of the theory of communicative ecology.

News-reading is mainly done on phone or computer, and the interviewees showed interest in personalised news-feeds, which is confined to the spatial dimensions of morning at home, during commute to and from work, and during lunch breaks. The practice and habit of news-reading on the phone displayed ritualistic tendencies in my interviewees’ responses, as most of them practice it in particular spatial dimensions. Social media-reading shows the same ritualistic tendencies, however, the interviewees were less likely to practice social media-reading in public places such as commuting, where “news on Twitter” seemed most popular.

Comparing news- and social media-reading to the practice of Kindle-reading, it becomes clear that the Kindle has replaced the physical book in the respondents’ daily reading habits, as none of them mapped out reading printed texts. However, it seems that the practice of Kindle-reading
replicates the practice of reading physical books, which is visible through two factors: a) the Kindle is read in is either at home or while commuting and b) the literature the interviewees read on the Kindle is the same as they read before they got the Kindle.

Additionally, the motivations for buying and reading on the Kindle seem to confirm the conclusion that Kindle-reading replicates reading physical books, as a majority of the interviewees responded that they got the Kindle because of its technology - the e-ink and lack of backlit screens. Another motivator for getting a Kindle was the vast selection of niched literature on Kindle Store. Thus, the technological layer of the communicative ecology of the Kindle plays an important part in the Kindle-reading practice of the interviewees.

By enabling readers to collaboratively share their opinions about books they have read, the Kindle and Kindle Store further enhance the social and community-based aspects of reading. In the cases of the interviewees in this research, reading reviews in Kindle Store is a common practice before deciding to buy a book. However, it also seems that the trust towards the reviews change according to genre. The interviewees reading non-fiction express that reviews have more value than the ones who read fiction, who express more distrust to the subjectivity of opinions. Lastly, all of the interviewees could see themselves contributing to the review-community on Kindle Store in the future. Their motivation for participating in review-writing would then be to help other readers in finding – or staying away – from certain books, which shows a clear connection in the discursive- and social layer in the translocal reading ecologies of the interviewees.
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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview guide

Purpose of the interview

The purpose of the interview is to map the everyday reading habits of the interviewee in order to understand where, how and when reading takes place in the daily life of the person. This information will be used to analyse changes in reading habits in relation to digitalized reading devices, which in this case is limited to Amazon Kindle. However, all reading the person does will be analysed in order to put the particular Kindle reading habits into context of this research, and as not to exclude or discriminate other forms of reading.

Information about the interviewee

Relevant information about the interviewee will be age and gender. Other than that, their identities will be kept anonymous for ethical reasons.

Outline of topics for the interview

1. Why use an Amazon Kindle?
   a. When was the device first purchased?
   b. Was any other device considered?
   c. What is it like using an Amazon Kindle in Sweden?
2. Individual reading habits
   a. Here the interviewee will be asked to map out their daily reading routine by drawing on a visualised 24 hour clock.
   b. Interviewees till be asked to reflect on some their habits, focused on the Kindle reading.
   c. Do their habits differ from people they know?
3. The collaborative aspect of Kindle
   a. What is being read on Kindle?
   b. How are new books found?
   c. How do readers participate in the review section?
Interview questions

0. Before we start, can you tell me
   a. How many reading devices you own
   b. [If more than one] How many of them are Kindle?

Part 1. The individual reading habits

1.a. Now, I’m going to ask you to draw on this clock when you read during your average day. With reading, I mean anything from articles on Facebook to printed books. I would also like you to note where you do the reading, and on what device (mobile phone, computer, paper, tablet, e-reader). Please comment as you draw, and when you are done, I will ask some questions.

1.b. [Here, questions will depend on the amount of commenting the respondent provides during the mapping, and also what kind of reading the respondent does]

1.c. Now, I’m wondering if you think that your reading habits differ from your friends’ reading habits.

   [If respondent answers yes] How do you think they differ? Why?

   [If respondent answers no] Do you think they would draw the same map as you? Why?

Part 2. Why use an Amazon Kindle?

2.a. Can you tell me when and how you got your first Kindle?

   [If respondent bought it themselves] Why did you buy it?

   [If respondent were given it] Who gave it to you? Why?

   [If respondent have more than one Kindle] Did you get them at the same time? Why/Why not?

2.b. What other reading devices did you consider before deciding on the Kindle?
[If other devices were considered] Why did you settle on the Kindle?

[If no other devices were considered] How come you didn’t look at any other devices?

[If respondent have an additional device that is not Kindle] How come you decided on two different devices?

Which version of the Kindle do you currently own?

Have you owned other versions of the Kindle in the past?

[If respondent have owned previous versions of the Kindle] How come you decided to buy a newer version?

Do you use your Kindle for more than reading e-books?

[If respondent answers yes] What other things do you use it for?

2.c. What are your experiences with using a Kindle in Sweden? Obstacles/positives?

Part 3. The social aspect of reviews on Kindle Store.

3.a. What do you mainly read on your Kindle?

[If respondent specifies genre] Is this a genre that you read on other devices and in print as well?

[If respondent answers yes] What do you think about the representation of this genre in Kindle Store compared to other book shops?

[If respondent answers no] Is there a reason why you only read this genre on Kindle? Why?
[If respondent specifies author] Is this an author that you read on other devices and in print as well?

[If respondent answers yes] What do you think about the representation of this author in Kindle Store compared to other book shops?

[If respondent answers no] Is there a reason why you only read this author on Kindle? Why?

3.b. Do you ever browse Kindle Store for books and authors that you are not familiar with?

[If respondent answers yes] Why do you look for unfamiliar books and authors?

How do you go about finding new books and authors?

What makes you decide to purchase a book from an unfamiliar author?

[If respondent answers no] How come you don’t do it?

Do you ever read reviews in Kindle Store?

[If respondent answers yes] What are your experiences with reviews in Kindle Store?

Have a review ever made you buy a book? Why?

Do you read book reviews in other places as well?

[If respondent answers yes] Where?

How do they differ from reviews on Kindle Store?

[If respondent answers no] How come you don’t read reviews?

Do you read reviews from other places? Where? Why/why not?

Has a review ever made you buy a book? Why/why not?
Have you ever written a book review on Kindle Store?

[If respondent answers yes] Can you explain why you wrote it?

[If respondent answers no] Can you explain why you haven’t?

What do you think could make you write a review?

Can you tell me how old you are?

Do you have any comments or reflections about the interview?
Appendix 2: Interview transcripts

Appendix 2.1: F32-student

[First off, can you tell me how many reading devices you own?] I only have the one Kindle, but I also use my laptop for a lot of literature reading.

[Thanks. Now, to begin, I would like you to draw on this clock when you read during an average day, and with reading I mean anything from posts on Facebook to printed books. I’d also like you to note where you do the reading, and what device you use. Please comment as you draw, and after I will ask some questions.]… So I just mark on the clock? [You can mark, draw, write, whatever you like] Okay, okay… Well… I always start my morning with reading local news on the computer… and then I’m on the train to uni at 8, and then I read more news on Twitter… [What device do you use then?] Oh, that’s on my phone! … then at lunch time, around 12 I’d say, I update myself by reading Twitter and Facebook on the phone … Wow, this is weird, I’ve never really thought about how much time I spend on there during the day [laughter]… [What content do you read on Twitter and Facebook during lunch then?] Ah, it’s mainly updates from my friends and people I follow, but also like, shared articles that seem interesting… then at 5, I’m on the train back home again, and then it’s Twitter on the phone again [laughter]. At 7 I’m home, and then I check Facebook and news sites on the computer… in the evening, I’d say around 9, I read course literature on Kindle… [Is it all books?] No, there are articles, PDF’s – which I read on the computer because they are usually linked from our course platform… it does happen that I read some print books there as well, but it’s rare.

[Now, do think that your reading habits differ from your friends’ reading habits.] … yeah I do think they differ a bit… [In which way?] I think they differ because not many of them use Kindle. I have been telling many of my friends how great it is, so I think more and more of them are actually using Kindle now, even if it’s just the app on their computer and stuff… But I also think they are more stressed about finding literature in general … like if they can’t find a certain book in paperback or in Google Books they get really panicky [laughter] … But with the Kindle I don’t feel that stress and panic anymore because I know that I can always find it in Kindle Store …

[Can you tell me when and how you got your first Kindle?] [I got it] in September 2015.

[Why did you get it?] It started out with me looking for a certain book for the new course I just started at uni … so I googled the title with the specific search word “e-book” attached to it and
Amazon showed up at the top of the search result … on Amazon’s page I could then choose between paperback and e-book, and I started looking around for more books when I realised that they were a lot cheaper and easier to get from there than from Swedish bookstores. So that’s when I decided to get it … when I bought the first book on Kindle store I couldn’t believe how easy it was, it took like two seconds and then I had it in my hand - and it looks really nice on the device as well, really easy to read.

[Did you look at any other reading devices before settling on the Kindle?] No-one, really.

[How come?] Well, I think it had a lot to do with that I immediately saw how cheap it was to buy our course literature there compared to Swedish bookstores, and I realised how much money I could save by getting it for the future as well… I mean, I could get the book I was originally looking for in hardback in a Swedish bookstore for 1000 SEK, but on the Kindle it was 30 dollars…[That's a big difference] yeah, huge I would say [laughter]”

[Which version of the Kindle do you currently own?] “The latest one, I think. I bought the one that was cheapest.

[Have you owned other versions of the Kindle in the past?] No.

[Do you use your Kindle for more than reading e-books?] …No? I didn’t know you could do that? [You can also read magazines and transfer files to it] …Oh, I didn’t know that! [laughter] I honestly haven’t had time to do much else than read the course literature – I don’t even have time to read fiction at the moment… but maybe that will change in the summer when I don’t have school.

[Now I wanna ask you about your experiences with using Kindle in Sweden. Have you encountered any obstacles or positive aspects?] Since I only read English course literature on Kindle, I’ve very positive experiences. As long as I’m looking for international course literature, I know Kindle [will] have it, and cheaper than in Swedish stores as well. But if I need Swedish literature, I can’t get it there. But as long as I’m reading English literature, it’s hassle free.

[What do you mainly read on your Kindle?] Course literature for my university studies.

[Do you read that on other devices and in print as well?] I do read some on the laptop, when it’s PDF:s and other articles. But the books I read on Kindle.
[What do you think of the selection of that type of literature on Kindle Store compared to other book stores?] Well, Amazon is an absolute giant when it comes to international course literature [laughter]... I know I can always find what I’m looking for in that department there [in Kindle Store]. The Swedish e-book sellers don’t have remotely the same kind of selection.... But, as I said, Swedish course literature is non-existent on Kindle, so that’s a drawback.

[Do you ever browse Kindle store for books and authors that you are not familiar with?] I only look for specific authors and titles that I know I need to read.

[How come?] In most cases, I have a list of books I need and therefore I know what I’m looking for.

[Do you ever read reviews on Kindle books?] No, I don’t.

[Why not?] I really haven’t had the need to … I’ve only looked for books I know I need [to read].

[Do you read reviews from other places?] Yes, I do actually … I look in the university library catalogue [How come?] If I’m looking for literature connected to my course, I know the library have good descriptions of the books online, and I can also see if it’s accessible as an e-book there… [So you mainly look for what the book is about and not opinions about it?] Yeah, exactly.

[Has a review ever made you buy a book?] No, it has never been a deciding factor for me…

[Have you ever written a book review on Kindle books?] … no, I haven’t… but I’ve rated some with stars…

[Can you explain why you haven’t?] …I’ve actually never thought about it? Like that’s something anyone can do? [laughter]

[Do you think you will write a review in the future?] … I think that if I found a book I thought was really helpful and worth reading, I would like to recommend it to other readers. Like, if I think my judgement could help others find a book I think is good, I would write one.

[Before we finish, I’m wondering if you have any reflections about the interview or comments about the subject we’ve been talking about?] I think the interview had a really nice feeling to it, very relaxed. And good interview technique. Yeah I think that’s all.
Appendix 2.2: M30-new-user

[Now, I’m going to ask you to draw on this clock when you read during your average day. With reading, I mean anything from articles on Facebook to printed books. I would also like you to note where you do the reading, and on what device. If you want to comment as you draw, you are most welcome to, and I will ask some questions when you are done.] Well, my day generally starts at 6 in the morning, and then I start with reading Twitter on the phone. [What is it that you read?] Well, it’s mainly news, but I also keep myself updated with certain people – I don’t know all of them personally you know, but I’m interested in what they have to say… and then during the day, I consistently look at Twitter and Facebook… perhaps a bit too much [laughter]. No, but like, I work a lot with connecting with people on Facebook and other social media platforms… so it’s pretty easy to get stuck on there while I’m at it [laugh] I think it’s like 45 minutes in total … no, you know what, it’s probably closer to an hour… That’s really too much [laughter]…But during that time I’m only reading on my computer…. I don’t use my phone at all for reading and internet during my work days…. And then on the way to and from work I read on my Kindle! In total that’s 40 minutes travel where I use the Kindle… and then in the evening I do some reading on the computer, like one hour… and then it’s news, Facebook and other social media… yeah I think that’s it!

[Do you think that your reading habits differ from your friends’ [reading habits]?] …yes, I think they do.

[In which way?] I think I spend more time on the computer – and on Twitter than my friends do.

[Can you tell me when and how you got your first Kindle?] I got it as a birthday present this February.

[Who gave it to you and why?] I had actually been wanting one for some time now and my sister-in-law heard me talking about it and told my mum…. Like I’ve been thinking about getting one for some time now and I recently got a new job that I’m gonna start after the summer, which will take much longer to commute to… so I really think it’s gonna be a life-saver [laughter], much easier to bring than a printed book, you know?

[What other reading devices did you consider before deciding on the Kindle?] You know, I was actually considering an iPad before I got the Kindle…. But I’m so easily distracted, so I’m...
actually happy about having a one-function device like the Kindle [laughter]… I’ll only use it for reading, so I’ll get the reading done!

[Which version of the Kindle did you get?] I got a Paperwhite, 4th generation… [Did you specifically want that one?] No, I just wanted “a Kindle” and that’s the one my mum got me.

[Do you use your Kindle for more than reading e-books?] … No… I’m not really conversant in all the functions yet since I only got it two months ago… I know it’s got a browser, and I tried it but I thought that I was so-so… I tried to make a library loan with it but I realised that it doesn’t support that format [that is used for Swedish library e-books] which is a shame… that I can’t read Swedish e-books on it, that is… but now come think of it, I did download an article in PDF-format from a Swedish database last week that I should be able to transfer to my Kindle [the kindle does allow that format and transferring PDFs] then that’s definitely something I’m gonna use it for in the future! [laughs]

[What are your experiences with using a Kindle in Sweden? Have you encountered any obstacles or positive sides?] Well, it’s a shame that I can’t get Swedish books on the Kindle…. Or make loans from the library… now after I got the Kindle I’ve realised that there are other e-readers that are compatible with those formats used for e-books in Sweden… but on the other hand the Kindle is connected to for example Amazon Classics… and there I can download classic books for free… so I have some stuff to sink my teeth into, so to speak [laughs]. I recently started on Anna Karenia… But I actually gotta say that it was a bit of a disappointment when I realised that you can’t open any format on the Kindle…. That was actually not something I knew beforehand… but yeah, the Kindle offers so much to read that I think I got a life-time supply of reading there [laughter]. So I don’t regret getting one, not at all!

[What literature do you read on your Kindle?] I’ve really only read one book on the Kindle so far [Which one?] How to kill a mockingbird… it’s really convenient to read on the Kindle… I mean, I’ve actually started reading that book like ten times before in paperback, but never managed to finish it… with the Kindle it’s much easier somehow? Like right now I’m reading The rise of the creative class, and I actually got that one in print at home as well… but it’s easier to read on the Kindle. One of the best things is that it automatically opens where I stopped reading… and that I don’t get like a whole page, the layout is really comfortable to follow… and I have to say that I also like how it shows progress in percent and not number of pages… it feels much better and more motivating when you read really heavy books [laughter]!
[Is this a genre that you read on other devices and in print as well?] The books I’ve downloaded so far are ones I’ve been planning on downloading and reading in general…. But it’s so much simpler to bring the Kindle than a paperback… and it’s just not the same reading on the phone, you know… it’s hard on the eyes… I’m positive that I will read more books by reading on the Kindle than in print… I’m pretty conscious about the fact that it [the Kindle] has changed my reading habits – but in a positive way! [laughter]

[Do you ever browse Kindle store for books and authors that you are not familiar with?] … Yes, I have done that… I have randomly browsed recommendations and tips in Kindle Store… and Amazon has some collaboration with Good Reads, so I actually joined… you can like follow authors and stuff there… so I joined. I’m pretty curious about literature from like Africa and East Asia, and it’s kinda had to find new titles from those countries if they are not recommended… and also, the price is often much lower when it comes to unknown authors and books…

[What makes you decide to purchase a book from an author you don’t know about?] The price is actually directly determining whether or not I would buy an unfamiliar book… Like I’m not gonna spend more than… 100 crowns on an unknown author or title that I haven’t heard of before.

[Do you ever read reviews on Kindle books?] I sometimes look a bit at ratings and reviews when it comes to unknown authors, but I’m also thinking that it might not always give a fair picture of the book [why?] because I think that if you want to give a rating or write a review, you often have something positive to say… so it might not be fair, you know…

[What do you think of the recommendations on Kindle Store?] I think that you need some kind of help when you look for new books… they [the reviews] can help you find [new books], but you gotta have some sort of idea what you are looking for before you start looking… I often know what I want beforehand… once I looked for authors similar to Gillian Flynn because I like her style and genre… to see what’s out there, you know… but I gotta say that I trust literary critique more than for example… musical critique… [How come?] no but like… book advice… I think there are more ”hard values” in literary critique? A good book is a good book, you know. Sure, there’s always the question about taste, but there are common values… like if the language is poor, you can tell… take Dan Brown for example, there is a pretty great consensus about that his language is poor, but his books are entertaining…. 
[Has a review ever made you buy a book?] I have actually bought some books that have been recommended for me through Amazon, but they haven’t really been wild cards, so to speak [laughter]... it was like Emily Dickinson and other classics.... But no, I haven’t bought any after reading reviews on Kindle Store

[Do you read book reviews in other places as well?] Yeah, I guess that I pick up on stuff from different newspapers and magazines and such... I subscribe to Ordfront and other left wing magazines... but mostly I get recommended books by my friends I think.

[Do you think those recommendations differ from reviews on Kindle books?] [laughter], njae, I don’t think I’ve had time to compare that much since I haven’t had my kindle that long...

[Have you ever written a book review on Kindle books?] No, but I can definitely see myself doing it in the future.... I can appreciate the community building the reviews create, which is really nice [What would make you write one?] [laughter] I would actually consider writing one if it was to put a book in its place that has undeservedly good reputation... but I also think that if I would find a relatively unknown book, that I would write a review to help, you know.... Both the author and other potential readers....

[Before we finish, do you have any comments and reflections about the interview or what we’ve been discussing?] .... No, not anything I can think of!
Appendix 2.3: M32-old-user

[First, I’m wondering how many reading devices you own?] I only have one, my Kindle.

[Great. Now, I’d like to ask you to draw on this clock when you read during your average day. With reading, I mean anything from articles on Facebook to printed books. I would also like you to tell me where you do the reading, and on what device… please comment as If you want to comment as you draw, you are most welcome to, and I will ask some questions when you are done.] … Let’s see… when I’m on the bus to work I usually read news on the phone. I have tried bringing books on the bus but it’s not working for me, I can’t focus. During the day I also check my phone during lunch, and then it’s various stuff I’m reading. [Like what?] Social media and news, mostly… Then on the bus home from work, I read news on the phone again. In the evening, I always read while lying on the sofa, and then it’s fiction – mostly science fiction and fantasy – that I read before going to bed… [Do you read physical books or Kindle then?] The Kindle, if we are talking about an average day…

[Do you think that your reading habits differ from your friends’ reading habits?] Both yes and no? I think they read a lot more on their computers than I do, and also more printed books. I think I read a bit less than my friends do. And also I read my books on the Kindle, and that’s not so common. [Do any of your friends own a Kindle?] … no, I actually think I’m the only one. They do most of their reading on their computers.

[Can you tell me when you got your first Kindle?] Yeah, I got it eight years ago… I read some articles about the Kindle and then I saw that they were gonna sell it at Webhallen [a Swedish IT-store] here, so I ordered one, went to pick it up… started using it right away and that was it [laughter]… It was really new back then, and I was really interested in the new paper technology they were using.

[Was that the only reason why you got it?] The thing is that I only read books once, and I don’t have a lot of space in my home to store books. So I used to throw away tons of books, which I though was a huge waste and pretty sad. So when I read about the Kindle, I realised that reading digitally should be something for me.

[What other reading devices did you consider before buying the Kindle?] I did look at another e-reader before buying the Kindle – I think it was a Sony, but I never really considered buying it.
[Why not?] The Sony was really expensive compared to the Kindle. I also got the Kindle that doesn’t have 3G, and has a little ad when I’m not using it, which made it even cheaper. It was really the price tag that decided for me.

[Which version of the Kindle do you currently own?] I still own the one I bought 8 years ago

[Have you considered buying a newer version?]… No, not really. I’m really happy with the one I have... I mean, I’ve seen they have Kindles with built in lights and stuff now, but I kind of like having to have a light in order to read on it.

[Do you use your Kindle for more than reading e-books?] I do read comics on it occasionally, but it’s not something I would recommend. [Why?] Well, it’s pretty compromised and the text is hard to read. When you try to zoom, everything ends up outside of the frame and it’s just… not ideal.

[What are your experiences with using a Kindle in Sweden? Have you encountered any obstacles or found any positive aspects?] Well, Swedish e-books are pretty much non-existent… On the other hand, if you wanna buy an e-book in Sweden, they are really expensive. In Kindle Store you can buy an e-book for about 20 crowns. In Sweden, an e-book can cost like 200 crowns. It just doesn’t feel worth it, you know? …Reading English literature on the Kindle is really good though.

[What do you read on your Kindle?] Science fiction and fantasy literature.

[Do you read those genres in print and on other devices than the Kindle?]…Yeah, it happens that I buy printed sci-fi and fantasy books. But I won’t read it on the phone or computer, it’s too taxing on the eyes.

[What do you think about the representation of fantasy and sci-fi books on Kindle books compared to other book shops?] Well, there are a lot more books in these genres on Amazon. And they are also cheaper… Also, there are many more authors that might not be seen in the bookstores that you can find on Kindle, which I really like. I’ve found a lot of self-publishing authors on Kindle that I follow, they usually sell their books cheaper as well.

[Do you ever browse Kindle store for books and authors you’re not familiar with?] Yeah, I guess I do? I mean, I read pretty quickly – a book a month or so – and the authors I like doesn’t always keep up with my reading [laughter]. So sometimes I find myself having read all they’ve written.
[How do you go about looking for new authors and books?] …I go to the top sellers first, I think… To see if there’s anything there that seems interesting. I also go back to authors I’ve read and liked before, in case they have released something new…

[What makes you decide to buy a book from an author you haven’t heard of before?] Mainly the comments, I would say. They can say quite a lot about the book – both good and bad…

[What do you look for in the comments?] … I think it’s to do with aspects of books in general that I agree on? Like, if someone comments that they didn’t think that the… characters’ dynamics aren’t good, I might not care about that because it’s not a big part of why I read books… It’s pretty difficult to find new books, I have a very particular taste… and I don’t really wanna waste money or time downloading books I won’t read - I’m very picky like that [laughs].

[Do you read reviews on Kindle Store?] Yes.

[What are your experiences with them [the reviews]?]

[Sighs] High and low. But they are great when it comes to getting an overview of the book…

[Have a review ever made you buy a book?]…Yeah! Like, if I’m uncertain about a book, a comment about it can make or break the deal, really.

[Do you read book reviews in other places as well?]… Actually…. No…. I mostly ask friends who I know have the same taste in books as me, and even if they mainly read printed books, I know I can find it on Kindle.

Do you think your friends’ recommendations differ from the ones you read on Kindle Store?] I actually don’t think they differ at all? [In what way?] No but, books they have recommended to me has had pretty good reviews on the Kindle as well…

[Have you ever written a book review on Kindle books?] Yes, I have…

[Can you explain why?] [Laughter] It was actually an email… Amazon sent an email after I bought a book and asked like “did you like this book?” and I just did it [laughs].

[Would you write another one?] It’s like… yeah, I think I would… It’s like, I know that many of the authors who publish on Kindle are not big – many of them have blogs where you can see how they think about their writing and stuff – and I think many of them are pretty … sensitive? About their works… I know some scroll through the comments on Kindle, and I think it’s important to encourage them…. That’s a reason why I would write reviews, I think. But I also
think it’s important to share your opinions to other readers… like if I really like a book, I would want others to know it’s good as well.

[Now, before we finish off, I’m wondering of you have any further comments about what we’ve talking about and how the interview went?] I think the interview had a really good flow to it… Otherwise I can’t think of anything…
Appendix 2.4: F42-children

[Firstly, I’m wondering how many reading devices you own?] I own one e-reader, but I also use my iPad for reading.

[And the e-reader is a Kindle?] Yes, it is.

[Okay, thank you. Now, I would like you to draw on a 24 hour clock when you read during your average day. With reading, I mean anything from Facebook to printed books. I would also like you to note where you do the reading, and on what. It would be good if you could comment while you map out your reading, and afterwards I’ll ask some questions.] Okay! Well… My day starts with breakfast in the morning, and I always read news on my computer then [Where do you read those news?] Oh, it’s like DN, DI, Aftonbladet and other websites I find useful… Then during the day at work we work very intensely in teams of three and four people, and we all share a computer so I don’t really do any reading until lunch time when I have coffee and read news on Twitter…[What device do you use then?] It’s on my phone… It’s actually quite interesting come think of it, when you can’t surf around looking at news during the day like you would if you were the only one on the computer, and it’s really noticeable somehow… Anyway, next time I do any kind of reading is in the evening, after dinner, when I again use my computer to read news, sometimes it’s some articles about some problem we encountered at work. Every other week I have my children at my place, and then we always do some reading together before bed… Either they have a print book that they are already reading, or I make an e-book loan on the iPad from the local library [Why the iPad and not the Kindle here?] I kinda have to use the iPad when reading with my kids because the Kindle Store doesn’t have any good Swedish literature for kids… On the weekdays, my day would end with this reading, I barely read any fiction on those days. However, on the weekends, I read a lot of fiction, and then I almost exclusively do it on the Kindle. On the rare occasion that there’s a Swedish book I must have, I will buy it in print, but I really do prefer to read the English versions on the Kindle.

[Thank you. Now, I’m wondering if you think your reading habits are different from your friends’ reading habits?] …Yes, I do think they differ… [In what way?] I think I read less fiction than my friends do… I read a lot of non-fiction connected to my line of work – technology and IT and that sort of stuff – most of the reading I do on the weekdays is with my kids.
Can you tell me when you got your first Kindle? Oh, that’s a hard one…. It was a very long time ago… 2010 it was, I think I was one of the first versions of the Kindle as well.

Did you buy it yourself or was it given to you? My boyfriend at the time bought it for me because I did so much reading on the iPad at the time and I thought it was useless. When I got the Kindle I was certain I would never use it because I had such bad experiences with the iPad – it really annoyed me that I couldn’t read on it outside – and I thought that the Kindle would be the same [But it wasn’t?] [laughter] No, it’s completely different, the lack of backlight makes the reading experience so much easier!

Did you ever think of getting another reading device before you got the Kindle? I did own an iPad, and I wasn’t actually interested in getting a Kindle at time either [laughs]. But now I have actually bought a couple of e-readers as gifts for friends and family. Not the Kindle though, but the Swedish Letto [How come they didn’t get Kindles?] I know they are only interested in reading Swedish literature, so a Kindle wouldn’t be good for them at all.

Which version of the Kindle do you currently own? I still have the one my ex gave me in 2010, so it’s one of the really old ones.

Do you use your Kindle for more than reading e-books? I have tried using it for reading PDF:s, but I thought it was useless. The document became really small when I transferred it from my computer with the Chrome stick-in, and I had to scroll sideways to read it. I only use the Kindle for e-book reading now.

What are your experiences with using a Kindle in Sweden? Have you encountered any obstacles or positive sides? …Well, since my kids read a lot my I think it would be great if there were more books in Swedish on the Kindle. I’ve stopped even trying to find Swedish books there, I go directly to the library website on the iPad instead.

What do you mainly read on your Kindle? I would say I read a mix of things, non-fiction and fiction. When I find something I want to read, I trust Kindle to have it, and I must say that there has only been a few occasions where I haven’t been able to get what I’m looking for on Kindle… Almost everything is there.

Do you ever browse Kindle store for books and authors that you don’t already know of? There have been occasions where I’ve found an author or a book through the “what others have been reading” feature. It’s mainly been fantasy fiction I’ve found that way. I think it’s a good way of finding new literature… I mean, sometimes when I’m at the library I wish I could just
randomly browse for books like that, but you kind of have to know what you are looking for in that environment [laughter].

[Do you ever read reviews on Kindle books?] Yes, I do, but only about non-fiction [How come?] Because I find fiction to be so very subjective… like everyone likes different things when it comes to fiction, it has to do with taste. When it comes to non-fiction, it’s different, because there you can find reviews that say “this book taught me a lot about this subject” and you know it could be useful.

[What are your experiences with reviews on Kindle Store?] I have mixed experiences, I would say. Like I said, reviews are very personal and they write from their own point of view. You have to take it with a grain of salt. But, if there’s many positive reviews with clear positive attributes, they probably do say something about the book.

[Have a review ever made you buy a book?] Actually, yes. [Why did you buy it?] I know I browsed a subject-matter and found a book I didn’t know about, where the reviews said that the book was great, so that got me to buy it.

[Do you read book reviews in other places as well?] Yes, I sometimes read them in newspapers and magazines… But I don’t read them to see what the person thinks about the book personally, I’m more interested in what the book is about. I kind of read it like a news piece in that sense.

[How do they differ from reviews on Kindle Store?] The differ a lot, I think. Reviews on Kindle never talks about what the book is about, only the opinion of the reader.

[Have you ever written a book review on Kindle books?] No, I haven’t…And I don’t think I ever will! [Why not?] I tell myself that to write a review, I have to either really love the book or really hate it, and I never really get that feeling when reading... But I do feel guilty about not commenting on what I’ve read sometimes, actually. [How come?] Well, it would help others to write reviews on books. I should probably do it.

[What would prompt you to write a review?]…I feel that I don’t read much compared to others, but if I read something which had a wow-factor, I would probably consider writing a review about the book.

[Thank you. Finally, I’m wondering if you have any comments or reflections about the interview or subject we’ve been discussing?] … I think it was a good interview, good questions… they [the questions] were easy to answer, but still made me think about my habits.
Appendix 2.5: M30-management

[So, before we start, can you tell me how many reading devices you own?] I own two devices I use for reading.

[How many of them are Kindle?] One, the other one is an iPad.

[Thank you. Now, first, I’m going to ask you to draw on this clock when you read during an average day. With reading, I mean anything from articles on Facebook to printed books. I’d also like you to note where you do the reading, and on what device... I’d like you to comment as you draw, and after I’ll ask some more questions.] Okay…. So… I always keep my Kindle in my pocket or in my backpack, so anytime I am going somewhere, or have to wait for something, I take it out and read. So it’s pretty hard to say exactly when I’m reading on my Kindle, but generally it’s anytime I am on my way or waiting during the day, no matter how much time I have to spend. In the morning I read on my phone, I have a personal news feed. [Can you explain what you mean by that?] Yeah, I keep myself updated with Reddit, blogs with people I think have something important to say, on Twitter I read what certain people have to say… it’s important to me that the news I read has value to me personally. Then during work I read a lot of technical documents on the computer, but sometimes, if it’s a really long document, I actually email it to my Kindle because I prefer to read it on it [the Kindle]. Sometimes in the evenings I read books, but only on the Kindle. I actually stopped buying and reading printed books a year ago, but I still have a little pile at home which I haven’t gotten around to read yet.

[Do you think your reading habits differ from your friends’ [reading habits]?] Yeah, I think they do. [In what way?] I think it’s mainly to do with what kind of books I read. I don’t read any fiction, only histories about real people and leadership management. I think that’s kind of unusual.

[Can you tell me when and how you got your first Kindle?] I got it as a birthday present two years ago. [Who gave it to you?] My wife bought it for me… [Had you told her you wanted one, or why did she get it for you?] … I think it was because I had been talking about how much I disliked to read on other devices with backlight for a really long time. I was really annoyed with the backlight technology when it comes to reading, and it was actually the reason why I preferred to read printed books at the time… The Kindle – and other dedicated e-readers – don’t have backlight. There are two reasons why I love the Kindle: the battery time – I only have to charge it like once a month – and the fact that it reads like a proper book, if it’s dark
you need light to be able to read. I really wish that they sold laptops with that technology, because I would love to be able to sit outside and work on my computer even when it’s sunny. How great wouldn’t that be? [Pretty great, I think] Right!

[Did you consider buying any other reading devices before the Kindle?] I don’t think there ever was talk about anything other than a Kindle in our home…[How come?] I only really knew about the Kindle, so for me that was the only option even though I never went out and bought it myself… I actually did try one of my friend’s Kindles once and I really liked it. Good thing my wife picked up on it [laughter].

[Which version of the Kindle do you currently own?] I own the Kindle Paperwhite, first generation. Without 3G. That’s really important to me, I refuse to buy a sponsored Kindle. [Why?] I really don’t want ads on it. I hate it.

[Have you owned other versions of the Kindle in the past?] No, this is my first one.

[Do you use your Kindle for more than e-book reading?] Yes, sometimes. Not often though. [What do you use it for then?] Sometimes I use it to browse the internet, when there’s WiFi around, and like I said before I sometimes email documents to it because I prefer reading on the Kindle. It’s gotta be a longer document though, because it takes a little while to send it, so if it’s a short text I won’t do it. But if I know I’m gonna spend an hour reading it, then I will definitely send it to my Kindle. It’s really convenient.

[Now I’m curious about your experiences with using a Kindle in Sweden. Have you encountered any obstacles or positive sides?] Since I only read English literature, there are no obstacles whatsoever when it comes to using Kindle in Sweden. I don’t read any translated literature in Swedish. I prefer to read in the original language and I have no interest in translated books at all.

[What do you mainly read on your Kindle?] I read books about management and leadership.

[Do you read books about that on other devices and in print as well?] Yes, I sometimes read on the phone and computer as well, if I find a link to an article or something that is being shared online.

[What do you think about the representation of that genre on Kindle books compared to other book shops?] Kindle is the one. I’ve all my books on the Kindle now, except for some older
ones that are not accessible as e-books. Those I buy in print. But I would love to have all my books in the Kindle – like my own little library!

[Do you ever browse Kindle store for books and authors you don’t already know about?] Not in the Kindle store, no. I’m trying to keep track of authors I know, so if they release something new, I know about it.

[How come you don’t do it?] Mostly I know what I’m looking for, so there’s no real need for it.

[Do you ever read reviews in Kindle Store?] Always! Sometimes when I’m hesitant about a book, reviews have made me not buy it.

[What are your experiences with reviews on Kindle Store?] Overall – good. I like that most reviewers write about both the positive and the negative aspects. You get a pretty good view of the book that way.

[Has a review ever made you buy a book?] Yes. [How come?] When I’ve been hesitant about buying a book, I’ve read positive reviews about it that made me buy it. But I have to be able to identify myself with the reviewer somehow. And the review has to be longer and more thorough. Most of the reviews I’ve found has been really good in that sense.

[Do you read book reviews in other places as well?] No, not at all.

[Why not?] When I’m at the stage that I’m considering buying a book, I’m already in the Kindle store, and then it makes no sense going anywhere else looking for it. And so far, I’ve been really pleased about the books I’ve bought because of reviews.

[Have you ever written a book review on Kindle Store?] Yes!

[Why did you write it?] I wanted to share my opinion about it – it was positive. There have been many occasions where I’ve read books that have been absolute garbage, but I won’t write a review about those books [Why not?] Because I don’t think it’s worth spending time reviewing a book you disliked or didn’t finish… but if I found mistakes in it or if it made me really angry, I would probably write that in a review [laughs].

So, before we finish, I’m wondering if you have any reflections or comments about the subject or interview?] It’s been good, good questions … I hope you got what you were after and that I could be of use!